

MINUTES of the MEETING of the PERSONNEL COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE, DA10 0GA on THURSDAY 21 MAY 2026 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillor Dawn Johnston - Chairman
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Pete Harris
Councillor Lesley Howes

ABSENT: There were none

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Indigo Allred – Assistant Town Clerk

41/26-27. **ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.**

The Chairman explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

42/26-27. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An apology for absence was received from Emma Ben-Moussa, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Richard Lees, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Elizabeth Wickham, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Jack Turner, Locum RFO, due to other commitments.

Recommended: That the reason for absence, for the above Town Councillors, be formally accepted and approved.

43/26-27. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

44/26-27. **URGENT ITEMS / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.**

There were none.

45/26-27. **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2026.**

Recommended: That the minutes from the meeting held on 22 April 2026 be confirmed and signed.

46/26-27. **PAY CLAIM 2026-2027 (p).**

As part of its Terms of Reference the Personnel Committee are required to:

“Exercise functions of the Council on questions of levels of pay and salary settlements for all staff employed by the Council.”

Further to minutes 284/25-26 and 331/25-26 and a confidential report provided by the Locum Responsible Financial Officer Members considered awarding a pay increase for all appropriate staff for 2026 – 2027 with any pay award being dated from 1 April 2026.

After discussion it was proposed, duly seconded, and agreed unanimously:

Recommended: To approve a 3% increase to all applicable staff salary points and to the monthly fringe allowance for 2026/27; to confirm that staff not on salary bands shall be paid at the 2026/27 National Living Wage rate of £12.71 per hour; and to authorise officers to process the necessary payroll adjustments and any agreed backpay through the next available payroll, subject to continued monitoring of staff costs against the approved 2026/27 budget.

47/26-27. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

MOVED BY Councillor Lorna Cross and seconded by Councillor Lesley Howes.

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s).

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

48/26-27. **REDUNDANCY POLICY – REDUNDANCY PAY / COST ANALYSIS (p).**

Members considered the confidential report along with the Redundancy Policy and, after a considerable debate it was agreed that:

Recommended:

- 1 That the proposal brought forward from a member of staff be sent to the Locum

Responsible Financial Officer for a cost analysis report and that this report be reviewed at the next Personnel Committee meeting.

- 2 That recommendation 2 be deferred to the next Personnel Committee meeting.
- 3 That recommendation 3 be deferred to the next Personnel Committee meeting.
- 4 That garden leave be allowed for the affected members of staff.

49/26-27. **STAFFING ISSUES (P).**

Members discussed the contents of the confidential report that had been provided by the Locum RFO.

It was proposed, duly seconded and agreed:

Recommended: That the report / item be noted and all recommendations (1 to 9) contained in the confidential report be agreed.

50/26-27. **2025 PAYROLL.**

Members considered the confidential report that had been provided by the Locum RFO.

It was proposed, duly seconded and agreed:

Recommended: That the Assistant Town Clerk investigates with the HR Consultant, Locum RFO and independent research to ascertain if the report can go to full Council as is or, if it requires redacting.

The Town Clerk updated Members on the current level of applicants for the Town Clerk/RFO post which had a deadline of 29 May 2026.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(CHAIRMAN)

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Refurbishing a small cafe in the UK typically costs between **£15,000 and £60,000**. Prices heavily depend on whether you are doing a **light cosmetic update** or a **full structural and commercial kitchen fit-out**, averaging roughly **£50 to £100 per square foot** for labour and materials.

A typical refurbishment budget breaks down as follows:

- **Cosmetic & Seating Updates:** £5,000 – £15,000 for painting, flooring, signage, lighting, and new furniture.
- **Bar & Serving Counter:** £5,000 – £20,000 for custom counters, plumbing, and electrical upgrades required for espresso machines and grinders.
- **Commercial Kitchen Upgrade:** £10,000 – £40,000+ if you need new extraction systems, commercial ovens, refrigeration, or dishwashers.
- **Contingency Fund:** Always add **10% to 15%** of your total project cost to cover hidden structural issues or supply delays.

A 30ft by 30ft cafe gives you **900 square feet** of total space, which typically fits around **30 to 45 seats** depending on your kitchen size. Refurbishing a space this size will generally cost between **£15,000** for a basic cosmetic refresh and up to **£90,000+** for a complete, high-end structural transformation.

Estimated Cost Breakdown by Project Scope

- **Light Refresh (£15,000 – £30,000):** Focuses on cosmetics. Includes professional painting, new laminate flooring, upgraded consumer lighting, modern loose furniture, and minor front-of-house plumbing modifications.
- **Mid-Range Refurbishment (£30,000 – £65,000):** Includes a bespoke service counter, high-traffic commercial flooring, upgraded electrical rewiring for heavy-duty appliances, minor structural drywall adjustments, and partial kitchen appliance replacement.
- **Full Strip-Out & Fit-Out (£65,000 – £95,000+):** A complete overhaul. Includes a fully compliant commercial kitchen extraction hood system, structural wall removals, complete plumbing and drainage restructuring, customer toilet updates, and premium bespoke seating.

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