



ST AGNES PARISH COUNCIL

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Human Resources Committee meeting – 20th August 2024

Minutes of the meeting as above, held in the Parish Rooms, 17 Vicarage Rd, St Agnes, at 16:00

Present: Cllrs Clark (Chair), Ripper, Rodda, Blight

Absent: Cllr. D. Brown, Mankee-Williams, G. Brown

In attendance: C. Nutting, Clerk | E. Goater, Environment & Properties Manager | B. Barrett, Handyperson | J. Pickersgill, Assistant Handyperson & Library Assistant | C. Harrod, Maintenance Support Worker

H01/24 Appointment of Chair for 2024/25

APPOINTED Cllr Clark as Chair of the HR Committee 2024/25. Cllrs Ripper/Blight. Unanimous.

H02/24 Appointment of Vice Chair for 2024/25

APPOINTED Cllr Rodda as Vice Chair of the HR Committee 2024/25. Cllrs Clark/Blight. Unanimous.

H03/24 Apologies for absence

RECEIVED and **ACCEPTED** from Cllrs D. Brown, Mankee-Williams, G. Brown.

H04/24 Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensation. None.

H05/24 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 29th April 2024

RESOLVED that the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting of the Human Resources Committee as above, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, approved, and signed. Cllrs Ripper/ Rodda. 3 in favour, 1 abstained: Cllr Blight.

H06/24 [Committee Terms of Reference](#)

NOTED that no changes have been made to/proposed for the document, which remains fit for purpose. No amendments required.

H07/24 Maintenance Team Out of Hours support

RECEIVED the proposed Maintenance Team Out of Hours [Policy](#) and the June/July 2024 [call out report](#). **NOTED** that the Committee has considered and approved this matter at two previous meetings ([H49/23](#), [H60/23](#)); and that the Policy has been developed/agreed in consultation with Maintenance Team staff. The scheme is ready to be implemented. Officers will continue to work on a policy and marketing strategy to offer this service to other smaller Councils in the locality, to create an additional income stream for the Parish Council. **RESOLVED** to recommend the Policy for adoption by Full Council and implement the scheme in September 2024. Cllrs Ripper/ Clark. Unanimous

H08/24 Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential and/or special nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable that the press and public be excluded and instructed to withdraw during the discussion of items H09 - H11/24. Cllrs Clark/Ripper. Unanimous.

E. Goater, B. Barrett, J. Pickersgill & C. Harrod withdrew from the meeting

H09/24 Matters arising from the meeting minutes of 29th April 2024

NOTED as follows:

- The Staff Handbook has been updated to reflect various Employment Law changes. The Handbook is currently with WorkNest, the Council's HR Consultants, for checking (H62/23).

- The Clerk is drafting a Mental Health Risk Assessment and Policy for the Council.
- A Library Team capacity review will be the subject of a separate HR Committee meeting (H63/23).
- Maintenance Team training requirements and budget remains ongoing, as Officers compile details and quotes (H61/23).
- The feasibility of creating a designated staff parking area, separate from the public car park, around the Maintenance Hub will be reviewed, once remedial works to the building are underway.

H10/24 Staff Return to Work

NOTED the phased return plan for the Library Manager and the requirement to maintain the current staffing schedule and reduction of opening hours until end October 2024, at which time it will be reviewed.

H11/24 OH Assessments Reports

NOTED a confidential update as above for two members of staff, including the recommended adjustments. The Clerk will continue to monitor and support staff, alongside their Manager and provide updates to the Committee, as necessary.

E. Goater, B. Barrett, J. Pickersgill & C. Harrod returned to the meeting

H12/24 Maintenance Team capacity review

RECEIVED a confidential report and supporting information regarding the Maintenance Team's workload and capacity, including advice from WorkNest, the Council's HR Consultants. Members held a Q&A session with Maintenance Team staff and **DISCUSSED**:

- The impact of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) cutting, both under Cornwall Council's Local Maintenance Partnership (LMP) contract and additional paths, as per the Parish Council's 2020 spreadsheet. On average, the Team can cut 2 paths per day, weather permitting. Each path takes approximately 3 hours to cut and requires two members of staff, significantly for H&S reasons. The Team begins cutting the Gold-2 paths in February, as these paths require a second cut later in the season. The Gold-1 paths are cut prior to the second Gold-2 cut and must be completed within the LMP contract timeframe.
- The workload resulting from the Parish Council's various assets, including buildings, land and street furniture. Programs of work are scheduled following asset audits, which includes emergency remedial works and general maintenance. The ability of the Team to undertake regularly scheduled general maintenance will support the Council to extend the life of its assets and reduce expenditure and time/complexity repairing assets. The Team do not have sufficient staff and time to undertake the required workload and keep Council assets in a good/safe state of repair.
- The Team of 3 are unable to manage when staff are on annual leave/sick/work part time. They regularly exhaust their contracted weekly hours, and the Council has days when it has no maintenance cover, which is critical when emergencies arise e.g., issues at the public toilets. Emergencies and other 'unscheduled work' divert staff time away from other jobs, which causes delay as there is insufficient staff to manage all that needs doing. The Team incurs significant overtime and/or Time Off in Lieu (TOIL), which, when taken, exacerbates Team pressures.
- The Team feels under pressure and are concerned about their physical and mental wellbeing. It was noted that most Council meetings generate work for the Team and the Committee considered a list of actions flowing from [Council meetings held in June and July](#). The Committee also noted a list of emergencies the Team responded to in this period.
- Undertaking works at the Maintenance Hub is considered a priority by the Council as the Team have no welfare and office facilities/storage for equipment and workspace. However, the Team have been unable to progress the works due to lack of staff/time and other work demands, particularly PRoW cutting.
- The Team schedule time for FPN patrols and litter pick in conjunction with other jobs e.g., playground inspections.
- Moving and monitoring the various Speed Sensors throughout the Parish is an example of how the Team's duties have expanded. However, they have been unable to move the devices recently, due to other work pressures.
- The current locking/unlocking of public toilets, to reduce the impact of ASB on the Council, Facilities staff and community has impacted work time. However, the Council's decision to install paid systems will alleviate this pressure in due course.

The Committee **THANKED** the Maintenance Team for all their hard work, dedication and conscientious diligence. The Committee **ACKNOWLEDGED** that the Council has, hitherto, benefitted from staff's good will and desire to do a good job and serve the community by going above and beyond e.g., consistently working overtime, sometimes unpaid. The Committee **RECOGNISED** that the Council has not supported its Maintenance Team as well as it should, and Cllr. Blight asked the Team to think about ways in which the Council can improve the situation.

B. Barrett, J. Pickersgill & C. Harrod left the meeting, 17:18

Being satisfied that the Council had received HR advice and undertaken appropriate staff consultation, the Committee **DISCUSSED** and **RESOLVED** to: -

1. **ADOPT** an [updated Job Description](#) for all three Maintenance Team staff, with the following amendment under 'Grounds work': *"Undertake Public Rights Of Way seasonal cutting and maintenance in accordance with the scheduled as agreed by the Parish Council."* Cllrs Ripper/Rodda. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*
2. **UPDATE** the Job Title for all three Maintenance Team staff to: **'Multi-Skilled Maintenance Worker'** in recognition of the increased complexity of the work undertaken and training required, as reflected in the updated Job Description. Cllrs Rodda/Blight. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*
3. **PAY** the Multi-Skilled Maintenance Worker role at NALC PayScale LC2 (18-23)
 - o Staff employed before 31st March 2019 to start at scale point 19 with immediate effect. **NOTED** one member of staff will not require a change.
 - o Staff employed since October 2023 to start at scale point 18 with immediate effect.

E. Goater left the meeting, 17:30

DISCUSSED the 2022/23 Pay Review process, which re-grade the PayScale of the Handyperson role to LC2 (18-23), which is akin to the Multi-Skilled Maintenance Worker role. **NOTED** that some Team Leadership responsibilities were reflected within the role's pay, which are no longer relevant. **CONSIDERED** the increased complexity of the Multi-Skilled Maintenance Worker role and training required due to the expansion of Council assets and services since 2022/23 and **REVIEWED** similar live job vacancies. **RESOLVED** that PayScale LC2 (18-23) is appropriate for the Multi-Skilled Maintenance Worker role. Cllrs Rodda/Clark. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*

4. **INCREASE** staff weekly working hours by 6.5 hours per week, in accordance with Manager recommendations and staff agreement:
 - o Mr. Pickersgill's weekly hours to increase by 4.5, to 34 per week (Monday – Friday am)
 - o Mr. Harrod' weekly hours to increase by 2, to 26 per week (Tuesday – Thursday)Cllrs Blight/Rodda. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*
5. **ADVERTISE** and **RECRUIT** a 24-hour a week permanent contract Maintenance Technician at NALC PayScale LC1 (5-6) – LC1 (7-12) range. **ADOPT** the [Job Description](#). **APPOINT** a panel with full authority to shortlist, interview and appoint. Panel Members: Cllrs Clark, Blight, Clerk & E&P Manager. Cllrs Blight/Rodda. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*

DISCUSSED the changes faced by the Parish Council over recent years and the increasing work demands on staff. The Committee **AGREED** that Council staff are key to delivering community services and effectively running the Council. The immediate **REQUIREMENT** for an additional member of Maintenance staff was in recognition of the significant pressures faced by the Team and the impact this is having on staff wellbeing and the Team's capacity to address work demands. **DISCUSSED** the significant workload PROW cutting places on staff. However, the Committee **AGREED** that maintaining the Parish's PROWs was a key public service. Residents and visitors enjoy walking in the area and the Council receives substantial public enquiry and complaints relating to the condition of local PROWs. Therefore, maintaining this service is desirable.

6. **Extension of meeting time (Standing Order 3(w))** Cllrs Blight/Rodda. Unanimous (18:15)
7. **NOTED** the recent NALC Youth Summit information regarding the benefits of apprenticeships to both the Council and Community and that increasing work pressures throughout the Council could be met in the future via apprenticeships. **RESOLVED** to **INVESTIGATE** apprenticeships to support the Maintenance Team and other Council areas in the longer-term. Cllrs Ripper/Clark. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*

8. Considering the Committee's resolutions at 5 and 7 above, **RESOLVED NOT to RECOMMEND** that the annual budget provides for the employment of a contractor to support the PRoW cutting. Cllrs Ripper/Rodda. Unanimous.
9. Being satisfied that the Council had received HR advice, **RECRUIT** from within the Council's current staff (internal promotion) a 30-hour a week permanent contract Grounds Maintenance Manager at NALC PayScale LC2 (24-28) range. **ADOPT** the [Job Description](#). **APPOINT** a panel with full authority to shortlist, interview and appoint. Panel Members: Cllrs Clark, Blight, Ripper, Clerk & E&P Manager. Cllrs Ripper/Clark. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*

DISCUSSED the need for the Team to have a line manager who works alongside the Team to support the day-to-day work and Team requirements. **ACKNOWLEDGED** that the Team's current office-based managerial structure is no longer fit for purpose. **CONSIDERED** the expansion of the Environment & Properties Manager role, resulting in the workload being unachievable for one employee. The Grounds Maintenance Manager role is ostensibly the same as the Multi-Skilled Maintenance Worker in terms of the practical requirements of the job; however, includes managerial tasks which can be undertaken flexibly and alongside the other duties rather than 'at a desk'. E.g., delegate reactive works; ensure Health and Safety compliance when using equipment and dynamic monitoring of activity Risk Assessments etc.

10. **ADOPT** an updated [Job Description](#) for the Environment & Property Manager role and **UPDATE** the Job Title to: **Property & Business Development Manager**, in recognition of the requirement of the role to strategically manage Council assets and key service delivery, as well as facilitate sustainable growth. Cllrs Ripper/Clark. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*

REVIEWED the full scope of the role and **DISCUSSED** the requirement for the Council to advantageously manage its assets and services to limit, wherever possible, pressures on the Precept. This requires forward-thinking commercial acumen, which the role has incorporated by virtue of Devolution and the expansion of Council activity and services. The role now supports the Council to plan and manage services and assets, including devolved land, property and services from Cornwall Council; including revenue generating opportunities, which can support the Council's priorities and vision to ensure future sustainability of community services and facilities. The Committee **AGREED** that they would carefully monitor results in this regard.

11. **PAY** the Property & Business Development Manager role at NALC PayScale LC2 (29-32). **RESOLVED** to implement the pay increase in April 2025 (new Financial Year), starting at scale point 29. To **WRITE** to the member of staff explaining this decision. Cllrs Ripper/Blight. Unanimous. *Clerk to action.*
12. **DEFFER** to the next HR Committee meeting on **9th September, 5pm** the final recommendation to the Full Council to adopt the detail set out above and make provision within the current 2024/25 budget to reflect the changes.

During the meeting, the Committee **REVIEWED** many budget iterations reflecting a variety of decision permutations (SCP (pay), hours, roles etc). The Clerk will prepare the final budget model which reflects the decisions of the Committee as detailed above.

The meeting closed at 19:00