

Employment Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 September 2018 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Mrs Bunker (Chairman); Councillors Barrott, Doody, Mrs Evetts, Heath, Mobbs, Noone and Parkins.

13. Apologies and Substitutes

- (a) Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Day and Mrs Gallagher.
- (b) Councillor Heath substituted for Councillor Mrs Falp.

14. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

15. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2018 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

16. Minutes – Members/Trades Unions Joint Consultation & Safety Panel

The minutes of the meeting on 30 May 2018 were noted.

17. Revision of the Bereavement Services staffing structure in Neighbourhood Services

The Committee considered a report from Neighbourhood Services that sought approval for revisions to the staffing establishment of the Bereavement Services Team.

Changes to the staffing structure of Bereavement Services were made in April 2017 to support a six day per week service offering. A significant increase in the number of cremations over the last 12 months had prompted a review of the team resources to ensure an excellent standard of service provision could be maintained.

Although a temporary post was agreed by the Corporate Management Team in March 2018 to backfill a long-term sickness absence, the review had confirmed that additional resources were required to provide a stable structure that improved service resilience. As part of the review, it was recognised that any staff absences within the small but specialist crematorium team had a severe impact on the ability to deliver the service.

There was a legal requirement for the Council to ensure that the staff operating its cremators were suitably qualified. Securing agency staff with the required qualification to cover absences proved problematic and costly (c£450.00 + travel per day), therefore it was cost effective to add to the staffing establishment.



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

Resolved that, subject to approval of funding by Executive, the following amendments be approved:

- (1) A change in hours for Bereavement Officer (post no WD00662) from 0.8 FTE to 1FTE; and
- (2) The creation of an additional 1 FTE Bereavement Officer post.

18. **Neighbourhood Services – Project Resources**

The Committee considered a report from Neighbourhood Services that sought approval for additional officers to be added to the establishment.

The current temporary Car Park Project Manager post would end in October 2018. The project work in Leamington needed to be delivered for the next two years, with further projects across the district for the foreseeable future.

These projects included the development of new surface car parks in Leamington, supporting the proposed development of the new Covent Garden multi-story car park, installation of new parking meters across the district, completing the Council's Car Park Strategy, reviewing the Council's approach to parking tariffs, replacement of Linen Street Multi-storey car park etc.

With the extensive list of projects in the coming years, it was considered there was a need to establish a permanent project management post, as this helped to develop capacity within the Service Area and allowed the post holder to develop their skills and knowledge.

The current Ranger Team was comprised of 12.5 FTEs, and provided a number of functions including parking enforcement, staffing St. Peter's Multi-Storey Car Park, sign posting for customers, information gathering, reporting, and liaising with numerous partners and agencies.

The current number of Rangers was sufficient to enforce on the Council's existing car parks and carry out a limited range of duties. The proposed loss of the Covent Garden car parks freed up very little time, as the majority of spaces were pay on foot that required minimum enforcement.

Additional visits would be needed at Court Street, Victoria Park, Princes Drive, and St Peters Multi Storey Car Park, to ensure areas were safe and parking machines were working.

During the displacement period it was considered that there would be some confusion when the current Covent Garden Car Parks would close, until car park users became accustomed to the interim parking arrangements. The more resources on the ground were proposed to provide information to car park users and direct them to alternative car parks where necessary.

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

Additional Ranger resources would enable better support at peak parking times during major events, and in the destination parks during the summer months.

Additional Rangers would be able to support the implementation of new parking machines, provide a presence and support to customers on how to use the card payment and/or pay by app facilities. This could include support by email/phone contact, outside of normal office hours via the St Peters office that was staffed seven days per week.

An increased Ranger presence across all car parks reduced any concerns about safety, especially the more peripheral car parks in the town.

The Business Support team within Neighbourhood Services currently comprised of 6 Full Time Equivalents (FTE's) (4 x Full Time and 2 x Part Time, and a Team Leader). One of the Part Time advisors was currently on Maternity Leave. The recruitment process for cover for this maternity leave had started as it had been demonstrated that the team had struggled to cope with the additional workload spread through the remaining members.

The team was multi-functional and alongside the car parking duties, the team liaised with the three main external contractors over enquiries, orders, complaints, and telephone calls. On average they received around 450-500 phone calls and 500 emails per week, and contributed to the receiving and processing of the Council's switchboard calls. They acted as the "front face" of Neighbourhood Services, dealing with a large range of local environment issues. Any service request arising from a customer contact required logging on the Council's Civica APP database. This created an additional level of action for the Business Support Officers which differentiated the role from a traditional switchboard role of taking a call then being able to move straight on to the next call.

As a result of implementing the agreed car park displacement plan, the Leamington Car Parking Displacement Strategy would increase the workload of the Business Support team in a number of ways, , as set out in the report.

Resolved that

- (1) the full time Neighbourhood Services Project Officer post be made permanent from October 2018; and
- (2) the following full time fixed term posts for Neighbourhood Services, be added to the establishment from December 2018.
 - (a) 2 x Ranger posts for a period of 12 months;
 - (b) 2 x Ranger posts for a period of 2 years; and



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

- (c) 2 x Business Support Officers for a period of 2 years.

19. **People Strategy Update**

The Committee considered a report from Human Resources that updated it on the progress on the People Strategy Action Plan, as discussed at the People Strategy Steering group (PSSG).

The existing Council car loan scheme had five members of staff with loans; loans could be taken for up to five years; with a current rate of interest at 4.5%; and the car must be of equal value to the loan. There was no credit reference check for an officer using the scheme. When an employee left Council having taken a car loan, recouping monies from the leaver and outstanding balance could be complex and create a disproportionately high administration burden.

A review of ten local authorities concluded that: four local authorities had comprehensive car loan schemes; five local authorities had no car loan schemes because they had discontinued schemes for various reasons; one local authority had an alternative scheme through a hire lease scheme managed by a third party.

Following adoption of the Disciplinary/Grievance/Capability Appeals Procedure, an exceptional case had occurred where the Chief Executive was hearing a disciplinary/grievance and in anticipation of an appeal, there was no one else that could hear it within the Council without changing the recently adopted policy of not involving Councillors. It was therefore proposed to amend the Disciplinary/Grievance/Capability Appeals Procedure was proposed as follows:

'If a situation occurs where the Chief Executive is called upon to act as the Hearing Manager in either a Disciplinary or a Grievance Hearing, then, should it come to an Appeal situation, an external body would be asked to carry out an appeal independent of WDC i.e. acting as the Next level of Manager or Manager's Peer. A decision on their recommendation(s) would then be made by WDC'

New guidelines were proposed, at Appendix 1 to the report, to support the process for volunteering for Council recognised projects. The need for this had arisen out of queries and differing practices being deployed across the Council and this proposed guidance would ensure a more consistent approach.

As part of the benefits and proposed savings aligned to the new 'Health Memberships Scheme', staff could claim against the cost of an eye test and glasses. Therefore it was proposed that policy for claims should be amended so that it read *'Should staff not be a member of the WDC Health Membership Scheme, claims should be made to their Line manager supported by a receipt and payment of the contribution will be made into the employee's salary.'*

The Committee had concerns with regard to the proposed amendment to the Disciplinary/Grievance/Capability Appeals Procedure and felt that

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

there should be a named role delegated for this. It was therefore proposed that WDC would be replaced by Monitoring Officer or in their absence the Deputy MO or Section 151 Officer.

The Committee also felt that in respect of the WDC Recognised Volunteering Projects Guidelines, it should be amended from WDC Elections to "elections and referendums administered by Warwick District Council".

Resolved that

- (1) no new applicants be accepted to the present Car Loan Policy, pending a review of the Policy;
- (2) the Disciplinary/Grievance/Capability Procedure be amended to read as follows:

'If a situation occurs where the Chief Executive is called upon to act as the Hearing Manager in either a Disciplinary or a Grievance Hearing, then, should it come to an Appeal situation, an external body would be asked to carry out an appeal independent of WDC i.e. acting as the Next level of Manager or Manager's Peer. A decision on their recommendation(s) would then be made by Monitoring Officer or in their absence the Deputy MO or Section 151 Officer'

- (3) the guidelines for 'WDC Recognised Volunteering Projects' as set out at Appendix 1 to the minutes, be approved.
- (4) the Eye Test for Display Equipment (DSE) Users Policy be amended to read: *Should staff not be a member of the WDC Health Membership Scheme, claims should be made to their Line manager supported by a receipt and payment of the contribution will be made into the employee's salary.*

20. **Public & Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following two items, by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

Minute No.	Para Nos.	Reason
------------	-----------	--------



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

21 & 22	1	Information relating to an individual
21 & 22	2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

The full minutes of the following two items would be detailed in the confidential minutes of the meeting.

21. **Principal Planning Officers**

The Committee considered a report from Development Services that set out the proposals to create three new posts of Principal Planning Officers within Development Services to replace three existing Senior Planner posts.

Resolved that the three existing Senior Planner posts are replaced by three new posts of Principal Planning Officers.

22. **Revisions of the Assets Team staffing Structure**

The Committee considered a report from Deputy Chief Executive (BH) that set out the establishment changes that would be required to support the proposed re-design of the Assets Team within the Chief Executive's Office.

A consultation exercise with staff and the recognised Trades Union commenced in May 2018. It was completed earlier this month, allowing the Job Descriptions for proposed new or significantly revised posts to be considered by the HAY Panel on 7 August. The outcome of the HAY Panel decisions enabled the potential cost implications of the new structure to be finalised and these, together with proposals as to how the additional costs were to be funded were presented to, and agreed at the Executive meeting of 30 August 2018.

Resolved that recommendations 2.1 to 2.10 of the report be approved.

(The meeting ended at 7.06 pm)


CHAIRMAN
5 December 2018

WDC RECOGNISED VOLUNTEERING PROJECTS GUIDELINES

Employees wishing to volunteer for a WDC recognised project must first obtain the permission of their line manager. Those projects currently included within these guidelines are:

- National Bowls Championships
- Commonwealth Games (2022) and associated events
- National Cycle Tours
- Elections and referendums administered by Warwick District Council*

NB: This is not an exhaustive list. Approval for a project not currently included here must be obtained from CMT via Head of Service in advance. Managers should then ask HR to update these Guidelines held on the Intranet

Reasonable time off either during normal working hours or time in lieu for the above activities will be considered by the line manager and must be approved in advance. Any approval will take into account the business need and team requirements.

Please note that this only applies when it is not part of the employee's normal job. All other volunteering carried out by employees should be undertaken in the employees own time.

Employees may be required to undergo a medical check for some activities; this may be due to the risks involved. Some roles, for example those involving contact with children or vulnerable adults, may also require a certificate from the 'Disclosure Barring Service'.

*specific regulations and rates of pay applies to work done on Elections.

