

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL
**Minutes of the meeting of the
Personnel Committee
6th August 2020**

Present

Councillors Kevin Cranston, Rob Green and Lucas Schoemaker

Absent

None

In attendance

Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

None

2. Declarations of interest or requests for dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

3. Questions from the public

There were no questions.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee of 10th June 2020 were **approved** by those present and will be signed as a correct record by the Chair at the earliest opportunity.

5. Appointment of a Project Officer to support the delivery of Stroud Town CAN projects

Cllr Green presented the background to a proposal to create a new part-time position. Having declared a climate emergency and recognizing the growing ecological emergency, the Council were now working with the Stroud Town CAN to develop a detailed action plan for delivering relevant projects. It was reported that there was now a growing momentum in the town and a need to demonstrate visible progress towards achieving the target of carbon neutrality by 2030.

Although some of the projects in the draft action plan had not yet been formally approved by the Council, it was clear that additional staff resource would be needed to progress the volume of work required and support community action.

The Committee discussed the proposed role, including the level of the post, contract period and funding. It was noted that a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the role would be needed and careful thought would need to be given to how internal and external projects would be prioritised. It was noted that the administration responsibilities of the post with regard to the CAN, would not replace the administration contributions from the member groups.

It was **agreed** to recommend to Council the creation of an initial one-year trial with a view to the post becoming a longer-term commitment. To enable a report to be presented to the Council meeting on 7th September, the Clerk was asked to consult the Environment Committee on the proposal by email and if necessary to arrange an extraordinary Committee meeting if requested.

6. Remote working

The Committee received a verbal report from the Clerk on the pros and cons of having staff working from home. Key areas considered were: the need to be accessible to the public for face to face enquiries, providing space to work on complex tasks without interruption, working with display screen equipment and isolation from colleagues.

The Committee recognised the importance of contact with the public and direct support for the community, and the benefits of staff working together as a team.

It was noted that current home-working arrangements would remain in place in the short term, but plans were being made for a staged return to the office, including initially offering appointments for matters that cannot be dealt with remotely.

The Committee gave support in principle to the continuation of some home working in the future, where this is good employment practice and appropriate to the role.

7. Exclusion of press and public

It was **resolved** in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting

8. Flexible working Request

The Committee **agreed** a response to a flexible working request. The Clerk was asked to check the proposed offer with the Council's HR advisors before responding to the request.

The meeting closed at 11.45am.

Chair

Date