

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Staffing Committee held on Monday, 16th August 2021 in the Main Hall, Northway Community Hub, commencing at approximately 8.30p.m., directly following an Extraordinary Council Meeting.

Present: Cllr J Roberts (Chairman) Cllr Mrs S Terry (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr S Ward

In Attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mrs L Stewart, Clerk's Assistant

S/12/21 Election of Committee Chairman for the Municipal Year

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that Cllr Roberts was elected Chairman of the Staffing Committee. No further nominations were received. Cllr Roberts accepted the nomination. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

S/13/21 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

S/14/21 Election of Committee Vice - Chairman for the Municipal Year

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that Cllr Terry was elected Vice-Chairman of the Staffing Committee. No further nominations were received. Cllr Terry accepted the nomination. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

S/15/21 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest, as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 11th July 2012 (Min Ref C/159/12), including paragraph 12(2), were made.

S/16/21 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Minutes from the meeting that took place on 24th March 2021 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

S/17/21 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

None

S/18/21 Health and Safety File

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that this item was deferred until later in the meeting (Min Ref: S/24/21)

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

S/19/21 **COVID-19**

Members considered any necessary actions relating to Covid-19, following easing of restrictions as part of the Government's Roadmap.

It was noted that a one-way entering/exiting system was still in place at the Community Hub. Members AGREED that this should remain in place and be reviewed by Council in September.

S/20/21 **Litter Picker Role**

It was noted that the Litter Picker would be resigning from this role as of 7th October 2021.

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the job description which had been updated accordingly. It was suggested that mention should be made of the fact that PPE and equipment would be provided.

Cllr Roberts suggested that a letter of thanks should be sent to the current Litter Picker closer to the time.

S/21/21 **Exclusion of the Public & Press under Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act) 1960 s1 ss2**
Viz:-

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business about to be transacted i.e. relating to staff personnel, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

S/22/21 **Exclusion Items**

Under confidential cover the Committee considered the Litter Picker Role including the contract of employment and rate of pay. It was AGREED to advertise the role immediately.

S/23/21 **Training**

It was noted that Cllrs Shelton and Terry were due to attend upcoming training courses.

S/24/21 **Kickstart**

The Clerk had been contacted by an organisation advertising the Kickstart scheme which helped fund work placements for younger people on Universal Credit, however, it would only apply to jobs with a minimum of 25 hours a week and Members believed this would be difficult to fulfil.

S/25/21 **Health and Safety**

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that this deferred item was revisited (Min Ref: S/18/21).

- i. Review of file by NFU Mutual, Risk Management Services Health and Safety Audit – Members noted the extent of the contents of the audit and were aware that going through the documentation would be a long process with gradual changes where necessary.

There were various titles to the Plan including 'Action Plan', 'Health & Safety Audit', 'Health and Safety Policy', 'Risk Assessments', 'COSHH' and 'Safety Information'.

Action Plan - The first folder contained the 'Action Plan' and Members were pleased to note that no items requiring 'Urgent Action' had been highlighted so they moved on to the section headed 'Necessary Action Points' and considered the following action points that needed to be addressed:

1. ***The Health and Safety Policy should be checked, approved by the relevant Committee(s), signed by the Chair of the Parish Council (on behalf of the Parish Council), dated and brought to the attention of all staff.*** Members reviewed the Health and Safety Policy and, upon approval, Cllr Roberts signed and dated the relevant paperwork and it was AGREED that a review of the document should take place annually.
2. ***The Risk Assessments should be discussed/checked by the individuals involved in undertaking the activities (and amended where necessary) to ensure that the information is accurate. Any additional control measures should be implemented, and key information must then be communicated to relevant staff.*** It was AGREED that relevant staff to the role would check the assessments.
3. ***Safe systems of work should be developed for tasks with significant hazards (e.g. litter picking and gate keeping). These must be brought to the attention of relevant staff. Regular checks should be made to ensure that staff are following the safe systems of work.*** It was noted that Risk Assessments were in place as well as safety equipment provided.

Cllr Roberts noted that various forms had been provided which the Office could look through and assign the relevant ones to each role. After reading, staff could then sign something to say they had read the forms.
4. ***The lone working arrangements should be reviewed. Consideration should be given to providing lone workers (especially public facing lone workers) with a lone worker alarm system and/or bodycam.*** It was noted that this was one of the Health and Safety Consultant's main concerns. Members AGREED that research should be made into what other Council's had in place to deal with lone working and this should be brought back to a future meeting.
5. ***Fire Risk Assessments must be produced for the buildings for which the Parish Council are responsible for. The Fire Risk Assessment should take account of the buildings' structure, layout, escape route distances, access to emergency services, etc. and include all current fire prevention measures in place and the risk of arson. The key information from the assessment should be brought to the attention of all relevant parties.*** The Clerk confirmed that a Fire Risk Assessment had been undertaken for the Community Hub in 2017 and the Health and Safety Consultant had been provided with a copy of this. The Clerk was asked to investigate when another Assessment would be required and look into using a consultant to undertake one at both the Village Hall and the Changing Room Facility. (Recommend to Finance Committee)

6. ***Arrangements for managing contractors should be reviewed. The arrangements should ensure that the Parish Council notifies contractors of any hazards they are likely to encounter whilst undertaking their work and vice-versa. It should be ensured that any contractors are 'competent', and as such checks should include ensuring suitable employers and public liability insurance is held, collecting references as proof of competency, and ensuring their awareness and compliance with health and safety issues, including legislation.***

It is important to ensure that any work undertaken by contractors is adequately monitored to ensure that their activities do not present a hazard to staff or members of the community. The Clerk confirmed that contractors being used were either known to the Council or came recommended and public liability information was requested and kept on file.

7. ***Consider implementing a more formal process for the inspection and reporting of buildings and structures (e.g. benches, bins and bus shelters) and for reporting issues. (Possibly, similar to the current process of inspecting play equipment).*** It was noted that the Office Staff and Councillors did monitor the condition of buildings and structures as they went around the parish, as did the Litter Picker. It was AGREED that 'visual inspecting of Council assets (bins, benches, bus shelters, etc.)' should be included in the Litter Picker job description. It was noted that this might require an extra hour per week as part of the role, but this could be reviewed at a later date.
8. ***A programme for the examination of the fixed electrical wiring (in the buildings for which the Parish Council are responsible for) must be implemented. The installations must be examined by a competent electrician (e.g. Integrity Electrical Services) and any defects rectified. The frequency of such examination should be determined by the competent person, taking into account the demand on the system, the likelihood of damage, previous faults and the age of the system.*** It was felt that, since the Community Hub was a new/renovated building, an electrical examination would not be required until 2027 (ten years after building work had been completed). It was AGREED that electrical examinations should be arranged for the Village Hall and Changing Room Facilities and then ten years afterwards for each building. (Recommend to Finance Committee)
9. ***Arrangements should be put in place to protect those at risk from contact with overhead power lines and underground services, including: recording the locations on a site maps; making staff, contractors and members of the community aware of their location; monitoring for damage/issues (e.g. low hanging lines); and ensuring that no activities are undertaken in the vicinity that could lead to accidental contact.*** The Clerk mentioned that the Health and Safety Consultant had suggested a website the Council could use to find information on power lines and underground services which were in place. It was AGREED that this should be consulted.
10. ***The COSHH Assessment should be checked, signed and dated and the key information from the Assessment brought to the attention of relevant staff. Current Safety Data Sheets should be obtained from the supplier for all commercial substances in use and the information shared with staff.*** Members considered what chemicals were used at the Community Hub, none of which were felt to be hazardous to health and there were some data sheets provided for the floor cleaning solutions.

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

S/25/21 Health and Safety File (continued)

11. ***Consider providing a lockable/flameproof/bunded cabinet for the storage of all cleaning (and similar) substances at the Hub. So far as is reasonably practicable, the quantity of stored substances should be kept to a minimum and any redundant substances safely disposed of.*** The storeroom at the Community Hub was lockable, which was felt to be sufficient, considering there was nothing hazardous contained in it (except bleach). The cupboards under the kitchen sink at the Hub were also lockable. The lockable cabinet at the Changing Room store needed replacing and a new one was being purchased as a matter of urgency.
12. ***Specialist advice should be sought to assist with carrying out assessment for the risks associated with legionella at the sites for which the Parish Council are responsible, following which arrangements should be put in place to manage the risk where required. The key information from the assessment should then be brought to the attention of relevant staff and third parties.*** A plumber had informally assessed the risks associated with storing of water at the Changing Room Facility and advice forwarded to the Football Club. It was AGREED that specialist advice should be sought for the Changing Rooms. (Refer to Finance Committee)
13. ***The Asbestos Surveys (and Asbestos Registers and Management Plans) must be reviewed, and the findings acted upon. The review should look at whether any asbestos containing material (ACM) identified in the initial Surveys have deteriorated and now present a significant risk. Also, where ACM has been removed, this should be noted. Information on the location and condition of ACM must be shared with persons who may disturb them during their work activities, such as contractors.*** The Clerk confirmed that an Asbestos Survey had been undertaken at the Ray Shill Building and Village Hall previously with asbestos being located in aertex ceiling tiles.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the rest of the action plan should be addressed at the next Staffing Committee meeting.

- ii. Necessary Actions – Already addressed above.

S/26/21 Correspondence received after 10th August 2021

None

The meeting concluded at 9.40 p.m.