

Agenda Item: To consider data entry plan

Report to: Community Committee (Appendix E)

Date: Wednesday 13th October 2021

Subject: Inputting the survey results into the online platform

Summary: To consider the most efficient and impartial way to input the paper survey results.

Recommendation:

The council is recommended to source an independent data entry clerk(s) from a local recruitment agency on a temporary basis to input the survey results.

1. Background

- 1.1 The town council is conducting a parish-wide survey asking residents for views on the future strategy of the council, known as 'The Big Survey 2021'.
- 1.2 The survey is available both online and in paper format. The paper results require inputting on the Survey Monkey website so that the results can be collated and analysed efficiently.

2. Paper Copies

- 2.1 There has been a far greater take up of paper responses than originally anticipated. The data entry will take a significant amount of time and with only one member of staff, the town council does not have the resources to complete this inhouse without impact on the day to day work of the council.
- 2.2 Each survey takes around 7 minutes to input. With around 300 paper versions received so far, the data entry task is expected to take in excess of 35 hours,

3. The options for data entry

- 3.1 The town council could nominate councillors to enter the data at no cost, however this could attract allegations of bias or political interference.
- 3.2 The town council could recruit volunteers to enter the data at no cost, however the surveys contain personal data and it would be difficult to manage the security of information without a formal contract with those accessing the data. Volunteers may not be reliable or available for full working days, which could result in delays to the inputting.
- 3.3 The town council could pay overtime to its one staff member to complete the task. The hourly rate would be higher than that of the level of administrative skill

that is required to enter the data and this would use up a week's resource of town council work, having a negative impact on the council's usual resources.

- 3.4 The town council could use Rother District Council staff, on a chargeback basis, to enter the data on behalf of the town council. This could attract allegations of bias or interference by the principal authority considering the questions involve RDC services.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 To ensure independence and efficiency, the town council is recommended to use a local recruitment agency to provide skilled data entry clerks to input the data on a temporary contract basis.

- 4.2 A Bexhill based recruitment agency has suggested that this will cost £15.00 + VAT per hour. Over a period of 40 hours this would result in a cost of £600.00 + VAT which can be covered by the underspend in the employee costs budget for this financial year.

5. Social Economic Case

- 5.1 The town council has the funds available in the employee costs budget for 2021-22 to cover the costs of temporary staff. The town council can use local agencies to source local people for this work, giving the opportunity for local growth and well-being.

6. Is it value for money?

- 6.1 The town council does not currently have any resources other than the town clerk. A town council of this size would reasonably expect to have additional members of staff to support the administrative workload that is already in place, let alone the data input work generated by the survey.
- 6.2 Using temporary staff will alleviate the pressures and ensure that the input is done within a set timescale and quality through a contractual agreement.

7. Financial Case

- 7.1 The town clerk will be responsible for the management of the staff, to ensure that efficiency and accuracy are delivered within the agreed budget. There is enough room in the office for the temporary staff member to sit alongside the town clerk. They can use the town council's laptop to enter the data whilst being supervised. There are no further financial implications to this as no further equipment needs to be purchased to complete the task.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The parish council has the power to employ staff to discharge its duties in the Local Government Act 1972 s112.

9. Insurance

- 9.1 A contract with the recruitment agency will contain relevant insurance for the staff members. The town council also has employer liability cover in place.

10. Impact on Local Crime and Disorder

- 10.1 The staff will require training in GDPR to ensure that information management is fully understood and the risk of data breach is minimised. This can be delivered by the town clerk and a non-disclosure contract signed with the agency.

11. Impact on Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 11.1 Local staff can be sought to reduce the emissions generated through travel.
- 11.2 Existing equipment can be used to minimise the carbon footprint of the project.
- 11.3 The used surveys shall be kept securely for a period of time whilst the data is analysed and can be recycled through a shredding process at a later date.

12. Community Consultation/ Engagement

- 12.1 No community engagement has taken place establish a need to provide additional staff for this project. The town council has the powers to take this decision without a consultation as a budget already exists for staffing and it has not been fully utilised.

13. Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation
a. Personal/sensitive data is shared outside of the town council	Staff are vetted by the recruitment agency and are directly supervised by the town clerk in a shared office space.
b. The questionnaires could be removed from the town council offices	The surveys for keying will be given to the staff member whilst under supervision and taken back at the end of the day.
c. Risks of errors in data entry	Staff are vetted by the recruitment agency to have the requisite skills for the role. Staff to take regular breaks.
d. The entry takes longer than anticipated	The surveys shall be organised into batches and presented to staff efficiently in a standardized process.
e. Duplication of entry	Each survey to be initialled by staff member to show that it has been keyed into the software.
f. Leak of passwords	The password to the laptop and Survey Monkey log in to be changed daily to ensure security.
g. Access to data on town council laptop	Ensure all folders on the laptop that contain sensitive data are password protected and only held by the town clerk.

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14. Recommendation

- 14.1 The council is recommended to employ temporary staff through a local recruitment agency to enter the manual data into the online software platform under the supervision of the town clerk.