

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF ABERTILLERY
AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 17 February 2022
at 6:30 pm in the Council Chamber Mitre Street, Abertillery**

PRESENT:

Councillors: Gary Oakley (Chair); Allen Rees; Nick Simmons; Glyn Smith

Officers: David Cartwright, Clerk; Steve Edwards, Deputy Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Rob Phillips

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR DISPENSATIONS

None

3. MINUTES – 20 OCTOBER 2021

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 20 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

4. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Members **RESOLVED** that, by virtue of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public would be excluded from discussions on the following items on the basis that disclosure thereof would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Cllr Glyn Smith asked whether it was appropriate for the Chair of the Council to chair the HR Committee. The Clerk replied that Standing Orders state that, if present, the Chairman of the Council shall preside at a meeting.

5. CURRENT OFFICER WORKLOADS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS & STAFFING MATTERS

The Chair ruled that these two agenda items would be taken together.

At its previous meeting, the Committee had resolved that the Deputy Clerk be paid a transitional salary level up to and including 10 January 2022 and that the situation would be further reviewed by the HR committee.

The clerks reported that their workload remained high, with the Clerk having to devote many hours to the Council's legal claim against two former officers. The Deputy Clerk had continued to bear almost total responsibility for managing the Council's financial affairs. The Chair asked the Deputy Clerk whether he would consider continuing to take on the responsibilities of joint-RFO and joint-Clerk. The Deputy Clerk said that he would, but only until the end of the current council term. The Deputy Clerk declared a pecuniary interest and left the chamber at 6.58 pm.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the Deputy Clerk's responsibilities and salary continue at the previous transitional level from 11 January 2022 until the end of the current council term.

The Deputy Clerk returned to the chamber at 7.05 pm.

The Chair expressed concern that the current workload meant that the Clerk was working more hours than he was being paid for. The Clerk replied that, during his job interview, he had accepted that his workload might be uneven, particularly during his first months in the role. He believed that it was his own responsibility to manage his hours over the longer term. He recommended that the Committee take no action at this stage and that he would report back to the Committee if managing his workload within his contracted hours became a long-term issue.

The Vice Chair stated that he was sure that the Committee would support officers fully if they prioritised some areas of work to the exclusion of others. In particular, he recommended that the clerks set aside a week as soon as possible to complete the Council's accounts for 2020-21, which were still outstanding.

The Committee recommended that future dates for HR Committee meetings be set each year by the Council's Annual Meeting in May to ensure at least quarterly reviews of HR matters.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEWS

The Deputy Clerk gave an appraisal of the Council's operations during Covid-19 lockdown periods. He recommended that the Full Council should consider whether to amend Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to increase the Clerk's 'authority to spend' during times of national emergency or other major business disruption.

8. ST DAVID'S DAY

Both clerks declared a personal interest and left the chamber at 7.26 pm.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that the Council should celebrate St David's Day each year by giving its officers the day off.

Both clerks returned to the chamber at 7.38 pm.

The meeting ended at 7.41 pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair

Minutes produced by David Cartwright, Clerk