

Malvern Hills Trust

Staffing Committee

Colwall Parish Hall

Tuesday December 7 2021, 7.00 pm

Present: Mr M Davies, Mrs H I'Anson, Mrs C Palmer (Chair), Mr C Penn, Prof Raine, Ms H Stace.

In attendance: CEO, Secretary to the Board, Mr R Fowler, Mr T Parsons.

Mrs Palmer welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Appointment of Chair**

This meeting had been postponed from 4 November. As the committee was re-appointed at the Board meeting on 11 November, it was necessary to deal with the appointment of a chair and vice-chair of the committee as the first item on the agenda. It was **AGREED** to suspend Standing Orders. Prof Raine proposed that Mrs Palmer should be appointed as chair of the committee and this was seconded by Mr Davies. There were no other nominations and Mrs Palmer was appointed unopposed.

2. **Appointment of Vice-Chair**

Mrs Palmer nominated Prof Raine to be vice-chair of the committee and this was seconded by Mr Penn. There were no other nominations and Prof Raine was appointed unopposed.

3. **Apologies for absence**

Mr D Baldwin.

4. **Chair's announcements**

There would be an item of urgent business. This would be dealt with in the confidential part of the meeting.

5. **Declaration of interests**

There were none.

6. **Public Comments**

There were none.

7. **Matters arising from previous meeting not otherwise on agenda**

The CEO reported that since July, the Operations Manager and a warden had been recruited. The field staff member who had been recruited on a temporary contract had resigned as he was offered a permanent post elsewhere. It had been decided not to recruit to replace him as there were only a few months of the term of the temporary post left to run.

8. Update on Health and Safety Issues

The CEO went through his written report. There had been no further incidents since the report was written.

The points arising from Mr Tompkins' visit were being actioned. The advice given in relation to the throw line at Gullet Quarry was that it should be checked daily. When visits to the quarry were less frequent in the winter months, Mr Tompkins had recommended removing the throw line altogether. The CEO clarified that the reference in the report to marking car park bays was in relation to the Manor House car park. A new system was being trialled to enable staff to report any health and safety concerns as well as "near misses".

The CEO had updated the Covid risk assessments in the light of the deteriorating situation.

9. Review of Abusive, Persistent or Vexatious Complainants Policy

The CEO said that the draft policy had been prepared following consideration of similar policies used by other organisations. The policy included behaviour directed at trustees (recognising that they were volunteers)

Amendments were proposed:

- Page 1, paragraph 3 before the bullets amend to read: **Unacceptable behaviour** may include **(but is not limited to)**
- Page 4, under the heading "Ceasing all contact with a complainant" - make clear that this was not an exclusive list.

It was agreed that the document was intended as guidance and needed to be drafted in a way that allowed for flexibility of response.

On the proposal of Mr Davies, seconded by Mrs I'Anson it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend that the revised policy be approved by the Board subject to the points set out above.

10. Review of Bullying and Harassment Policy

On the proposal of Prof Raine, seconded by Mr Penn it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend that the revised policy be approved by the Board.

11. Urgent Business

To be dealt with in confidential session.

12. Date of next meeting

7 April 2022.

13. Confidential business

On the proposal of Ms Stace seconded by Mr Penn it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to exclude the public for discussion of items 11 and 14 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the exempt or confidential nature of the business to be transacted (personnel matters).

CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes released

14. Estate Supervisor post

On the proposal of Prof Raine, seconded by Ms Stace it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend to the Board that duration of the temporary Estate Supervisor post be extended by a further 6 months to 21 September 2022.

15. Benchmarking

A benchmarking exercise for all staff salaries (except the CEO) was undertaken in 2018/19. The CEO had intended to repeat this exercise in 2023/24. As a result of changing circumstances, including erosion of differentials because of increases in the minimum wage, increases in National Insurance, increases in inflation and more competition in the employment market affecting recruitment and retention, he felt this should be brought forward to the next financial year, to be undertaken once the increases in the Local Government pay scales were known.

The cost would be about £2,000 - £2,500.

Mrs Palmer suggested including a further benchmarking exercise in year 5 of the Business Plan.

On the proposal of Ms Stace, seconded by Mrs Palmer it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend to the Board that the budget for 2022/23 should include the sum of £2,500 in order to carry out a benchmarking exercise during the next financial year.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm