

NORTH TAWTON TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk - Mrs Sarah Say
14a The Square, North Tawton, EX20 2EP
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Assistant Town Clerk - Stephen Webb
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You are hereby summoned to the Extraordinary Meeting of North Tawton Town Council to be held via Zoom on: **Monday 28 September 2020 at 7.15 pm – please refer to the information below re remote meetings – this meeting will be a remote meeting and attendees, including members of the public, should start logging on to Zoom from 7.00 pm to allow the meeting to commence at 7.15.**

Please note: In order to allow Local Authorities to function during the Covid-19 emergency, the Government has now issued legislation which, amongst other provisions, allows Councils to hold meetings remotely using appropriate technology. NTTC has decided that its meetings will be held remotely until further notice and has adopted the use of Zoom Conferencing software for this purpose.

Members of the Public are welcome to join the meeting if they have suitable equipment in order to log onto Zoom. Any personal data provided in this connection will be held securely, and will be destroyed by 1 April 2021 or at any time as requested by the person concerned.

Members of the public wishing to join the remote meeting can request to join – you need a Zoom account, and when you request to 'join a meeting' the reference number you need is **840 3162 1853**. For security you will be kept in a virtual 'waiting room' until you are admitted to the meeting. The rules for a virtual meeting are the same as for a live meeting in relation to any disruptive behaviour, ie the ability to remove users from the meeting. Background screens and uploading of documents will be disabled.

If you have any problem logging onto the meeting please telephone 01837 880121 for advice (phone diverted to Town Clerk when office closed).



AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence** - To receive apologies from Councillors unable to attend.
2. **Declarations of Interest** - Councillors are invited to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting.

If Councillors have any questions relating to predetermination, bias or interests in items on this Agenda, then please contact the Clerk in the first instance.
3. **Proposal for increase in staff hours for the Town Clerk post and for the Assistant Town Clerk post.**
 - 3.1 **Background**
 - 3.1.1 At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on 16.9.20, a resolution was passed to proceed with recruitment of an Assistant Clerk, further to the resignation of the current postholder.
 - 3.1.2 The Chair of the Council's Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC) updated members on the recent meeting of the Committee, including a proposal to increase the hours of the Assistant Clerk to 16 hours per week, from 12 hours. The Committee had also considered an

increase in the hours of the Town Clerk, this had been the subject of discussion at the recent meeting of the PAC, and also at the time of recruitment of the Assistant Clerk.

3.1.3 At the extraordinary meeting there was a question as to whether the hours of the Town Clerk should be increased, rather than those of the Assistant Clerk. Subsequent to the meeting, the Chair of the Personnel Advisory Committee asked the Town Clerk if an increase in hours was appropriate and could be considered.

3.2 Current work hours situation, and likely position over the next 2 years.

3.2.1 Over the last 4 years, since the current Town Clerk has been employed by the Council, the work of the Council has increased substantially, as may be evidenced by the large number of working groups that have been set up, the burden of new legislation (General Data Protection Regulations and Website Accessibility Regulations in particular), the reports of the internal auditor which have highlighted areas where the Council has not had relevant procedures and policies in place, and the increase in numbers of meetings of the Council and its Committees.

3.2.2 The Town Clerk has regularly worked overtime hours of at least 2-3 per week, and up to 6-8 per week in an attempt to catch up with outstanding work, with limited success.

3.2.3 The resignation of the Assistant Clerk is likely to result in a period of time with no replacement in post. As and when a replacement is appointed and commences work, there will be a period of training, which will impact on the Town Clerk.

3.2.3 Members recently approved for the Town Clerk to undertake the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), which is recommended in the relevant job description as well as by the Council's internal auditor.

- This qualification brings significant advantages to the Council by helping it qualify for the General Power of Competence (GPC); the other criterion is that at least two-thirds of councillors have to be elected as opposed to co-opted.
- The GPC is intended to give local authorities (including parish and town councils) wider powers to deliver more for their communities. The GPC will allow a council to do anything that individuals generally may do, except where other aspects of law may forbid them from doing. It is intended to relieve councils of the need to find specific statutory powers to authorise their activities.
- Councils not being eligible to make use of the GPC can only do those things which they are specifically empowered to do by statute, thus it brings significant advantages.
- There is a time implication for undertaking the CiLCA course, members have agreed to pay 2 hours extra per week to the Town Clerk, but the usual time commitment is 4 hours per week so this needs to be covered. After a year in post the Assistant Clerk would be able to undertake the course, and this may have to be accommodated within the allocated hours., therefore there should be enough hours to allow for this in due course.
- Within a maximum of two years time the Town Clerk will have retired, and the Council will then be in a good position to review the hours of this post again in the light of the situation at that time.

3.3 Budgetary considerations

3.3.1 Please refer to the attached document which illustrates the budget implications of an increase in hours to 13, 14, 15, or 16 hours per week for both posts. Note that this takes into account the recent pay award (yet to be ratified by the Council).

3.3.2 Projected spend for the current FY is already under budget, and there are readily identifiable savings which would cover any increase within 2020-21 (Specific examples, 1004 – travel expenses - £0.6k; 5000 – public convenience cleaning (closed during

lockdown) - £1k; 1002 – workplace pension - £1k; 1006 – election expenses – minimum £1k = total £3.6k).

3.3.3 Looking ahead to 2021-22, the costs of proposed increase in hours can be accommodated by one or more of the following, this would be for the council to consider when setting the budget for the next FY:

- an increase to the precept
- identification of savings
- adjustment to reserves allocations

3.4 Proposal

3.4.1 It is the suggestion of the Town Clerk that the Council propose and agree an increase in hours of both the Town Clerk and the Assistant Town Clerk posts from 12 per week each to 16 per week each, with effect from 1 November 2020. It is further suggested that the only overtime to be undertaken by either post as from that date should be to cover evening meetings, or by specific permission of the Council if circumstances warrant.

4. Questions/Comments from members of the public

The meeting shall be suspended to allow members of the public to comment/ask a question on any **AGENDA ITEM ONLY – PLEASE QUOTE AGENDA ITEM NUMBER**. Time is limited to 2 minutes per person, up to a maximum of 3 persons, unless the Chairman rules otherwise. A brief record of any points made will be included in the minutes of that meeting.

5. Date of next meeting

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council shall be **Tuesday 6 October 2020**, at 7.15 pm unless otherwise notified.

PART II - EXEMPT REPORTS:

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by S.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

1 Assistant Clerk – consideration of payment in lieu of Annual Leave – Town Clerk will report.

Exemption under Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended:

- 1. Information relating to any individual*