

Axminster Town Council Annual Report of the Employment Committee 2021-2022

This has been a busy year for the Employment Committee. During the year we have seen several staff changes. Three members of staff have or are about to retire - some after long periods of service to the Council – the Cemetery Caretaker retired after 32 years and the Clerk after 21 years. The Administrative Assistant is also to retire at the end of April. Two members of staff have moved on to different or promoted roles – the Lengthsman and the Responsible Finance Officer.

This has provided an opportunity to review our staff structure and the roles required for a modern and effective Council for the years ahead. An external consultant was recruited to review our team, to benchmark Axminster Town Council against other Councils of a similar size and community, and to advise us on a new structure. Following their recommendations, Council has decided to create two new roles:

- a joint Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer role as our Proper Officer
- a second senior officer to have responsibility for our premises and town projects – including regeneration work and the Neighbourhood Plan. This new role is to be named Council Administrator

A new administrative assistant will be recruited who will also lead on our communications strategy to ensure our website and social media communications with residents are current and informative.

We are thrilled to be able to announce that after national and regional advertisements and an interview process, Mr. Paul Hayward was appointed to the Proper Officer role in March. We look forward to recruiting our other new staff during April.

During the year, the Committee have worked alongside the staff to introduce an appraisal system which is providing six-monthly opportunities for staff to celebrate their achievements and to focus on next steps in the priorities of their roles and for the community.

We have also continued our role to review and update all of the policies and procedures relating to the employment of staff which is required on an annual cycle.