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## **STAFFING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Staffing Committee,  
held at the Fleur-De-Lys Meeting Room, Market Street, Hailsham, BN27 2AE  
On Thursday 15th January 2026 at 7.00 p.m.

SfC/25/  
6/42

### **Public Forum**

No members of the public were present.

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### **Present:**

Cllr B. Carpenter, Cllr B. Holbrook, Cllr M. Laxton, Cllr C. Mitchell, Cllr K. Nicholls (Chair),  
Cllr G. White. Cllr M. Cairra was also in attendance.

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In the absence of the Deputy Chair, the Committee **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr C. Mitchell  
as Acting Deputy Chair for this meeting.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

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### **Officers Present:**

E. Hastings (Corporate Services Manager), J. Harrison (Town Clerk)

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### **Apologies For Absence:**

Apologies were received and accepted from: Cllr G. Blake-Coggins and Cllr AM. Ricketts.

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### **Declarations of Interest:**

Cllrs M. Laxton and C. Mitchell declared interests as Directors of the Post Office.  
Cllr B. Carpenter advised he would withdraw for the James West Community Centre  
Manager item.

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### **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13th November 2025, are  
an accurate record and may be signed by the Chair.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

Update about progress of resolutions from the last Committee meeting not covered by  
this agenda:

E. Hastings explained that the Disciplinary and Sickness Management policies will be  
reviewed by the new HR Manager and will be put forward to Staffing in April.

## **Review of the Staffing Review**

Full Council resolved that the review of the Staffing Review be outsourced to an external consultant. The Committee was asked to consider the specifications and parameters for the review.

The Town Clerk reported that potential names of individuals who could undertake the review had been provided. Cllrs B. Carpenter, M. Laxton and C. Mitchell declared their knowledge of the individuals. The Committee agreed that the Town Clerk should approach two of the suggested individuals.

Cllr M. Laxton suggested that the review should consider the 18month period since the adoption of the Staffing Review and assess its effectiveness in relation to the Council's Strategic Plan. The review should examine the roles and posts in place to deliver the Council's objectives. In addition, the review should cover: staff wellbeing, sickness absence, succession planning and morale. The review should be conducted through confidential 1 to 1 interviews, with the reviewer arranging their own appointments with staff and Councillors.

Cllr C. Mitchell suggested that the parameters of the review should include: how the Staffing Review was implemented; the extent to which the implementation reflected what had been agreed; whether staff were undertaking the roles expected as a result of the review; and whether the changes had been positive, negative or neutral. A full written report should be produced, to be reviewed by the Chair and Deputy Chair before being presented to the Staffing Committee.

Cllr B. Carpenter suggested that the parameters could be kept broader, allowing the individuals approached to propose their own methodology, including how they would conduct the review and what they would ask staff and Councillors.

E. Hastings suggested that contributions from staff and Councillors should be optional, and that a questionnaire could be offered as an alternative. The Committee emphasised that anonymity and confidentiality should be essential.

**RESOLVED** that the Chair and Deputy Chair select an appropriate individual to carry out the review based on the agreed specifications, and that, subject to availability, the work should commence as soon as practicably possible, with a report ideally submitted to the next Staffing Committee on **23 April 2026**.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

## **Policies**

The Committee reviewed the Work Experience Policy. It was suggested that the policy be amended to state that the Council will provide PPE where required. Cllrs M. Laxton and C. Mitchell also suggested that the policy could be expanded in future to include reference to apprenticeships supported by government funding.

**RESOLVED** to recommend that the Work Experience Policy be approved by the Finance and Governance Committee, subject to the proposed amendment to Section 11: *PPE (provided by the Council as required)*.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

51 **Confidential Business**

**RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the next agenda items as they concern engagement, terms of service and the beginning of legal proceedings - in accordance with the Council's Standing Order No 1E.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

52 **Staffing matters and Updates**

52.1 **Recruitment updates**

52.1.1 J. Harrison provided an update on the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) role. The Committee was presented with an amended job description, including updated qualification requirements and changes reflecting the increasing complexity of the role. It was suggested that Section 2.7 be amended to read: *"...and all pension authorities including East Sussex County Council, Royal London, or their successors."*

**RESOLVED** to adopt the amended job description and person specification, and to commission an external job evaluation.

This resolution was carried **unanimously**.

52.1.2 E. Hastings provided an update on the successful recruitment of the HR Manager and the Receptionist (maternity leave cover) posts, with both new starters expected to begin in early February.

Cllr B. Carpenter left the meeting at **19.37**.

52.1.3 The Committee discussed the vacancy at the James West Community Centre.

**RESOLVED** to commence recruitment for a **30 hour post** and a **10 hour post** to provide cover for bookings across the week and weekend.

This resolution was carried **unanimously**.

Cllr B. Carpenter returned to the meeting at **19.44**.

J. Harrison informed the Committee that the Post Office and Banking Hub Senior Counter Clerk job description had been agreed and was currently being regraded. Internal recruitment for the post was expected to begin imminently.

52.2 The Committee discussed the forthcoming vacancy for the Corporate Services Manager. A report was presented proposing an internal fixed term secondment to cover the role. It was suggested that the person specification be amended to include the word supervision in the following essential criteria: *"Proven staff management/supervision experience"*.

**RESOLVED** to recruit to the Corporate Services Manager role as an internal secondment for a fixed term of six months.

This resolution was carried by 4 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

Cllrs Carpenter, Holbrook, Mitchell, and White voted in favour.

Cllr Nicholls voted against.

Cllr Laxton abstained from voting.

52.3 Officers reported on the following resignations: Stacey White, Youth Worker and Emily Hastings Corporate Services Manager

52.4 The Committee received a report on completed appraisals for noting. The Committee was asked to consider awarding an additional increment for exemplary performance.

**RESOLVED** to award an additional increment for 2026/27 to Tony Lee, Operations and Facilities Manager.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

The Committee considered how and when to conduct appraisals for Post Office staff. It was suggested that the Town Clerk undertake the first stage of the appraisal process, with the Post Office and Banking Hub Manager completing the final stage.

Senior Managers and the Committee asked that their thanks be formally recorded to all managers and staff for embracing and participating in the appraisal process.

52.5 J. Harrison explained that there are variances within the employment contracts of senior managers in relation to overtime. He presented the Committee with relevant information from the Green Book and the NALC employment contract. Discussion took place.

**RESOLVED** to harmonise the contractual arrangements for senior staff (spinal column point 34 or above), such that planned additional hours are paid at time rather than time and a half; to undertake a 12 week individual consultation process with the senior staff affected; and to ensure that all new senior managers' contracts reflect these harmonised arrangements.

This resolution was carried by 5 votes in favour, with 1 abstention.

Cllrs Carpenter, Holbrook, Laxton, Mitchell, and Nicholls voted in favour.

Cllr White abstained from voting.

52.6 J. Harrison reported on sickness absence and the substantial cover for staff absences.

52.7 The Committee was asked to consider the report and external job evaluation for the Senior Finance Officer role.

**RESOLVED** to regrade the role to SCP 18–23, with the post holder to commence on SCP 18 for 2025/26, and for pay to be backdated to 1 July 2025.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

Senior Managers and the Committee requested that their thanks be formally recorded for the post holder's additional responsibilities and hard work.

The Committee agreed to use the previous Finance Assistant job description and to proceed with recruitment to a 15hour, 6 months fixed term contract (previous resolution SfC/25/5/41.1).

- 52.8 Officers were pleased to confirm that Sarah Bishop, Post Office and Banking Hub Clerk has completed their probation.
- 52.9 Officers reported on annual increments due following two members of staff reaching one year in post: Loren Homewood and Mark Simms.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at **21:20pm**

CHAIR

DRAFT