



THE IVERS

PARISH COUNCIL

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Agenda Item	Item 9
Meeting Date	Full Council – 18 November 2024
Report Title	Review of HR Support Provider
Recommendation/s	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To terminate the WorkNest contract for the provision of HR and H&S advisory services2. To appoint Council HR & Governance Support as the council's HR support provider for a five-year contract, at a cost of £1200 per annum.3. To note officers will continue to identify alternative Health & Safety advice providers and a report will be presented to the December 2024 meeting
Appendices to Report	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Quote Proposal from CHRGS2. Existing WorkNest contract terms and conditions
Prepared By	Shaun Fishenden PSLCC – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Detailed Information	
<p>The Parish Council currently holds a contract with WorkNest for the provision of both HR and Health & Safety advice services. This is at a cost of £6350.00 per annum (increases to £6480.00 in 2025-26) and the contract is due to expire on 9th November 2026.</p> <p>It is important to undertake regular reviews of council contracts to ensure they are continuing to deliver both 'value for money' but also that the quality of the services delivered meet the needs of the council.</p> <p>The existing officer team report that the health and safety aspect of the current contract is not delivering for the Council, and it is important this is addressed. Furthermore, it is recognised that WorkNest whilst satisfactory HR advisors, are not local government sector specific and this can sometimes mean their HR advice is unsuitable to be applied in practice.</p> <p>There is a specialist local government HR support provider, Council HR & Governance Support Ltd. They focus on supporting Parish & Town Councils with their HR needs.</p> <p>A quote proposal to enter into a HR support agreement with CHRGS was sought and is attached as an appendix to this report. The summary of quoted prices is as follows:</p>	
Three-year contract	£1400 per annum
Five-year contract	£1200 per annum

Officers have reviewed the existing WorkNest contract and confirmed it is possible to invoke a notice period to terminate the remainder of the contract. An additional benefit of terminating the existing contract is it reduces duplication in terms of Legal Expenses insurance cover which is currently provided for in the Council's overall insurance policy with Clear Councils but is also being charged for separately in the HR & H&S support contract.

If appointed, Council HR & Governance Support would have an approved list of authorised contacts who would be:

- Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
- Deputy Clerk – Open Spaces & Highways
- Deputy Clerk – Facilities and Events (in absence of Clerk & RFO)
- Chair of Staffing Committee

Officers have already commenced work to identify suitable alternative providers for the Health & Safety advisory and audit aspect of the service, and this work will continue until December 2024 when a report will be presented to Council with recommendations.

Key Implications	
Financial	<p>The termination of the WorkNest contract will generate a per annum saving of £6350</p> <p>£1200 of this would be immediately re-allocated by entering the new HR support provider contract.</p> <p>This leaves a budgeted underspend of £5150 which can be utilised when a new H&S advisor is identified and appointed.</p>
Legislative and Policy	<p>The recommendations in this report are compliant with the agreed policy framework of the Council to act as responsible employers.</p> <p>The report also complies with the Financial Regulations to ensure value for money within council contracts. The report is also compliant with the Regulations as this is a specialist service and so the necessity for three quotes to be sought is not applicable.</p> <p>Adopting the recommendations will ensure the Council is compliant with its duties as an employer as set out in the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974</p>
Equality Assessment	<p>The decisions recommended through this report have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.</p>
Net Zero	<p>There are no Net Zero issues arising from the recommendations of this report.</p>

