

Cockermouth Town Council

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE STAFFING COMMITTEE

Adopted by resolution 21st February 2024, minute 258.

1. Objective

1.1 To ensure effective and professional staff management of all matters related to the employees of the Town Council.

1.2 The Staffing Committee shall be a standing committee of The Council. It shall exercise some responsibilities and assist, advise, and make recommendations to The Council regarding the fulfilment of The Council's responsibilities as an employer, and compliance with employment legislation and The Council's policies.

2. Membership:

2.1 The committee shall comprise 5 Members in total, elected by The Council, normally at the first meeting of The Council after an election. Membership of the committee shall continue until the next Town Council election. If a vacancy arises, it shall be filled by election of a member at the first possible meeting of The Council after the vacancy has arisen.

3. Chair/Vice-Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected by The Council.

4. Quorum

The quorum of the committee shall be 3 Town Council members.

5. In attendance

5.1 The Proper Officer shall act as Clerk to the committee except where the committee is to discuss confidential matters relating to the Clerk/RFO. In such an eventuality, the committee shall elect from amongst its members a minute-taker and records kept in compliance with The Council's confidentiality policies.

6. Meetings

6.1 Meetings shall normally be held quarterly or more frequently should the need arise, at the discretion of the Chair/Vice-Chair of the committee or two members of the committee who have requested a meeting in writing to the Clerk/Proper Officer.

6.2 The Proper Officer shall 'call' the meeting, circulate the agenda, and summon members to attend in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

6.3 Public Notices of the meeting shall be given in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

7. Public participation

Meetings will be open to the press and public, although they may be excluded from the meeting when confidential items are being discussed.

8. Minutes

8.1 Minutes of all meetings shall be recorded by the Proper Officer (or delegated to a member as agreed by the committee) and circulated to all members of the committee and to all Full Council members within five working days of the meeting.

8.2 Where there is a separate note of the meeting containing confidential information not included in the minutes, this will be kept securely by the Clerk, and will be available for Councillors to view at the Town Hall by prior arrangement.

8.3 Minutes shall be presented to the next meeting of the committee for confirmation.

9. Accountability and Scope

9.1 The Chair of the Staffing Committee shall be responsible for:

- line managing the Clerk/RFO;
- performing the annual appraisal and job description review;
- and, with the committee, any salary review of the Clerk/RFO as provided for by the Council's policies, reporting and making recommendations to the Full Council.

The Chair of the Committee shall manage any long-term sickness of the Clerk/RFO in accordance with the Council's policies.

9.2 The Chair of the Staffing Committee is the first point of contact for the Clerk/RFO on staffing and employment issues in relation to other staff.

9.3 The Staffing Committee shall be bound by Standing Order 4 of the Council's Standing Orders relating to committees and sub-committees.

10. Responsibilities

10.1 The Staffing Committee has responsibilities in relation to these defined terms of reference only; any other recommendations outside the Staffing Committee's terms of reference shall be made to Full Council.

10.2 To consider and ensure implementation of any changes which are required to comply with Employment Law, Health & Safety Law and Terms and Conditions of Service.

10.3 To consider and approve requests from the Clerk within the training budget for training requirements. (The Clerk to consider and approve requests within the training budget for training from other staff.)

10.4 To undertake the recruitment of candidates for the Town Clerk/Proper Officer/RFO and other senior staff roles when vacancies arise and make recommendations to Full Council on final appointments.

10.5 Following the appointment of Council staff to consider recommendations from the Clerk following the staff annual appraisals, before making final recommendations to Full Council for approval.

10.6 To draw up (as appropriate) and annually review employment policies/procedures and standard forms of employment contract for recommendation to Full Council for approval.

10.7 To consult (no later than 30 November each year) with Full Council on budget proposals in respect of salaries and employees' training for the following financial year.

10.8 In conjunction with the Clerk to be responsible periodically for reviewing The Council's staffing structure, employee handbook, and all employees' job roles and pay awards and increments and to make any recommendations to Full Council for approval.

10.9 To periodically review staff pension arrangements for recommendation to Full Council for approval.

10.10 To oversee any disciplinary matters in line with the council's disciplinary procedures and to report to Full Council.

10.11 To oversee an employee's formal grievance(s) in line with the council's grievance procedures and to report to Full Council.

10.12 To ensure that confidentiality is maintained over all staffing matters under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Code of Conduct by all members of the Council.

10.13 To ensure that all staff have an annual appraisal with quantifiable and measurable objectives.

10.14 Except in the case of a vacancy in the Proper Officer/RFO role (see 10.4) to provide, if requested by the Clerk, at least one Member to constitute, along with appropriate Officers, the Interview Board for all applicants for Council employment.

10.15 Except in the case of an appointment to the Proper Officer/RFO role, to grant the Interview Board the authority to make offers of employment and remuneration within the available budget and the agreed salary scale for the role. Any proposed variation outside of the budget shall be referred to the Staffing Committee for review and recommendation to the Full Council.

11. Review

The Staffing Committee's Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council.