



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Practices Committee  
Wednesday 18 February 2026  
7.00pm**

**Present:** Cllrs Craig Gale (Chairman), Sandy Duck, Craig Jones, Marie Montoya, Anna Rhodes, Kate Rowbottom and Doug Waller.

**In attendance:**

G Burt, Clerk to the Council

*Following the resignation of Cllr Steve Thomas who chaired the Committee.....*

**01/26 Election of Chairman**

On the proposal of Cllr Sandy Duck, seconded by Cllr Kat Rowbottom **RESOLVED** that Cllr Craig Gale be elected Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

*As there was now a vacancy for Vice Chairman... ..*

**02/26 Election of Vice Chairman.**

On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller, seconded by Cllr Anna Rhodes, **RESOLVED** that Cllr James Marchant be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

**03/26 Chairman's announcements**

1. That the meeting was being streamed to the internet.
2. Cllrs wishing to speak should raise their hand and speak loudly and clearly.
3. Mobile 'phones should either be switched off or silenced.

**04/26 Apologies**

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr James Marchant for an approved reason. On the proposal of Cllr Craig Gale, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller **RESOLVED** to accept the apology and reason given.

**05/26 To receive Declarations of Interest and Notification of Changes to Members' Interests**

None

**06/26 Public Session**

None

**07/26 Approval of the minutes of the Working Practices Committee meeting held on 10 September 2025, previously circulated.**

On the proposal of Cllr Craig Gale, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and signed as a correct record accordingly.

**08/26 Clerk's Report**

None

**09/26 To review the Council's policy of only keeping streamed meetings, until the next meeting takes place. Requested by Cllr P Berry.**

The Council deemed that recordings only be kept online until the next meeting, when the Council first started streaming meetings during the COVID pandemic. Cllr Berry, in his e-mail to all Cllrs felt that a review was now timely, suggesting they be kept longer as they were a useful tool for Cllrs and the public. Members agreed that a longer period would be beneficial. However, they were keen that recordings also be kept offline for longer should the Council need to review them, technology permitting. Cllr Waller raised the need for the recordings that were retained online to be easy to find on the website.

- a. On the proposal of Cllr Craig Jones, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller **RESOLVED** that all recordings be kept publicly accessible for 6 months.
- b. On the proposal of Cllr Craig Gale, seconded by Cllr Craig Jones, **DEFER** a retention policy on offline recordings, pending further information on technical and cost issues.

**10/26 To review the Council's *Approved Reasons for Absence from Meetings Policy*.**

- a. The Clerk reported that having had the policy in place for year, issues has arisen where Cllrs served on other community groups and the current policy did not make provision for that as an approved reason On the proposal of Cllr Craig Jones seconded by Cllr Marie Montoya, **RESOLVED** *Official / Trustee of other local charity or organisation* be added as an approved reason to the policy according.
- b. The Clerk added that he felt uncomfortable having to ask Cllrs what their reason was, when they sent an apology, as if he was having to *nanny and police* Cllrs. Cllrs said that the Clerk was not expected to do this, and that Cllrs should tend the approved reason, and expect to have it recorded accordingly if they did not, and risk the chance of having their apology not approved.

**11/26 To note delivery of recent training to all councillors and staff on *Sexual Harassment Awareness*.**

Members spoke positively about the *Sexual Harassment Awareness* training recently undertaken by all staff and Cllrs. Cllr Doug Waller said it was good to have such training for staff and Cllrs at the same time. Members commented on the need for refresher sessions and for any new Cllrs post-elections. **NOTED**

**12/26 Exclusion of Press & Public**

On the proposal of Cllr Craig Jones seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted (staffing), the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw.

**13/26 Staff Changes**

The Committee **NOTED** various staff departures and appointments since the last meeting. Members and the Clerk spoke highly of new additions to the team in the last 12 months.

**14/26 2026-27 Pay Award.**

Negotiations on the 2026-27 national pay award had not yet been agreed. **NOTED.**

**15/26 EOY Reviews**

These were complete; once Cllr Gale had review them all, he would undertake the Clerk's. **NOTED**

**16/26 Annual Leave Policy**

The Clerk had proposed that all staff who complete 5 years' service be granted an additional 2 days of annual leave; this had been prompted by some inconsistencies noticed whilst looking at new contracts of employment. On the proposal of Cllr Craig Jones seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that all staff who complete 5 years' service be granted an additional 2 days of annual leave.

**17/26 To consider request for pay increase by member of staff.**

Members spoke in support of this request which they felt was wholly justified and deserved. On the proposal of Cllr Craig Jones seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** that the member of staff move to SCP11 from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026 accordingly. [The Clerk briefed Members on some other staff salary issues.]

**18/26 Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 13 May 2026**

Meeting closed at 8.01pm.

**Chairman**

**Date**