



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

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Terms of Reference for the Staffing Sub Committee

Reviewed: May 2026

Approved:

Date For Next Review: May 2027

Purpose

To oversee and manage all staffing matters within the Council, including recruitment, performance management, grievance and disciplinary procedures, staffing structure, HR policies, and staff welfare, within its delegated authority, and to make recommendations to Full Council where required.

Membership

- A minimum of three (3) and a maximum of eight (8) Town Councillors will be appointed annually at the Annual Council Meeting as voting members.
- Vacancies may be filled during the year. The Sub-Committee Chair will request co-option via the Clerk for inclusion on the next available Finance & General Purposes Committee agenda, with appointments confirmed accordingly.
- Full Council may remove any member of the Sub-Committee at any time (for good reason if mid-term).
- The quorum is three (3) elected councillors.
- The Chair of the Sub-Committee will be appointed at the first Sub-Committee meeting following the Annual Council Meeting as the first agenda item before any other business is conducted.

Declarations of Interest

This requirement is in addition to each Councillor's statutory obligation to maintain an up-to-date Register of Pecuniary and Other Interests. Members must declare any relevant interest at the start of each meeting.

Where an interest relates to a staffing matter, the member must take no part in the decision-making and must not influence the views of others. With the permission of the Chair, the member may provide factual information or context. Thereafter, at the discretion of the Chair, the member may be required to withdraw for the remainder of that item.

Confidentiality

Due to the sensitive nature of staffing matters, all discussions, papers and records of the Sub Committee are strictly confidential and must not be disclosed outside the Council unless required by law. Breaches of confidentiality may result in removal from the Sub Committee.

Meetings

- The Sub-Committee will meet quarterly to review staffing matters, with additional meetings convened by the Clerk or the Chair when necessary to deal with grievance or disciplinary matters, recruitment, or other emerging staffing issues.
- Agendas will be prepared by the Clerk and issued at least three clear days in advance; they will be published on the Council's website/noticeboard in accordance with standing practice for committees handling confidential items.
- Any councillor who is not a member of the Sub-Committee may attend and participate as a non-voting member, subject to confidentiality and exclusion.
- Decisions are made by simple majority of members present and voting.
- If the Chair is not able to attend, the Sub-Committee shall elect a Chair for that meeting before any other business is conducted.
- The Chair may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Clerk. The role will be considered vacant upon receipt. As the Sub-Committee does not appoint a Vice-Chair, the first item of business at the next meeting will be the election of a new Chair.

Minutes & Reporting

Minutes will be recorded by the Clerk and presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, with any recommendations set out for consideration. Confidentiality will be preserved and exempt information handled in accordance with legislation and Council procedures

Delegated Authority (Financial)

The Sub-Committee may authorise expenditure up to £800 within its approved staffing budget. Any spending above this amount must be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee or Full Council as appropriate.

Restrictions

The Sub-Committee may not:

- Exceed the £800 expenditure limit or approved staffing budgets.
- Change staffing levels, structure, or contractual terms without Full Council approval.
- Incur legal or professional HR costs without referral to Full Council or Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- Make decisions outside staffing matters.
- Determine matters reserved to Full Council under the Scheme of Delegation.

Delegated Powers (Staffing Governance)

The Sub-Committee is authorised to:

- Draft and keep under review the staffing structure of the Council and make recommendations to the Finance & General Purposes Committee as appropriate.
- Keep under review staff conditions, welfare, salaries and appraisals.
- Keep under review contracts of employment, terms and conditions, and make recommendations to Council.
- Monitor the Council's employment policies and procedures for legislative updates and make recommendations to Council where appropriate.
- Authorise the Clerk to undertake recruitment to any approved posts within the established structure; oversee recruitment and interviews as required.
- Appoint interview panels from its membership when necessary and recommend appointments to Council. Panels will normally include three members for the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk, and two members plus the appropriate senior officer for other posts, unless otherwise specified.
- Delegate recruitment for Amenities Operatives and Administrative Assistant roles (once approved) where deemed necessary, within the approved staffing structure and subject to budget provision.
- Grant panels the authority to make offers of employment except for the role of Town Clerk, whose appointment must be referred to Full Council.
- Review staff and councillor training and development in line with the Training & Development Policy.
- Review and monitor staff absences in line with the Absence Management Policy and appoint from its membership an absence review panel (and appeals panel) with delegated authority to decide on employment matters, having received advice from the Town Clerk and/or an external HR representative. Panels will usually consist of three members. In the case of an absence review concerning the Clerk or Deputy Clerk, the panel will make a recommendation to Full Council.
- Authorise the Clerk to obtain Occupational Health advice as required.

Performance Management

- Receive and review reports about staff probationary reviews and/or appraisals as undertaken by the Clerk.

- Receive and review the Clerk's probationary/appraisal reports as undertaken by the Chair and one additional Sub-Committee member and make any recommendations to Full Council.
- Receive and review the Deputy Clerk's probationary/appraisal reports as undertaken by the Clerk and the Chair (or, in their absence, one additional Sub-Committee member), and make any recommendations to Full Council.

Complaints, Grievance & Disciplinary

- Receive and consider any complaints made under the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures and take appropriate action.
- Appoint from within the Council three members to act as a disciplinary panel, and three members to act as an appeals panel, ensuring that no member who took part in the original decision sits on the appeal.
- Appoint from its membership a panel of three members to hear any formal grievance raised by the Town Clerk relating to a member of staff. Any subsequent appeal will be heard by a separate panel of three members who were not involved in the original decision. Where the matter concerns the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk, the panel's findings shall be presented as a recommendation to Full Council for final determination.

Grievances Relating to Councillors:

Where a grievance is raised by any employee concerning the conduct or actions of a Councillor, the matter shall not be dealt with by the Staffing Sub Committee. Such grievances must be referred directly to Full Council for consideration under exempt business, or to the Monitoring Officer where the matter may amount to a potential breach of the Members' Code of Conduct.

Where the Town Clerk raises a grievance concerning the conduct or actions of a Councillor, the matter shall automatically be referred to Full Council. The Staffing Sub Committee has no authority to determine or adjudicate on grievances relating to elected members.

Operation of the Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee operates only as set out in these Terms of Reference and within the Council's Standing Orders and Code of Conduct. It may not exceed its delegated authority. Significant or strategic staffing matters must be referred to Full Council.

Any amendments to these Terms of Reference require a formal resolution of Full Council.