



Ottery St Mary Town Council

Minutes of the **HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING** of **OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, the Old Convent, 8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary on Monday, **24th FEBRUARY 2020** at **9.15AM**

PRESENT:- Councillor Giles (**Chairman**), Cllr Pratt (**Vice Chairman**) Cllrs Faithfull, Stewart, Lucas and Harding together with Christine McIntyre CEO

HR20/02/01

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none

HR20/02/02

TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND RECEIPT OF REQUESTS FOR NEW DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPIS) DISPENSATIONS FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were none

HR20/02/03

UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 AS AMENDED BY S.100 LGA 1972, THE PUBLIC (INCLUDING THE PRESS) ARE EXCLUDED FROM ITEMS DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE CONTENTS

It was agreed that Items 5 be discussed in Confidential Session in view of this item relating to a potential employee

HR20/02/04

TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF 31ST OCTOBER 2019

The Minutes of the Human Resources Management Committee Meeting of 31st October 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair of the Committee

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

HR20/02/05

TO CONSIDER THE REQUIREMENT FOR AN ADDITIONAL MEMBER OF STAFF AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ACCORDINGLY

The CEO had circulated a job description and person specification to members of the committee. The CEO had advised that primarily the need for another staff member was due to an increase in members of the public seeking advice (due to the expanding population), an increase in telephone calls and an increase in workloads in general. It was therefore necessary to consider employing a receptionist/administrator who would be able to deal with fielding phone calls and queries from members of the public as well as carrying out some administrative tasks. This would then allow the CEO and deputy CEO to concentrate on more complex matters. The CEO confirmed that she had carried out

Chairman's Initials.....

research two years ago and had discovered that in the region, the Council had the lowest number of staff, despite having the largest property portfolio of any town or parish council plus a cemetery and allotments to manage, which overall generated a substantial amount of work. Cllr Harding questioned the lack of evidence, to support the need for an additional member of staff (there were no records showing the numbers of persons visiting the ground floor office and telephone calls received etc each day). The CEO advised that both she and the Deputy CEO were in fact recording time sheets which proved that they were both working in excess of their contracted hours. Further, that because of their work loads, (apart from one day in the week), they were also having working lunches which in the long term was not sustainable. Cllrs Stewart and Lucas were of the view that the salary rate being paid to the CEO should reflect the role, and that dealing with basic administrative tasks should not be part of the CEO's remit. The CEO advised that Sue Ginman had indicated she would be available to cover the odd day of staff holidays or sickness but she had no desire to work for the Council for long periods of time, as she was actively involved in her new business venture

After much discussion It was **RECOMMENDED** that a Receptionist/Administrative Assistant be appointed as soon as practicable with a three month probationary period, on Scale 3 and, after a satisfactory probation period having been served, that the salary be increased to Scale 4; to work Monday – Friday from 9.15am – 1.15pm

THE PUBLIC SESSION THEN RESUMED

HR20/02/06

TO CONSIDER THE REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ACCORDINGLY

The CEO had previously provided each member of the Committee with background information as to why it would now be appropriate for the relocation of the CEO and Deputy CEO to the first floor office 4. The office had been empty for almost a year and there had been no interest shown by any potential tenant, despite Redferns still having it on their 'books'. The CEO explained that first floor office 5 to her knowledge, had never been rented out, as it was an archive room and would also be used by the new Volunteer Co-ordinator when he/she was in post. The current ground floor office only accommodated two members of staff so there was simply not room in the office for the CEO, the Deputy CEO and an additional employee. In addition, both she and the Deputy CEO were unable to concentrate on some of the more complex work they were undertaking, due to constant interruptions; plus the lack of privacy was becoming a problem ie when dealing with bereaved relatives (drafting up legal documents for burials etc and looking at wills and probate documents) and when councillors wished to discuss a confidential matter. There was also a lack of working space in the ground floor office. Of course if any member of the public was unable to alight the stairs, the CEO and Deputy CEO would speak to the person(s) on the ground floor

After much discussion the following was **RECOMMENDED**:- the CEO and Deputy CEO to be relocated to Office 4; a budget for £5000 be set aside for the move (to include office furniture; additional computer; security measures (to include link between the downstairs office and Room 4, webcam, cameras telephone system etc). It was also suggested that a stair lift be considered for less able members of the public/councillors, which it was agreed was an excellent idea and something to consider in the future. As a separate issue it was further **RECOMMENDED** that the hatch doors in the downstairs office be removed and replaced with a glass/Perspex screen and counter, as there were health and safety issues with regards to the present hatch, as staff were unable to see who they were

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opening the hatch doors to. It was also considered by some councillors that the present set up was not particularly welcoming.

HR20/02/07

AN UPDATE ON THE VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR ROLE

The CEO advised that two candidates were being interviewed on Wednesday and there would be a pre-interview meeting tomorrow regarding the format of the interviews. Cllr Pratt gave his apologies for this meeting

HR20/02/08

COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

There were none

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.55AM

Chairman`s Signature	
Date	

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