

Minutes of Staffing Committee Meeting of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 6th January 2014 at First Floor Crown Chambers, 7 Market Place, Melksham at 8.00 p.m.

Present: FULL COMMITTEE: Cllr. Richard Wood (Chairman); Cllrs. Alan Baines; Terry Chivers; John Glover; Pat Nicol and Mike Sankey.

Cllr. Paul Carter attended as an observer at the Committee.

- 404/13 **Declarations of Interest:** The Clerk Mary Jarvis and the Assistant Clerk/RFO Teresa Strange declared an interest in Agenda Item 4(i): Staff roles and responsibilities.
- 405/13 **Minutes of Staffing Committees 1st July and 5th August:** These Minutes which had already been approved by the Council were noted.
- 406/13 Arising from Min. 116/13 **Council Lease:** The Clerk reported that she had again requested a lease from Bob Kirby of Total Equipment. It was understood that Total Equipment had been in the process of extending their own lease which ran until 1st June 2014 and had confirmed in writing the Parish Council was secure until that date. There was concern that if the lease was not renewable it would take some time for the Council to find alternative premises.
Recommended: *The Council seek an urgent meeting with Total Equipment to try and secure a lease renewal.*
- 407/13 Arising from Min. 122/13 **Change to Council Opening Hours:** The Clerk reported that closing the office to the public on Tuesdays had proved successful and allowed a time for staff to work in a more concentrated way.
- 408/13 Arising from Min. 178/13 **Part-Time Minute Secretary & Assistant:** It was noted that the 3 monthly review date for this post was 28th January and Jo had settled into the work very well.
- 409/13 **Office Staff changes**
- a) **Clerk – retirement:** The Chairman read out part of a letter received from Mary Jarvis (9th December) to inform that she would be standing down as Clerk on 28th March 2014, after thirty and a half years' service. Mary referred to the many wonderful years she had enjoyed working as the Clerk to Melksham Without and wished the Council and staff God's blessing for the future. Mary explained that it had been agreed previously her hours be reduced to 20 per week from 1st April 2014 and as the Clerk's post now required at least 25 hours + per week to be done properly, she felt this was the right time to step down, especially as the Wiltshire Council Pensions Scheme would be changing after 31st March 2014. However she would be willing to take flexible retirement and do other Council project work e.g. for the Neighbourhood Plan, if this was required.
- b) **Appointment of New Clerk:** The Chairman reported he had sought legal advice from NALC who had made clear the post would need to be advertised. It was noted that the present Assistant Clerk/RFO Teresa Strange was CiLCA qualified and interested in applying for this post.

Teresa left the Meeting at this point.

It was agreed the post should be advertised in the Wiltshire Times, the Melksham News and on the Council's own website. It was agreed that a draft advertisement should be prepared together with the Clerk's job description for consideration at the next Council Meeting on 20th January. The Staffing Committee then considered what should be included in the advertisement. It was agreed this should include the following requirements:

Good Local Council knowledge
CilCA qualified
Tolerance and Discretion
Excellent communication skills
Computer literate - Word and Excel
Flexibility to work evenings as required
Experience with budgets & accounts preparation
Office & staff management experience

It was agreed the advertisement should be placed in the Wiltshire Times on Friday 24th January with a view to holding interviews to short-list in mid February and appointing in early March. It was further agreed to hold an additional staffing committee meeting on 27th January to review progress.

Recommended: 1. The Council advertise for a new Clerk at the end of January with a view to interviewing in mid February so that a new Clerk could be appointed in early March. 2. An extra Staffing Committee Meeting be held on Monday 27th January 2014.

Teresa Strange returned to the Meeting.

410/13 **Review of Caretaker Role:** The Clerk and Asst Clerk RFO advised the Staffing Committee that the Council Caretaker had carried out excellent work for the Council for six years and had taken on the role of Allotment Warden in January 2012 which included more duties when the extra allotments at Brian fields had been opened. Due to the pay freeze his hourly rate had remained static and a review of his role and remuneration was now required to ensure parity of pay with those in similar posts. It was agreed to seek advice from Wiltshire Council and other Councils re an appropriate pay scale so that the matter could be reviewed at the next Staffing Committee Meeting on 27th January.

411/13 **Quality Council Scheme renewal:** The Clerk reported that the Quality Council Scheme was under review at present. The Council's Quality Council Accreditation had now lapsed and would require renewal once the review had been completed.

Meeting closed at 9.02 p.m.

Chairman, 20th January 2014