

HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

STAFFING COMMITTEE

MONDAY 21 JULY 2025 at 19:00 HRS

In the EXHIBITION ROOM, THE CIVIC, HUDDERSFIELD ROAD, HOLMFIRTH, HD9 3AS

PRESENT: Cllr Colling (in the Chair), Cllr Barnett, Cllr Baylin, Cllr Kirkby, Cllr Morgan, Cllr Wilson

APOLOGIES AND REASONS APPROVED: Cllr Blacka

OFFICER TAKING MINUTES: Jen McIntosh CLERK

- DRAFT MINUTES-

Public question time.

No members of the public were present.

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2526 01 Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 amended by Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The meeting was being recorded and would subsequently be published on the **HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL's** *YouTube* channel.

There were no other requests for recordings to be made.

2526 02 Apologies for absence.

APPROVED: apologies for absence and reason from Cllr Blacka.

2526 03 Items on the agenda to be discussed in private session

RESOLVED: to consider items 2526 13 and 2526 15 in private session.

2526 04 Members' personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda.

No members' personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda were received and there were no requests for written dispensations.

2526 05 Officers' interests in items on the agenda.

RECEIVED: the officer's interest in items 2526 13. 2526 14 and 2526 15.

2526 06 Receipt of Revised Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

NOTED: revised declarations of pecuniary interests for all three members of the clerking team.

Clerk to share officers' DPIs with all councillors prior to the Full Council meeting on 8 September 2025.

2526 07 Minutes for the Staffing Committee meeting on 17 March 2025, numbered 2425 32 to 2425 43.

NOTED: the Minutes of the STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING held on 17 March 2025, numbered 2526 32 to 2526 43, **approved** at ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING held on 19 May 2025.

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The following information regarding ongoing matters arising from the approved minutes which did not appear under other agenda items was received.

- i. External Staffing Roles Review minute 2425 07 – further update. As reported in March, the review was now expected to take place later in this council year once job descriptions etc have been reviewed as a result of the committees review.
- ii. Business Continuity Plan minute 2425 07 – further update. As reported in March, this would be progressed later in this current council year.
- iii. Disclosure and Barring Service Checks minute 2425 11 – further update. One application remained outstanding. This would be resolved by the next meeting.
- iv. Human Resource policies minute 2425 12 – further update. Policies were to be reviewed as time allows or as new model policies are released by YLCA/NALC.

2526 08 Election of Staffing Committee Vice Chair

At the Annual Council meeting in May 2025 the appointment of the Vice Chair of the Staffing Committee was delegated to the committee.

ELECTED: Cllr Lawrence Baylin was unanimously elected the Vice Chair of the Staffing Committee to serve throughout the remainder of the council year 2025-26.

2526 09 Staffing and Staff Training Budget 2025-26

The Deputy Clerk/RFO had prepared a *Salaries and Staff Training Budget 2025-26* report – to date and a *Staffing Budget Year to Date and Projected 2025-26* report.

A further report dealt with likely overspend on the Staffing budget for 2025/6. The Committee wished to follow whatever path chosen by the Deputy Clerk/RFO with respect to the likely overspend. That could be to take steps so that additional funds were taken from General Reserves as and when required or an Earmarked Reserve could be set up to set aside the required additional monies. The Committee desired the least bureaucratic way of addressing the issue to be settled upon.

NOTED: the reports from the Deputy Clerk/RFO.

RESOLVED: that steps are taken to ensure that sufficient additional funds are available through the Staffing budget line to pay all three officers throughout 2025/6, including any national payrise, once settled.

Clerk to liaise with the Deputy Clerk/RFO to ensure that sufficient monies were available to pay staff wages throughout 2025/6 including any forthcoming national pay rise agreed.

2526 10 Appraisal policy - review

A new appraisal policy based on YLCA guidance had been drawn up for consideration alongside a revised proforma for appraisal meetings. The Clerk reported that both the policy and the reporting document had been amended following consultation with the other two officers.

The Committee discussed the relationship between appraisal/managing performance and supervision.

The proposed policy and report format were commended for linking objectives with training. Training should be defined as a much broader activity than simply attending a course.

An amendment to the policy was decided upon, adding a stipulation that should the appraiser and appraisee be unable to agree an annual appraisal statement, this would be referred to the Staffing Committee for resolution.

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RESOLVED: to recommend the policy and proforma to FULL COUNCIL for approval in due course, including the amendment outlined regarding recourse to the STAFFING COMMITTEE should there be any disagreement regarding the annual appraisal statement.

2526 11 The use of AI

The Assistant Clerk had produced a report on the possible uses of AI by the Clerk Team.

The Clerk Team wished to trial the use of an AI assistant with regards to preparation of council meetings. Cloudy IT had developed a family of AI-powered assistants called GovAssist built specifically to support the work of local councils. Each assistant focuses on a core area of council operations - from managing meetings and responding to residents to streamlining planning and forecasting budgets.

Each unit costs £495 per annum plus an annual licence fee of £360.

Points raised in discussion included:

- any use of AI could benefit councillors with regards to working groups as well as officers.
- it would be good to see if any other local councils were using Cloudy IT.
- any savings made through using AI should be identified and monitored.

DEFERRED: consideration of expenditure of up to £855 for the purchase of a year's use of the GovAssist Meetings Module plus annual licence fee.

Clerk to contact Cloudy IT regarding setting up a webinar in September to present on their AI offer. All councillors to be invited to attend via Zoom. Clerk to find out if any local councils near to HVPC utilise Cloudy IT AI products.

2526 12 Completion of CiLCA by the Deputy Clerk/RFO

As **NOTED** at the ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING on 19 May 2025 the Deputy Clerk/RFO received notification that he had been awarded the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) on Saturday 3 May 2025.

As **APPROVED** in principle by the STAFFING COMMITTEE at its meeting on 17-3-2025, the Deputy Clerk received a pay award of one incremental point payable from 3 May 2025.

RESOLVED: to further congratulate the Deputy Clerk/RFO for having obtained the CiLCA qualification.

2526 13 Appraisal/supervision 2025-26.

This item was heard in private session. No recording was made during the item.

NOTED: update on appraisal/supervision 2025-26 from the Clerk, including the objectives set for the Deputy Clerk/RFO and the Assistant Clerk.

APPROVED: the Clerk's objectives set for 2025-26.

RESOLVED: that the COMMITTEE'S praise for the flexibility and commitment of all three officers in striving to provide an outstanding clerking service to the Council be minuted.

2526 15 Other staffing matters

This item was heard initially in private session, going back into public session towards the end of the item.

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In public session the Clerk reported that, following the statement made by the Chair at the Full Council meeting on 24 March 2025, no further social media posts had been made that could be linked to individual officers. This was a step forward from the situation earlier in the year.

The Clerk asked that all councillors be mindful of Standing Order 9b that stipulated that 10 clear days' notice should be given of items and motions that councillors wished to place on agendas. In practice this would mean ensuring items/motions had been relayed to the appropriate officer by the Thursday before an agenda was due to be sent out on the Tuesday in the following week.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow the remainder of the business to be heard.

2526 14 Pay awards for the clerk team

The Committee resolved on incremental annual pay awards and additional points awarded in line with contracts for specific performance matters such as gaining additional recognised qualifications in the meeting on 17 March 2025.

Regarding National pay awards, the HVPC utilises the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) Pay Spine.

The Clerk reported that a national pay award for 1 April 2025 was yet to be confirmed.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk would advise the COMMITTEE by email of the National Pay Award, once settled, and that any rise, backdated to April 1 2025 should be paid out to all 3 staff at the next available pay point.

2526 16 Training received by Officers

The Clerk reported on training received by officers since 17 March 2025 and upcoming training.

This included a Yorkshire Local Councils Associations Webinar on the Code of Conduct for Local Councils (Clerk).

The clerk and Assistant Clerk had also attended the Local Public Inquiry into Holmfirth 60 footpath modification based at the Town Hall, Huddersfield.

For 2025-26 there is a budget of £2,300 for staff training.

Future training included:

- Society of Local Council Clerks Introduction to understanding quotes, tenders and contract management £36 inc VAT(Deputy Clerk – 28 August; Clerk 9 October).
- Society of Local Council Clerks The Council as Landlord (Clerk and Deputy Clerk 25 November).
- Society of Local Council Clerks civility and Respect Training (Clerk 9 October).

NOTED: training received by Officers since the STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING on 17 March 2025 and upcoming training **APPROVED** as listed above.

The meeting closed at 9.06pm.