



NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extra Council Meeting

held on Wednesday 11th December 2024 at Cedar House, 3 New Road,
North Walsham NR28 9DE

Present:

Town Councillors:	Cllr Wright (Chair)	Cllr Spall	Cllr Hester
	Cllr Brand	Cllr Dibben	Cllr Seward
	Cllr Covell	Cllr Ginbey	Cllr Bunton

Town Clerk: Deborah McNeill (Locum)

Members of Public: 18 members of the public, Town Clerk Wendy Murphy, Assistant Town Clerk Jasmine Dewbery

In Attendance: Gemma Murphy, HR Adviser (Croner)

The meeting opened at 19.00.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Beach and Heinrich for personal reasons.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - (Standing Orders: 13b-pecuniary interest; 13c-personal interest if the code of conduct requires; Councillors will leave the meeting for the item, unless a dispensation is granted)

Personal interests: None

Dispensations: None

Pecuniary interests: None

3. OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3.1 Public

From the public gallery, the Town Clerk stated that she waived her right to anonymity.

Various members of the public spoke expressing their disquiet at the way the council has been mismanaged and deep concern at the way the Town Clerk, who uncovered the issues, is now being treated.

The view was expressed that there was no confidence in the elected body of Councillors or in the Mayor.

The Assistant Town Clerk read out a statement expressing her support for the Town Clerk and her concern about recent unfounded accusations of wrongdoing towards her from a Councillor.

A statement from Cllr Heinrich was read out in his absence expressing his concern about the 'witch hunt' against the Town Clerk and the behaviour of his fellow Councillors.

It was asked whether those Councillors with a disclosable interest would be participating and voting at tonight's meeting and were reminded of the Nolan Principles.



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There were calls for the remainder of the meeting to be held in public but the Clerk of the meeting advised that this would not be appropriate as other individuals may be mentioned during the course of the discussion and that would be a breach of their confidentiality.

4. **IT WAS RESOLVED, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED**

All members of the public and staff left the meeting. The HR adviser remained for the confidential session.

5. **STAFFING MATTER**

A proposal was made to defer a decision until after all grievances have been concluded. Following discussion, and with the advice of the HR professional, the following resolutions were made.

It was RESOLVED

- A. To defer the decision on the staffing matter until all ongoing grievances have been investigated and full reports received for further consideration.
- B. To extend the probationary period for staff until the end of February 2025 initially, to allow for the outcome of all grievances to be concluded.
- C. To appoint Cllr Dibben as a Safeguarding/Wellbeing Officer for all staff, with Cllr Ginbey as a substitute in the event of Cllr Dibben's absence.
- D. To procure a cultural review as soon as practicable, as recommended by Croner, which will identify training required by councillors and processes and procedures that need to be reviewed.
- E. To procure an independent panel to provide impartiality.

Meeting closed at 20.20