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Recommendations from the HR Working Group Meeting 10th August 2016

This was the second meeting of the HR Working Group the first being called by the Chairman to look at staffing difficulties, at the first meeting it was suggested that the Chairman and the Clerk investigate the Councils position in regards to staffing matters, including works contracts, disciplinary matters, pensions and other employment issues.

The Clerk investigated three options regarding Works Contracts, Disciplinary matters and procedure he approached.

1. Pendle Borough Council and was told that their HR was run through Liberata who would be willing to help but their charges equated to £500 per day pro rata or £450 per day if previously arranged.
2. Lancashire Association of Local Councils: Whose responded that their organisation could help through the national branch but the process was slow and recommended the Clerk rang ACAS.
3. The Clerk rang ACAS who put the council into contact with Peninsula Business Services.

A free meeting and advice session was booked with Peninsula and the Chairman and Clerk attended the meeting staffing matters were discussed and it was felt that the use of generic works contracts obtained from NALC could in the long run lead to problems particularly in the areas of appraisal and disciplinary procedures.

As the Parish Council seems set to expand through recent Government and Local Government decisions and this may include additional staff then a more professional approach to HR matters should be adopted. Peninsular off a package of support and guidance measures at a monthly fee based on either a 3 year or 5 year contract. There services cover:

- ✓ A full **on-site [Employment Law Consultancy Service](#) review** carried out by our local employment law specialist - to update (if necessary) all **personnel documentation** to ensure compliance with current legislation and best practice.
- ✓ An on-site **installation** of your **personnel management systems** once produced.
- ✓ Unlimited 24 Hour/365 days a year **Advice** and support on **any employment** query;
 - Including the writing of letters to be issued to staff following advice taken.
 - Intelligent call routing recognises your telephone number and automatically directs your call to the consultant you last spoke with.
 - Continuity of advisor throughout a 'case' - particularly beneficial if it's a complex case.
 - Not a 24 hour 'on-call' service - advisors actually based in the office around the clock with access to your account history, calls and previous advice.
 - A Service Level Agreement that has a 30 minutes call back in the unlikely event you can't speak with a consultant immediately.
- ✓ All **employment stationery** for day to day needs.
- ✓ Subsequent **updates** of all **employment documentation** following a change in the law or at your request to reflect business needs.
- ✓ An **on-site review visit** by the local consultant after approximately 18 months to discuss, review and make any changes required to your documents.
- ✓ Unlimited access to our **[employment law training](#)** sessions for you and/or key management.

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- ✓ **Bottom Line Express** our bi-monthly **Email** on topical and forthcoming changes in the law.
- ✓ An optional **unique insurance** policy. Whilst we act for clients in over 3,000 tribunals a year our business ethos is centred around the protection and prevention of tribunal litigation and the reduction of time spent by you and your staff on HR and Employment Law matters but for complete peace of mind we provide insurance covering the defence of any **future employment tribunal***.
 - Legal representation irrespective of whether you take advice
 - Legal representation even if no prospects of success – will always defer to you for a decision to proceed (no compulsory commercial settlement)
 - Effectively an entire legal department on a retainer consisting of a mixture of bar qualified, solicitor trained employment law specialists & advocates
 - **Award and settlement cover*** for **Employment Tribunals** if you take and follow advice
- ✓ **hronline** our secure online interactive database to access your personalised documentation, including our employee tracking and management system.
 - Upload your existing employee records to be accessed by authorised personnel at any time
 - Authorise employees to input their own absences and holidays, and segment data by site or department to easily manage staffing levels
 - Archive electronic versions of all your employment documentation, from contracts to handbooks as well as detailed personnel file
 - All information is secure and safely stored by our cloud server, while you can set access levels to ensure different permissions for every employee
 - Customise your homepage dashboard to include the latest employment law news, notifications of employees who are on leave or off sick, or redundancy and wage calculators
- ✓ **Fees fixed for the term** regardless of ‘organic’ growth in employee numbers/increases in payroll
- ✓ On-going **account management** from me personally for dealing with service issues or any other non-advice queries you may have
- ✓ **Payroll Advice Service** - this service complements our Employment Law Advice Service by offering a dedicated helpline to give technical assistance on all matters related to payroll that do not currently sit squarely within the employment law bracket. With this service, we can help to guide you through the red tape surrounding; statutory payments such as SSP, SMP, P11D, P11D(b) P9D(b), PAYE, Real Time Information, calculating holiday pay, repayment of student loans, tax codes etc.

As can be seen from this exhaustive list this company helps manage all aspects of staffing and Human Resources giving expert advice, legal support and training. This type of specialist resource is the professional way to proceed as the previous reliance on free advice from the higher tiers of local government are a thing of the past. As all parish and town councils expand and the resources of the national association are stretched, prompt attention to individual council’s problems are compromised.

Costs:

The costs involved are dependent on the length of contract and are:

Term	Annual Fee	Monthly Equivalent
5 Year Employment Law Support Protection	£1,080	£90 + vat
3 Year Employment Law Support Protection	£1,200	£100 + vat

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Recommendations to the Council:

Bearing in mind that if the Council gets any staffing decision wrong the financial penalties both legal or tribunal payments could be crippling to a council of Barrowford's size so the Human Resources Working Group recommend:

- **That Barrowford Parish Council signs an agreement with Peninsula for the services offered.**
- **That the Council decides on the length of contract.**
- **That the costs for 2016-17 are found from the Council's Contingency and that the fees are added to subsequent budgets.**