

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF BEAUMARIS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON FRIDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 7.00 PM IN THE TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: The Town Mayor Councillor F R Carr
The Deputy Mayor Councillor C M Brimecombe
Councillor J R Carr
Councillor I Davies
Councillor A J V Grant
Councillor M Jones
Councillor B L Kotkowicz
Councillor R J Parry
Councillor C J Theakston

The Town Clerk was in attendance

APOLOGIES: Councillor G Evans-Jones
Councillor J A Rowlands
Councillor J P Zalot
Councillor S Zalot

The Town Mayor took the Chair

32.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

33.0 QUOTE FROM ELLIS WHITTAM TO ACT AS HR CONSULTANT TO COUNCIL

7.02 pm Councillor Theakston arrived

The Town Mayor asked the Town Clerk to bring the meeting up to date with recent developments.

The Town Clerk said that following the decision made at the previous Special Council meeting he had contacted Ellis Whittam and arranged a meeting with their representatives. As requested by Council, the Chairman of the Audit & Personnel Sub-Committee had attended the meeting but the Deputy Mayor had been unavailable and his place had been taken by the Town Mayor.

The Regional Business Director of Ellis Whittam had said that his company had a team of people that had specialist knowledge of Councils, including those of small towns, where business was conducted in the public eye and members had to avoid conflicts of interest. For a fixed fee per year, his offices would provide unlimited advice, including response to telephone enquiries. As well as Councils, the company gave advice to Golf Clubs, Hotels and Care Homes as well as a range of businesses. Their aim was to nip problems in the bud, but if these arose they would provide advice to ensure that were handled properly. They would help with staff contracts and documents relating to policies and procedures. They acted on the employer's side of the fence in respect of aiming to protect organisations. For handling employment law issues under Human Resources service, they offered a three year or five year service agreements. The three year service agreement could cost £1,995 per year, and a five year service agreement would cost £1,895 per year. In addition, the company offered a legal expenses insurance which would cost £7.93 per person per year to cover any legal bills should the Council be taken to a tribunal. This insurance would not cover any matters that were already outstanding. They also offered an optional extension of online training and management for staff.

The Town Clerk said this matter was being referred to a Council meeting because there was no allocation in the Rates Estimates, and the new contract would involve cuts to expenditure for which there were no competitive prices to make price comparisons.

In addition to the Human Resources package, Ellis Whittam also offered a health & Safety support service. This could be a separate contract added at a later date, but the quote submitted did give the costs for a combined Employment Law, Human Resources and Health & Safety service for three or five year contracts.

A member stated that he had knowledge of Human Resources service providers, and the quote given represented good value.

It was proposed and seconded that a three year contract be taken to cover the Employment Law and Human Resources service and the Health & Safety service but without the optional e-learning extension.

An amendment was proposed that a five year contract be taken out and this was seconded. It was stated that the new agreement would take pressure off the Town Clerk and the office when dealing with Health & Safety matters in particular. It was noted that an additional discount could be obtained by paying annually in advance.

A member asked if tenders should be obtained before engaging a company to provide these services. The Town Clerk said that clearly the expenditure for a five year contract was in excess of £17,000 and that this exceeded the amount that could normally be spent without ensuring value for money as required by the Financial Regulations governing Councils. A member argued that the annual fee, especially if just engaging a Human Resources Employment Law service, was much less and under £2,000. There was a discussion on this subject, and it was noted that the annual fee still moved into the Capital Equipment bracket. Further, that it was a total commitment when taking on the contract that needed to be considered.

There was a discussion as to whether a second quote should be obtained on the understanding that the lowest quote would then be taken without delay. The Town Mayor said that he had asked a member of the office staff to obtain a second quote for an HR Consultant but the staff member had not had time. The Town Clerk said that past discussions had always been centred on paying a price from Ellis Whittam as opposed to a price for a service.

The meeting asked for the resolution of a previous Special Council meeting held on 18 August to be read out. The Town Clerk obtained a copy of the minutes and gave a resume, including a statement of the resolution.

It was proposed, seconded and carried by a majority that Council, in accordance with a resolution made at a meeting on 18 August 2017, should engage Ellis Whittam as a Human Resources Employment Law Consultant. Councillor Davies asked for his abstention to be recorded.

It was proposed, seconded and carried by a majority that Council engage Ellis Whittam for a five year period and include a Health & Safety service. Councillor Davies asked for his abstention from the vote to be recorded.

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Town Mayor
Councillor F R Carr

Date