

## **BISHOPS LYDEARD & COTHELSTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

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### **Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held in the Church Centre, Bishops Lydeard on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at 1:30pm.**

**Persons present:** Cllrs Allen (chair), Cllrs Lewin-Harris, Bletcher, Bainbridge and Roberts supported by David Richards (Clerk).

There were no members of the public present.

#### **Agenda Item 1 - SC015/25 To note apologies**

None

#### **Agenda Item 2 - SC016/25 Declarations of Interest relating to matters on the agenda**

None

#### **Agenda Item 3 - SC017/25 Comments from Members of the public.**

No members of the public were present

#### **Agenda Item 4 - SC018/25 Adoption of the minutes of the Staffing Committee meetings held on 3rd and 30th September 2025**

The meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 had not followed the councils' Standing Orders and the meeting was declared as void. All recommendations from this meeting will not be carried forward.

The meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025 was not quorate so did not go ahead. As the minutes of that meeting stated this the minutes were approved.

#### **Agenda Item 5 - SC019/25 Approval of the Clerk/RFO Pay increase 2025/26**

The Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2025/26 was proposed by Cllr Lewin-Harris as approved. This was seconded by Cllr Bainbridge and received unanimous support.

**Agenda Item 6 - SC020/25 Review and approval of the updated contract of employment for the Clerk/ RFO**

The updated contract was proposed as approved by Cllr Bletcher. This was seconded by Cllr Roberts and received unanimous support.

**Agenda Item 7 SC021/25 - Review of Clerk/ RFO workload and stress level and proposals to mitigate**

The current clerk/RFO is working more than the contracted hours which are 20 hours per week. The recorded average working time is more than 25 hours per week. It is recognised that the workload is increasing. He is also looking to reduce his working hours rather than increase them. Various options to reduce the workload were discussed including having fewer meetings in the year.

After discussion the following was agreed by all:

Since the current clerk has also expressed his aim to retire in the medium term, but will be prepared to continue to work in the RFO role with reduced hours, it would make more sense to recruit a replacement clerk rather than an assistant clerk, with the current clerk inducting the new clerk and then continuing as RFO on reduced hours (5 hours per week).

It was therefore agreed that the proposal to the Parish Council should be to recruit a new clerk. This has the added advantage that if the new clerk doesn't hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification, his/ her early exposure to the responsibilities of clerk may help him/ her in progressing to gaining this qualification.

**Agenda Item 8 - SC022/25 Proposals to support the clerk with an Assistant Clerk if required**

The agreement to recommend recruitment of a clerk rather than an assistant clerk obviated the need to discuss the assistant clerk role.

**Agenda Item 9 - SC023/25 If the Staffing Committee recommend the recruitment of an Assistant Clerk, then:**

Having agreed to recommend recruitment of a clerk rather than an assistant clerk this agenda item changed to reviewing the documentation for a clerk rather than an assistant clerk.

The documents reviewed were:

Clerk Job Description

Clerk Person Specification

Clerk Application Form

## Vacancy notices for a Clerk

The documents were reviewed and will be amended to show the recruitment of a clerk and not an assistant clerk. In the job description and adverts it was agreed the role will be part time at 15 hours per week and the pay scale will be stated as SCP 18 to SCP 23 (£16.35 to £17.85). It was also agreed that in the Person Specification - Experience of budget setting, monitoring processes, controls and financial management reports will be moved from Essential to Desirable. The closing date for applications was recommended as mid-January 2026.

The method of publication was discussed. It was agreed to publish the job advert on the Parish Council noticeboards, the website and in Fiveways magazine. It should also be sent to SALC and the SLCC. Distribution of post cards advertising the role will be considered if necessary. The cost of this will need to be agreed but should be similar to the previous time. It was also agreed that those candidates shortlisted from last time should be contacted.

The Recruitment and Selection panel was agreed as Cllr Allen, Cllr Bainbridge and Cllr Roberts. The other Staffing Committee members agreed to step in for interviews as needed.

It was agreed that the interviews should be held in the Church Centre as last time.

### **Agenda Item 10 - SC024/25 Proposals to the Parish Council for approval at the next Parish Council meeting**

The following proposals were made for approval at the next Parish Council meeting:

1. A new Clerk is recruited. It is recommended that the role is for 15 hours per week with a starting salary at SCP pay scale 18 to 23 depending on experience (£16.35 to £17.85 per hour).
2. After suitable training of the new clerk the current Clerk/ RFO hands over the Clerk role and stays as RFO only at 5 hours per week. It is recognised the current clerk will need to work additional hours above the 5 hours per week during the handover period.
3. It is agreed that the Staffing Committee has delegated power to undertake the recruitment process and agree the following:
  - a. Job Description and Person Specification
  - b. Vacancy notices and methods of publication
  - c. Application Form
  - d. Recruitment Process including closing date, shortlisting arrangements, and interview date and membership of a Recruitment and Selection Panel.  
(NOTE: The Recruitment and Selection panel was agreed as Cllrs Allen, Bainbridge and Roberts).

The Staffing Committee will review the recommendations from the Recruitment and Selection and then forward their final candidate recommendation to the Parish Council for approval before any job offer is made.

**Agenda Item 11 - SC025/25 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Staffing Committee is to be advised.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.00 pm