

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE HELD ON Monday 12th December 2022

Present: Alan Grant (AG), Sylvia Francis (SF) Jim Richmond (JR)

In attendance: K Carpenter (Clerk) P Holland (Deputy Clerk)

	<u>Finance & Staffing Committee</u>
1	Apologies Cllrs Dale and Cllr Bruce
2	Declaration of Interest AG declared a connection to the Solicitor due to a family member recommending them as part of the Law Group under which they provided services.
3	Minutes of the last meeting Agreed as an accurate record. The following matters arising were briefly discussed: Grass Cutting Tender – documents have been published VAS – donation from Berry Hill received and invoice for unit to be paid in December. Staffing – plan to reduce accrued time in place and reducing accrued hours
4	Engagement of Solicitor There was a brief discussion about the merits of pursuing the complaint and recouping costs incurred by Council against the probability of success for this course of action considering the nature of the proprietor of the business.

	<u>The recommendation to Council will be to take no further action, and to contact the Solicitor to advise of this course of action.</u>
5	WDPC Grant Publicity The meeting discussed the cost of inserting the adverts into the papers, this being in the region of £370, and whether this expense was merited as many of the applicants for grants were accessing the information via the parish website and social media. There was some brief discussion about making this more prominent on the website when the grant application period was open to ensure that it was visible. <u>The recommendation to Council is to no longer use press advertising for the WDPC grant awards.</u>
6	Handyman Appointment AG opened the discussion by detailing the recent criticism over the appointment of the current handyman, which he detailed as an expedient appointment. At the time there was considerable recruitment work being undertaken for officer posts with delays imposed by the need to advertise vacancies. AG felt that now all vacancies were filled and had settled into a consistent and efficient working pattern. PH confirmed that the handyman was working on average less than 5hrs per week with the main roles being the installation and upkeep of the VAS (x3) and repair work when necessary either at the Centre or across the parish. PH also confirmed that the handyman was contacted to provide services when required. There was some discussion about the works which have been done and PH & AG agreed that they were more than satisfied with the standard of work provided and that the current arrangement was expedient to the parish and was also economically advantageous. <u>The recommendation to Council is that there is no point in advertising the post, when a suitable and capable candidate is already providing the service and that the current arrangement is economically advantageous and meets the requirements of the role.</u>
7	Newsletter There was a discussion about the budget for the newsletter, which is set at £5k per annum and the frequency of the newsletter being altered too twice yearly. KC advised that a meeting was scheduled with the website provider to understand what they could offer, and the costs associated with this additional service. There was also some debate about the inclusion of business information as a thank you for acting as distribution hubs for the newsletter. <u>The recommendation to Council is that a small editorial committee be set up to assist in the development of the content and agree distribution methods for the printed versions of the newsletter.</u>
8	Review of Staff Hours and Leave

	AG is managing the leave and hours worked by the officers and will continue to be monitoring and manage this element of employment at Finance & Staffing Committee Meetings as a core Agenda item. It was acknowledged by those present at the meeting that the implementation of an electronic timesheet and leave cards, as well as the yearly planner being used to identify when holidays are booked, has been a tremendous step forward in the Council's ability to monitor and manage staff hours and leave. These records are available in both electronic and paper formats which allow for review during the Staffing & Finance Committee meetings. <u>PLEASE NOTE THAT THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED FROM 21/12/22 TO 4/1/2023</u> <u>(Reopening at 9am on Wednesday 4th January 2023).</u>
9	Date of the Next Meeting – As Required.

Meeting finished at 13:10