



Bracknell Town Council

Staffing Thursday 24th April 2025

Date **Thursday 24th April 2025**
Time **18:30 - 19:30**
Location **Council Chamber Brooke House**
Present Cllrs **Anna Keen**, Roy Bailey, Elizabeth Baker, Simon Carter, Guy Gillbe (Sub), Cath Thompson
Apologies Cllr Mary Temperton
Officers Jackie Burgess Town Clerk

Minutes

S55 ATTENDANCE

/ 25 The Chair Councillor Anna Keen welcomed everyone to the meeting. The apology from Councillor Temperton was Noted with Councillor Guy Gillbe being substituted. There were no members of the public present.

During the meeting, there was a discussion about the scheduling conflicts between the town council meetings and the borough council meetings, it was explained that normally Bracknell Town Council adheres to its calendar but in this instance the request was received in plenty of time regarding the clash of meetings and Bracknell Town Council was able to accommodate a change.

S56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

/ 25 The Town Clerk confirmed that there were no written requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests, and thus no requests for dispensation needed to be granted. As there were no members of the press or public present, the committee did not need to move to confidential business for any of the items.

S57 MINUTES

/ 25 Councillor Keen reviewed the minutes from the last meeting held on 21st January 2025. She went through the minutes page by page and asked if there were any questions or corrections. Councillor Keen recommended the minutes for approval this was seconded by Councillor Thompson with all in agreement.

S58 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

/ 25 The members confirmed that all matters arising were already included in the current agenda, and no additional questions or issues were raised.

S59 TRAINING

/ 25

The Town Clerk provided a detailed update on the training undertaken by staff. Two of the newest recruits completed a one-day online course on working safely. The Assistant Recreational Facilities Manager completed a three-day IOSH Managing Safety in the Workplace course. The Recreational Facilities Manager is currently undertaking the NEBOSH Environmental Course, which includes coursework and an exam in June.

A member inquired about customer service training, expressing interest in rolling it out to all customer-facing staff, including those in the pavilion and office staff. The Town Clerk agreed to investigate this. Another member raised concerns about staff engagement with training, particularly among long-serving staff who struggle with online courses. The Town Clerk acknowledged these challenges and detailed efforts to provide extra help to these staff members.

The discussion also touched on the need for regular training updates to keep staff informed about new regulations and safety procedures. The Town Clerk mentioned that the Grounds Staff were redoing their training on the use of adhesives, with both online and manual hands-on training being provided.

Task: Investigate rolling out customer service training to all customer-facing staff, including pavilion and office staff. *@Jackie Burgess*

Task: Provide extra help to long-serving grounds staff who struggle with online courses. *@Jackie Burgess*

S60 RECRUITMENT

/ 25

Grounds Person

A successful recruitment exercise was carried out in February 2025 with the new recruit starting on 31st March 2025

Cemetery Caretaker

This position has not yet been advertised as work was required on the property. Following the discussion the Committee asked the Town Clerk to commence advertising for this position asap and to ensure that the license to occupy included inspections of the property at an agreed time frame. The Town Clerk will investigate qualifications for carrying out inspections

For the Office and Site Team recruitment, the Town Clerk informed the Committee that due to staff absences and other priorities, specifics of the recruitment have not yet been finalised. She acknowledged the need to move forward with this soon.

Task: Meet with the builder to determine a completion date for maintenance works before advertising the Cemetery Caretaker position. *@Jackie Burgess*

Task: Decide on the specifics of the Office Team recruitment. *@Jackie Burgess*

S61 HEALTH AND SAFETY

/ 25

The Town Clerk updated the committee on recent health and safety incidents and the health surveillance for HAV equipment users. The Town Clerk mentioned that concerns raised during the health surveillance are being followed by medical professionals. Staff

identified as having issues can still work but may have restrictions on the equipment they can use or the duration they can use it for.

The Town Clerk highlighted the need for a more robust reporting system for hand-arm vibration testing, ensuring accurate tracking of equipment usage and compliance with safety limits. The RFM is looking into solutions that work effectively in the field, considering the practical challenges faced by staff.

Task: Follow up with medical professionals regarding concerns raised during health surveillance. @Jackie Burgess

Task: Investigate solutions for a more robust reporting system for hand-arm vibration testing. @Ian Evans

S62 STAFFING MATTERS

/ 25

The member of staff who was on long term absence following a non-upheld grievance has now returned to work. A further letter has been issued to the member of staff following an altercation with their Line Manager; however, the Line Manager was also given a letter about the incident which reminds them both that they need to always maintain a professional standard of communication. The RFM meets the members of staff on a weekly basis, which is working well. Following the discussion, it was agreed to make notes following these meetings to ensure transparency on what was discussed.

The tractor Operator has informed us that he will be undergoing an operation in May 2025. To cover his absence an ex-member of staff who retired in January 2025 has agreed to come back on a temporary contract covering this medical leave.

ARFM is awaiting an operation which will see him off work for up to 4 weeks. No date has been given yet, his wife is expecting their first baby in May, he will be taking 2 weeks paternity leave. Due to family bereavement he is currently off work. The two Foremen will be supported by the RFM during these periods.

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the long-term absence of the Pavilion Supervisor and the Senior Environment Warden including concerns that had been raised. The Town Clerk will keep the Committee updated.

S63 ABSENCE REPORT

/ 25

The committee reviewed the staff absence report, comparing absence levels for 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. The Town Clerk noted that long-term sick leave significantly affects the overall absence rates. When long-term sick leave is excluded, the absence levels are relatively comparable to the baseline data. The challenge remains effectively managing long-term sick leave.

S64 ABSENCE POLICY

/ 25

The Town Clerk presented the updated sickness policy, which has been reviewed by BrightHR. The policy aims to provide a continuous monitoring process rather than resetting after a series of reviews. Cllr Carter raised concerns about the tone of the document and the generous time scales involved. It was suggested BTC shorten the review cycles from 12 weeks to 6 weeks and consult with unions for feedback. The committee agreed to review the policy further and discuss it at the next meeting. The Town Clerk is to update the policy

with the suggestions and bring them to the next meeting after discussing with Councillor Carter.

Task: Review the updated Absence policy further and discuss it at the next meeting along with the Attendance bonus. *@Jackie Burgess*

Task: To consult with Councillor Carter and share document with the Unions once agreed by Committee. *@Jackie Burgess*

S65 CYCLE SCHEME

/ 25 The Town Clerk discussed the cycle scheme, noting that the government scheme required purchasing expensive bikes with a balloon payment at the end. The committee agreed that providing loans for bicycles, like season ticket loans, would be a positive move. The Town Clerk will investigate creating a policy for transport-related loans and bring it to the next meeting.

Task: Investigate creating a policy for transport-related loans and bring it to the next meeting. *@Jackie Burgess*

S66 APPRAISALS

/ 25 The Town Clerk provided an update on the appraisals, confirming that most ground staff and pavilion staff appraisals have been completed. The office team appraisals are the last to be done, and then senior staff appraisals will follow. The committee commended the efficiency of the appraisal process.

Decision: The committee commended the efficiency of the appraisal process.

Task: Complete office team appraisals. *@Jackie Burgess*

Task: Schedule senior staff appraisals after office team appraisals are completed. *@Jackie Burgess*

Date of the next Meeting: 3rd June 2025 6.30 Council Chamber Brooke House

Sign:

Date: