

## THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD, ON  
TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY 2016, STARTING AT 4.30 P.M.

Present:

Councillors

R F W Brame	M P Brindle (Chairman)
Mrs B J Canham	T J Jermy
J C Moorman	M Taylor
Mrs F Robinson	

Officer in attendance:  
Maurice Howard Town Clerk

Minutes

- 833/15 DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS  
None.
- 834/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NEW MEMBERS  
Apologies were received from Councillors M S Robinson and  
Mrs S J Armes.  
Mrs F Robinson was welcomed onto the committee by the Chairman.
- 835/15 MINUTES  
RESOLVED that the minutes of the Committee's meeting held on the  
5<sup>th</sup> January 2016 received by Council on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016 be  
confirmed as a true record and be signed/initialled by the Chairman.
- 836/15 REVIEW OF ACTION POINTS
- The booking of the Scaffolding Course for the Venues and Works Team had been made.
  - The booking of the Public Nuisance and Bylaws Course for the Deputy Town Clerk had been made.
  - The Ely VAT Brief had been booked for the Finance Manager.
  - The Health and Safety Policy had been distributed to the Committee but will be discussed further under Agenda Item 842/15 below.
  - Following the January meeting the arrival of the NJC Pay Scales are still awaited and once received a review of the implications of the Accredited Living Wage on the Pay Structure will be carried out.
  - It was agreed in the January meeting that on arrival of the new NJC Pay Scales a decision would be reached on bringing Sessional Staff on to NJC Scales.
  - Financial Regulations had been placed on the Finance Agenda and had been reviewed and agreed.
  - The Town Clerk was yet to provide the information required in a presentable format to the Outsourced Contracts Task and Finish Group this would be provided in Mar/Apr and a subsequent meeting date set.

- 837/15            BUDGET REVIEW  
The budget elements were reviewed and in particular the training budget was discussed. In addition to the Month Nine report the Town Clerk indicated that three courses had since been booked. After deducting them from the current balance there would still be approximately £260 remaining to the end of the year.
- 838/15            HEALTH & SAFETY  
Councillor Canham stated that, following the appointment of the new Health and Safety Advisor, one of the first acts would be to carry out a review of all policies, risk assessments etc. The start date for the new contract would be 1 Mar 16 but a preliminary visit was scheduled for 17 Feb 16. As a result the H&S Meeting scheduled for 4 Feb 2016 had been postponed.
- 839/15            COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS  
The Town Clerk had received information from a user of the Carnegie Rooms suggesting that many positive responses had been received both during and following the recent TARA award ceremony. Comments had been made on the recent improvements to the venue but centred mainly on the tremendous effort and professionalism of the staff on duty. The Town Clerk was asked to pass on both these plaudits and the thanks of the Personnel Committee to the Venues Manager and staff.  
Councillor T J Jermy commented that many webpages, similar in nature to our venues booking website, display accredited compliments. It was felt that this would be a useful addition to our booking site but of course would require permission from the authors. The Town Clerk stated that adding this to the website should not be a problem and he would look to obtain 'permission for use' from authors of future bookings that could then be used on our site.
- 840/15            TRAINING REQUESTS  
It was felt that Councillor Mrs B J Canham would benefit from attending the Public Nuisance and Bylaws course that the Deputy Town Clerk was attending on 5 Feb 16. Due to the complexity of some of the issues it was felt that her attendance provided extra knowledge base in case of any possible absence of the officer. It would also provide more of a sounding board within meetings for ideas to be 'bounced around'. It was proposed by Councillor J C Moorman and seconded by Councillor Mrs F Robinson that Councillor Mrs B J Canham attend the Public Nuisance and Bylaws Course on 5 Feb 16 at a cost of £25. This was unanimously approved.  
**RESOLVED: That Councillor Mrs B J Canham attend the Public Nuisance and Bylaws Course on 5 Feb 16 at a cost of £25**
- 841/15            REQUEST FOR SESSIONAL CARETAKER/BAR STAFF  
The Town Clerk reported that one of the long serving Sessional Caretakers would be taking up a new appointment that would preclude her from carrying out her current role. As a result there was a need to seek additional sessional cover. With added commitments in the Summer months there would be a need for an additional 2 members of staff. The Town Clerk stated that members of the previous Personnel Committee had given delegated responsibility to the Town Clerk and Venues Manager for the hiring of such staff and he wanted to be sure

that this delegation continued under the new committee. Of course there would always be a requirement to inform the VEM Committee of this type of situation and confirm a way forward. However, due to the short timelines involved, it was felt that the VEM Committee would appreciate speedy action and that they should be informed of the process at their next meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor T J Jermy and seconded by Councillor B J Canham that the Town Clerk and Venues Manager be given delegated responsibility to continue to hire Sessional Staff Members as and when required. The vote was unanimous.

**RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk and Venues Manager be given delegated responsibility to continue to hire Sessional Staff Members as and when required.**

842/15

REVIEW OF TOWN COUNCIL POLICIES

Councillor M Taylor joined the meeting.

The Draft Health and Safety Policy was presented for approval as a recommendation from the Health and Safety Meeting of 12 Nov 15 (under Minute 635/15). Certain members felt that they needed more time to review this and others stated that they had lots of potential amendments to be made which could mean a further lengthy review was required (possibly in a different meeting). However, the Chairman pointed to the statement from Councillor Canham regarding the fact that the first order of business for the newly appointed H&S Advisor would be to review this very policy. It was therefore decided that this would be held over until this review had been carried out and approved by the new provider.

843/15

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was resolved that, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded for any remaining Items of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

844/15

TOWN COUNCIL APPRENTICE

(This matter is below the line due to the personal and confidential nature of the matter to be discussed)

The Town Clerk and the Chairman updated the Committee on the interview process so far and on the candidates that were being considered. The committee were content with the way this had been conducted and with the potential candidate. It was pointed out that delegated authority had already been given by Full Council (Agenda Item 824/15) for appointment of the individual. It was proposed by Councillor R F W Brame and Seconded by Councillor B J Canham that it should now be left to the Town Clerk to conduct a final interview with the chosen individual and that, subject to the individual gaining the confidence of the Town Clerk, that he be given authority to appoint.

**RESOLVED: Town Clerk is to conduct a final interview with the chosen individual and that, subject to the individual gaining the confidence of the Town Clerk, that he be given authority to appoint.**

845/15

REQUEST FOR PERSONAL EXPENSES

(This matter is below the line due to the personal nature of the matter to be discussed)

A member of staff had damaged a tyre to his personal vehicle while carrying out Council business. He had used his vehicle due to the unavailability of a Council vehicle and the fact that a contractor was waiting at site. It was felt that whilst it is not normal practice to use personal vehicles for work of this nature, he had taken a decision that ultimately was meant to benefit the Council and had simply been unlucky.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs B J Canham and seconded by Councillor J C Moorman that the member of staff be reimbursed £95 for the cost of the tyre this coming from the Vehicle Maintenance Budget.

A vote was taken. For the proposal: 4 votes, Against: 2 votes, Abstentions: 1 vote.

**RESOLVED: That the member of staff be reimbursed £95 for the cost of the tyre this coming from the Vehicle Maintenance Budget.**

846/15

ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Town Clerk alerted the committee to the fact that on 5 Feb 16 three of the Senior Officers would be away from the office leaving only the Finance Manager as senior cover in the office. This would be for a three hour period until the Deputy Town Clerk returned from her course. The Town Clerk had no concerns with this and stated that he was on-call if required. The committee were content that enough experience was available should it be required.

847/15

PRESS RELEASES

It was felt that, once the appointment of the apprentice had been confirmed, this may be a newsworthy story and one which showed the Council in a positive light. Therefore, a press release should be considered following appointment.

Chairman

**ACTION POINTS**

<b>ACTION POINT</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
Await arrival of NJC Pay Scales and then consider a review of the implications of the Accredited Living Wage on the Pay Structure and Payroll.	Town Clerk	On receipt of new Pay Scales
Await NJC Pay Scales and then look to bring Sessional Staff on to NJC Scales.	Town Clerk	As above
Following review by new H&S Adviser, Agenda the H&S Policy for Recommendation.	Town Clerk	ASAP

Pass on compliments to Venue Manager and staff as required.	Town Clerk	1 Mar 16
Seek to gain permission for future venues compliments that can be used on the Town Council booking website	Town Clerk/Venues Manager	As and when
Book Councillor Canham on the Public Nuisance and Bylaws Course on 5 Feb 16.	Town Clerk	4 Feb 16
Place advert for Sessional Caretaker/ Bar Member.	Town Clerk	ASAP
Carry out final interview for Apprentice and appoint as necessary	Town Clerk	ASAP
Reimburse staff member for personal expenses (tyre)	Town Clerk/ Finance Manager	1 Mar 16
Consider Press Release on appointment of apprentice	Town Clerk	1 Mar 16
Book additional meeting for Out-Sourced Contracts Task and Finish Group.	Town Clerk	Mar/Apr 16