

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF LYDD TOWN COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022 at 6.30 pm in the Guild Hall Chamber

**Present: Councillors Darren Chapman (Chairman), Clive Goddard, R.S. Jones and Martin Sweeney (Town Mayor)**

Angela Alexander – Town Clerk

The meeting commenced at 6.45 pm due to the late running of the Planning Committee meeting.

### 217. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Paul Rye (Personal reasons)

### 218. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Martin Sweeney declared an interest in the item covering the Safeguarding policy.

### 219. MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** *The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.*

*Proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Sweeney*

*Unanimous*

### 220. PRESS AND PUBLIC EXCLUDED

**RESOLVED:** *that this meeting be held without press or public present as the content of discussions will involve sensitive and confidential matters and is therefore exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the local Government Act 1972, to be treated as confidential by Members*

*Unanimous*

### 221. PENSION RE-ENROLEMENT AND RE-DECLARATION

The Town Clerk advised Councillors that every three years an employer must put certain staff back into a pension scheme and tell us that they've done so. We will soon have to do this for Lydd Town Council and should prepare what we need to do in advance.

Depending on the circumstances, re-enrolment and re-declaration may be a two-stage process.

**Re-enrolment** - At the time of declaration any member of staff who has left the pension scheme for any reason can choose to opt back in if they wish. This will mean that they are re-enrolled into the pension scheme.

**Re-declaration** -Lydd Town Council must also declare who is a contributing employee and is still active in the pension scheme

**Compliance**-Whether we have staff to put back into the pension scheme or not, we must complete and submit the re-declaration of compliance form. The third anniversary of the previous re-enrolment date is 30<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and we must confirm the date when the 'snapshot' of those in the pension scheme is taken to submit electronically.

Due to the suggested Christmas close down the Town Clerk recommended the date of 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 may be used for this purpose.

**RESOLVED: That the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 be used for the purposes of re-enrolment and re-declaration for the Pensions regulator purposes**

**Unanimous**

**222. SAFEGUARDING POLICY (Appendix A page 216 to 217)**

The Town Clerk advised that as part of the meetings she was having with the Lawn Tennis Association regarding the setting up of the tennis courts that one of the criteria around receiving the grant and other assistance is that we adopt a Safeguarding Policy. Whilst we will not be directly working with children and vulnerable adults we will be required to encourage and engage with coaching at the tennis courts and also, we will be working in partnership with the schools. A draft Safeguarding Policy had been circulated for consideration by the Committee.

The Town Clerk also explained that she would be undertaking training as the Safeguarding Officer but in the interim said it would be advisable to have a qualified person able to be in this role. The Mayoress Tracey Sweeney had been approached and had agreed as she is employed as a teacher and has the necessary training and qualities for the role.

**RESOLVED: That the Safeguarding Policy be adopted and that the Mayoress Tracey Sweeney be appointed as the interim Safeguarding Officer and that the cost for any training for the Town Clerk be agreed in relation to the Safeguarding role.**

**Proposed by Cllr Goddard and seconded by Cllr Jones**

**Unanimous**

**223. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS**

The Chairman reported on their decision letters from the ICO with regard to vexatious behaviour from two members of the public and advised that a resident was now appealing about the ICO decision against him and a tribunal - Resident v ICO would take place.

**224. REVIEW OF DECISIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

The Chairman reported that following legal advice regarding the adoption of an Unreasonable Behaviour Policy and the subsequent letters that had been sent to two residents that the policy states that an annual review would be carried out. Councillors discussed the current situation.

**RESOLVED: That following consideration and annual review of the letters sent to two residents with regard to vexatious behaviour and the decisions made by the ICO that the situation remains unchanged and the letters and position taken by the Council will stand.**

**Unanimous**

**225. APPRAISALS AND STAFF MEETING**

The Town Clerk advised it is a year since the last appraisals had been carried out and as part of that it would be helpful if there was a staff meeting first for the Chairman of the Personnel Committee to talk to staff members as a group. The Council as a whole is looking at reducing costs and there are reminders about the way in which we work which can help with cost savings. The biggest challenge we are facing is the running costs of the Guild Hall which is a large building to heat.

Councillors discussed the current opening of the Guild Hall and staff working arrangements and that Covid had paved the way for hybrid working. Cllr Goddard said that the District Council are closing  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Civic centre to save costs and that the Planning Department staff only now go in to the Civic Centre two days per week and work from home for the remainder.

It was agreed that by closing the Guild Hall at 5pm on Wednesdays and the last job to be that the handyperson turns all the radiator valves down and that on Sunday evening these are turned up by the Guild Hall keeper that there was an opportunity for savings on fuels this winter. The Town Clerk has authority from the Committee to work from home as she sees fit and to come into the Council building during the closed days should meetings require this. The Town Clerk said that over the next few months with site project management meetings she would be at Dennes Lane or

the Rype rather than in the Guild Hall. Town Clerk and Town Clerk Assistant to work from home on Thursdays. New Guild Hall opening hours to be advertised.

**RESOLVED: That the appraisal panel should be made up of the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Darren Chapman and the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Bob Jones to keep the continuity of the previous year's appraisals. The date of staff meeting to be 24<sup>th</sup> October and appraisals to be set as 31<sup>st</sup> October from 10am until 1pm. Cllr Darren Chapman to lead a meeting with staff members and others working in the Guild Hall to advise on decisions reached by the Committee on adjustments to working in line with cost savings prior to the appraisals being carried out.**

## 226. BUDGET SETTING – STAFF COSTS

Councillors discussed a review of the budget head allocated for staff costs. The Town Clerk advised that the Committee has in its remit that they agree expenditure on staff costs within the budget amount agreed by full Council and anything above that amount must be taken to full Council to be agreed and a virement to the budget head made. It was noted that the Committee does not know the recommendations of NALC/NJC on cost-of-living adjustments at this stage.

**RESOLVED: That an increase to the current budget head for staff salaries be made of 5% for the forthcoming budget to be included in the draft budget for consideration at the November Council meeting.**

## 227. CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

Councillors considered the dates for the Christmas closure of the Guild Hall and staff holidays. It was agreed that the last working day would be Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December and the Guild Hall would re-open on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

Full Council and Planning meetings are to be held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and paperwork for these meetings will be delivered on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

During this closure period we would display the contact details of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for any emergency matters and routine actions such as bin emptying

**RESOLVED: That the Guild Hall will close at lunchtime on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and re-open at 9am on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and all urgent matters to be dealt with by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.**

## 228. STAFFING MATTERS

### **Confidential report 2022/C0007**

The Town Mayor thanked the Town Clerk and assistant for the support received during the announcement of the passing of the Queen and the mourning period. Cllr Goddard said that from the announcement of the Queen's death he had regular updates from the CEO of FHDC and that he received the updates from the Town Clerk within half an hour of those from FHDC and that these began on the Thursday evening and continued every day over the weekend. The additional hours worked by staff were discussed and it was agreed that these should be reimbursed at double time for weekend work. The Town Clerk to be paid for the hours worked and the Town Clerk Assistant wished to take these as TOIL.

The Chairman said that he had attended a meeting with the Town Clerk and a staff member where there was discussion about additional work had been carried out. It was agreed that any additional work should be agreed first with the Town Clerk only.

**RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk and Town Clerk Assistant are reimbursed in pay or time for the additional hours worked around the period of mourning at double time.**

**That should any additional work be carried out by a staff member that this must be agreed by the Town Clerk and that the rate of pay is set in accordance with contracted salary scale and agreed by the Town Clerk in advance.**

**That any other staffing matters are discussed at appraisal time.**

## **LYDD TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Safeguarding Policy**

#### **Policy Statement**

In the interests of child protection and the welfare and protection of vulnerable adults, Lydd Town Council is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Town Council within the parish.

#### **Policy Objective**

To ensure that where possible all facilities and activities offered by the Town Council are designed and maintained to limit risk to children and vulnerable adults.

To promote the general welfare, health and development of children by being aware of child protection issues.

As the Town Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children and vulnerable adults, it expects all children and vulnerable adults using its facilities to do so with the consent and the necessary supervision of a parent, carer or other responsible adult.

The aim of this document is to provide, staff, volunteers and councillors with overarching principles that guide the approach to safeguarding

#### **Responsibility and Procedure**

As the Town Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children and vulnerable adults, it expects all children and vulnerable adults using its facilities to do so with the consent and the necessary supervision of a parent, carer or other responsible adult

A Safeguarding Officer will be appointed from within the Council and in their role work alongside the Town Clerk. If there is no suitable person appointed then the role of Safeguarding Officer will be the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk

#### **Our Commitment**

- To ensure that before any Town Council event with children or vulnerable persons that the Safeguarding Officer brief Members and Staff of the Council involved appropriately and remind them of their risks.
- To ensure that any persons who engage with the Town Council in providing activities for children or vulnerable adults are interviewed and two written references are taken up. N.B. This would apply to those arranging activities at the tennis courts and football pitches. They would be required to provide their own Safeguarding Policy and Risk Assessments to the Town Council.
- To ensure that all Members and Staff of Lydd Town Council are provided with a copy of the Policy and acknowledge by signature that they will abide by it.

#### **What to do with any concerns**

If a member of staff has a safeguarding concern and judges it to be an emergency or life threatening situation they should call 999 and they should advise a Councillor or member of the public to call 999 themselves if they report a concern under similar

circumstances to a staff member. Otherwise, other concerns will be reported to the local authority referral services.

Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to Councillors will also be referred to the Monitoring Officer and dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct of Members of the Council

**SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: NOT RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN IS NOT AN OPTION.**

- Our safeguarding lead has overall accountability for this Policy and its implementation

**Meeting closed at 20.30**

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_