

Minutes of the closed meeting to discuss appointment of Parish Council Clerk

Meeting held on Tuesday 1st March as closed session following the monthly formal Parish Council Meeting

The meeting was held in the Village Hall

Attending

Keith Cornwall (KC), Chloe Rusby (CR), Paul Newman (PN), Mike Tyers (MT), Michael Wallace (MW)

Katy Harper (KH)

The RFO Brian Spencer and Clerk, Alison Feist were not present, conflict of interests.

There was brief explanation of the history and situation surrounding the reason and purpose of the meeting. Some members were familiar with the process and position to date.

In summary

The position of Parish Clerk had been conducted over the previous 12 months by Alison Feist but she had received no financial reward for the work. This was because as a recognised and salaried position it was not legally permitted to remunerate any body in a position on the council if they had previously been a councillor within the previous 12 months. Alison had resigned her position as a councillor in February 2021 and was therefore eligible to become Parish Clerk with effect from March 2022.

The meeting was to confirm her position, ensure that due process had been followed and to determine the contract and remuneration package for her.

It was mentioned for the process to be completely transparent so that the Parish Council could not be accused of any malpractice in reaching the current position and in how it proceeded in the appointment.

It was agreed that in February 2021 the Parish Council with the support of HALC had properly conducted a job advertisement, interview and selection process and Alison was the selected candidate. There was discussion about whether the process stood up to scrutiny given that since the appointment in 2021 no formal contract had been offered regardless of remuneration and therefore was the appointment legitimate?

Two of the councillors had been involved in the interview and selection process.

It was questioned whether there was a time limit between the appointment and when it had to be fulfilled. The 12 months between appointment and final offer was not necessarily a finite period

It was suggested that we should consult HALC, bearing in mind that at the earlier full council meeting it had been agreed that the Parish Council would not renew its subscription to HALC. It was suggested that before we terminate our relationship with HALC perhaps we should utilise their expertise and advice.

It was suggested and it was unanimously agreed, that to demonstrate absolute transparency and deflect criticism perhaps we should provide an opportunity for any other candidate to apply. It was

generally accepted that it was most unlikely for there to be any competition against Alison, previous efforts to recruit a clerk were of limited success.

The matter of salary was raised. The salary is dependent on qualification and apparently Alison has agreed to undertake the necessary training to not only meet the requirements of the council but also to qualify for the appropriate salary. It was agreed that firstly any salary could not be determined by precedent and the fact that an interim clerk (Richard) had received or expected a certain figure was not a measure for future appointments, however it was suggested that we could enquire of other local parish councils what was the "going rate" but bearing in mind qualifications.

It was accepted that there was a formal pay scale to which we could refer.

Given the sensitivity of the situation CR and KC agreed to meet up with Alison to explain the situation.

It was agreed that the sub committee should meet again within a short timescale (TBC) by which time the details of

The contract

The salary

The formal appointment

Would be determined and the process, of readvertising would be complete with no expected competition.

Meeting concluded 9.30pm

R. K. [Signature]

17.03.22.

THE CHAIR OF THIS MEETING DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE MINUTES OF UBPC HELD ON 17 MARCH 2022 IN RESPECT OF THE SAID MEETING WERE A CORRECT RECORD BUT HIS VIEW WAS NOT UPHOLD BY THE MEETING AND THE MINUTES ARE CONFIRMED AS AN ACCURATE RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS

RKC