

STONE TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk

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12th September, 2016

A meeting of the **MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE** will be held in the **Council Chamber, 15, Station Road, Stone** on **20th September, 2016** at 7:10pm or on the rising of the Estates Sub-Committee if later.

I trust you will be able to attend.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

Councillors: A Osgathorpe (Chair), M Green (Vice Chairman),
Mrs J Farnham, T Jackson, Mrs E Mowatt, G Neagus and M Williamson

AGENDA

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**
3. **Representations from Members of the Public**

To consider representations from members of the public on items to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation

4. **National Pay Award 2016-17 and 2017-18**

Referred from General Purposes 02.08.16. Copy of Town Clerk's original report presented to the General Purposes Committee attached.

5. **Committee Minutes**

Report of the Town Clerk attached.

6. **Paperless Meetings**

Report of the Town Clerk attached.

7. **Website Development**

Report of the Town Clerk attached.

8. **Update from Working Groups**

This Sub-Committee currently has no active working groups

9. **Updates on current issues**

- Website
- Outstanding actions listed in the Council handbook
 - Data Protection policy
 - Asset Register
 - Staffing Guidelines

Stone Town Council - General Purposes Committee

2 August 2016

National Pay Award 2016-17 and 2017-18

Report of Town Clerk

Purpose of Report

1. To inform the Committee of the outcome of the 2016-17 national pay award negotiations for local government staff and its impact on the Council.

Background

2. Pay for local government staff is negotiated nationally. Although the parish council sector is not represented on the negotiating body, salaries at local councils are normally based on the national local government scales.
3. The 2016-17 pay negotiations resulted in an agreement that:
 - a. Pay points would be increased by approximately 1% with effect from 1 April 2016, with larger increases for the lower grades.
 - b. Pay points would be increased by a further 1% with effect from 1 April 2017, again with larger increases for the lower grades.
4. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) have recommended the adoption of the outcome of these negotiations to local councils. The NALC/SLCC circular setting out the new pay scales is attached as an appendix to this report.

Employee Pay Scales

5. Two of the Council's current staff are paid hourly rates that do not relate to the national pay scales. It is suggested that the Council increase their pay rates in line with other Council staff, subject to the minimum levels required by law.

Implications for the Council

6. The additional cost of this award to the Council will be around £1,200 in 2016-17 and a further £1,200 in 2017-18. This level of pay award was anticipated when the Council's budget was prepared and so is fully covered within the existing budget.

Recommendations

7. The Committee is recommended to adopt the new salary levels for staff as set out in this report.

E02-16

May 2016

2016 - 2018 NATIONAL SALARY AWARD

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached agreement on the following:

- New pay scales for 2016-2017 to be implemented immediately and backdated to 1 April 2016
- New pay scales for 2017-2018 to be implemented from 1 April 2017

Annex 1 lists the new pay scales for clerks and other employees employed under the terms of the model contract including SCPs 50 and above which have been agreed between NALC and SLCC (based on the changes agreed by NJC). These apply from **1 April 2016**.

Annex 2 lists the new pay scales for clerks and other employees employed under the terms of the model contract including SCPs 50 and above which have been agreed between NALC and SLCC (based on the changes agreed by NJC). These apply from **1 April 2017**.

The recommendations in Annex 1 & 2 are made jointly by NALC and SLCC.

ANNEX 1

NJC has reached agreement on the pay scales for 2016-17. Consequently NALC and SLCC jointly recommend the below salary scales of all full and part-time clerks, employed under the terms of the model contract (including SCPs 50 and above) to be applied from 1 April 2016.

Pay scales from 1 April 2016

Scale	Points below Substantive range	Substantive Benchmark range	Points above Substantive range		
LC1					
	(15-17)	(18-22)	(23-25)		
15	£16,772	18	£17,891	23	£21,057
16	£17,169	19	£18,560	24	£21,745
17	£17,547	20	£19,238	25	£22,434
		21	£19,939		
		22	£20,456		
LC2					
	(26-29)	(30-34)	(35-38)		
26	£23,166	30	£26,556	35	£30,480
27	£23,935	31	£27,394	36	£31,288
28	£24,717	32	£28,203	37	£32,164
29	£25,694	33	£29,033	38	£33,106
		34	£29,854		
LC3					
	(39-42)	(43-47)	(48-51)		
39	£34,196	43	£37,858	48	£42,474
40	£35,093	44	£38,789	49	£43,387
41	£36,019	45	£39,660	50	£44,473
42	£36,937	46	£40,619	51	£45,580
		47	£41,551		
LC4					
	(52-55)	(56-60)	(61-68)		
52	£46,727	56	£51,573	61	£59,923
53	£47,885	57	£52,858	62	£61,678
54	£48,943	58	£54,623	63	£63,455
55	£50,313	59	£56,379	64	£65,198
		60	£58,145	65	£66,850
				66	£68,538
				67	£70,265
				68	£72,042

ANNEX 1 - PART-TIME CLERKS - HOURLY RATES April 2016

Salary scales and hourly pay rates for **ALL** part-time clerks are calculated by **pro-rata** reference to the standard NJC working week for all local government staff of 37 hours. To calculate the hourly pay rate for part-time clerks paid between LC1 and LC4, divide the full-time annual salary by 52 weeks and then by 37 hours rounded to the 3rd decimal place.

For part-time clerks in LC1 and part LC2, for example, the hourly rates, payable from 1 April 2016 are:

Scale LC1 and part LC2 (SCP - Spinal Column Point)

SCP 15	£8.717
SCP 16	£8.924
SCP 17	£9.120
SCP 18	£9.299
SCP 19	£9.647
SCP 20	£9.999
SCP 21	£10.363
SCP 22	£10.632
SCP 23	£10.944
SCP 24	£11.302
SCP 25	£11.660
SCP 26	£12.041
SCP 27	£12.440

SALARY RATES (BELOW LC Scale) (only applicable to staff other than the Clerk)

SCP	£	Hourly £p	SCP	£	Hourly £p
6	£14,514	£7.544	11	£15,507	£8.060
7	£14,615	£7.596	12	£15,823	£8.224
8	£14,771	£7.677	13	£16,191	£8.415
9	£14,975	£7.783	14	£16,481	£8.566
10	£15,238	£7.920			

ANNEX 2

NJC has reached agreement on the pay scales for 2017-18. Consequently NALC and SLCC jointly recommend the below salary scales of all full and part-time clerks, employed under the terms of the model contract (including SCPs 50 and above) to be applied from 1 April 2017.

Pay scales from 1 April 2017

Scale	Points below Substantive range	Substantive Benchmark range	Points above Substantive range		
LC1					
	(15-17)	(18-22)	(23-25)		
15	£17,072	18	£18,070	23	£21,268
16	£17,419	19	£18,746	24	£21,962
17	£17,772	20	£19,430	25	£22,658
		21	£20,138		
		22	£20,661		
LC2					
	(26-29)	(30-34)	(35-38)		
26	£23,398	30	£26,822	35	£30,785
27	£24,174	31	£27,668	36	£31,601
28	£24,964	32	£28,485	37	£32,486
29	£25,951	33	£29,323	38	£33,437
		34	£30,153		
LC3					
	(39-42)	(43-47)	(48-51)		
39	£34,538	43	£38,237	48	£42,899
40	£35,444	44	£39,177	49	£43,821
41	£36,379	45	£40,057	50	£44,918
42	£37,306	46	£41,025	51	£46,036
		47	£41,967		
LC4					
	(52-55)	(56-60)	(61-68)		
52	£47,194	56	£52,089	61	£60,522
53	£48,364	57	£53,387	62	£62,295
54	£49,432	58	£55,169	63	£64,090
55	£50,816	59	£56,943	64	£65,850
		60	£58,726	65	£67,519
				66	£69,223
				67	£70,968
				68	£72,762

ANNEX 2 - PART-TIME CLERKS - HOURLY RATES April 2017

Salary scales and hourly pay rates for **ALL** part-time clerks are calculated by **pro-rata** reference to the standard NJC working week for all local government staff of 37 hours. To calculate the hourly pay rate for part-time clerks paid between LC1 and LC4, divide the full-time annual salary by 52 weeks and then by 37 hours rounded to the 3rd decimal place.

For part-time clerks in LC1 and part LC2, for example, the hourly rates, payable from 1 April 2017 are:

Scale LC1 and part LC2 (SCP - Spinal Column Point)

SCP 15	£8.873
SCP 16	£9.054
SCP 17	£9.237
SCP 18	£9.392
SCP 19	£9.743
SCP 20	£10.099
SCP 21	£10.467
SCP 22	£10.739
SCP 23	£11.054
SCP 24	£11.415
SCP 25	£11.777
SCP 26	£12.161
SCP 27	£12.564

SALARY RATES (BELOW LC Scale) (only applicable to staff other than the Clerk)

SCP	£	Hourly £p	SCP	£	Hourly £p
6	£15,014	£7.804	11	£15,807	£8.216
7	£15,115	£7.856	12	£16,123	£8.380
8	£15,246	£7.924	13	£16,491	£8.571
9	£15,375	£7.991	14	£16,781	£8.722
10	£15,613	£8.115			

Stone Town Council – Management Sub-Committee

20 September 2016

Committee Minutes

Report of Town Clerk

Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the form of minutes to be recorded by the Council.

Background

2. The requirement to keep minutes of meetings is set out in the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Paragraph 41. There is no prescribed layout for minutes, and as a result most local authorities have slightly different formats.
3. The main legal reference for local councils, “Arnold Baker on Local Council Administration”, states:

“Minutes of proceedings of a council and its committees must be kept. They are intended to be formal records of official acts and decisions, not reports, still less verbatim reports, of the speeches made by councillors. Minutes should, therefore, be as short as is consistent with clarity and accuracy, and the arguments used in the discussion need be recorded only if the decision cannot be clearly expressed in any other way.”

4. This report considers the format of this Council’s minutes, including minute referencing. It also consider whether meetings should be recorded.

Format of Minutes

5. Other than for the Planning Committee, which has its own format, and standing items such as apologies, the minutes at Stone Town Council generally follow these principles:
 - a. A typical minute will normally consist of a statement of the information considered by the meeting (eg. The Committee considered correspondence received from Stafford Borough Council regarding proposals to *do something*) and a clear statement of the decision made (eg. RESOLVED: To write to Stafford Borough Council objecting to their proposals due to *issues*).
 - b. Copies of correspondence, reports, etc. considered by a Committee are attached to the signed, official copies of the minutes, but not recirculated in the draft minutes which are considered at the next meeting.
 - c. Only the final agreed version of a resolution is recorded, not any earlier motions or amendments, unless either specifically requested by a Member, if a named vote has

been undertaken, in the case of a “Member’s Motion” where the original motion is always recorded or unless essential to ensure understanding of the resolution and/or its context.

- d. Individual points of discussion are not recorded in the minutes, unless essential to ensure understanding of the resolution and/or its context.
 - e. Movers and seconders of motions and amendments are not usually recorded in the minutes unless it is a specific “Member’s Motion”, where the mover is recorded, or unless specifically requested by any of the Members involved.
 - f. Voting, either by specific Members or by recording the total count of votes, is not recorded in the minutes unless either a Member has asked specifically for their vote to be recorded, or a named vote has been requested in accordance with standing orders.
 - g. Some agenda items are not for decisions, but are for reporting and discussion. These include the report of the County Councillor, and reporting on working groups and outside bodies. The discussion in these items is normally recorded more fully.
6. Following comments from some Members that minutes were too brief, more detail has been added recently, but still within the principles above. Comments are welcomed from Members whether the detail in minutes is now about right, or whether further adjustments need to be made.
7. One area where an improvement does need to be made is in relation to the minuting of declarations of interest. Declarations of interest generally record the Member declaring the interest, the related agenda item, and (in the minute for the item itself) whether they left the room for the discussion. This is not best practice. In addition to the information currently recorded, the minute should also note whether an interest is pecuniary or personal, whether it is already included within the register of interests and, if not in the register, what the interest is.

Minute Numbers

- 8. Currently, minute numbers contain reference to the committee/sub-committee being minuted, the municipal year and a rolling consecutive number for each Committee etc. which resets to 1 at the start of each municipal year. The 25th minute of the General Purposes Committee in the 2016-17 municipal year will thus be minute number GP17/025.
- 9. This is already a more detailed minute reference than many Councils. The inclusion of a consecutive number that continues throughout the municipal year then resets in May is almost universal, however this is often the only minute reference. Some Councils add a committee reference and even less include reference to the municipal year itself. During my research I have not found any Councils adding additional information beyond this to minute numbers, but there are many thousands of Councils and I have only been able research a small fraction of them.

10. It has been proposed that the minute number be extended to include reference back to the specific meeting to which the minute refers and the agenda number. This would result in a minute number that could look something like "GP17/025/5 Jul/A3".
11. This would provide easier reference back to the original agenda item, but:
 - a. The agenda numbers would be longer and much more cumbersome. Most authorities that I researched would just use minute number "25".
 - b. In most cases, the user will have the minutes for the full meeting in front of them, not just the single minute "GP17/025". Details of the original meeting can always be found in the heading to the minutes.
 - c. The office holds a database of which minute number arises from which meeting, which can be made available to Members if they are regularly having problems searching.
12. Changing the format of minute numbers is not something to be done without careful consideration, as minutes are often referenced many years after a meeting and a changing the number format can cause confusion for users who are trying to access minutes from different time periods.
13. In conclusion, I would recommend that the current format of minute numbers should remain unchanged.

Recording of Meetings

14. The Council currently has the facilities to make audio recordings of meetings in the Council Chamber via the induction loop. This facility is not currently being used, but the recording of meeting has been raised with me as a question.
15. Standing orders would permit recording but, in accordance with advice from NALC, require that the recording should be destroyed once the minutes of a meeting have been approved.
16. Recordings could be made available on request for Members to listen to in the office prior to the approval of the minutes, but not to copy or distribute outside the Council. There is no requirement to make recordings available to the press or public under the Freedom of Information Act as, in all cases, the publication of the approved minutes would be imminent.
17. Challenges to minutes are very rare, so I do not believe that the additional work can be justified for the limited benefit gained. I would therefore recommend against the routine recording of meetings. This would not prevent the recording of specific meetings where there may be potential benefits.

Recommendations

18. This paper has looked at a number of issues related to the format of minutes and their numbering; and the recording of Council and Committee meetings. The Sub-Committee are recommended to advise the General Purposes Committee that:
- a. The principles which underlie the current production of minutes should be supported. (Paragraph 5)
 - b. Where Members views are that minutes are either too detailed or not detailed enough, the Clerk should be informed and the detail in future minutes adjusted accordingly. (Paragraph 6) (NOTE: Individual current minutes can be adjusted, if required, when draft minutes are under consideration)
 - c. The minuting of declarations of interest should be expanded to include whether an interest is pecuniary or personal, whether it is already in the register of interests, and if not in the register, what the interest is. (Paragraph 7)
 - d. No changes should be made to the current minute referencing scheme. (Paragraphs 8 to 13)
 - e. Meetings should not be routinely recorded, though specific meetings could be where there could be potential benefits. (Paragraphs 14 to 17)

Stone Town Council – Management Sub-Committee

20 September 2016

Paperless Meetings

Report of Town Clerk

Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to consider whether to allow the serving of agendas for meetings electronically.

Background

2. Outside the legally controlled sphere of local government, paperless meetings have almost become the norm. Agendas, papers and minutes are distributed via email, or via a computer application, with no paper produced unless the user chooses to print it out themselves.
3. Even within local government, email distribution is starting to become more common, and many Councils, including Staffordshire County, are using systems such as “modern gov” which are available as computer and tablet apps as well as via the internet, to provide meeting papers to both councillors and the public.
4. In order to allow the serving of agendas/meeting summonses by email, two stages are required:
 - a. The Council must approve the practice.
 - b. Once the Council has a scheme in place, any individual Member wanting to be sent agendas electronically, rather than on paper, must then make a written request to the Council.
5. This means that, even where the Council has a scheme of “paperless meetings” in place, no Member can be required to change from paper unless they want to.

Advantages and Disadvantages

6. The main advantages of a system of paperless meetings are:
 - a. Earlier access to meeting papers, as there would no longer be a need to wait for the post.
 - b. Meeting papers would be available virtually anywhere.
 - c. It would be possible to include live internet links within the papers for easy reference by Members.

- d. Members would no longer need to keep large volumes of paper if they file old meeting papers.
 - e. A Members' personal archive of previous papers, decisions, etc. would be available to them via their electronic device (PC, tablet, etc.) at meetings.
 - f. Financial savings to the Council on paper, photocopying and postage estimated at around £75 per Member per annum.
7. The main disadvantages, however, are:
- a. Accessing papers electronically will take some adjusting to for individuals used to using paper.
 - b. A degree of computer literacy is required, so training may need to be provided.
 - c. Appropriate computer hardware will be required. (Tablets tend to be more suitable than PCs due to their smaller size and considerably better battery life.)
 - d. Whilst annotations can be made on electronic "papers", it can be more difficult than with paper documents.
 - e. Easy access to an individual's emails, social media and the internet from their electronic device can distract focus from the business of a meeting.

Options

8. There are three approaches that the Council could take:
- a. Continue with the current "paper only" meeting processes.
 - b. An enabling approach, whereby members that wanted to move to an electronic system are able to do so, or,
 - c. A proactive approach, whereby Members are encouraged to convert from paper to electronic.
9. I would recommend that the Council adopts option 8.b above for the remainder of this Council term. This would allow a significant period of time as a trial period before considering whether a more proactive approach would be appropriate following the next elections.
10. At present I do not believe that the Council could justify the cost of dedicated software. I therefore suggest that, if this recommendation is supported, electronic paperwork is emailed to participating Members in the form of Acrobat (.pdf) files.
11. In addition, for this trial period, it is recommended that the Council does not supply participating Members with tablet computers, as the cost would be difficult to justify from the savings generated over the remaining life of this Council. It may, however, be necessary

to supply appropriate equipment in the future should the Council ultimately decide to undertake a more proactive approach.

Conclusions

12. The Council currently uses paper for distributing agendas etc. for all of its meetings. This report has considered the advantages and disadvantages of moving to a paperless meeting system, and concluded that the most appropriate approach would be to operate a trial period up to the end of this Council term. This would allow, but not require, any Member to opt in to an electronic system if they saw benefits to themselves, and build up a body of experience prior to considering whether a more proactive approach would be appropriate following the next elections.
13. There would be no cost to the Council of this approach, as the software to prepare .pdf versions of meeting papers and email them to Members is already available within the office. A small amount of saving may also be made in paper, photocopying and postage charges.

Recommendations

14. The Sub- Committee are recommended to advise the General Purposes Committee to:
 - a. Approve the electronic serving of meeting papers to Members.
 - b. Offer all Members the option to take part in a trial of paperless meetings as set out in this report.

Stone Town Council – Management Sub-Committee

20 September 2016

Website Development

Report of Town Clerk

Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the future direction of the Council's website development.

Background

2. The Council's website has currently been redeveloped using WordPress, in order to make it more flexible and easier to maintain. Apart from one technical problem which is currently in the hands of a WordPress developer to solve, the site is now operational as originally envisaged.
3. The site has been seen as having three "stages" to its development:
 - a. The "Council" site, with Councillor details, agendas and minutes, public documents and details of Council services and activities. This is the part that is currently operational.
 - b. A "Members'" site, accessible only by Councillors, containing reference materials, confidential agenda items and minutes, and other items at the request of Members.
 - c. A "Town" site mainly aimed at tourism, giving details of the town, what was happening in the town, details of hotels, etc., etc. A working party of the Tourism and Town Promotion Sub-Committee has been established to consider the content of this aspect of the site, if it goes ahead.
4. The Sub-Committee are now asked to consider, for recommendation to the General Purposes Committee, whether site development should continue into the "Members" and "Town" stages of its development and, if so, which would be the priority for the next stage.

Comments

5. The Town Council site could become a very valuable town resource, in addition to its value to the Council, if development continues along these two additional paths. Whilst neither the "Members" or the "Town" sites would be particularly difficult or expensive to develop, and could be afforded from existing budgets over 2-3 years, there could, however, be a significant staff time commitment in both setup and maintenance of the sites.
6. The "Members'" site would need a significant set-up in terms of organising documents into a way easily accessible by Members. The Council probably already has either electronic copies

of the documents likely to be required or knowledge of where they can be accessed, but they are not necessarily held in an appropriate format, or organised in an appropriate way. One set-up, however, new documents for the site could probably be produced through the Council's normal processes with little additional day to day workload.

7. The "Town" site, however, could need both significant set-up work and a high degree of ongoing maintenance. If this site is to become the authoritative place for visitors to obtain information about Stone, it will need to be kept constantly up to date in respect of changes within the town and events happening in and around it. This work would most likely need to be proactive, as the Council could not rely on others to automatically provide us with the information required.

Conclusion

8. The Sub-Committee is asked to consider the direction that it wants the Council's website to take. It is asked, in particular, whether the "Members" and/or the "Town" elements of the site should be developed, whether there are any other elements that Members would like to see included and what the priorities should be for development order.
9. Once preferences have been determined for the next phase of development, it is recommended that the Sub-Committee consider a further report on costs and staff time implications before making a final recommendation on whether to proceed to implementation.

Recommendations

10. The Sub-Committee are recommended to advise the General Purposes Committee on their proposals for the future development of the Council's website.