



BANWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 7:15pm ON MONDAY 2nd of SEPTEMBER 2024

Present: Cllrs Paul Blatchford (Chairman) and Paul Harding.

In attendance: Liz Shayler (Clerk)

Due to Lack of quoracy the meeting was cancelled. However, Cllr Harding and Cllr Blatchford undertook the shortlisting which resulted in two applicants being shortlisted for the position of Environment and Biodiversity Officer.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 19:15

.....Chairman

.....Date



BANWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 10am ON MONDAY 9th of SEPTEMBER 2024

Present: Cllrs Paul Blatchford (Chairman), Paul Harding and Maggie McCarthy.

In attendance: Liz Shayler (Clerk)

33/24 To receive and accept apologies for absence (agenda item 1).

Apologies were received from Cllr Simon Arlidge.

34/24 To receive members' declarations of interest on any agenda item (agenda item 2)

No member's declarations of interest were received.

35/24 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Employment Committee held on the 3rd of June 2024 (agenda item 3).

Resolved – That the minutes be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).

The minutes of the meeting were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

36/24 To discuss the current admin role and agree a way forward (agenda item 4).

Resolved: To reassess the need for additional workforce capability in March 2025.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).

Resolved: To, if necessary, allow the Clerk overtime hours to complete the movement from .org.uk to gov.uk without it triggering an employment committee meeting after three months.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).

37/24 Exclusion of the press and public. (The Committee is recommended to resolve that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 6 - 9 by reason of the confidential nature of the item of business to be transacted, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (agenda item 5).

Resolved – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).

38/24 To note the Communication Officer six-monthly appraisal targets (agenda item 6).

The Communication Officer six-monthly appraisal targets were noted.

39/24 To discuss the end of the Communications and Marketing Officers 6-month probation (agenda item 7).

Resolved – To agree the end of Communications and Marketing Officers probation.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).

40/24 To undertake the Clerk's six-monthly appraisal and agree any targets (agenda item 8).

The Clerks six monthly appraisal was undertaken, and appraisal targets noted.

41/24 To agree the date of the next meeting (agenda item 10)

March 3rd 2025 at Banwell Youth & Community Centre

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10:15

.....Chairman

.....Date

DRAFT

9 To reassess the need for additional workforce capability and discuss increasing officer hours

1. Introduction

This report looks at whether current officer hours are meeting the council's needs and suggests adjustments where necessary. A further reassessment is planned for September once we have the Environment & Biodiversity Survey results and a clearer picture of the bypass impact, Local Plan developments, and Parish Council input on the Wolverhill development.

2. Current Workforce and Hours

Role	Current Hours	Proposed Change	Justification
Parish Clerk	28 hours/week	No change	AI is making processes more efficient, reducing admin workload.
Communications & Marketing Officer	6 hours/week	No change	The officer is happy with current hours and workload.
Environment & Biodiversity Officer	6 hours/week	Increase to 8 hours/week	Now that we have a better understanding of the role, additional time is needed for planning applications, community engagement, and environmental oversight for major projects.
Environment & Biodiversity Officer	–	Additional 2 hours/week	Dedicated time for researching and applying for grant funding, including both environmental and wider Parish Council projects. Hours will flex as needed.

3. Justification for Adjustments

3.1 Parish Clerk

No change needed. AI is making admin tasks quicker, meaning no additional hours are required at this stage.

3.2 Communications & Marketing Officer

- No change needed. The officer has confirmed that 6 hours/week is sufficient.
- If any additional communications workload arises, particularly related to environmental matters, the Environment & Biodiversity Officer can take on environmental comms to support the team.

3.3 Environment & Biodiversity Officer

- This is a new role, and while the initial estimate of 6 hours per week was a reasonable starting point, we now have a better understanding of the time required to effectively manage key responsibilities.
- The role is strategic rather than operational, focusing on oversight rather than direct land management.
- The additional 2 hours per week are proposed to ensure there is sufficient time to cover:
 - i. **Planning Applications** – Reviewing applications for environmental impact, particularly biodiversity and climate considerations. The volume of applications has been high, and additional time is needed to ensure responses are well-researched.
 - ii. **Community Engagement & Events** – Running workshops and public engagement activities based on survey feedback.
 - iii. **Bypass & Major Infrastructure Oversight** – Liaising with the Banwell Bypass team as they implement their environmental obligations, including habitat

mitigation, tree planting, and biodiversity corridors, ensuring Parish Council input and oversight.

- Additional 2 hours per week for grant funding (flexible allocation) – Since many environmental and wider Parish Council projects rely on external funding, dedicated time is needed for:
 - i. Researching and applying for grants to support environmental and sustainability projects.
 - ii. Seeking funding for wider council priorities such as community infrastructure or energy initiatives.
 - iii. Identifying and tracking grant deadlines to ensure timely applications.

However, the nature of grant funding work is not consistent week to week. Some months may require more than 2 hours per week when applications are being prepared, while others may require less when funding opportunities are limited. The additional time should be flexible to accommodate these fluctuations

4. Reassessment in September

A further review of officer hours will take place in September 2025 to consider:

- Findings from the Environment & Biodiversity Survey and any additional workload arising from it.
- The impact of the Banwell Bypass and whether it creates extra demands.
- The effect of the Local Plan and Wolverhill development on officer workload.
- Whether the extra hours for the Environment & Biodiversity Officer are delivering the intended benefits.

5. Recommendation

- No changes to the Clerk's or Communications Officer's hours at this time. Increase the Environment & Biodiversity Officer's hours from 6 to 10 hours per week, with 2 hours allocated for planning applications, community engagement, and environmental oversight, and 2 hours for grant funding (covering both environmental and wider Parish Council projects).
- Recognise that grant funding work will not be evenly spread and may require more hours some weeks and fewer in others, depending on funding deadlines and opportunities
- If additional communications needs arise, particularly relating to environmental matters, the Environment & Biodiversity Officer can assist with this.
- Reassess the situation in September 2025 based on new information and workload demands.

These changes ensure we're balancing resources effectively while keeping the council running smoothly.

10 To undertake the annual salary review

The annual salary review has been undertaken, and no pay increases are proposed beyond the statutory annual increase. Both the Communications & Marketing Officer and Environment & Biodiversity Officer are employed on payscale 13, which is a fixed point rather than a salary range, meaning there is no scope for incremental increases. The Parish Clerk is already at the upper limit of their pay scale entitlement, so no further increases can be applied without a formal re-evaluation of the role.

Moving forward, the annual salary review should take place in September to align with the budgeting process for the following financial year. This will ensure that any necessary adjustments can be factored into budget planning in a timely manner. If salary adjustments are to be considered, a job evaluation process would need to be undertaken to reassess responsibilities and ensure alignment with appropriate pay scales.