

Axminster Town Council

Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10am – 12 noon

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk



THE GUILDHALL
WEST STREET
AXMINSTER
DEVON
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk

Axminster Town Council: Minutes of the meeting of the Employment Committee

MINUTES APPROVED on 18th September 2023; Part ONE version (Redacted).

Held in person on Monday 26th June 2023 at 7pm.

Members present:

Cllrs. Birnie (SB), Farrow (JF), Leat (SL), Paice (EP) and Walden (JW). (Quorate).

Together with Clerk to the Council, Paul Hayward.

Chair welcomed all in attendance. Chair highlighted the building fire precautions and alerted those present to the fire exits.

Public Forum session.

No public speakers present.

Chair closed the Public Forum session at 7.05pm

Part ONE business.

EC23/015

To elect a Chair of the Employment Committee for the next year.

JF proposed that SB be elected as Chair of the Employment Committee.

Seconded by JW. No other nominations proposed.

SB accepted the nomination. Proposal resolved nem con.

SB was duly elected as the Chair of the Employment Committee.

EC23/016

To elect a Vice-Chair of the Employment Committee for the next year.

The Chair proposed that this election be deferred as the committee could nominate an Acting Chair should the need arise at any future meeting. Proposal resolved unanimously.

EC23/017

To note members of the Employment Committee present at the meeting:

As above. Meeting was quorate.

Continued overleaf.

Axminster Town Council

Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10am – 12 noon

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk



THE GUILDHALL
WEST STREET
AXMINSTER
DEVON
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk

EC23/018

To receive and, if thought fit, to note the absence and to approve the reasons given for the absence: (LGA 1972 s.85(1))

Cllr. Steadman (BS) sent her apologies as she had a conflicting engagement.

Chair proposed acceptance of this apology for absence. Seconded by JW.

Resolved unanimously.

EC23/019

To note members of the committee who are neither present nor have given their apologies for absence:

None.

EC23/020

To receive any declarations of interest from members of the committee in relation to items of business on this agenda and to note any dispensations previously afforded.

This does not preclude the need for members to declare any additional interests that may arise during the meeting.

No declarations of interest offered by members in relation to the business on the agenda for consideration.

EC23/021

To consider and, if thought fit, approve the minutes of the Employment Committee meeting held 3rd April 2023.

And to consider matters arising from those minutes not otherwise listed on this agenda.

It was proposed by JW, seconded by JF, that the minutes of that meeting be approved.

Resolved unanimously. One matter arising from these minutes. Clerk was asked to forward a copy of a recent exit interview to members of the Employment Committee as advised in the minutes. Noted for action.

EC23/022

To consider any matters listed on this agenda that Councillors consider should be dealt with as confidential business as per the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (see below).

No other matters to be considered in Part Two session other than that already listed on the agenda and the matter detailed above under EC23/030 to 034 inclusive.

Continued overleaf.

Axminster Town Council

Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10am – 12 noon

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk



THE GUILDHALL
WEST STREET
AXMINSTER
DEVON
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk

EC23/023

To consider proposal that the Chair of the Town Council be designated as the Line Manager to the Clerk/Proper Officer for the purposes of undertaking Performance Reviews and providing the day-to-day management role for that employee.

JF (the current Chair of Council/Mayor) outlined the justification and reason for this proposal which stems from previous employment circumstances at the Council which were no longer applicable/relevant.

Proposed by JW, seconded by SL. Resolved unanimously.

Clerk: Please note and liaise with Chair of Council accordingly.

EC23/024

To note the proposed period for the completion of annual employee performance reviews (appraisals) as per the previous resolution of this committee.

Clerk reported that the arrangements for the annual appraisals were underway. Noted.

EC23/025

To note that the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) operated by Peninsula Pension Services on behalf of Devon County Council has increased the Employer Contribution Rate from 21.1% to 21.9% (effective from April 2023) to reduce the current Pension Scheme Deficit.

Noted with no further action required other than for RFO to amend monthly payment schedule accordingly in respect of the increased pension contributions due to LGPS. Clerk also reported that LGPS had asked the Council to provide clarity to them in respect of the Town Council's Employer Discretion Policy regarding early retirement payments. Chair asked Clerk to ensure that this matter was brought back before EmployComm. at the next opportunity and to receive a report on the subject matter prior to debate and decision. Noted.

EC23/026

To review the draft Capability Policy and agree any amendments/revisions prior to approval and adoption by the committee (subject to FULL Council ratification).

JF proposed that the consideration of this matter be brought back to the next Employment Committee meeting so that the Clerk and Chair could have an opportunity to revise and edit the draft Capability Policy already circulated (taking on board member comments and suggested revisions) having taken advice from HR professionals to ensure final policy was both workable and legally compliant in accordance with employment legislation. Agreed by Chair. Clerk: please note and action accordingly, adding this matter to the next EmployComm meeting.

Axminster Town Council

Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10am – 12 noon

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk



THE GUILDHALL
WEST STREET
AXMINSTER
DEVON
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk

EC23/027

To consider whether this Council should adopt an Employee Adverse Weather Policy.

Councillors had reviewed a number of comparable policies used by other parish/town councils and public sector organisations. The model policy template used by St Stephen in Brannel PC appeared to cover all the key aspects of such a draft policy and Clerk was therefore directed to use that template as the base for the creation of a Town Council Bad Weather Policy document and to bring this back before the Employment Committee in the Autumn for further review and adoption. Noted.

EC23/028

To consider any matters considered as urgent by the presiding Chair for discussion:

None raised by Chair.

EC23/029

JF proposed that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, (as amended by the Local Government Act 1972, the public, (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Seconded by JW. Resolved unanimously.

The Part One meeting recording was stopped and a separate recording commenced for Part Two.

Part TWO business.

Business to be considered in Part Two session; matters which are considered as confidential as they relate to Council employment.

EC23/030 (IC)

To receive an update on a matter pertaining to a former Council employee which requires the attention of the employment committee.

(This matter is considered confidential as it relates to a former employee of the Council).

Report received from Clerk. Noted.

Continued overleaf.

Axminster Town Council

Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10am – 12 noon

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk



THE GUILDHALL
WEST STREET
AXMINSTER
DEVON
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk

EC23/031 (IC)

To receive an updated “leave” summary for Council employees for review.

(This matter is considered confidential as it relates to employees of the Council).

Noted. No further action necessary. Chair reminded all staff that they must take their leave as contractually due/earned/accrued and that the Council had a duty to ensure that staff leave was taken in full for the benefit of our employee’s physical and mental wellbeing.

EC23/032 (IC)

To note the recruitment of a new member of Council staff and to ratify terms and conditions of employment, pension arrangements and length of probationary period.

(This matter is considered confidential as it relates to an employee of the Council).

Chair proposed that the offer of employment as issued by the recruitment Panel under their delegated authority be ratified by this committee. Seconded by JW. Resolved unanimously.

Furthermore, that the contractual terms (including rate of pay, hours of work, employment benefits and probationary period) offered by the recruitment panel be formally adopted and approved. Proposed Chair, seconded JW. Resolved unanimously.

Finally, Chair proposed that the Council should pre-purchase some specialist IT equipment for the employee to be funded (and then subsequently reimbursed) under the DWP “Access to Work” programme. Expenditure cap was approved at £1600 (plus VAT).

Resolved unanimously. Clerk/RFO to liaise with employee and DWP to arrange accordingly.

EC23/033 (IC)

To receive a report from the Clerk on, and to consider matters with regards to, an employment matter considered confidential and to resolve (if appropriate) that this Council should seek specialist HR advice to ensure compliance with all relevant extant employment legislation in that regard.

(This matter is considered confidential as it relates to employees of the Council and other 3rd parties).

Report received and instructions/directions issued to the Clerk to execute.

It was further proposed by JW, seconded by JF, that the Committee authorise the expenditure of up to £1000 for the procurement of any specialist HR advice needed to ensure compliance with the applicable employment legislation; this expenditure to be duly delegated to the Clerk to authorise having carried out necessary due diligence and checks on the prospective advice sought and accepted.

Continued overleaf.

Axminster Town Council

Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10am – 12 noon

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk



THE GUILDHALL
WEST STREET
AXMINSTER
DEVON
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk

EC23/033 (IC)

To receive a report from the Clerk on, and to consider matters with regards to, an employment matter considered confidential and to resolve (if appropriate) that this Council should seek specialist HR advice to ensure compliance with all relevant extant employment legislation in that regard (continued):

Clerk was asked to bring this matter back to the committee at the next opportunity but, if timescales required, that an extraordinary meeting could be convened with the agreement of the Chair, or that such matters be referred to the FULL Council in case of urgent business to be considered and agreed upon. Noted.

EC23/034 (IC)

To consider a matter pertaining to Council banking arrangements that directly affects employees.

At the request of the RFO, the committee approved that Sara Leat be reconfirmed as a FULL Power signatory with Lloyds Bank PLC and that a Board Resolution (as per that financial organisations regulations) be signed and returned confirming this approval.

Proposed by JF, seconded by JW. Resolved unanimously.

RFO: Please note and action accordingly. Please add to FULL agenda for FULL Council ratification as per Council's extant Financial Regulations.

RFO was also asked by SL to contact Lloyds Bank to enquire as to whether there were any limits on the number of Full Power signatories that could be nominated. Noted.

With no further items to discuss the Chair closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Signed Date:

MINUTES APPROVED on 18th September 2023; Part ONE version (Redacted).