F

FULL COUNCIL – 16 SEPTEMBER 2024

PROPOSED CHANGES TO CARETAKING STAFF PROVISION/ORGANISATION

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 To note the current caretaking staffing position,

1.2 To approve the proposed reorganisation of the caretaking provision; and

1.3 In the absence of the Clerk, to delegate authority to the Deputy Clerk, to implement the recommended changes to the existing staffing working patterns as set out below and advertise for new caretaking post at 11 hours a week at a salary of £12.00 per hour.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Council on upcoming changes to caretaking staff and their working patterns to allow greater flexibility for staff and whilst meeting business needs as well as ensuring that the changes do not negatively impact on the set staffing budget for 2024/25.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council has been notified that a member of the caretaking team, currently workings 11 hours per week, will be retiring and leaving employment at the end of November. In additional the two other members of the caretaking staff (20 hours and 15 hours respectively) have also requested that their hours worked on the weekend be reduced to provide them with an improved work-life balance. The Council also has a caretaker on 6 hours per week who predominately covers gate locking and cover during the splashpad season.

3.2 Given the ad-hoc nature of the hire at the Community Centres, particularly party bookings, caretaking staff cover is essential during the weekends, and these must be covered by caretaking staff. Therefore, the business needs of the Council must come first when considering requests for changes in staffing resource/hours.

3.3 As it is not possible to accommodate the request from the two staff members to cease working at weekends, a compromise position has been reached whereby all caretaking staff will cover all buildings, including weekends on a rotational basis.

4. PROPOSED CHANGES TO WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Based on the Council's current business needs, the upcoming resignation and request from two other caretakers to reduce their hours including weekend cover, it is proposed that:

- The replacement employee for the retiring member of staff is initially employed on a like for like basis with an option to increase their hours once in the post.

- The two-caretaking staff wishing to reduce hours worked over the weekend, maintain their current hours of work, however, weekends will be shared on a rotational basis across three (not two as current) members of staff,
- That the 11 hour a week post would then be advertised with the possibility of hours fluctuating to cover weekends (as above); and
- The replacement postholder's remit will extend to include full caretaking cover for all Council buildings as required by the weekly schedule.

4.2 The above will be managed via the following arrangements: - the beginning of each week the caretakers will receive a schedule from the Communications & Events Officer. The caretakers will be required to manage the cover of the schedule themselves (with assistance from Communications and Events Officer where necessary) ensuring that all duties required for that week are covered between the three staff members. Once complete the schedule must be returned to the Communications and Events Officer for staff reference. This will be shared with the Finance Officer to ensure that the total caretaking hours budgeted for, namely 46 hours is not exceeded, to remain in budget.

4.3 Each caretaker will be required to cover weekends and evenings using this rota system, which will allow them the opportunity to work less weekend hours where possible.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Although this proposed staffing change will not negatively impact the budget set for 2024/2025, it will incur an advertising cost of approximately £100 to advertise on Indeed.com which will be taken from the staff and sickness budget.

5.2 The vacancy for the caretaker at 11 hours per week (with potential to increase on an ad hoc basis) will be advertised with the agreed salary of £12.00 per hour. It is hoped that with successful recruitment process, a new caretaker will be in post by 1 November. Given the time pressure and the need to ensure that the Council has full caretaking cover, a shorter advertising period will be adopted.

6. CRIME & DISORDER AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. None directly arising from this report

7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and treatment and to ensuring that there is no discrimination in employment practices.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The Council's current caretaking staffing position and proposed changes to working practices is set out above.

8.2 It is proposed that Council agree the recommendations set out in Paragraph 1.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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