



**ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL**

Town Hall, Queens Square, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 2AF  
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**Minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee  
Held on Wednesday, 30 October 2019 at 9.30 am  
in the Town Hall, Queens Square, Attleborough**

**Present:**

K Montague (Presiding)  
Cllr B Bulmer            Cllr T Crouch            Cllr J Ellis  
In attendance: Gina Lopes – CEO & Town Clerk  
2 x public

**2019/07) Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received as below:-

Cllr J Roper  
Cllr E Tyrer

**2019/08) Declarations of Interest**

- a) To consider declarations of interest in respect of items below – None received
- b) To receive any requests for dispensation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest – None received

**2019/09) Minutes of meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 15 August 2019**

Noted for information

**2019/10) Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 given the sensitive nature of the business to be discussed

Cllr Taylor and Cllr Grave who were present as non-committee members objected to being asked to leave the meeting following the exclusion.

**2019/11) Staff Matters**

**a) Staff contracts** – There was some discussion on the existing contract. The NALC/SLCC standard contract was considered. It was noted either independent body would be able to advise and assist on the standard contract which could prove to be money saving. The CEO advised no change to terms and conditions could be made without staff negotiation and agreement.

On the motion of Cllr Crouch, seconded by Cllr Montague, it was

**RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to adopt and issue the standard NALC/SLCC contract subject to acceptance by staff members.

**b) Member/Officer & Member/Member Communication** – There was a lengthy discussion on standards of behaviour within the Council by certain members. It was

acknowledged there was evidence of repeated breaches of the adopted Protocol agreement. Bullying and intimidation are apparent and are now extending beyond staff to other Councillors. The Chairman reported a spate of “frivolous” complaints which were costing the Council both time and money and will need to be handed over for independent advice. The Mayor offered to send an email to all Councillors reminding them of required standards and the need to be respectful to all staff and other members. He will also confirm the CEO’s role is to advise the Chairman and other members during the meeting and she is therefore able to speak up in this forum.

**c) HR Consultancy quotes** – Quotes for HR consultancy services were considered and Cllr Montague and Cllr Crouch confirmed they had spoken in depth to Lovewell Blake as they performed a similar review successfully at Thetford Town Council. It was generally agreed a review was needed urgently to address the issues within the Council. All Councillors and all staff would be interviewed within this process which ensured inclusiveness and fairness for all parties.

On the motion of Cllr Crouch, seconded by Cllr Montague, it was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to approve the first phase costs for a report and recommendations to a total of £4,235.

On the motion of Cllr Crouch, seconded by Cllr Bulmer, it was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to approve the estimated cost of Occupational Health Assistance for initial assessments of staff to a total of £2,475

**d) Consideration of complaint** – Cllr Crouch confirmed he had taken independent advice on how to deal with a number of complaints suddenly received all relating to staff, however, he would not go into detail at this time. The independent advisor confirms following the initial resolution the correct channel for processing any appeal on the decision is via the Personnel Committee as they are appointed to deal with staff matters. It was noted it was also imperative to comply with the Council’s “Duty of Care”.

On the motion of Cllr Crouch, seconded by Cllr Montague, it was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote the current complaints will be handled by the Personnel Committee, with an independent advisor present, for any which need to be progressed past initial findings and response.

**e) Any other staff matters**

**i) Christmas closing** – The CEO requested the Council office closes on Friday, 20 December 2019 and re-opens on Thursday, 2 January 2020. The grounds and caretaking staff will have skeleton cover during this time and some office staff may wish to come in but it would be at their discretion – Agreed by all members

**ii) Caretaking/cleaning cover** – The new position for 10 hours had been advertised but there had been no response. Regrettably the agency worker had suffered a bereavement and been unable to work and her Manager hospitalised. Alternative cover is being considered.

**iii) Staff budget review** – Agreed the CEO will undertake with the Committee Chairman

**ACTION: CEO/ALL MEMBERS**

Meeting closed at 11.30am