

CROWTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY
11 NOVEMBER 2020, VIRTUALLY ON MS TEAMS AT 11.30AM

Present: Cllr B McKenzie Boyle – in the Chair
Cllr R Price
Cllr G Robertson
Cllr S Sever
Cllr B Wade
Mrs M Saville - Clerk
Mrs J Robertson – Assistant Clerk
0 member of the public

Apologies: All members were present

MINUTE 1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
There were none.

MINUTE 2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 27 October 2020 as circulated, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

MINUTE 3 MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 27 OCTOBER 2020

1 Min 4.1 – Training
This item was covered under minute number 6.

2 Min 5 – Management of officer workloads
This item was covered under minute number 5.

3 Min 6 – Offsite outdoor staffing training, planning and review meetings for admin. and finance staff
The CPC finance and admin. team had their first offsite training, planning and review meeting on 3 November with a set agenda including training on the new Health Protection regulations which were published the evening before. The meeting was very productive and will be repeated when the recent lockdown measures are eased again.

4 Min 9 – Staffing matters
The arrears of overtime pay will be included in the next payroll run. Staff have been requested to present their TOIL and overtime claims monthly to enable CPC to keep track of these commitments.

MINUTE 4 CLERK’S REPORT

1 General staffing update and work allocation:
The management of the practical elements of the market have been reviewed and the Assistant Clerk will be allocating set pitches to expected traders before each market day. This will minimise the requirement for staff to be physically in attendance at the market.

CPC’s grounds staff will be undertaking the work displaying/bringing in the market signage and collecting any market pitch fees due on the day.

CPC’s finance and admin. team continue to be extremely busy working on the budget planning for the coming year and implementing the latest raft of Health

Protection measures which were published the night of the CPC meeting on 3 November and came into effect on 5 November.

CPC's grounds staff have been allocated lockdown tasks to carry out from 5 November to 2 December, including installing a temporary floor in the storage container, decorating the toilets at the Morgan Centre and Parish Hall in 'wipe clean' emulsion and ongoing drain/leaf matter clearance to try and prevent flood issues in the Morgan Centre car park whilst the blocked drain outside Crowthorne Smiles is investigated and repaired. These works will ensure that CPC's estate is well managed during lockdown and can reopen to hirers looking fresh and clean afterwards. These tasks will be undertaken in addition to grounds staff regular work checking and maintaining CPC's grounds/buildings, but within core contracted hours whilst there is little in the way of hirer bookings to accommodate.

MINUTE 5

TO AGREE RECOMMENDATIONS TO PRESENT TO COUNCIL FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF OFFICER WORKLOADS

Members acknowledged the ongoing excessive workload that the Parish Office was dealing with during the Covid pandemic and the additional strain this was placing on officers, especially whilst working from home. The additional workload requirements have had a particularly detrimental effect on the Finance Officer and Clerk, both of whom have had to work many hours in excess of their contracted hours to ensure CPC remained compliant and met legal deadlines.

Additional work and projects have also taken place during this time which were unplanned in order to mitigate the impact on CPC's financial position during lockdown, such as the launch of a market to generate an income from the letting of outdoor space and the preparation of several applications for grant funding.

It was recognised that 2 elements comprised the work currently being undertaken and members acknowledged that it was imperative that these 2 items were completed in a timely and efficient manner and took priority over other tasks:

- 1 The annual cycle of essential work expected of a Parish Council (audit deadlines, end of year, risk assessments, draft budget estimates and revisions/review of existing budget); and
- 2 Compliance with legislation issued by government on Covid security measures, plus the submission of emergency funding applications.

The Clerk reported that it was impossible to quantify how much time is being spent on work brought about by Covid as it pervades all areas of Council's work at present.

To address the issue of excessive workloads and following previous discussions on this matter, Cllr B McKenzie-Boyle had compiled a set of principles which were still under discussion with the Parish Office.

Cllr B McKenzie-Boyle stated that in the first instance it was critical to have an Officer Member Protocol in place. Despite this being brought to council for approval at the February 2020 council meeting and subsequently being referred to the Admin WG for review, it has to this date not been formalised. Members were asked to review this document. Due to an ongoing confidential issue, and advice from the borough solicitor, the review and implementation of the

Member Officer Protocol will be brought back to Council for review and adoption when the confidential matter is resolved.

Members discussed the proposed set of principles and how to resolve this issue at length and Cllr B McKenzie-Boyle agreed to finalise his document and to circulate it to committee members before distribution to all other Cllrs.

Action: Cllr B McKenzie-Boyle

Cllrs also discussed that a work plan setting out Council's priorities and strategy in the next 3 years would be useful, even if this was not a full 3 year strategy consultation. This would help to determine resource requirement to deliver on any agreed projects.

Cllr Sever raised the issue of staff using their personal phones for council business and recommended that staff should have office phones for this purpose. It was agreed that this needed further investigation and to be brought to the next meeting.

Action: Cllr Sever

MINUTE 6

TRAINING UPDATE

A table showing the training undertaken by all staff in the last 12 months was circulated. £1,000 was included for training in the 2020/21 financial year. At the present point in the financial year, none of the training budget for 2020/21 has been spent. Much of the training accessed by staff has been free of charge via BFC and memberships with the SLCC and CBAS.

£908 was spent on training in 2019/20 and there will be some expenditure on training between now and the end of the financial year.

£1000 for training in 2021/22 will be allowed for in the budget estimates.

First Aid training

The face to face first aid training booked for staff in March this year (2020) was postponed due to the Covid pandemic. The training provider required a 50% payment on account and the balance will be payable when the training is delivered.

The HSE has extended the validity of existing First Aid certificates until March 2021 due to the Covid pandemic. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/first-aid-and-medicals/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>

All staff will be offered an online first aid training refresher at £14.95 + VAT per person as an interim measure until it is possible to undertake face to face training.

A query was raised at the last Staffing Committee concerning whether a member of staff could be liable for providing first aid if sued. The legal position is that there are two types of legal duty that UK citizens must follow:

- 1 Statutory Laws – that are imposed by Parliament; and
- 2 Common Law – the law that has been built up over centuries as a result of decisions made by Judges in Court.

There are no Statutory Laws relating to first aid, but potential liability can arise

in Common Law. There have been some cases in the UK where a claim has been brought against a ‘rescuer’, although there have been no reported cases in court where a casualty has successfully sued someone.

Fire awareness and Fire warden training

Staff will also all be required to undertake fire awareness/warden training according to their role requirements. Again, these courses can be delivered online at £12 + VAT per person.

Staff training since Autumn 2019

Melanie Saville

2.10.19	Planning training	BFC training session for members & council staff
23.10.19	Planning policy overview	BFC training session for members & council staff
26.10.20 & 27.10.20	Practitioner's conference national	SLCC national training on all current topics
30.4.20	Funding application hints & tips	CCBerks
7.5.20	Funding community buildings in Berkshire	CCBerks
25.6.20	Re-opening Your Village Hall post Covid	CCBerks
5.11.20	Safeguarding in community centres	CCBerks

Lisa Davison

30.4.20	Funding application hints & tips	CCBerks
7.5.20	Funding community buildings in Berkshire	CCBerks
1.6.20	Coronavirus LGPS Employers	LGPS
15.9.20	Harnessing digital to drive sustainability	ACCA
22.9.20	Technology trends driving change in accounting	ACCA

Joanna Robertson

2.10.19	Planning training	BFC training session for members & council staff
23.10.19	Planning policy overview	BFC training session for members & council staff

MINUTE 7

INFORMATION ITEMS

None.

MINUTE 8

ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

Mobile phones for council staff.

Meeting closed: 12.35pm

Signed

Dated

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it was resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public were excluded from the meeting whilst the following confidential items were considered:

MINUTE 9

STAFFING MATTERS – BUDGET REQUIREMENTS FOR 2021/22

All staff are appraised on an annual basis to review their performance, increase motivation and discuss existing and future job requirements. Staff appraisals were held in September and October 2020. Without exception, all staff had worked hard and developed within their roles, despite the unprecedented challenges to operations during the Covid pandemic in the preceding 8 months which was ongoing. All staff were set objectives and training was agreed related to the postholder and role.

The CPC Appraisal links appraisal outcomes and the achievement of objectives to the annual pay review process.

The appraisal panel had reviewed staff pay and made recommendations to the staffing committee for pay awards for 2021/22 based on the pay scales and performance.

The recommendations for pay reviews for 2020/21 would be incorporated into the draft budget estimates. The recommendations were based on advice from NALC and SLCC that staff appointed on spot salaries should have their salaries reviewed annually as this gives the council the opportunity to consider annual performance and appraisal results.

The salary increases were based on existing scale points for 2020/21 and any cost of living increments agreed by the NJC would also be applied with effect from April 2021.

As a result, it was recommended by Cllr B McKenzie-Boyle, seconded by Cllr Wade and unanimously RESOLVED that all staff receive the pay awards in the confidential proposal paper with effect from 1 April 2020. Furthermore, that the budget include provision for the Project Officer's contract to be extended from August 2021 until March 2022 should the project workload at that time require additional resources.

Meeting closed: 12.43pm

Signed

Dated