

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE**

Held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr Rae Frederick – Town Mayor  
Cllr Mary DeBoos – Chair of Policy and Finance Committee  
Cllr John Haywood - Chair  
Cllr James Swyer  
Cllr Glenys Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk  
Cllr. G. DeBoos

ABSENT: Cllr Philip Day – Deputy Mayor  
Cllr Peter Kelleher  
Mrs Jo Hurd

**S/0106  
ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Cllr Haywood was nominated for Chairman. There were no other nominations.

**RESOLVED: That Cllr Haywood be elected as Chairman of the Staffing Committee until the first meeting of the Committee after the next annual meeting of the Council.**

**S/107  
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were recorded from Cllrs. Day and Kelleher.

**S/0108  
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

**S/0109  
MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024, having been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**S/0110  
TOWN CLERK’S ANNUAL REVIEW**

Arrangements for the Town Clerk’s annual performance review and appraisal were considered.

**RESOLVED: Cllrs. M. DeBoos and Turner were appointed to undertake the Town Clerk’s annual review and report back to the committee**

**ACTION C Wilkins**

**S/0111  
SALARY SCALES ADJUSTMENT**

The officers’ report attached as Annex A was considered.

**RESOLVED: To comply with the Council’s obligations as a Living Wage Employer, the salary scale for the Gateway Caretaker/Cleaner be changed as recommended by officers**

**ACTION J Hurd**

**S/0112  
TRAINING POLICY**

The officers’ report attached as Annex B was considered with a view to members giving guidance to inform a re-write of the policy. After a wide-ranging discussion, the following principles emerged:

- The training needs of councillors are different from those of staff and would be better served in a separate, brief policy statement which acknowledges that training for members should continue to be offered but remain optional
- The new staff training policy should:
  - Avoid gendered language
  - Support and encourage training but not unduly constrain managers or staff when discussing, agreeing and arranging training;
  - Substantially retain the existing objectives (a) to (d) but omit (e);
  - Omit the existing statement about ambitious staff (which, whilst possibly true, serves no purpose) and include instead a statement about the values members attach to staff training;
  - Substantially retain the first three sections of the existing procedure but simplify and make much less prescriptive the remaining three sections.

**RESOLVED: That officers prepare new draft policy documents, following the guidance given, for consideration by the committee at a future meeting**

**ACTION C Wilkins/J Hurd**

**S/0113  
EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Town Clerk explained that he needed to present a verbal report on personnel management issues which, being of a confidential nature, it would be prejudicial to the public interest to consider in the presence of the press or public.

**RESOLVED: That, in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted**

**S/0114  
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT MATTERS**

A verbal report from the Town Clerk on confidential personnel management matters was received (see *Confidential Minutes – Annex C*).

**RESOLVED: To note the Town Clerk’s report**

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.14pm.

**Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.**

*RECEIVED*  
*25<sup>th</sup> September 2024*

*APPROVED*  
*12<sup>th</sup> March 2025*

*TOWN MAYOR*

*COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN*

**STAFFING COMMITTEE**11<sup>th</sup> September 2024**Report on salary scale adjustments****1. Introduction and reason for report**

- 1.1 As a result of securing accreditation as a Living Wage Employer, the Council needs to review the salary scales relating to any posts where the current scale includes pay points below the real living wage.

**2. Background information**

- 2.1 All Council staff aged 18 or over are currently paid at a rate exceeding the Real Living Wage. However, one pay scale currently includes a pay point below the level of the Real Living Wage. The table below details this post, its current salary scale and the new scale suggested by officers.

Post	Current Salary Scale	New Scale proposed
Gateway Cleaner / Caretaker	SCP 3 to 8	SCP 4 to 8

**3. Issues for decision and any recommendations****Whether to approve the salary scale revision proposed by officers.**

For further information, contact:

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 Email: [chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk](mailto:chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk)

Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk  
 Direct Dial: 01425 484721  
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## STAFFING COMMITTEE

11<sup>th</sup> September 2024

### Report on Training Policy review

#### 1. Introduction and reason for report

- 1.1 At the last meeting of this committee, members expressed a desire to review the council's training policy (see minute ref. S/0102).

#### 2. Background information

- 2.1 The Council's current training policy is attached as Annexe 1. It was adopted in 2014 and has not been reviewed since.
- 2.2 The current policy envisages a relatively structured and rigorous approach that has seldom, if ever, been achieved in practice. Apart from induction training for new members, very little training has been sought by members and offers of more have generally met with lukewarm responses. Staff training has been focussed on induction of new employees and mandatory safety training (e.g. food hygiene, fire safety, first aid, etc.). No employee has a written training plan. Additional training aims and needs are discussed at annual reviews (and sometimes at regular 1-2-1 meetings) but tends to be arranged *ad hoc*.
- 2.3 Since 2014 there have been significant changes in how training is typically delivered. The default method for providing knowledge-based updates is now the webinar. Likewise, the default method for providing and testing basic knowledge-based skills is online. In-person training is still the norm for practical skills but in other contexts it is now less common and has become relatively more expensive. Training for qualifications (like CiLCA) is also now mainly remote in format (webinars, virtual meetings and telephone conferencing).
- 2.4 The disparity between policy and practice is glaring and uncomfortable. Officers, can prepare a new draft policy for consideration if members can guide them on the desired aims and approach to achieving them.

#### 3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

- 3.1 **Do the aims expressed in the current policy require any change?**
- 3.2 **How, realistically, can these aims (as revised) best be achieved?**

For further information, contact:

Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk  
Direct Dial: 01425 484720  
Email: [chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk](mailto:chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk)

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# RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

## Training Policy & Procedure

### POLICY STATEMENT

Ringwood Town Council (“the Council”) recognises the important contribution that training makes both for the effective operation and improvement of its services and for the career development of its individual employees. The Council will encourage members to undertake training appropriate to their circumstances and will encourage each employee to undertake training in order to develop their individual skills and abilities.

To this end, advice and assistance on training will be given relevant to members and employees, including volunteers.

### Policy Objective

The training policy refers to all members and employees and seeks to:-

- (a) provide induction training for new members and staff, including volunteers, and for those transferred to new roles;
- (b) ensure that appropriate training is available to enable individuals to achieve effective performance in their roles;
- (c) provide training and development for possible future individual roles and responsibilities and additional activities to be undertaken by the Council;
- (d) provide information, instruction and training to ensure the health and safety of all members, employees and volunteers;
- (e) provide instruction and training on the Council’s operational policies, practices and procedures.

The Council recognises that because of its size, opportunities for promotion are limited. Ambitious staff are likely to obtain promotion elsewhere but we recognise our responsibility for providing training for staff development.

**Steve Nash – Town Clerk & Proper Officer**

Signed .....

Dated .....

This Policy was approved at a meeting of the Council on..... it will be kept up to date as the size and nature of the council changes and as new legislation is introduced. Otherwise the date of next review is March 2017.

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## Training Policy & Procedure

### 1. Responsibility for managing the Policy Management:

The prime responsibility for training rests with management and all managers are responsible for ensuring their staff are trained to achieve effective performance in their current jobs, and to provide development training for any future roles, responsibilities and activities.

#### **The Town Clerk:**

The Town Clerk will provide advice and assistance on training activities. He will investigate and where necessary prompt the need for Council training initiatives. In consultation with line managers he will agree all training being undertaken and is responsible for preparing training programmes and seeking financial provision for them.

### 2. Training Plan

All training will be planned, programmed and recorded and the results reviewed to determine how training methods can be improved and maximum benefits can be obtained from resources devoted to training. An annual training plan will be drawn up detailing the training the Council intends to implement in the following year.

### 3. Consultation

In recognising the legitimate interests of employees in training matters, the Council will consult with them on training requirements.

### 4. Approved / Recognised Qualifications

#### **Training Requests**

- All applications for post entry training leading to approved qualifications must be made in writing to the Town Clerk;
- Decisions will be made according to the provisions of the training budget, the relevance of the course to applicants' present and possible future posts;
- New employees already undergoing training must apply, as indicated above, to continue with their course. Consideration will be given in each case although, dependent upon the state of the budget, full financial assistance may not be granted;
- The Council will give the following financial assistance in respect of agreed courses leading to approved qualifications:-
  - (i) Course fees - 100%
  - (ii) Examination fees - 100%
  - (iii) Subsistence and travelling will be agreed in advance with the Town Clerk
  - (iv) Necessary text books or equipment.

Any necessary textbooks or equipment for which the Council pay full cost, remain the property of the Council and are on loan to the relevant employee. They must be returned to the Town Clerk on completion of the course. Members of staff wishing to retain books must reimburse the Council in full.

Books required for reference purposes or as optional background reading as recommended by the course organiser should be borrowed from public or college libraries.

### **Recovery of Costs**

Employees studying for nationally recognised qualifications may, in certain circumstances, be required to repay training costs in full (excluding salary):

- If they leave local government within 1 year from the date of obtaining a recognised qualification; or
- If they withdraw from the course, or leave the Council before its completion, before sitting any examination or failing the examination;
- If an employee fails their examination the Council may agree to a re-sit fee if there is a Health & Safety requirement for the member of staff. Where there is no requirement, then the member of staff may pay their own re-sit fees.

They will also be required to repay training costs (excluding salary) if they leave the Council to take up a post within another company, business or local authority as follows:

#### **Full time courses**

- 100% of training costs, if an employee leaves during the course or within 12 months of the last day of the course or the examination, whichever is the later;
- 100% of training costs, less 1/12<sup>th</sup> for each completed month of service after one year if they leave within 2 years of the last day of the course or the examination, whichever is the later.

#### **Block release, part-time day release and correspondence course**

- 100% of training costs if an employee leaves during the course or within 12 months of the last day of the course or the examination, whichever is the later;
- 50% of training costs, less 1/12<sup>th</sup> for each completed month of service after one year if they leave within 2 years of the last day of the course or the examination, whichever is the later.

Employees will be required to sign an agreement to repay training expenses (Appendix 1) before commencing a course.

### **5. Short Courses - Seminars and Conferences**

- Applications to attend external short courses should be made to an employee's line manager who will advise the Town Clerk with regard to the state of the training budget, the demands of the Council, the benefit to the employee, the need for essential information about impending changes in legislation, or other relevant factors
- Where possible and beneficial, the Town Clerk will arrange joint short courses with other local authorities or councils;
- The Council will pay course fees and subsistence and travelling according to the scale of allowances;
- Any person undertaking training at the Council's expense will be required to distribute any knowledge gained, by way of a report to a meeting of the Senior Management Team;
- Attendance at normal meetings of professional institutions will not be financed from the training budget.

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**6. Scale of Allowances**

- Claims will only be accepted from officers who have received official approval for their training.
- Claims must relate to actual expenditure incurred and be submitted in sufficient detail to establish the validity of the claim. Management have the right to demand receipts.
- Claims which exceed the limits set by the Council from time to time will not be entertained.
- Out-of-pocket expenses may be paid as agreed in advance.

## Training Agreement

Employees need only complete this agreement if they are applying to study for a nationally recognised qualification

- 1) In return for Ringwood Town Council (“the Council”) paying all, or some of the training expenses in connection with my studies:-
  - i) I will repay to the Council 100% of the training expenses, which the Council has paid if I leave local government during the course or within one year of the date of the last day of the course or examination, whichever is the later
  - ii) I will repay to the Council 100% of the training expenses, which the Council has paid if I withdraw from the course or fail to sit any of the examinations or fail to make satisfactory progress in the view of the Council
  - iii) If I leave the Council to take up employment within another local authority within the UK, I will repay;
    - 100% of the training expenses which the Council has paid if I leave during the course or within twelve months of the date of the last day of the course or examination, whichever is the later
    - 50% of the training expenses, which the Council has paid less 1/12<sup>th</sup> for each completed month of service after one year if they leave within two years of the last day of the course or the examination, whichever is the later.
- 2) “Training expenses” include course and examination fees, travelling and subsistence, accommodation and payment for books and equipment.
- 3) I acknowledge that on completion of the course there may not be a post available which requires the qualification I have obtained and agree that the Council is under no obligation to make available a new post or in any way vary or alter my terms and conditions of employment.
- 4) I agree to comply with the provision of this agreement concerning the repayment of training expenses whether or not a post requiring the qualification I obtain is available to me on the completion of the course.
- 5) In so far as this agreement conflicts with my employment contract I agree that the provision of this agreement will prevail and that my employment contract will be varied accordingly.
- 6) In the event of my death, or if I leave local government on the grounds of redundancy or permanent ill health, I understand that I will not be required to repay any training expenses.
- 7) I agree that any money I owe the Council in accordance with this agreement may be deducted from my final salary or from any monies due to me by the Council. This is without prejudice to the Council’s other rights to recover any amount due.

Name:

Course Title:

Signature:

Date: