

Minutes of a meeting of
Staffing Committee
Held on Wednesday 12th November 2025
At School Green Centre commencing at 19.30

Present: Cllrs L James (Chair), Z Matic, I Montgomery & D Peer

Attending: B Winton (Clerk)

25/SC/35 Public Questions

- 35.1 There were no public questions.

25/SC/36 Apologies and declarations of Members' Interests

- 36.1 Apologies had been received from Cllr Masseron
- 36.2 There were no declarations of members' interests.

25/SC/37 Minutes of Previous Meetings

- 37.1 The minutes of the committee meeting held on 16th July 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed as such by Cllr James.

Proposed: Cllr Montgomery
Seconded: Cllr Peer
Approved: Unanimously

- 37.2 Actions and Matters Arising

There were the following matters arising:

31.2 Add Terms of Reference to the agenda of the next meeting

The Clerk apologised for this not happening

ACTION – Clerk to add Terms of Reference to the agenda of the next meeting

32.1 Clerk to consider internship options for summer of 2026

The Clerk had done some initial research into providing an internship. A recommended programme would include the following steps:

- Set out the purpose (what will they learn e.g. council admin, community engagement, governance etc.)
- Duration – Recommendation is 6-8 week period of employment
- Paid/Non-Paid – If they are doing real work and not shadowing then they should be paid the National Minimum Wage
- Draft Internship agreement – Role Description, duration & hours, payment/expenses, confidentiality
- Advertise through our channels, local schools, university job boards (including Henley Business School) etc.
- Advertising in March/April to start June/July

Members agreed that this should be a paid internship if we can find the right candidate.

ACTION – Clerk to progress arranging an internship for summer 2026.

32.2 Clerk to amend the appraisal form to include a general summary of performance of the year

The form has been modified ready for the 2026 reporting cycle.

25/SC/38

General Review of Staffing

- 38.1 The Chair opened this part of the agenda by raising the issue of recent tensions within the council. These, in part, have been one of the reasons for the spate of recent councillor resignations and increased staff concerns which threaten to cause damage to the ongoing operation of the council. The Chair discussed a draft Members-Officers protocol he had prepared. The protocol would bring clarity to roles and responsibilities and how councillors and staff should treat each other. This will be discussed at the next Finance and General Purposes committee with the intention to seek ratification at the following Full Council. The Chair also asked that the Clerk sought additional guidance from the WBC Monitoring Officer.

Members agreed to this initiative.

ACTION – Chair and Clerk to develop a Members-Officers Protocol for consideration by Full Council

ACTION – Clerk to seek additional guidance from WBC Monitoring Officer



38.2 A proposal to test Long-term staffing structure and resilience.

The Clerk advised that after discussion with the Chair that he had started to conduct a review of the long-term staffing structure for the council. He explained that previously there had been tweaks to existing structure but now was the time to do a root and branch review to ensure the structure was correct for the long-term future of the council and built in resilience.

He identified the following changes since 2022:

- Increases in staff numbers
 - Facilities 2 > 3 but only adding 27 hours pw. Despite covering two new building (Manor & High Copse) additional cover was needed in the evenings
 - Youth team 3 > 4 (reflecting increased numbers of children attending youth club)
- Increases in hours for existing staff
 - Finance Manager (18 to 37 hours)
 - IT & Comms Manager (18 to 37 hours)
- Significant growth in room bookings (volume and also complexity of bookings)
 - September 2022 - 215 bookings compared to September 2025 - 370 bookings and increase of 72%
 - The length and complexity of bookings was increasing and there was a need for more/quicker turnarounds
 - The Supervisor role is now much more demanding
- Council Business
 - In 2022 there were 48 council meetings a year, which rose to a maximum of 66 and has only recently reduced to 53 (plus 3 extraordinary Council meetings in 2025)
 - There has been a significant increase in the number of Working Parties, each of which brings more admin and work for those officers on the WP
- Community Events
 - The Council is adding more events, each of which requires staffing and, when new, also require more planning than a well-established event e.g. first art exhibition compared to Remembrance Sunday

It was agreed that the Clerk should pursue initially with his team, and then with the Staffing Committee members, to ensure that appropriate provision was discussed with Full Council and any relevant budget provisions made.

ACTION – Clerk to develop a long-term staffing plan

- 38.3 In support of the above exercise it was also recognised that the Council needed to review existing IT systems. It was proposed to set up an IT Working Party to conduct the review and recommend appropriate upgrades and/or new software as part of reducing workloads where practicable and supporting the resilience programme

ACTION – Clerk to arrange a meeting with Cllrs James, Johnson, and Matic regarding potential new IT systems

- 38.4 A verbal report on staffing matters and structure by the Clerk

The Clerk advised that the unplanned taking the café in-house had caused a period of significant extra workloads for all staff (either directly café related or indirectly). That period had now passed and there was a return towards normal working practices. The Clerk wanted the committee and the Council to be aware of the excellent work to achieve the transition.

In particular the café team that had transferred across were performing well with the lead supervisor showing signs of being able to progress eventually to a Café Manager role.

Member **NOTED** the Clerk's Report

25/SC/39

Training & Development

- 39.1 Training since last meeting
- Various office staff on Allergens and other food hygiene courses
 - All Café Staff Level 2 Food Hygiene
 - Café Supervisor working towards Level 3
 - One councillor on Chairing Skills
 - One councillor on Knowledge & Core Skills
- 39.2 Future Training
- One councillor is booked on a NALC 'Local Council Governance' course
 - Two staff are booked on NALC "Navigating Tough Decisions"
 - One member of staff booked on NALC "Digital and Data Compliance"
 - Two staff are booked on "Procurement Training"
 - One member of staff booked on "Future Leaders: Attracting Young Talent"
 - One member of staff booked on "Introduction to VAT"
- 39.3 Clerk's Training

The Clerk advised that his final set of results would be available on Thursday 13th November. Post Meeting note: The Clerk passed with an expected final grade of Pass with Merit (2:1 equivalent).

25/SC/40

Security Matters

40.1 Staff Security

The Clerk advised that there were no specific reports directly affecting staff.

40.2 Anti-Social Behaviour

The Clerk advised that there had been ASB on Millworth Recreation Ground in the summer and ongoing break-ins at Ryeish Green Pavilion all of which are reported to the police and covered at Facilities Committee meetings. There had been no ASB directed at council staff.

25/SC/35

Date of Next meeting

35.1 The date of the next meeting was the Wednesday 21st January 2026

The meeting ended at 20.45

Summary of Actions

25/SC/31.2	Clerk to add Terms of Reference to the agenda of the next meeting	Clerk
25/SC/32.1	Clerk to progress arranging an internship for summer 2026	Clerk
25/SC/38.1	Chair and Clerk to develop a Members-Officers Protocol for consideration by Full Council	Chair/Clerk
25/SC/38.1	Clerk to seek additional guidance from WBC Monitoring Officer	Clerk
25/SC/38.2	Clerk to develop a long-term staffing plan	Clerk
25/SC/38.3	Clerk to arrange a meeting with Cllrs James, Johnson, and Matic regarding potential new IT systems	Clerk

