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12<sup>th</sup> March 2025

To: **MEMBERS OF THE STAFF AND MEMBER DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP**

A **MEETING** of the **STAFF AND DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP** will be held in **The Council Chamber** on **MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025 at 19.00 hours**, when your attendance is required.

**Copied to all members of the Council for information**

Julie Holden  
Chief Executive Officer

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE THE START TIME OF THE MEETING\*\***

Filming, recording of Council meetings and use of social media: there is a notice displayed in the Council Chamber setting out the Councils protocol for filming at meetings.

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**A G E N D A**

**1. OPEN FORUM**

Members of the Public are permitted to speak in accordance with [standing order 3.8.](#)

**2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**4. SUBSTITUTES**

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

## 7. NOTES OF THE MEETING 21<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2024

### 8. **STAFF MOVEMENTS**

Purpose of report: The Council have undergone several changes in staffing since the last meeting, with retirements, resignations, promotions and new appointments.

Appendix A shows the current organigram for information. This is also available on the Town Council website. Staff can choose not to have their photograph included on public documentation. Gill Tubbs will be joining the Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> March as part of the maintenance team admin support which will put the staff back to a full complement.

The following staff have successfully completed probation during 2024/25 and joined the permanent staffing: Alice Bannister, Valentina Gagerro, Jo wood. There are two staff members on probation having joined the Council in January and March.

**Recommendation:** This is just to note

Environmental Implications : there are none

Financial implications : the budget already allows for this post, which has been unfilled since September.

Community safety implications : there are none

### 9. **DEPOT (CHANGES TO PLACE OF WORK )**

Purpose of Report : To advise of a change to the contracts of the maintenance staff who now work at the depot.

The staff contracts determine their place of work as 96 Church Walk, four of the maintenance team staff have relocated to the Bolney Depot. For three of these staff they now have a longer commute to work than they had previously. Having discussed this with ACAS and SLCC we are advised that as we have made the change to their place of work and now require them to travel further to reach their place of work, it is appropriate that an allowance to cover these additional costs are made.

The Responsible Financial Officer has made the calculations for a small adjustment to allow for the additional miles per day for the staff affected. The calculation is based on current petrol costs multiplied by the number of miles

per week. The calculation also takes in to account the amount of annual leave and statutory leave that the staff involved have regarding the number of days that they work. The allowance is taxable, is paid with their monthly salary and varies between £10 and £22 per month.

**RECOMMENDATION** This is just for noting, that the Council as an employer is required to fairly reimburse staff when contractual changes result with them out of pocket.

Environmental Implications: The staff driving slightly further to their place of work has increased carbon emissions, but this is marginal. Some staff have a shorter commute and therefore this is offset.

Financial Implications: the allowance is met within existing budgets and will in the fullness of time reduce as when posts become vacant the new place of work will be stated on contracts making the allowance unnecessary.

Community Safety Implications: there are none.

## 10. NATIONAL PAY DEAL

Purpose of Report: To advise the KAG as to the current process.

The Council is signed up to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, regarding all the staff pay and conditions. This is standard for local and principal councils and includes the provisions for the annual cost of living rise to be agreed between the Employer (Government) and Unions. All Burgess Hill Town Council staff are eligible to join a union, the most common for our sector are Unison and ALCC.

The Employers negotiate with the NJC Executive (made up with representatives from Unison, GMB and Unite), the 2024 claim was settled in October 2024 (backdated to April). The settlement was for 2.5% for all grades.

The Claim for 2025 has been submitted by the unions and is as follows:

- An increase of at least £3,000 across all NJC spinal column points
- A clear plan to reach a minimum pay rate of £15 an hour
- One extra day of annual leave for all staff
- A reduction in the working week by two hours, with no loss of pay

- The ability for school staff to take [at least] one day of their annual leave during term time, with no loss of pay

The Town Council have 6 staff members who are paid below £15.00 per hour. While it is thought unlikely that this demand would be successful. It is worth noting that this would have a significant effect on the Councils budget. This demand was submitted to the Employers on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 and is expected to be the starting point. What happens next is that a counter offer is made by the Employers and if it is less than has been demanded by the Unions the Unions will ballot their members (or make another proposal). A ballot to the membership determines whether the members are willing to accept the lower offer or whether they wish to take industrial action, which may be in the form of stoppages or strikes.

At this time nothing more is known, the cost -of- living increase is not expected to be agreed for some time and may yet again be late autumn before it is settled.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To note this position

Environmental Implications : there are none

Financial Implications. The uncertainty of the cost-of-living rise at budget setting means this is a guessing game as to the allowance for this. The budget is set with a prudent allowance, however if the Unions negotiate a significant settlement this can have impacts on the budget. However Council reserves will be used, if necessary, to meet any unexpected rises.

Community Safety Implications: there are none.

## **11. PENDING RETIREMENTS / STRUCTURE**

The KAG will be aware that both the Chief Executive and Head of Projects retired last year. The loss of the Chief Executive resulted in a prolonged recruitment process while the Head of Projects post, coupled with decisions elsewhere in the organisation allowed for a review of the projects team and recruitment on a restructured basis.

A senior member of staff has advised that they are considering retirement later in 2025. Staff can retire at any time under the Local Government Pension Scheme, but their pension unless protected will be adjusted. There is no financial penalty for the Council should this staff member retire this year. However the retirement will give an opportunity to reconsider the structure of the central services team. There have been some movements of duties to return committee and councillor support to Central Services and the transfer of website content responsibility out of this team.

Over the summer there will be further review and considerations as to the work and capacity of the team and the demands upon them so that once the staff member confirms their retirement date a plan as to how this team could be remodelled will come forward. The rest of the Council services re adequately resourced (although there is no slack) and no further restructure needs considering at this time.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To note the current position

Environmental Implications: there are none

Financial Implications: the allowance is met within existing budgets and will in the fullness of time reduce as when posts become vacant the new place of work will be stated on contracts making the allowance unnecessary.

Community Safety Implications: there are none.

## **12. HR CONTRACT & POLICY UPDATES**

The current HR work all falls to the Chief Executive with support ad hoc from a HR company on a pay as you go basis. The former Chief executive Officer had used more than one company. This support has proven to be expensive and has only been used when “problems” have arisen. Since the new CEO joined in September, there have been four staff recruitments (2 internal promotions and 2 external recruitments). All paperwork and recruitment process (along with the probation for 2 other staff members) has fallen to the Chief Executive which has been a considerable amount of work and a necessary distraction from the other Council work to be carried out. In

addition the Chief Executive has discovered that appraisals and policies were also out of date in some areas. Having looked at the cost that has been budgeted for this and making an additional allowance in the budget for 2025/26 the Chief Executive has been seeking quotes for HR packages to assist with the tasks. She has entered in a contract with Worknest for the provision of HR support (including standard letter writing, managing absence and capability issues, policy writing. The package also includes software to provide for booking and tracking leave, sickness and other absences). The Council will receive regular updates on news from the world of employment law and when policies need updating they will handle this to ensure that the Council remain up to date. The package also includes a new Employee Assistance Package (confidential advice and support including counselling). The main benefit of the cover is that should a relationship with an employee breakdown the entire costs of handing the process through to employment tribunal and employer liability are included.

The KAG will be mindful that as an Employer the Council has to ensure that it remains compliant with employment law and has in place appropriate policies and procedures for a myriad of circumstances, with this new contract the Chief Executive is confident to advise that this is now in place. Appraisals are also underway with a target of completion by the end of March. The overall annual cost of the package is £3365 plus VAT.

**RECOMMENDATION:** This is for noting

Environmental Implications

Financial Implications: There are none as the budget has adequate allowance to cover the annual cost. Not having appropriate policies and good advice could result in the Council facing challenges from employees which could become costly or even result in claims against the Council.

Community Safety Implications: there are none.

### **13. TRAINING**

Since April 2024 the following training has been undertaken by staff:

staff member	course	provider	Cost (£)	status
<b>Julie Holden</b>	updating Neighbourhood Plan	online SLCC	£15	completed 14.10.24
	Level 5 Community Governance	SLCC	£2,000*	Passed with merit October 2025
	Fire Marshall Training	First Fire training	£50	Completed 13.11.24 valid 3 years
<b>Jen O'Grady</b>	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First Aid Awards	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years
<b>Kayleigh Davidson</b>	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First Fire Training	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years
<b>Louise Carmichael</b>	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First fire Training	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years
<b>Alice Bannister</b>	Time Management	Ihasco	£25.00	Completed and passed 14/06/2024
	Conflict Management and Resolution Training	The Conflict Training Company	£25.00	Completed and passed 18.06.24
	Effective Minute Taking	CCG Training, Crawley Campus	£100.00	Completed July 2024
<b>Gemma Wallis</b>	Conflict Management and Resolution Training	The Conflict Training Company	£25.00	Completed and passed 18/06/2024
<b>Gill Kilgour</b>	Conflict Management and Resolution Training	The Conflict Training Company	£25.00	Completed and passed 18.06.24
<b>Sarah Thomas</b>	Conflict Management and Resolution Training	The Conflict Training Company	£25.00	Completed and passed 18.06.24
	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First Fire Training	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years
<b>Valentina Gaggero</b>	GDPR Training		£25	Completed and passed 05/06/2024
	Conflict Management and	The Conflict Training Company	£25.00	Completed and passed 18.06.24

KAG membership: Graham Allen (Chair), Stuart Condie, Matthew Cornish, David Eggleton, Tofojjul Hussain, Adam White

	Resolution Training			
	Minutes and Agenda	SLCC	£84.00	completed 23/09/24
	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First Fire Training	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years
<b>Sarah Hughes</b>	Fire Marshall Training	First Fire Training	£50	Completed 13.11.2024 valid 3 years
<b>Kevin Keoghan</b>	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First Fire Training	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years
	Fire Marshall Training	First Fire Training	£50	Completed 13.11.2024 valid 3 years
<b>Mark Unicombe</b>	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First Fire Training	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years
	Fire Marshall Training	First Fire Training	£50	Completed 13.11.2024 valid 3 years
<b>Bob Andersson</b>	PAT test training	Tradeskills4you	£429	Completed and passed 16/07/2024
	Fire Marshall Training	First Fire Training	£50	Completed 13.11.2024 valid 3 years
<b>Joshua Willis</b>	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First Fire Training	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years
	Fire Marshall Training	First Fire Training	£50	Completed 13.11.2024 valid 3 years
<b>Angela Dallman</b>	Conflict Management and Resolution Training	The Conflict training company	£25	Completed and passed 18.06.25
<b>Jo Wood</b>	FAA level 3 award Emergency First Aid at work	First Fire Training	£42	completed 26.09.24 valid 3 years

\* part paid by BHTC under contract of employment.

In addition the following Councillor has attended training at a cost of £216:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Learning Need</b>	<b>Learning Method</b>	<b>Date Attended</b>
Jon Gardner	finance for Cllrs	Mulberry and co online	7th November 2024
Jon Gardner	Cllrs: Roles responsibilities	Mulberry and co online	24th October 2024
Jon Gardner	Cllrs policies and powers	Mulberry and co online	3rd October 2024
Jon Gardner	meetings agenda and minutes	Mulberry and co online	26th sept 2024

The Appraisal scheme identifies new training for staff along with standard training for staff on GDPR, manual handling etc and expiration of existing certificates for competence operating machinery, first aid etc.

**RECOMMENDATION:** This report is for noting

Environmental Implications: well trained staff and councillors are able to consider implications for policy and service delivery which have environmental implications.

Financial Implications: There are none as the budget has adequate allowance to cover the cost.

Community Safety Implications: Not training staff in fire and first aid could have implications for the public safety. The Council complies with legal requirements for occupying a building and employing staff.