

HAMBLE PARISH COUNCIL

HR Working Group – Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The HR Working Group (HR WG) has been established by the Council to provide strategic direction and oversight in relation to Human Resources (HR).

Its core purpose is to ensure that the Council fulfils its responsibilities as an employer, with particular emphasis on staff welfare, safety, performance, and compliance with employment legislation and best practice.

The Group does not have executive powers and cannot exercise decision-making other than where specifically delegated. It will make recommendations to Council on matters requiring approval outside of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The HR WG will establish a work plan for the year (in collaboration with the Clerk) and report progress to Council. It will also address day-to-day operational HR matters as required.

2. Responsibilities

The HR Working Group is responsible for:

- Overseeing all staffing matters to ensure the Council meets its obligations as an employer
 - Supporting and advising the Clerk on:
 - Recruitment and staffing structures
 - Attendance and wellbeing
 - Goal setting and performance management
 - Pay and reward
 - Ensuring staff health, safety and welfare are prioritised
 - Monitoring that staffing levels are appropriate to workloads
 - Overseeing performance management processes, including appraisals
 - Managing disciplinary and capability matters, up to and including dismissal where required
 - Reviewing staffing costs in line with approved budgets
 - Ensuring all HR-related policies (e.g. Staff Handbook, Equality, Pensions) are up to date and adhered to
 - Reviewing completed HR-related projects and recommending improvements to operational practice
 - Responding, where appropriate, to internal or external audit findings relating to HR, staffing, or health & safety
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3. Membership

Members and Chair of the HR Working Group will be appointed annually at the Council's Annual Meeting.

Hamble Parish Council, Parish Office, 2 High Street, Hamble, Southampton SO31 4JE

- Membership will comprise up to 5 councillors, including the Chair and/or Vice Chair of Council
- The Chair of the Council is an ex officio member
- The Clerk will be a standing member of the group
- Additional councillors with relevant professional experience may be co-opted as required
- Task-and-finish groups may be established for specific HR matters

A councillor with relevant experience may be appointed to support HR-related workstreams.

4. Delegated Powers

The HR Working Group may exercise delegated authority, where approved by Council, in the following areas:

- Urgent HR matters in consultation with the Clerk, including:
 - Staff contracts
 - Immediate staffing issues requiring timely resolution

All decisions made under delegated authority must be reported to the next available Council meeting.

5. Meetings

- The HR Working Group will meet monthly, or as required
 - Meetings may be held virtually or in person
 - The Clerk will be responsible for preparing and circulating notes or minutes
 - Outputs will be shared with Council as appropriate
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6. Decision Making

The HR Working Group is advisory in nature.

- Recommendations will be made to Full Council for approval unless delegated authority applies
 - Where delegated powers are used, decisions must be made collectively and in consultation with the Clerk
 - A consensus approach will be used wherever possible
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7. Confidentiality

All members must maintain strict confidentiality in relation to HR and personnel matters.

In particular, members must not disclose:

- Individual employee information
- Sensitive staffing matters
- Any exempt business, where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business

Confidential items will be handled in accordance with statutory requirements.

8. Reporting

- The Chair (or nominated councillor) will provide regular updates to Council
- Written reports will be submitted as required
- All recommendations and delegated decisions will be formally recorded and reported

9. Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually at the Council's Annual Meeting, or earlier if required, to ensure they remain fit for purpose and aligned with Council priorities.