



# Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

## Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Policy Committee of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council held at Meeting Room - Sycamore House on Thursday, 19th January, 2023 commencing at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Cllrs E Hume (Committee Chair), G Bedford, K Ely and E Kelly-Wilson

**Absent:** Cllr M Imran

**Apologies:** None

**In attendance:** Delia Shephard (Town Clerk)

### Min Ref

EMPC22-231 **Councillors' apologies for absence**  
There were no apologies for absence and it was RESOLVED that the absence without apologies be noted.

EMPC22-232 **Councillors' declarations of interest in matters on the agenda**  
No declarations of interests were made.

EMPC22-233 **Minutes of the previous meeting**  
It was RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 2 August 2023 be approved as a correct record of proceedings (with the correction of one typographical error).

EMPC22-234 **Public Speaking**  
There were no representations from members of the public.

EMPC22-235 **Review of the Town Council's health and safety risk assessment and action plan and make any appropriate recommendations to full council**  
The clerk tabled a summary of outstanding action points following the most recent round of health and safety risk assessments and visits by the council's appointed health and safety advisor WorkNest to council premises.

There was one high priority action item arising from the general H&S risk assessment which was to improve stress management controls by carrying out a specific stress risk assessment to help determine the main causes of stress in the workplace along with the current controls and any further actions required.

It was RESOLVED to note that this work was in progress and a further update would be provided at the next meeting on 21 February 2023. The committee noted the importance of stress management controls.

There were three medium priority action items concerning the fitting of fire doors at Sycamore Hall, adoption of safe system of work for cleaning at Spotlight and supervision in the safe and correct use of hazardous cleaning materials and substances at Spotlight.

It was RESOLVED to note that this work was in progress and a further update would be provided.



## Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

EMPC22-236

### **National civility and respect project and recommendation to full council**

Members discussed the background, purpose and application of the national civility and respect project currently being undertaken within the sector under the leadership of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council sign up to the civility and respect pledge thereby demonstrating that the council is committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.

It was RESOLVED to recommend that the council's officer and member protocol and dignity at work policy be replaced with those proposed by the civility and respect project, and that the dignity and respect bullying and harassment statement be placed on the town council's website and displayed in its buildings.

EMPC22-237

### **Progress with external pay evaluation for the staff team**

The clerk reported that following the postponement of the last meeting of the committee delegated powers had been used (in consultation with councillors) to secure external support with a review of pay across the staff team to ensure fairness. A range of services and quotations had been reviewed and work had been awarded to Paydata at a cost of £2,050.

It was RESOLVED that the award of this contract be ratified by the committee.

The clerk noted that it was expected to have the evaluation report from Paydata in time for the next meeting of the committee on 21 February 2023.

EMPC22-238

### **Exclusion of Public and Press**

It was RESOLVED that members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted which would include discussion of individual employees.

EMPC22-239

### **Confidential report on from the clerk on current issues affecting the staff team and delivery of existing and planned services**

Members discussed a confidential report from the clerk on issues affecting individual staff and delivery of services. Following extensive discussions the following decisions were made.

- i It was RESOLVED to note the confidential report and the increasing workload for the staff team..
- ii It was RESOLVED to authorise the clerk to negotiate a change of contracted hours for the RFO (between a specified minimum and maximum) and to report the outcome to the next committee meeting.
- iii It was RESOLVED to approve backdated pay to a member of staff in lieu of exceptional out of hours working over a prolonged period. The amount of pay to be confirmed at the next meeting on 21 February 2023.
- iv It was RESOLVED to put in place a temporary rota of existing staff members who would be ready to be called out to any council premises if necessary



## Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

during evenings and weekends and a weekly sum of £50 per week was agreed for those on call. If attendance at the premises was needed payment for time worked would be paid at the usual rate per hour (with a minimum payment of 2 hours per individual call out).

- v It was RESOLVED to incorporate a review of weekend and on call work into a wider review of the staff to be undertaken as expeditiously as possible so that a permanent solution could be found.
- vi It was RESOLVED to recommend to the Community Committee that the staff team did not have the capacity to deliver a Town Council run Coronation event during the Coronation weekend.
- vii It was RESOLVED to note the recommendation of the Finance and Governance Committee made in December (minute reference EPC22/23-52) that a review of the duties undertaken by the Ranger team be considered as part of the planning for the taking on of the landscaping contract and that this review should include consideration of the extra hours freed up by the change to an out of hours cleaning contract (at Spotlight).
- viii It was RESOLVED to undertake a review of the work of the Environment and Premises Team in view of anticipated and existing changes to workload and to consider the staffing needs of the council with regard to its environment and premises priorities.
- ix It was RESOLVED to recruit to a fixed term full time contract of up to 14/15 months (depending on start date) to cover anticipated maternity leave of a part time member of staff (25 hours per week) and to include 12 additional hours to support the Support Services Team.
- x It was RESOLVED to note arrangements for interviews and appointment to the council's current vacancy within the Support Services Team.
- xi It was RESOLVED to note the transparency requirements for the Town Council's website in terms of staff information and to complete publication of this information. (Local Government Transparency Code 2015.)

### EMPC22-2310 **Review of the staffing budget for 2023-2024 following discussion of all previous business and recommendations to full council**

The draft staffing budget for 2023-24 was reviewed and following discussion it was RESOLVED to make no recommendations for changes to the budget although it was accepted that changes to staff pay were likely because of the evaluation of posts and potential changes arising from current reviews but these were unknown at the time of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm