



HR COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

21 August 2023 – 5.30pm

MINUTES

Present Councillors: Cllr. Gale (Committee Chair), Cllr. Buckenham, Cllr. Snell

Clerk and RFO: Mr S Baxter **Members of the public (MOP):** 3

Meeting commenced at 5.30pm. Meeting was held at the North Thoresby Village Hall, North Thoresby.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

1. COMMITTEE CHAIR'S WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked the councillors and stated that the meeting may be recorded.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk confirmed that all members of the HR Committee were present and thus he had not received apologies from any members.

3. TO GRANT DISPENSATION TO COUNCILLORS: To receive any declarations of interest in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and to consider any requests for dispensations

The Clerk confirmed that no declarations have been received from any Councillors prior to the meeting - he asked all Councillors if they wish to offer any declarations for any subject of the Parish Council Meeting. The Clerk confirmed that none were offered and thus it can be considered that there is no pecuniary interest of any Councillors which would affect their voting of any motion on the agenda.

4. TO PROPOSE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM PARTICIPATION

- ***Motion to exclude the members of the press and community were proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.***

The members of the community and press were permitted to remain but were asked to remain silent.

5. ROLE OF HR COMMITTEE (under the Terms of Reference)

The Clerk stated the Terms of Reference for the HR Committee had been agreed by the Full PC Meeting on the 07 August 2023. This had been publicised on the website of the PC. The Councillors agreed that the ToR was perfectly suitable and that all of them should be well versed in the detail to allow good decisions to be made based on the terms, The ToR should be considered a live document and that any amendments needed could be brought to the Full PC for ratification.

The Chair stated that they felt that the HR Committee should meet approximately four times a year or when specifically needed. This would allow regular reviews but not be too onerous - and that the date of the next HR Committee meeting should always be agreed. It was felt that the timings of the HR Committee to fit in with the Clerk's availability and to minimise travel costs should be before the main PC Meeting. Thus the next HR Committee Meeting would be on or around the 04 December 2023 (depending if the main PC Meeting is rescheduled)

The Chair stated that in her opinion the HR Committee should be there for the Councillors and the Staff and to understand what support can be given to all for the benefit of the Parish Council. All members agreed.

6. COUNCILLOR TRAINING NEEDS - how to ascertain what is required and available from ERNLLCA

The Clerk confirmed that he had emailed all Councillors, both new and more experienced, who may wish to have some degree of training to help them with their roles on the Council.

The Chair confirmed that this was a very good starting point to ensure that all Councillors were made aware that training is available - both through the Local Association (ERNLLCA) and other sources. This would also encourage Councillors to review what training is available and feed back to the HR Committee, Finance Committee and the Clerk.

The Committee stated that from the review of the training available, the resources and courses from ERNLLCA were in their opinion far better than the previous local association the Parish Council were members of. They agreed the courses and training were well published and clear in the purpose. They also discussed that there were plenty of courses for the staff of the PC and they would be encouraged to seek what is appropriate for their role.

The Chair introduced a subject of Councillor style appraisals which would be useful if agreed so that training needs for all Councillors could be reviewed. She envisaged that this would start with a request to all Councillors to complete a review form to then form a longer term strategy.

The Clerk stated that Councillors could not be forced to undertake this and it could not be mandatory and each Councillor is on the PC through being democratically voted or co-opted. This would have to be made clear to Councillors to ensure no Councillor was placed under any undue direct or indirect pressure. It would not need a vote as this was non-mandatory and a process not a decision.

The Chair noted this and agreed that it would have to be non-mandatory but it would be hoped that the Councillors would engage with this process of the benefit of all, both themselves and the community.

The committee discussed this further and areas such as support, training, understanding the role of a Councillor, any projects or roles within the council they wish to engage with and overall their interests in the Parish Council.

The Clerk stated that he had received various responses on training needs from Councillors and most of these courses were either free or a maximum of £20+VAT. In his opinion the training cost was very much value for money for what the training would be and that it was both in house from ERNLLCA as well as being outsourced to specific expertise.

The Councillors agreed that as there was budget agreed at the start of the year, they would encourage all the training requests as highlighted be booked. The Clerk confirmed this would be undertaken as needed.

- ***Motion to agree the training requests from Councillors and the spend to be included in the training budget as agreed was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.***

7. STAFF SUPPORT, DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESSION

The Clerk stated that as the Line Manager of a member of staff, as well as being a staff member himself reporting to the whole council, it was imperative that proper support and training provision was provided as it would appear that this provision was not obvious in previous administrations.

The Committee very much agreed and that this was a very important part of the HR Committee as well as the whole Parish Council. They discussed that an appraisal process was an integral part of this and would be developed to suit all. This appraisal process would then also be engaged for the staff but would include more job specifics and proper support with the management by the HR Committee. All staff would be invited to an appraisal with members of the HR Committee and that while some staff are newer than others, the appraisal would be designed to ensure support and empowerment was included.

The committee also discussed the Performance Indicator Policy that the PC had inherited from the previous administration was in their opinion not fit for purpose. This policy would have to be rewritten for a more suitable and appropriate process for the property performance management.

The Clerk stated that it would be useful to review all policies - including those agreed by the former administration and previous clerk - to ensure these were fit for purpose and appropriate without the influence of previous local council associations. The committee agreed, but would need to manage this process in good time and the current policies are a starting point.

The Clerk stated that he was aware that the Council did not provide proper PPE provision for the staff and that this would need to be reviewed to ensure all staff had proper equipment and clothing for their role. He stated that he was aware that the Village Hall Manager did not have any clothing or protection for his role and as his work specifics included work externally to the Village Hall and for some works that may be somewhat 'unclean' work he was currently using his own PPE. This needed to be addressed to be a fair and good employer, and various items such as all weather jacket hi-vis jacket (for safety), hi-vis waistcoat and proper safety boots had been identified. The Clerk stated that as there was no specific budget, this expenditure would have to retrospectively approved by the Full Council but if the HR Committee agree that this PPE purchase was needed, the Clerk could use his delegated authority of less than £500 (as this agreed with the Chair of the HR Committee) to purchase these items which totally around £100 approximately.

The Committee agreed that this was absolutely needed and it was fully appropriate.

The Committee also discussed the possible need for a PC marked polo shirt and it was agreed by all that this would be very useful for both protection of the Village Hall Manager in work related tasks, but would also be used as an ID when showing prospective hall users round. A member of the committee showed an example from a supplier they had previously engaged with and it was agreed by the Committee that this Councillor could engage with the Clerk to agree the design and order the necessary amounts - with Councillors being permitted if they wish to purchase ones for themselves.

- ***Motion to agree to purchase the identified PPE including the necessary clothing at a cost previously noted was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.***

Meeting was closed by the Committee Chair at 6.05pm.
