



Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Lewes Town Council held on Tuesday 7 February 2023 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Lewes Town Hall.

Present:

Councillor Baah
Councillor Bird (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor Catlin
Councillor Clarke
Councillor Earl
Councillor Handy
Councillor Herbert
Councillor Lamb
Councillor Makepeace
Councillor Maples
Councillor Milner
Councillor Mayhew
Councillor Sains (Mayor)
Councillor Waring
Councillor Wood

In attendance

Town Clerk, Chief Executive Officer of the East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC), Locum Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

104. Filming of council meetings and mobile phones

104.1. The procedures were noted.

105. Apologies for absence

105.1. There were apologies from councillors O’Keeffe and Vernon due to work commitments.

106. Members’ declarations of interests

106.1. There were none.

107. Question time

107.1. There were none.

108. Exempt business

108.1. The Mayor proposed and it was resolved that:

The public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded from the Meeting under Section 100 Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.

This item is a confidential report for Members of the Council only in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to any consultation or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

109. Staffing matters

109.1. Council considered a confidential report containing proposals to fill the position of Town Clerk following the recent resignation of the current postholder.

109.2. Given the length of time required to prepare, undertake and complete a recruitment process it was proposed that an experienced interim Town Clerk is secured to provide continuity. Council were asked to consider an interim position up to and beyond the elections to allow for a handover with the current Town Clerk as well as ensure the Council has a Clerk in post to receive the new administration, supporting the Council through a period of significant change.

109.3. It was also proposed that the current arrangements for the locum Responsible Financial Officer were extended to beyond the elections to provide support and continuity particularly for the year end processes including the close of the financial accounts and the internal and external audits.

109.4. Mr Leggo explained that appointing an interim Town Clerk is not an unusual process. He gave an example of a local principal authority who had recently done similar. Mr Leggo explained the process that could be undertaken to source an interim Town Clerk including through the local and national associations and making use of the Society of Local Council Clerks who provide a local council consultancy service delivered by a team of CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) qualified Clerks. As a consultancy service a locum clerk is employed by SLCC and the Town Council charged an hourly rate which covers oncosts such as national insurance, pension, handling costs and annual leave.

109.5. Council discussed the need to progress the interim appointment expediently.

109.6. It was resolved that:

109.7. Authority be delegated to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Personnel Panel to work with the CEO of ESALC, the Town Clerk and locum RFO to secure an interim Town Clerk up to and beyond the elections for a minimum of nine months.

109.8. The current arrangements for the locum RFO continue up to and beyond the elections be agreed.

109.9. Council agreed a supplementary estimate from the General Fund of up to £25,000 to meet recruitment and salary costs.

The meeting closed at 7:35pm

Signed..... Date.....