



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Friday 23rd April 2021 at 7pm, held remotely on Zoom. The meeting was held in confidence to discuss staffing issues.

Present: Cllrs: A. Holt (Chair), M. Denoual, A. Green, E. Grew, M. Hanley, H. Ho, L. Seaton, Z. Robson.

Apologies: C. Harrison

Absent:

Declarations of interest: none

The clerk requested that she be allowed to read out a statement circulated earlier by e-mail.

Statement from the clerk

My advice is that the parish council should only be considering making a donation to the Town Hall to assist with HR issues, the meeting is being held in confidence for this reason on the advice of CALC. Considerations of a contract for ongoing HR assistance should be discussed at a full and open council meeting, as is required under parish council legislation, since this is not a matter requiring confidentiality. The proposal from the chair was not made clear when the initial request for an extraordinary meeting was made. The council should also give serious consideration to whether a donation to the Town Hall is necessary.

The agenda was based on the original request from the chair, and had been prepared and distributed before revisions were received.

Staffing matters

A statement from past chairman Richard Turner confirmed that the clerk was told in 1987 that she would no longer need to work for the Town Hall. At this point the honorarium was withdrawn and a clear separation between Town Hall and parish council work made. The clerk has never been asked to line manage town hall staff, over the years this has included project managers, caretakers and administrators.

Cllr Holt reported that CALC advised setting up a separate staffing committee.

Quotations for HR support

The chair confirmed that no response had been received to his query to Eden District Council.

CALC were also unable to offer assistance over and above their regular support, but can assist with policies. They are unable to provide legal advice.

The chair obtained the following quotes:

Croner – 5 year contract at £189.09 per month

Retired HR consultant - £850 to set up policies + £25 per hour and travelling costs excluding tribunal costs.

Neathouse – 3 year contract for £99 + vat per month reduced to £79.20 + vat for annual payment. Separate employment tribunal insurance offered for £350 + IPT.

Local company sourced by Cllr Grew - £80 + travelling expenses, but would not be available within the next fortnight.

The clerk had also spoken to a semi-retired HR consultant, who could offer advice, other than legal, for free.

Resolved to accept the Neathouse proposal, excluding tribunal insurance, with the DGP Committee having powers to liaise with the firm on the issue of the Town Hall staffing. Annual payment of £79.20+ vat allocated between the parish council at 33.33% and Town Hall at 66.66% (One third and two thirds). Proposed by Cllr Holt and seconded by Cllr Seaton (6+ 2 abstentions from Cllrs Grew and Hanley)

The meeting closed at 9pm

Signed:

Dated: