



MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING held in the St Piran’s Room, Penlee Centre, Penlee Park, Penzance on Monday 17 February 2025 at 7:00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillors

NG Pengelly (Chair)

MJ Beveridge
NC Broadhurst
Z Lawlor

SJ Reynolds
N Tonner

Also present: James Hardy (Town Clerk), Cal Bagshaw (Corporate Services Manager) and Elliot Ridington (Democratic Services Officer).

47. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bosworth, McKenna and Osborne.

Councillors S Elliott, W Elliott and Davis were absent without having provided apologies.

48. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

49. TO CONSIDER WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

No requests had been received.

50. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

51. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

In respect of Agenda Items 10(a), 10(b) and 10(c), ‘Flexible Working Request’, ‘Redesignation of Post’ and ‘Results of Job Descriptions Review’, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that members of the press and public be excluded from that section of the meeting.

(Proposed: Councillor Reynolds; seconded: Councillor Beveridge)

52. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2024

Having been previously circulated, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2024 be approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

(Proposed: Councillor Beveridge; seconded: Councillor Reynolds)

53. REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES FOR DECISION

(a) Revised Recruitment and Selection Policy

The annual review of various policies was in the process of being undertaken and the Recruitment and Selection Policy had been considered and amendments proposed. There were no relevant legal or regulatory changes and those changes proposed provided greater clarity on the updated points, set out using tracked changes within Appendix 1 to the report.

Following consideration, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the revisions to the Recruitment and Selection Policy, set out using tracked changes at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and the document be adopted.

(Proposed: Councillor Tonner; seconded: Councillor Beveridge)

(b) Review of Employer Discretions Policy for Local Government Pension Scheme

Penzance Council was a scheme employer within the Local Government Pension Scheme and each employer was required to publish a policy statement detailing how it would apply the scheme when certain events happened, known as discretions. The policy was required to have discretions on whether it would:-

- allow flexible retirement;
- award additional pension;
- pay towards the cost of additional pension; and
- waive any reductions if a pension was paid early (not including if an employee retired due to ill health, redundancy or business efficiency, in these cases the employer had to meet the cost of paying pension early).

It was necessary to keep the policy under review and update it periodically in order to comply with any new legal or policy developments. The proposed changes to the document were set out within the report.

Following consideration, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

1. The revisions to the Local Government Pension Scheme – Employer Discretion Policy, set out using tracked changes at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and the document be adopted.
2. If necessary, a consultation exercise be undertaken with the affected members of staff and the revisions to the policy be implemented upon the conclusion of said exercise.

(Proposed: Councillor Beveridge; seconded: Councillor Reynolds)

54. REPORTS FOR DECISION

(a) Revised Grants Policy

At the meeting of the Committee held on 19 August 2024, it was resolved that a Working Group would be established in order to consider the Council's Grants Policy. A number of changes were proposed by the Working Group and these were included in the revised policy, set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

During the debate, Members raised a number of points including the following-

- i) An additional element should have been included within the 'Mandatory Requirements' section to require evidence of an applicant's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- ii) Within the section entitled 'Applications which are not eligible', it was stipulated that organisations which intended to use the funding for further fundraising purposes would be precluded from applying. However, this may have prevented a number of worthwhile applications as, often, events such as those for a Christmas lights 'switch on' would involve volunteers with collection buckets, which would not be allowed if this change were made. It was therefore suggested that this element be clarified to refer to *third party* fundraising purposes.
- iii) Clarification was sought as to whether there would be 'no right of appeal' within the 'Automatic Refusal' section as it was thought that the word 'no' may have been deleted in error.

Following consideration, it was unanimously

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO PENZANCE COUNCIL that the revised Grants Policy, set out using tracked changes at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and adopted subject to:-

- i) The 'Mandatory Requirements' section including reference to evidence of an applicant's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
- ii) The 'Applications which are not eligible' section being amended to refer to '*third party* fundraising'; and
- iii) Clarification being provided as to whether there would be a right of appeal or no right of appeal within the 'Automatic Refusal' section.

(Proposed: Councillor Beveridge; seconded: Councillor Tonner)

(b) Enhanced Employee Benefits Policy and Introduction of Salary Sacrifice Schemes

Salary sacrifice schemes enabled employees to forego a part of their salary in exchange for non-cash benefits such as additional annual leave, dental/medical insurance or sustainable transport options like bicycles or electric vehicle leases.

The schemes could lead to saving on National Insurance contributions for both the employer and the employees, improve employee satisfaction and have a positive environmental impact. Were such schemes introduced, they would be incorporated into the 'Enhanced Employee Benefits Policy'.

Following consideration, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

1. The feasibility and benefits of incorporating salary sacrifice schemes into the Enhanced Employee Benefits Policy be investigated.
2. The results of the investigation be reported to a future meeting of this Committee for consideration.

(Proposed: Councillor Broadhurst; seconded: Councillor Reynolds)

(c) Financial Papers to Receive and Accept

Following consideration, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the following financial papers be received and accepted:-

- (i) – Paid Expenditure from 1 December 2024 to 31 January 2025
- (ii) – Bank Reconciliation from 1 December 2024 to 31 January 2025
- (iii) - Financial Comparison for the Period Ending 31 January 2025

(Proposed: Councillor Broadhurst; seconded: Councillor Beveridge)

55. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

There were no reports for information.

56. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES FOR DECISION

(a) Flexible Working Request

The background and issues associated with this item were set out in the report.

Following consideration, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the recommendation, as set out in the report, be approved.

(Proposed: Councillor Beveridge; seconded: Councillor Pengelly)

(b) Redesignation of Post

The background and issues associated with this item were set out in the report.

Following consideration, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved.

(Proposed: Councillor Beveridge; seconded: Councillor Broadhurst)

(c) Results of Job Descriptions Review

At the meeting of Penzance Council held on 20 May 2024, authority was delegated to the Town Clerk to review and revise the job descriptions of the posts detailed within the report, to seek independent job evaluation through the Council's external HR advisors and to make recommendations accordingly.

The review had now been completed and job descriptions had been revised in order to provide a true reflection of the roles carried out by members of staff on a day-to-day basis. These documents had now therefore been job evaluated by the Council's independent HR advisor which had resulted in a number of recommendations, as set out in the report.

Following consideration, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved.

(Proposed: Councillor Broadhurst; seconded: Councillor Tonner)

57. MATTERS ARISING FOR REPORT AT NEXT MEETING

There were no matters arising for report at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 7:32 pm

Chair
14 April 2025