

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD AT LIVESEY HOUSE, 7 ST JOHNS HILL

ON 10 APRIL 2024

PRESENT

Councillors Alan Mosley (Chair), Julian Dean, Pam Moseley and Kevin Pardy

Staff Adam Clifford, Andy Davies, Andy Hall, Mike Pugh, Sally Nicholson and Ian Thorpe

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), David Burton (Unison), Stuart Farmer (Acting Operations Manager) Danny Powell (Acting Operations Manager), Claire Osborn (Unison), Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk) and Andy Watkin (Head of Resources)

24/23 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED:

That apologies be accepted from Bernie Bentick and Rosemary Dartnall.

25/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

26/23 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Notes of the meeting held on 24 January 2024 had been circulated prior to the meeting and were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

27/23 MATTERS ARISING

(i) Staff Security Alarms

The Town Clerk reported that all Teams had been issued with Panic Alarms to test. Generally the alarms worked well and specifically located staff who had pressed them. There had however been inconsistencies in the number of activations before the battery had been depleted. New batteries were holding upwards of 10 activations. That said the alarms were intended to be used in the same way as a defibrillator; once used the batteries would be replaced. There were difficulties in being able to download the APP onto work phones due to the restrictions on being on the public sector network; this wouldn't be overcome but the Council was happy to buy enough alarms for those who needed one to put on their phones and to use Town Council staff as contacts. The Town Council was able to discharge its duty of care given that mobile phones and radios were also provided. Town Council representatives at the meeting had favourable experiences of using them.

ACTION – Operations Managers to determine how many staff require an alarm

(ii) Visioning Exercise

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the progress of the Town Council Visioning Exercise. Full Council had agreed the final document to go out to public consultation together with the consultation document that would be used. It was intended to launch the Action Plan at the Annual Town Meeting and depending on the number of attendees undertake a World Café style activity.

ACTION – Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk to proceed with public consultation.

(iii) Union Recognition

Claire Osborne reported that she and Ash Silverstone had continued to meet with Helen Ball and Amanda Spencer in between JCC Meetings to discuss staffing issues and all were working cohesively and communicating in an affecting and meaningful way and generally in accordance with the draft Union Recognition Agreement. Both parties however recognised that their current priorities were elsewhere and that the formalisation of an agreement had to wait until more pressing matters had been dealt with.

ACTION – Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk & Unison Representatives to pick up on finalising the Recognition Agreement when other matters are less pressing.

28/23 ITEMS RAISED BY THE COUNCIL

(i) Consultants Report

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that an amended version of the Consultants Report had been received; this had been discussed with the Team Managers and copies together with an explanatory memo had been sent to all staff. To date no comments had been received by staff. Town Council representatives confirmed that all staff had received copies and they were generally content with the content. Whilst this was only a recommendation, it would not be considered further until the SLA negotiations had been concluded. Councillor Mosley advised that there was a member SLA Working Group that would look at SLA negotiations and any changes to staffing structures would be determined by the Personnel Committee. The Town Clerk advised that this document would also help to address the Town Council's Business Continuity needs taking into account staff attrition rates.

(ii) Holiday Pay for Term Time Staff

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on a recent Court Ruling in determining the holiday allowances and pay of part-time and term-time staff. This would only affect Youth Workers. All staff had received backpay and going forward would receive their holiday pay on a quarterly basis depending on average hours worked. This had already been communicated to the Youth Workers. Andy Hall reported that the process had been welcomed by the Youth Workers

(iii) Sickness Procedures

The Town Clerk had reported that the procedures for reporting sickness absence were very clear within the sickness policy; these had been communicated to staff on numerous occasions both directly, at staff meetings and through Team Managers. Yet there were still occasions where staff were not following procedures in reporting sickness to Line Managers but expecting other staff members to do that for them. This often resulted in delays in Line Managers knowing and the Office Manager logging sickness absence on the system. This couldn't continue and the Council might have to revert to more punitive measures including withholding sick-pay. The Union representatives asked that the procedures be communicated to all staff a final time and that they be asked to sign and return to say they have read and understood the procedures and appreciate that not following policy could result in disciplinary proceedings.

ACTION – Deputy Town Clerk to write to every member of staff.

29/23 ITEMS RAISED FROM STAFF REPRESENTATIVES

No items were raised for discussion.

30/23 ITEMS RAISED FROM UNION REPRESENTATIVE

No items were raised for discussion.

31/23 NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date of the next meeting would be 3 July 2024.