

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the **PERSONNEL, POLICY & STRATEGY COMMITTEE** held on **FRIDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2019** at 10.00 am in the Committee Room, Town Hall, Wimborne Minster.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllr K F Webb (Vice-Chairman of the Council – in the chair)
 Cllr C A Chedgy (Chairman Resources Committee)
 Cllr W J Richmond (Chairman Recreation & Leisure Committee)
 Cllr M R Tidd (Chairman Planning & Environment
 Committee)

COMMITTEE MEMBER NOT PRESENT

Cllr S K Bartlett (Chairman of the Council)

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr C L Butter (Vice-Chairman Resources Committee)

OFFICERS PRESENT

Town Clerk
 Assistant Town Clerk

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The Assistant Town Clerk submitted a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix A** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

In the report, it was suggested that in view of the obligations under and complexity of the Health and Safety at Work legislation, the time had come for the Town Council to do as other Town Councils had done in Dorset and outsource this service.

Prices obtained from three private providers and the services they offered were set out in the report. The services each provided were similar and the monthly charge from the two lowest tenderers were almost the same. Although these firms offered Human Resource (HR) services as a package with the Health and Safety function (and had provided prices for this also), the Town Clerk did not wish to recommend that the Committee consider this at this time.

Although the Committee was supportive of outsourcing the Health and Safety service, Members had a number of questions which would require further investigation.

RECOMMENDED:

- a) that the Town Council outsource its Health and Safety function to one of the two lowest tenderers set out in the report and the cost be met from the General Fund for the remainder of 2019/20 and budgeted for in 2020/21;
- b) that the Town Clerk be authorised to enter into a contract with the successful tenderer once the Committee is satisfied that all the outstanding queries have been answered.

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PROJECT ACTION PLAN (Min 105 – 06.09.19)

The Assistant Town Clerk submitted for information an updated project action plan, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix B** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Members agreed that a review of staff terms and conditions should be added to the project action plan as a new item and that an informal meeting of this Committee should be arranged to discuss the subject.

Councillor Chedgy requested that the Committee review the subject of Council communications and PR.

Members discussed the progress of the development of a strategic plan for the Town Council and requested that this Committee had the opportunity to have an input into its content in a workshop session. The principle being to enable participation in its formulation rather than leaving it solely to the Assistant Town Clerk and Chairman of the Council.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Town Clerk prepare a report on staff terms and conditions for review at a future informal meeting of this Committee;
- b) that the Assistant Town Clerk arrange a workshop session with Members of the Personnel, Policy and Strategy Committee to enable them to have an input into the strategic plan document.

The meeting closed at 10.52 am.

Signed Dated
Town Mayor and Chairman of the Council

Date: 4 OCTOBER 2019
Reference: Item 2 – Health and Safety at Work
Author: Assistant Town Clerk

1. Introduction and Background

Members will be aware that the obligations in relation to health and safety at work legislation are complex and beyond the limited in-house capacity and expertise. The Town Clerk and I have been discussing the best way forward for the Town Council to address this issue.

I have contacted town councils across the county to understand what arrangements they have put in place for health and safety and most currently outsource including Ferndown, Blandford, Swanage, Sherborne, Shaftesbury, Gillingham and Verwood.

We believe that the time has come for the Town Council to do the same if it is going to comply properly with health and safety at work requirements.

2. Outsourcing Services

Three providers used by other town councils have been contacted to tender for the Council's business including Ellis Whittam, ELAS Group and Peninsula. Both Ellis Whittam and Peninsula are recognised providers by the Society of Local Council Clerks and within local government.

Although, when approaching these companies the intention was to gather outsourcing costs for health and safety services; all of them offered a combined employment law and HR package with the Health and Safety service at a reduced combined cost. Details for individual and combined service costs from each company are included at Table 3 which is confidential and circulated separately on pink paper.

Table 1 provides a list of the common features and support provided when outsourcing employment law and health and safety services. These are minimum requirements to ensure the Council is fully compliant with current legislation.

Table 1 – Outsourced Services

Health and Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit from a Health and Safety Consultant • Completion of an Audit and General Risk Assessment with high risk hazards identified (<i>some of the providers will then act as a joint competent person with the Council</i>) • Specific Fire Risk Assessment • Health and Safety Policy including responsibilities for management and employees to control risks • Risk Management and Improvement Action Plan • 2nd Visit from Health and Safety Consultant to ensure compliance (and then annual visits) • Advice Line • Newsletters and Bulletins • Indemnity Protection Insurance • Staff and members will receive health and safety training updates. The IOSH (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) Directing Safely and IOSH Managing Safely (training will need to be completed by either the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk and the Head Groundsman)

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- Health and Safety Online Software (some additional charges apply for this)

3. HR and Employment Law Services

In addition, if the Council so wished, similarly, to health and safety, the Council's documentation relating to employees and employment law matters could be provided by one of these companies as part of the package.

Should the Council choose to outsource HR, all documentation and contracts would be updated and an employee handbook would be created. A 24-hour advice line is also offered, representation in court should any disputes escalate and online HR software. The combined offer for both health and safety and HR services is therefore appealing.

A fuller list of employment law and HR services are detailed at Table 2.

Table 2

Employment Law and HR Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of Contracts of Employment/ Terms and Conditions for all employees• Employee Handbook / templates and documentation from Person Specs through to Exit Forms• Advice and news bulletin on all new aspects of employment legislation• Advice Line• Software to support management of staff e.g. annual leave, absenteeism, disciplinary

4. Outsourcing Costs

Table 3 identifies the costs to outsource individual health and safety and HR services, as well as combined package costs. These quotations are valid until the end of October 2019. Each provider has quoted for both a 3-year (36 month) and 5-year (60 month) contract.

5. Conclusion

The legislation, requirements and portfolio for health and safety is constantly changing and evolving. The opportunity to outsource this service and access professional support, advice and guidance will mitigate the current risks to the Council.

6. Recommendations

It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

- a. the Council outsource Health and Safety at Work in a three-year contract with Supplier 2;
- b. Supplier 2 be appointed as a joint competent person for health and safety at work purposes.

Item 3 - Project Action Plan – 4 October 2019

Project Name	Project Status	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	RAG Status	Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
Chamber Renovation	Live	Sep-18	Summer 2019	Cllr Webb/TC	Green	Three quotes have now been received for internal redecoration. The Council has received one quote to install a sound and microphone system. Councillor Webb is producing a mood board.	Quotations to be submitted to Resources Committee. The Assistant Town Clerk is meeting with another supplier on 2 October to get a second quote for a sound system in the chamber.
Town Centre Strategy/ Town Plan/ Neighbourhood Plan – Phase 1 Feasibility Research	Live	June 2019	August 2019	ATC	Green	Feasibility research is now complete. The Town Council, along with neighbouring parishes, has also met with Bruton Town Council, Blandford Forum Town Council and O'Neill Homer Planning Consultants to learn more about the Neighbourhood Plan process and learn from their experiences.	The Chairman of the Planning and Environment Committee has invited a local Dorset Planning Consultant to visit the Town Council to advise on their services and costs associated with developing a Neighbourhood Plan. This will take place at the end of October. A report will then be drafted to go to the Planning and Environment Committee in December.
Health and Safety Review	Live	June 2019	Sept 2019	ATC	Green	The officer report on Health and Safety at work is presented as Item 2 on this agenda.	Following the recommendations of this Committee, Full Council will need to sign off this report.
Climate Change and Biodiversity Task and Finish Group	Live	July 2019	December 2019	Cllrs Shirley and Webb	Green	First meeting of Task and Finish Group held and Terms of Reference finalised.	Awaiting further reports from the Task and Finish Group.
Land and Leases Review: a. Bowls Club b. Tennis Club c. Rugby Club	Live	a. Jun-17 b. Jun-17 c. Mar-18	a. Unknown b. Unknown c. Completed	TC/ CAC	Green	a. Final lease and draft maintenance agreement now with the Bowls Club's solicitor. b. Tennis Coach considering his future options. c. Deed of Variance completed.	a. Awaiting response from Bowls Club Solicitor. b. NFA yet. c. NFA.
Website Accessibility – Phase 1	Live	July 2019	October 2019	ATC	Green	Changes to government legislation require the Town Council to update the website to ensure it is accessible to all users by September 2020. The Assistant Town Clerk and Finance Administrator have completed training webinars.	On successful handover to new ICT supplier, the Assistant Town Clerk will work with them to ensure the Town Council's website is compliant with new regulations.

Project Name	Project Status	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	RAG Status	Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
Community Asset and Amenity Areas Transfer	Live	Jun-18	Continuous	TC	Amber	The District Council agreed list of assets to be transferred. The Town Council accepted the majority of these on 20 November 2018. Reports on title received on various land and property to be transferred.	Further progress dependant on Dorset Council.
Standing Orders/Financial Regulations Review	Live	Apr-19	Sept-19	TC/ ATC	Green	Town Clerk has completed first draft of the revised Standing Orders/Financial Regulations and supporting documents.	Town Clerk to meet with staff to review the changes and then a report will be submitted to Council. To be submitted to Extraordinary Council meeting on 22 October.
ICT Upgrade	Live	Mar-19	Summer 2019	ATC/ TC	Green	ICT supplier has been appointed and upgrade of office ICT equipment completed this week.	A decision on member tablets is now required. The ICT supplier has sourced a couple of options and these will be available to members as prototypes. The Assistant Town Clerk will review office printers next as the current contract is coming to an end.
Development of a Corporate Strategy Phase 1 – Member Development and a Council Vision	Live	June 2019	Autumn 2019	ATC	Green	The PPS Committee agreed to progress this project at the meeting held on 6 August 2019. The Assistant Town Clerk and Chairman of the Council have been working on the first draft of the Strategic Plan and it is nearing completion.	The Assistant Town Clerk to finalise first draft and share with members for initial thoughts and feedback.
Upgrade of CCTV System	Completed	Jan-18	August-19	TC	Green	Project is completed except for Dream Boats camera.	No further action until a solution can be found on radio connection to Dream Boats.
Ownership of Amenity Spaces (Cranfield Estate)	On Hold	Jan-18	Unknown	WJR	Green	The P and E Committee agreed at the meeting held on 8 January 2019 that any further action on this matter be deferred pending the results of Councillor Richmond's investigations.	Awaiting feedback from Councillor Richmond's investigations.

Project Name	Project Status	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	RAG Status	Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
Redcotts Recreation Ground	Not yet started	TBA	TBA	TC	Amber	Recreation and Leisure Committee no longer manage the grass courts. Grass Courts to be left open for use for time being. Repairs to fencing authorised by R & L Committee.	Grounds Staff to undertake repairs within the next months.