



MINUTES

Meeting: PERSONNEL

25th February 2019

Time: 7.30pm

Venue: North Weald Library, High Road, North Weald

PRESENT:

Councillors: (4) A Buckley, Chairman, R Spearman, B Clegg, Mrs S Jackman, MBE.

Officer in Attendance (3)

Susan De Luca – Clerk to the Council
Adriana Jones – Principal Finance Officer
Jo Tyler - Senior Administrative Officer

Members of the Public (0)

Members of the Press (0)

PERS18.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (2)

Apologies were received from Cllrs Grigg and Eldridge.

PERS18.02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were NO Declarations of Interest.

PERS18.03 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were present.

PERS18.04

The Chairman welcomed all to the Meeting. Due to the nature and content of the two agenda items falling within *The Local Government Act 1972 – Schedule 12 A Part 1 (Exempt Paragraphs 1 & 2 refers)*, the Chairman advised as to the necessity of taking both items in private session. This was **AGREED**.

A) INCIDENT IN THE PARISH OFFICE ON 6TH FEBRUARY 2019

The Clerk had provided Members with a copy of the file note, together with advising of two conversations with the police regarding this issue. After full discussion, Members **AGREED** the following:

- 1 The best way forward in dealing with the matter was by way of Community Resolution Order, as long as the Clerk was happy taking that pathway.
- 2 Following this incident, any resident wishing to speak formally with staff members should be invited to make an appointment. Conversations should always be held at the table in the Library in full view of other staff, with another member of staff and/or Councillor at the table if it was felt necessary. Residents should be advised that appointments can be made with staff and the Clerk, and encouraged to do so, and that the Annual Report could be used to advise of this, as could the Website.
- 3 The individual concerned would be written to and advised that if, in future he wishes to attend the Parish Council Office, then he should write in the first instance to the Clerk or to the Chairman, to make an appointment, and that at any such meeting at least two individuals, including one Councillor, should be in attendance.

B) RECEIPT OF NINE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS, AND THE DETERMINATION OF WHAT ACTION THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO TAKE, AS PER ADVICE RECEIVED FROM THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER.

Members were advised of the nine Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, all of which were received after working hours on 6th February 2019, were dated 7th February 2019, were from the same individual, and all consecutively numbered. All nine requests were received by email within 15 minutes of one another on 6th February.

Members noted that the Clerk had undertaken a cost estimating exercise in accordance with Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act and FOI guidance, and further advice had also been received from the Information Commissioner. As a result of this, the estimated costs associated with dealing with these nine requests collectively exceeds the cost limit of £450.

Details of the relevant legislation and different options available were given to Members. These options were discussed in great detail and at great length, after which the following was **AGREED**

- The Parish Council will issue a letter giving notice of refusal to comply with the above nine Freedom of Information requests under section 12 of the Act due to the estimated costs of doing so exceeding the cost limit as defined in the Act.
- The Parish Council will write to the individual concerned to advise him of other options such as submitting these requests individually, spread out over a period of months, with a view to bringing the costs within the cost limit and thus not placing an excessive burden on the public authority and its staff.
- The individual will be advised that he would also have the option to pay for the cost of complying with the above nine Freedom of Information Requests. As such, the Parish Council will issue a Fees Notice, confirming what the cost would be, which in this case would amount to £913.50 for the supply of this information. If no payment is received within 3 months of the date of this letter, no further action would be taken by the Parish Council.

Signed:.....

Dated: