

CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting duly convened and held on Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 9.30am at The Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey

Members present: Cllr J. August (Chair), Cllr S. Schafer

Officers present: C. Bird (Clerk)

Start time: 9.40am

End time: 10.50am

S1. To elect the Chair of the Committee

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr J. August as Chair of Staffing Committee.

S2. To receive apologies for absence

Last minute apologies were received from Cllr Herbert for personal reasons.

S3. To hear questions or comments from members of the public concerning topics on the agenda (limited to 10 mins)

There were none.

S4. To receive Declarations of Personal and Pecuniary Interest for any agenda items (note, this does not preclude later declarations)

There were none.

S5. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2024 (Appendix A) and receive update on any Minute items

It was **resolved** to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2024 and they were signed by Cllr August. It was noted that the Council was unable to hold a Staffing Committee meeting in 2025 due to not having three appointed Committee members. Cllr August was appointed to the Committee in November 2025. It was discussed that appointing four members to the Committee with a quorum of three would be more sustainable going forward.

The Clerk reported that a new Environment Coordinator job description is now in place; Cllr Herbert has provided feedback which may lead to further amendments.

S6. To approve and adopt updated Employee Handbook 2026 (Appendix B)

The existing Handbook has been updated by GAP HR for the Parish Council; changes are based on new legislation and include changes to Statutory Sick Pay, Parental/Carer Leave policies, Unfair Dismissal, Dignity at Work and Whistleblowing policies.

It was agreed to recommend adoption of the updated Handbook at the next meeting of full Council.

S7. To receive update on recruitment of a new Community Coordinator for the Community Allotment

The Clerk reported that the Council was awarded a Soha grant in January to appoint a part-time (5 hours per week) Community Coordinator for the Community Allotment for a 30-week fixed term in 2026. The position was advertised from 23rd February with a closing date of 11th March. Three applicants were interviewed by Cllr Herbert and the Clerk on 16th and 18th March. All candidates were able to start immediately. The successful candidate was offered the position on 19th March, and contracts have been signed with a start date of 23rd March.

S8. To receive update on appraisal process 2025/2026

The Clerk reported that 2026 appraisals have been completed with the officer team, with the exception of the Maintenance Person who will shortly have their appraisal with the Estate Manager. Once write-ups are ready the Clerk will send these to the Staffing Committee Chair for signing.

S9. To discuss next actions on Health and Safety

The Clerk reported that a general Risk Register is in place and regularly reviewed by the

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Finance Committee. Estate and project-specific risk assessments are in place. The Clerk and Estate Manager will be meeting with a Health and Safety consultant (at no charge for the initial meeting) to review the Council's provision. Advised next steps will be reported to Council following the meeting.

S10. To discuss next actions on GDPR compliance

The Clerk reported that a data audit has been completed and approved by full Council at the March 2026 meeting. Officers are currently completing an e-course on GDPR via SLCC; the Clerk is investigating suitable training for Councillors. Any changes identified as a result of training will then be actioned.

S11. To discuss and agree any other training needs

The Clerk reported that the officer team completed First Aid training in December, but there is an ongoing need to keep this learning fresh. The Estate Manager completed Fire Marshal training in February, along with other members of the Pavilion community.

All team members will be completing GDPR, Cybersecurity, EDI, and Health and Safety training in the coming months. The Clerk continues to investigate suitable training on preventing harassment; it was agreed that it is desirable for this to be provided by an organisation with local council expertise if possible.

Other courses being explored by individual team members include Intermediate Excel, Dealing with Difficult People, Planning/NPPF reforms, Communications plans.

S12. Items for report or inclusion on next agenda

There were none at this time.

S13. To agree items to be reported to meeting of full Council on 22nd April 2026

Appointing a fourth Committee member
Updated Employee Handbook

S14. To agree next meeting date

October 2026, TBC