



Minutes of a Meeting of the
STAFFING AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE
of the Winkfield Parish Council held on
Tuesday 23rd September 2025 from 7.30 pm – 8.26 pm

Those present:

Cllr N Atkinson
Cllr E Blyth
Cllr G Paxton

Cllr G Barber
Cllr Dudley (Chair)
Cllr R Warren

Cllr T Blakemore
Cllr Ms M Gaw

Officer: Mrs Ruth Lyes, Clerk

SS 25/12 WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair welcomed those in attendance to the meeting

SS 25/13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

SS 25/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

SS 25/15 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

SS 25/16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the previous Staffing & Strategy Committee meeting (10th June 2025) were received and accepted at the Council Meeting on 24th June 2025. The committee is now asked to formally approve the minutes (agenda Appx 1) for signing.

It was proposed by Cllr Blyth, seconded by Cllr Barber and with one abstention was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2025 be confirmed and be signed and adopted.

SS 25/17 POLICIES REVIEW

The Committee reviewed the following policies:

- i. **Unauthorised Traveller Encampment Policy** – minor updating amendments (attached as agenda Appx 2)

It was **proposed** by Cllr Dudley, seconded by Cllr Atkinson and was unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend with noted amendments, to Council for approval

- ii. **Grievance Policy** – annual review; minor updating amendments (attached as agenda Appx 3). The Clerk also provided the following additional amendment recommendations based on the NALC model policy:
- Staff may raise complaints about councillors informally; formal grievance stages cannot be used for code-of-conduct matters. Such issues may be referred to the Monitoring Officer.
 - Council will ensure employee safety. Safety-related grievances raised informally may lead to action under Health & Safety, Dignity at Work, or the Members' Code of Conduct.
 - Where the grievance does not concern the Clerk, the sub-committee may ask the Clerk to hear it.
 - The sub-committee can appoint an internal or external investigator to report findings in writing.
 - Time limits may be extended beyond 10 working days for written notification or for issuing the decision letter when an investigation is required.
 - Hearings may be adjourned to allow investigation if new issues arise.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Dudley, seconded by Cllr Warren and was unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend with noted amendments, to Council for approval

- iii. **Data Retention Policy** – updating amendments (attached as agenda Appx 4)

It was **proposed** by Cllr Barber, seconded by Cllr Paxton and was unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend with noted amendments, to Council for approval

- iv. **Privacy Notice** – updated to reflect the Data (Use & Access) Act, June 2025 (attached as agenda Appx 5)

It was **proposed** by Cllr Paxton, seconded by Cllr Warren and was unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend with noted amendments, to Council for approval

- v. **Code of Conduct** – no changes required; (based on Bracknell Forest Council policy which remains unchanged) **Noted**.

- vi. **Social Media Policy** – updating amendments (attached as agenda Appx 6). The Clerk also provided the following additional amendment recommendations based on the NALC model policy:
- Employees may use personal social media but must state views are their own, protect confidential data, avoid posts that could damage the Council's reputation, and follow Data Protection/UK GDPR rules.
 - Policy to be reviewed every three years or earlier if laws or platforms change.

The changes as outlined above were proposed by Cllr Dudley and seconded by Cllr Barber.

Cllr Barber then queried and proposed a change to the wording of the recommended clause 8.4. The proposal was that this should be adapted to

state that personal views could be allowed but must be clear that they are personal opinions and not that of the council.

This amendment was proposed by Cllr Barber, seconded by Cllr Dudley and was unanimously

RESOLVED to recommend this proposal, along with other noted amendments, to Council for approval.

vii. **Speedwatch Policy** – updating amendments (attached as agenda Appx 7)

It was **proposed** by Cllr Dudley, seconded by Cllr Paxton and was unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend with noted amendments, to Council for approval

viii. **Whistleblowing Policy** – updating amendments (attached as agenda Appx 8). The Clerk also provided the following additional amendment recommendations based on the NALC model policy:

- Add the councillor/Monitoring Officer route.
- Include a clear Stage 1 → Stage 2 → Stage 3 escalation.
- State that the whistleblower need not investigate.
- Add the disciplinary warnings and a short data-protection clause.
- When referencing external regulators, use the current gov.uk “prescribed persons” page.

It was proposed by Cllr Blyth, seconded by Cllr Atkinson and was unanimously **RESOLVED** to recommend with noted amendments, to Council for approval

SS 25/18 STRATEGIC PLAN – UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS

The Clerk and members of the Strategic Plan Working party provided a brief verbal update on the recent Working Party meeting. The next steps in the development of the draft plan were stated as:

- i. The Consultant will make some final adjustments to the Plan and resubmit it to the Clerk
- ii. Clerk to discuss the plan with staff and evaluate the proposed timelines
- iii. Clerk to circulate updated plan to Working Party Members with a two-week review deadline
- iv. Draft document to be submitted to Council for review, acceptance and adoption

Noted.

SS 25/19 TRAINING & CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Committee noted that, since the last meeting, staff members have undertaken a range of role-appropriate training and CPD, including: COSHH, PA6, Manual Handling, Display Screen Equipment, Information Security, Cyber Security, VAT Partial

Exemption Calculation, Managing a Playground Project, and See, Check & Notify (SCaN) Martyn's Law. **Noted**

SS 25/20 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Cllr Dudley, seconded by Cllr Warren and was unanimously

RESOLVED that pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following matters : Staff Remuneration and Staffing Updates.

SS 25/21 STAFFING REMUNERATION

It was proposed by Cllr Barber, seconded by Cllr Blakemore and was unanimously

RESOLVED that the Committee recommend to Full Council that the staff mobile phone allowance which is processed through payroll be increased to £13.89 per month per eligible employee to maintain the existing £10 net benefit, with the associated additional costs included in the 2025/26 staffing budget and going forward.

SS 25/22 STAFFING UPDATES

1. Clerk resignation & recruitment

The Committee noted the Clerk's resignation and discussed recruitment options and the support package proposal offered by the Local Council Consultancy.

It was proposed by Cllr Gaw, seconded by Cllr Blyth and was unanimously

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that specialist sector support be engaged for the recruitment process, with costs (£3080 + VAT and expenses) met from Contingency Earmarked Reserve. The Chair would call an Extraordinary Meeting to be held on 7th October following the Planning & Highways meeting, to consider the recommendation.

2. Staff Member– Declaration of Other Employment

The Committee noted that written consent has been granted by the Clerk, in accordance with the employment contract, for a staff member to undertake self-employed work outside their contracted hours. **Noted**