



# PEACEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

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**DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the Peacehaven Town Council Personnel Committee held on-line (Zoom) at 7.30pm on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020**

**Present** – Cllr. David Seabrook (Chairman), Cllr W Veck, Cllr. Cathy Gallagher, Cllr. Isobel Sharkey, Cllr. Lucy Symonds, Cllr Lynda Duhigg, Cllr Gloria Hill. Town Clerk Tony Allen. Civic & Marketing Officer, Deborah Donovan.

## **1 E128 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## **2 E129 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr. Chris Collier, Cllr C Cheta & Cllr J Harris.

## **3 E130 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**

There were no declarations made.

## **4 E131 TO ADOPT THE MINUTES OF 28<sup>th</sup> JULY 2020 MEETING**

It was resolved to adopt the minutes as a true record.

***NOTE: In accordance with Standing Order No. 3(d) and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, in view of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted, the public and press were excluded from the discussion of the following items.***

## **5 E132 STAFF DEPLOYMENT & VACANCIES**

### **5.1 GROUNDS TEAM**

#### **5.1.1 GROUNDS PERSON VACANCY**

#### **5.1.2 EMPLOYMENT OF A GROUNDS TEAM APPRENTICE**

The current situation and options available were discussed in detail. It was noted that the filling of these vacancies was an urgent matter to meet current workload requirements.

The use and deployment of current Caretaking & Grounds staff, availability of contractors, and advertising the vacancies again was discussed. It was resolved that a meeting should be held with Cllr Seabrook and the staff managers and supervisors, to detail the options available and produce a plan for the Committee going forward.

### **5.2 CARETAKERS TEAM**

#### **5.2.1 OPENING UP OF COMMUNITY HOUSE & THE HUB**

It was noted that a few groups were returning, and others being approached to ascertain their position currently. Many groups are still being cautious and a number of them will probably wait until next year before looking at returning.

### **5.3 OFFICE STAFF**

#### **5.3.1 REMOTE WORKING**

#### **5.3.2 RETURNING TO THE PTC OFFICE**

#### **5.3.3 PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT**

The reports circulated with the meeting papers were noted and discussed in detail.

Three areas of consideration were discussed: -

1. Officers to continue to work from home where possible
2. To use a suitable rota for all officers to work want to work partially from home and at the office.
3. To use one of the meeting rooms as a working office and to fit it out appropriately.

Regarding Item 1, it was noted that remote working had been very effective, with no loss of efficiency or productivity. Officers who want to attend the office have a common understanding with colleagues to pick a convenient day and time to visit or work from the office.

Regarding Item 3, it was noted that the staff consensus is that the back office is too crowded and unsafe with regards to the current COVID-19 situation. It is not possible for all officers to work in that particular room all together and to ensure a safe environment with regard to social distancing. It was noted that the room has no fresh air because there are no opening windows. It was noted that the use of a meeting room for office purposes will reduce the space available to hirers, although this was not a pressing consideration at the moment.

It was noted that, as the current working situation had developed into, and will remain as a long-term consideration, Council must be mindful of the need to ensure that staff working from home are properly and safely equipped with regard to IT, furniture, etc.

It was agreed that sensitivity to staff needs and concerns remains of high importance and that spending more time at the office should continue to happen organically; it should not be imposed. It was resolved that the current working arrangements should continue, to be reviewed later in the year, and that a costed plan is put to the Policy & Finance Committee for homeworking requirements and for converting a meeting room for office use.

### **6 E133 ONGOING STAFF MATTERS & ACTION PLAN**

The Committee's Action Plan was noted and discussed.

Ongoing cases, issues and training opportunities were discussed.

### **7 E134 CODE-OF-CONDUCT FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The need for maintaining a professional image, both in appearance and behaviour at on-line meetings was discussed.

It was resolved that the briefing document produced earlier in the year would be updated to emphasise this requirement and upgraded to a Code-of-Conduct for on-line meetings.

### **8 E135 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October at 7.30pm.

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:09.*