MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING - HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL
ON TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 6.30PM

Present: Cllr Russell (Chair)
Councillors, Jenkinson, Davis and March

In attendance: Lucy Noakes (Clerk)
No members of the public.

Declarations of Interest: Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited. None were recorded.

1.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2.APPOINT A CHAIR TO THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Cllr March proposed Cllr Russell as chair of the committee. Seconded Cllr Davis, unanimous for those present.

3.PUBLIC SESSION

None.

4.AGREE MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING 20 OCTOBER 2023.

Cllr Jenkinson proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Davis, unanimous.

5.CLOSED SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE – TO CONSIDER FEEDBACK FROM STAFF APPRAISALS AND REVIEW SALARIES (BASED ON NALC SCALES) AND STAFFING FOR RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL

Cllr Russell as Chair proposed that the committee enter a closed session to discuss staff appraisals and review salaries and staffing for recommendation to Full Council, seconded Cllr March, unanimous.
Under closed session, there was discussion regarding the outcomes and findings of the staff appraisals, which had taken place earlier in November.

Cllr Davis proposed a recommendation to Full Council that both the Clerk and deputy Clerk's salaries should be raised one point on the NALC salary scale, to points 34 and 24 respectively with effect from 1st April 2025. Seconded Cllr March unanimous.

A revision of the existing Emergency plan had been set as a target for both clerks in the coming year and it was considered that some outside assistance by way of volunteers could be useful in this, with some suggestions being made to the Clerk .

Another target was to produce a sheet of the Horsmonden NH plan policies for Cllrs to refer to in their planning committee meetings. It was suggested that NPPF Policies and Local Plan policies could be added to this sheet and that Brenchley and Matfield PC may have a sheet already which could help with this.

Cllr Russell proposed that the committee come out of closed session. Seconded Cllr Davis, unanimous.

6.CONSIDER DEPUTY CLERKS REVISED CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL.

The Clerk had provided a draft contract for Cllrs to read prior to the meeting.
Cllr March recommended the revised contract with changes in red, be taken to full council for consideration. Seconded Cllr Jenkinson, unanimous.

Cllr March raised the issue of the Clerks not being able to access each other emails during period of holiday when they are covering for each other. The Clerk had looked into this previously and it was not possible with the current system for the two Clerks to share each other's emails automatically. During periods away from the office both clerks set an 'out of office' auto response which asks for anything urgent to be referred to the other person and which provides their contact details and a date upon which they will return to the office.
Another suggestion was that it may be possible for emails to be automatically forwarded to the other Clerk's account during a period of absence. The Clerk would look into this with Microshade the email account provider to see if this is possible.

7. **OTHER MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION (DISCUSSION ONLY).**

The Parish Office had been discussed in some detail during the closed session and although it was not possible to make any proposal regarding this matter, Cllr Russell made the following statement on behalf of the committee:

The Committee noted that the current parish office arrangement is now not really adequate for the Council's current needs and does pose some health and safety risks to the Clerks and visitors to the office. The committee now recommends that the Council investigates some suitable alternative accommodation which would be a more appropriate working environment for the Clerks and more accessible for visitors.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.