

**LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 DECEMBER 2024**

**Present**

**Chairman:** Cllr G. Stammers

**Members:** Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr P. May, Cllr G. Turner

**Officers:** A. Mullins (support services manager), A. Turner (operations manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

**24/45/HR Public Forum**

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

**24/46/HR Apologies**

Cllr C. Reynolds – personal commitment

It was also noted Cllr J. Trevena had resigned from the council and Cllr S. Larcombe had stood down from this committee.

**24/47/HR To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 11 September 2024**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Turner, the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2024, were **ADOPTED**.

**24/48/HR Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were none.

**24/49/HR Dispensations**

There were none.

**24/50/HR Matters arising from the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 11 September 2024**

Members noted the report.

**24/51/HR Update Report**

Members noted the report.

**24/52/HR Human Resources Committee – Objectives**

Members noted the report.

**24/53/HR To receive the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 6 December 2024**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 6 December 2024 were **RECEIVED**.

**24/54/HR Annual Health and Safety Audit**

The operations manager said a new auditor had carried out the audit this year, who had a different methodology and went into a lot more depth. The auditor had raised some concerns and as it was the operation's manager's first week in post, there were some things officers were unsure of but had since been clarified.

It was noted the auditor had not awarded a percentage, as in previous years, which presented a problem as the council was targeting an 85% score as one of its objectives.

The town clerk agreed it was important the council had a benchmark so officers would go back to the auditor to discuss this. A score of 85% would remain a council objective but this could be amended to reflect any new scoring system.

**24/55/HR Technology for In-situ Dynamic Risk Assessments**

The town clerk said since the report was written, officers had discussed the number of tablets required and agreed each relevant person would require one.

It was suggested a smartphone would be better so employees didn't have to carry around tablets, but officers felt tablets could be better protected and would be very compact. It was also noted the tablet could be used as a phone as it would include a sim card.

A member asked if training would be provided for employees who were not confident using smart technology.

The operations manager said the provider would be asked to provide full support and training.

It was noted the lowest quote obtained included only 300mb of storage, which was felt to be insufficient, and that £15 a month seemed excessive. Officers said they would try and obtain the best deal, taking into account factors such as monthly costs and storage allowances.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to agree the council subscribes to a risk assessment platform provider (cost not exceeding £2,500 per annum) and purchases four smart tablets (cost not exceeding £4,500) to operate the preferred system as soon as practicable.

## **24/56/HR      The Town Clerk's Objectives 2025-26**

A member suggested using SMART appraisal and objective-setting to help with prioritising projects and tasks, with the aim of focusing more on people and what their top priorities should be.

The town clerk said although the SMART acronym wasn't used, the objectives worked on the same basis; the formal process of delegating objectives was through the town clerk, tasks would be allocated to managers, budgets allocated to committees to monitor, and managers' specific objectives would then be incorporated into their appraisals. More detail on each of the objectives, including who was the lead manager, the target completion date and the budget, would be taken to relevant committees at the start of the 2025-26 financial year.

A member suggested there were key performance indicators against each task so members could track its progress and check if it was on budget.

The town clerk for the last two years, a report had been considered by each committee, which tracked the progress of each objective, including any budget variations.

Proposed by Cllr M. Ellis and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the town clerk's objectives for 2025-26.

## **24/57/HR      Human Resources' Annual Review**

Members discussed the issues arising from employee appraisals and were particularly concerned about comments about members making decisions without considering the implications for staff, and some members' behaviour towards staff. They asked for examples to better understand this, which the support services manager provided.

It was noted some of these issues were likely to be raised by employees as part of the cultural change management programme, which included an employee survey and focus groups.

Members agreed it was important for members to have the opportunity to get to know employees and it was suggested this was included as part of the member induction programme. Members were also encouraged to acknowledge all employees and to make the effort to chat to them and make themselves known.

## **24/58/HR      Employment Law Update**

A member asked how the council would monitor and evaluate the actions put in place to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

The support services manager said monitoring would be carried out by officers, which could include maintaining a database of any incidents, regular reviews by the management team, regular reviews of policies and procedures, and high-level reviews to this committee.

A member suggested the council considered having a policy to reduce the gender pay gap.

The town clerk said the current gender pay gap was narrow and at a level that could be tolerated. However, he agreed having it as a policy statement was important and that the council should strive to be an organisation with no material gender pay gap.

It was agreed it was important that employees were aware of how to report any sexual harassment issues.

The support services manager said it was intended to provide training to all staff, which would include guidance on how to recognise sexual harassment and how to report it, as well as training for managers on how to handle these issues.

The support services manager talked through the Employment Rights Bill in more detail and highlighted the potential changes to zero hours' contracts, which would have a major impact on the council as the amenities' assistants were on this type of contract. It was noted consultation would take place and the council could feed into this.

**24/59/HR Gardener and Maintenance Person (post holder 204), Six-Month Probation Extension Review**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**24/60/HR Request to Transfer Pension Rights**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr C. Aldridge, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**24/61/HR Exempt Business**

**a) Gardener and Maintenance Person (post holder 204), Six-Month Probation Extension Review**

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the gardener and maintenance person's (post holder 204) continued employment with the council, effective from 19 November 2024

**b) Request to Transfer Pension Rights**

Members noted the request had been made well beyond the deadline, it would potentially have financial implications for the council, and agreeing it may set a precedent.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Stammers, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to refuse postholder 210's request to transfer previous pension rights into the Local Government Pension Scheme after the deadline date.

*The meeting closed at 8.05pm.*