

**MINUTES OF A STAFFING & COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE
HELD ON 2nd MARCH 2022 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ASSEMBLY ROOMS,
THORNE**

Present Councillors R Powell (Chairman), Craig Ellis Town Mayor (by remote link), S Durant Deputy Town Mayor, J Phillips, and S Sweeting

3816 APOLOGIES

All members were present

3817 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

No declarations were declared.

3818 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential of the remaining business to be transacted.

3819 MINUTES – 15th NOVEMBER 2021

The minutes were approved as a correct record subject to the following amendments: -

3265.5. STAFF GRIEVANCE

The grievance received from an employee was considered and discussed.

RESOLVED to receive and accept the grievance from the employee and accept and follow the advice provided by Julie Brookes (HR adviser). (It was noted that the time limits proposed by Julie Brooks (HR adviser) may not be achievable)

The following steps will be taken to follow up the grievance:

Step 1 - Cllr. Ron Powell and Cllr. Craig Ellis to write to the employee to confirm the outcome of the grievance and arrange to meet informally with the employee.

Step 2 - Personnel Advice and Solutions be approached to conduct the work quoted for in March 2021 subject to a virtual meeting with the staffing committee beforehand who will discuss with the company their approach to the work to be undertaken.

Step 3 - The advice from Personnel Advice and Solutions to be reviewed by Staffing committee who will then make appropriate recommendations to Full Council.

AMENDED TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

It was confirmed by JB & MG that the work started by the previous locum clerk CG to update contracts and job descriptions had been halted by the new clerk whilst he settled in and even though requested several times to address this the work had not been done

3265.10 H&S EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Discussions were held around the demands of the councils H&S and the impact of the workload on the staff. It was recognised that there is work to be done and that there is merit in seeking an external audit of the councils H&S position.

There was concern from a member that we have a H&S product already in Peninsula however the Clerk pointed out that the product is, in his opinion, not fit for purpose.

The Clerk explained that he has throughout his tenure picked away piecemeal with H&S improvements but has always maintained that he needs a few months to fully get on top of it and whilst a period did commence recently events have since taken over.

RESOLVED to seek quotes to obtain an external H&S audit of the Council with a view to some external input to help the Council get up to speed and then review how much can be done in house.

AMENDED TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

The council has a package from Peninsula that is used for H&S, this was to have been completed by the clerk to make sure documentation is in place from the templates provided. We are now outsourcing the work that is needed to populate the Peninsula package. We may have to agree that this is now done but going forward this should be done in house. it seems that we are outsourcing work that should have been done internally

3820 HEALTH & SAFETY - EVALUATION OF THE PENINSULA SYSTEM.

Arising from discussions resulting in the amendment of Minute 3265.10, Chris Geeson (CG) the Locum Town Clerk, outlined the considerations leading up to his recommendation to enter into a five-year agreement with Peninsula during the early part of his first engagement with the town council in 2017-2018.

CG reported that he had utilised the system over several years with his previous local council and reiterated that the product was considered a 'market leader' in Health & Safety management and compliance.

RESOLVED: That the Locum Town Clerk contact Peninsula to establish: -

- Why is the system is not meeting the council's obligations and responsibilities.?
- Accepting that a five-year contract with Peninsula is in force until 2022/2023, how can the town council get 'value for money' from the current arrangements.
- Agree a recovery plan including:
 - councillor's awareness,
 - redefinitions of responsibilities at all levels of staff responsibilities
 - identifying and preparing appropriate risk assessments
 - arranging and recording periodic inspections undertaken by town council staff in conjunction with Peninsula.
 - Defining appropriate actions to be taken to mitigate risk and avoid public liability claims and ensure safe working conditions for council employees.

3821 EVALUATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL.

Further to Minute 3265.5 (15th November 2021) Chris Moses, HR Consultant from Personal Advice Solutions, joined the meeting by remote link, and gave a presentation of the work he had carried out so far undertaking a review of the organisational structure of the Council.

Questions were asked by Councillors to the consultant and it was agreed that: -

1. A meeting between Chris Moses and Chris Geeson, Locum Town Clerk, be held at the earliest opportunity in the town council's offices to review the office organisation and conduct a visit to all the service sites managed and operated by the town council.
2. Further work was therefore needed before an Interim Report could be agreed and submitted to the scheduled Town Council meeting on 12th April 2022
3. The Chairman would give an interim report to the extra-ordinary Town Council meeting to be held on 3rd March 2022

