

**Downham Market Town Council
Human Resources Committee Meeting
Tuesday 17 October 2023 at 6pm**

This meeting was held at the Town Hall, Bridge Street, Downham Market, Norfolk PE38 9DW

	<p>Present</p> <p>Committee Members - Cllrs Buxton, Daymond, Incorvaia, Jordan, B Moyses (5)</p> <p>Non-Committee Member – Cllr Hobbs (until Agenda Item 04)</p> <p>Town Clerk – Ms C Dornan</p> <p>There was 1 member of the public present</p>
	<p>It was noted that Anne Marsay had resigned from the Council and therefore the Committee no longer had a Chair.</p>
001	<p><u>To agree a Chair for the start of the meeting</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk stated that she added this item to the agenda as it felt inappropriate to vote a permanent Chair to the committee when there was a current vacancy. The committee agreed.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Daymond Seconded – Incorvaia</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That the Chair for the start of the meeting be Cllr Daniel Jordan.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
002	<p><u>To receive Members’ Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>All members were present and therefore no apologies were required.</p>
003	<p><u>To receive Members’ Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Cllr Buxton declared an interest in Agenda Item 7 as her brother may have applied for the role of Caretaker.</p>
004	<p><u>To co-opt a new Committee member following the resignation of Anne Marsay</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that Cllr Hobbs and Cllr Sharman had both asked to be considered as a committee member.</p>

	<p>Proposed – Cllr Daymond Seconded – Incorvaia</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That Cllr Hobbs should be invited to join the Human Resources Committee.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p> <p>Cllr Hobbs joined the table.</p>
005	<p><u>To vote a permanent Chair for the Committee</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk suggested that any Councillor who is already a Chair of a Committee consider not putting someone else forward so that there is no accusation of undue influence over the Council.</p> <p>Cllr B Moyses stated that she could not fulfil the role as Chair as she is often working and unable to attend short notice meetings.</p> <p>Cllr Hobbs did not feel he had enough current knowledge to take on the role.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Daymond Seconded – Incorvaia</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That Cllr Jordan be elected Chair of Human Resources Committee until 31 December 2023 to allow continuity. A new Chair to be considered from January 2024.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
006	<p><u>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023</u></p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Jordan Seconded –Cllr Incorvaia</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.’</p> <p>4 In Favour</p> <p>2 Abstentions - Cllrs Hobbs & B Moyses were not present at the last meeting</p>
007	<p><u>To receive an update on the recruitment of a Caretaker and agree any action</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that there had been 1 application and 1 individual enquire about the role.</p>

	<p>The Town Clerk advised that the applicant was not Cllr Buxton's brother and therefore Cllr Buxton was allowed to participate in the discussion.</p> <p>As the Council is looking for local applicants due to the nature and hours of the role, the job had only been advertised through Council social media channels and shared by Councillors.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Buxton Seconded – Daymond</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>'That the role be advertised on Indeed for 10 days, alongside the Job Centre, and if unsuccessful in improving applicant rates, an advert placed in Your Local Paper.'</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
008	<p><u>To discuss whether the Council requires a Covid contingency plan and agree any actions</u></p> <p>The members, bar Cllr Hobbs, had been provided with a copy of an email sent to the Town Clerk by the Deputy Clerk regarding her request for a Covid Policy. Cllr Hobbs was given an overview.</p> <p>Members discussed the use of Face Masks, ventilation and hygiene measures.</p> <p>It was agreed that staff should have the freedom to wear masks whilst at work. It was also acknowledged that the Council still had a stock of sanitiser which the staff were able to use as an when the wished. It was suggested that desks in the office be spaced 2 metres apart to allow social distancing however noted that when meeting customers, it was very difficult to enforce this, as there was no legislation in place to support requests. It would purely be in hope that the customer's abided by staff requests.</p> <p>Members discussed the need to live with Covid. Although it is acknowledged that it is circulating again, so are colds and other respiratory diseases. Council do not ask staff to go home when they have a cold so questioned why is Covid any different now that staff have all had the opportunity to be vaccinated and can take personal safety measures, if they wish.</p> <p>It was noted that previously staff were asked to work from home when testing positive however there is no legal obligation to test and any staff or Councillors that have tested have not tested positive the same day they felt unwell with cold symptoms, it was often 5 days after the initial symptoms which meant that NHS advice was outdated.</p> <p>The Maintenance Team were also discussed. They are subject to possibly 200+ encounters with the public on a busy weekend event. Without formal Government</p>

	<p>advice, it was not feasible to expect all attendees to wear masks to protect the staff. It was felt that this would be risk adverse.</p> <p>It was noted that Cllrs who test positive should stay away from staff as they do not need to attend any of the Council's buildings however staff have a job to do and must be given the ability to do it.</p> <p>Members were happy with how the Town Clerk managed the recent positive Covid test outcome.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Daymond Seconded – Jordan</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>'That there be no Council Policy on Covid - 19.'</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
009	<p><u>To discuss 2024/2025 budget requirements</u></p> <p>It was agreed until the salary negotiations were completed for 2023/2024 it would be inappropriate to debate budget requirements for 2024/2025.</p> <p>It was agreed to discuss the budget at the next meeting on 22 November 2023.</p>
010	<p>Confidential Items To consider a resolution (under the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960) to exclude members of the public and press</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Jordan Seconded –Cllr Incorvaia</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>'That members of the press and public be excluded whilst information pertaining to recruitment and staff matters is discussed.'</p> <p>All In Favour</p> <p>The meeting went into confidentiality.</p> <p><u>To discuss staffing matters and cover during periods of absence</u></p> <p>Members discussed the impact of covering all bookings on staff.</p> <p>The meeting came out of confidentiality.</p>
	<p><u>To agree actions following discussion under confidentiality</u></p>

	Further to the discussion under Confidentiality, members were advised of the key code to the Jubilee Community Centre site along with the alarm code to provide assistance to the staff.
	Meeting closed: 6:34pm
	SIGNED
	DATE