

REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

6th October 2020

AGENDA ITEM 8.3 – NATIONAL SALARY AWARD AND WORKING HOURS

1. Report

- 1.1 It is appropriate to report to Council both on the 2020-21 National Salary Award to council employees and also it is pertinent to report on the Clerk's working hours over this unusual summer.

2. Salary Award

- 2.1 Your Clerk was appointed on 1st June 2016 on a salary of £3000 p.a., based on a requirement to work 25 hours per calendar month. On 1st November 2016, you agreed to increase the Clerk's salaried hours to 30 per month, in the light of the time demands on his duties. In both cases, the agreed salary reflected an hourly payment of £10, which is based upon his appointment on Spinal Column Point (SCP) 20 (within the SCP range 18-22.)
- 2.2 As part of the 2019 national salary agreement a new pay spine was introduced which, inter alia, replaced the SCP range 18-22 with new SCPs 7-12. SCP20 (referred to in 2.1 above) was divided on the revised pay spine into two – SCP 9 and 10. SCP9 in 2019 was set at an hourly payment of £10.57, and SCP10 £10.79. It was agreed at that point that your Clerk should be paid at £10.57 per hour, raising his annual salary to £3805.
- 2.3 NALC has reported that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services has recently agreed new pay scales for 2020-21 to be implemented from 1 April 2020.
- 2.4 On the basis of the 2020 salary award, the same spine point is £10.86, an increase of 2.7%. On an annual basis, the approved salary level is £3909.60.
- 2.5 This award should be backdated to 1 April 2020, leading to a gross salary payment of £325.80 starting on 3rd November, plus a back payment of £60.90 to cover the period from 1st April.
- 2.6 Your Council's budget for 2020-21 accommodates an increase of 5% in the Clerk's salary costs.

3. Working hours

- 3.1 Your Clerk, as mentioned above, is paid for 30 hours per calendar month, or 360 per year. Normally his working hours exceed this figure, the average for the weeks 5 March 2018 to 23 March 2020 being 8.13 (including weeks when holidays were taken).
- 3.2 Since Covid lockdown on 23 March 2020, his hours worked have been 305, over a 25-week period, giving an average of 12.2 hours per week (again including holidays taken). The maximum number of hours worked in one week was 29.75. In 8 of those weeks, 15 or more hours were worked. Over this period of 25 weeks, an excess of 157.5 hours over salaried hours has been worked.
- 3.3 The reasons for this increase have included:

- The work involved in reaction to the problems of visitors to Pickmere during the summer (discussions with relevant bodies, seeking to set up meetings, etc);
- Briefing and preparation work in respect of the Covid pandemic and its implications for the Council – in relation to considering the closing/reopening of the Village Hall and play area;
- Preparation work for the replacement of the council website;
- Preparation work for the proposal to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan;
- Work involved in setting up and managing the Zoom Council meeting system;
- Responding to the additional email correspondence with Pickmere residents that has arisen as a result of the pandemic and its local problems, and also the increased resident interest in the Council's decision-making that has arisen primarily from the holding of on-line meetings.

3.4 The Clerk is of course a resident of the village and therefore does not seek payment for this excess work. In addition, it is to be noted that this additional work reflects also the demands placed on parish councillors who are not paid and do not keep track of their hours worked. In this context, the Clerk would like residents in particular to be aware of the particular demands that have been placed this summer on the Parish Council as a whole, particularly when criticising the Council for the lack of action in certain areas.

4. Recommendation

4.1 That the report be noted

J Steel
Parish Clerk