

THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT of the Meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 14 July 2020

Present: Cllrs: Guy Rawlinson – Chairman
Matt Stringer (Vice Chairman)
Maggie Tyrrell
Helen Harrison (arrived late)
Jayne Stansfield
Chris Davies

Louise Powell (Town Clerk)

1. To receive any apologies for absence

None.

2. To receive any members declarations of interest

None.

3. To elect a Vice Chair of the Staffing Committee

Cllr Rawlinson nominated Cllr Stringer for the position, Cllr Davies seconded this, and all were in favour

4. To receive any representations from the public

None.

(Cllr Harrison arrived)

5. To note the report of the meeting held on 05.03.20 and any matters arising from it

The report was noted by Committee, having previously been approved at Council. The matter of the Clerk's appraisal and objectives were discussed, and it was agreed that the objectives should be reviewed in light of the global pandemic.

6. To resolve that due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed that the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting and that it be conducted in private.

It was resolved to conduct the remainder of the meeting in private due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed.

7. To discuss staffing matters in relation to the Armstrong Hall

The Clerk updated the Councillors on the latest position with the redundancies and notice periods and financial implications for the Town Council. It was acknowledged

that there were now no staff to report to the Trust. Some work has continued for the Trust by Town Council staff that will need to be recharged to the Trust such as building checks and financial processing. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk had spent significant time on helping the Trust with matters since the start of the pandemic. The staff member who was redeployed is nearly at the end of the trial period in their new role which has gone well.

8. Staffing implications of Covid-19

The Clerk stated how pleased she was with the way the staff had coped and worked throughout the pandemic. Office staff had been able to continue working with the help from our IT support which enabled working from home, the phones were diverted, and the radios worked from local homes. The outside staff continued in 'bubbles' and kept up with all the essential work despite a large increase in activity. Office staff had often worked over their hours and through their holiday to keep on top of activities. The consequences of the pandemic are still taking significant resources to address such as the detailed risk assessments and various tests in the buildings such as legionella, LOLER inspections etc.

We have successfully opened the parks and green spaces and we are starting to work on the risk assessments for the Pavilion and Town Hall. It is possible we will open the Town Hall late August, however there are a number of activities that need to take place ahead of this and as all essential activities can take place without opening then we will only open when it is safe to do so. Cllr Tyrrell suggested that we could open by appointment only. The Clerk stated this would definitely be an option that we would consider in the risk assessment.

9. To receive an update on any general staffing matters

The Clerk reported that unfortunately an outside staff member has gone off sick which could potentially be long term. There were other shortages in the outside team due to annual leave and shielding. We are using cleaning and office staff to support the outside staff in certain activities such as litter picking during this time. There is also a performance issue that is being addressed. It was agreed that if appropriate a honorarium could be given to staff to cover roles as required.

10. To agree the process and timetable to recruit a Responsible Finance Officer

The Clerk stated that now the new accounting system was in place and we have completed year end, she would revisit the job description for the RFO. It was agreed the Clerk would do an initial draft and circulate to the Committee for comment with an aim to recruit in the next few months.

11. To update on training requested through appraisal and training required (including those raised from our General Risk Assessment)

The Clerk reported that there are areas outstanding with regards to training that we are looking into courses for and arranging training for our new staff members. The annual general risk assessment was taking place next week and there are likely to be recommendations for training coming from that.

12. To consider any matters on the grounds of urgency

There were none.