

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Staff Committee

Thursday 18th March 2021 at 6.00pm By Video Conference Call.

Present: Councillors:

Cllr I Roome (Chair), V Monk, V Elkins, A Windsor, J Hunt, J Phillips & A Rennles

In attendance:

Mr Robert Ward (Town Clerk),

S Petters (Assistant Town Clerk)

Members of the Public:0

17. Apologies for absence

None received.

18. Dispensations and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllrs I Roome, J Hunt & L York as members of North Devon District Council, have a dispensation under SO66 to discuss and vote on any item on the agenda unless the item refers to a financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

19. Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2020, are approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.
(NC)

20. Budget Monitoring Report

RESOLVED: The committee noted the report as presented (NC)

21. Absence of press and public

RESOLVED: That the following matter shall be taken in the absence of the press and public, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, as the item contains exempt information as defined by Standing Order 82a. (NC)

22. Staff hours report

RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted (NC)

23. Town Clerk Report

The Town Clerk gave an update on recruitment and other staffing issues:

- Four Town Rangers now in post, one extra post was created following the decision to self-deliver the highway verge grass cutting.
- The Events and Communications Officer Post is now filled and the new person starts Monday 29th March.
- Employee 86 is now on maternity leave and a post has been advertised to provide cover for the absence.

- A discussion was had about the impact of homeworking on the office-based staff team.
- Plans are now being made to return staff to the office but only where provision can be made to allow enough space for safe distancing.
- Currently, there is no guidance as to when staff can return to the office.
- Staff primarily working outdoors have continued to come to work and have been provided with appropriate PPE for situations where they need to work in close proximity, such as sharing a vehicle.
- A weekly team meeting via Zoom, for Barum House staff, continues to ensure that they can stay in contact with each other and know what each other is doing.
- Several of the team have expressed the negative impact of the current lockdown on their mental health and their ability to undertake their work effectively.
- Discussions are now taking place about the process of returning to the office, any decision will be informed by Government advice and regulations.
- Seven staff have either had or been invited for vaccinations.
- The committee asked that an update be provided to introduce new staff to councillors, the new Events and Communications Officer will be undertaking this task.

RESOLVED: To note the Town Clerk Report (NC)

Meeting closed at 6.30pm

Chairman.

Signed:

Dated: