**Report to the Governance Committee April 2019**

Ellis Whittam services to Baildon Town Council 2018 – 19

**Background**

Ellis Whittam were recommended as a supplier of specialised Human Resources and Health and Safety services to local Councils by the BTC Clerk, Tom Ferry prior to his resignation.

As BTC’s staff compliment increased, we were required by law to ensure that we complied with the following;

* Legal staff contracts in line with the JNCC Green book
* Health and Safety Executive approved working conditions

Cllr Peter Ashton and Louanna Winch were delegated to enter negotiation with Ellis Whittam on behalf of the council. This was approved by the Governance Committee in June 2017 and Baildon Town Council entered into a 3 year contract with Ellis Whittam later that month.

**Costs and services provided**

Ellis Whittam specialise in Employment Law and Health and Safety services for companies without this specialist provision in their own workforce.

Each year these services cost Baildon Town Council £2,580 including VAT. For this we access the following encompassing services;

**Employment Law**

* Unlimited services of a Senior Law Employment Officer
* Unlimited legal advice and legal expenses insurance
* Up to date and lawful staff handbook
* Review of all contracts of employment, procedures and policies
* Updates on changes to employment law
* Access to interactive knowledge hub on subjects including; bullying, flexible working, holidays, apprentices etc
* Access to the interactive dashboard which records all our requests and completed advice received.

**Health and Safety**

* Yearly visit to the BTC office and Bracken Hall to ensure compliance with Health and Safety and fire risk assessments
* Followed by a general risk assessment report and prioritised action plan
* Quarterly newsletter on Health and Safety matters
* Access to the interactive dashboard which records all our actions related to the general action plan.

**Direct Services used by BTC since 2017**

* Advice on updating staff contracts to ensure they are lawful, and staff are paid salaries in accordance with their responsibilities
* Annual review of staff contracts
* Annual review of all employment law policies held by the council
* Received advice and creation of a fixed term contract for the Administrative Officer role
* Received a new permanent contract for the Administrative Officer
* Received advice on the employment of a casual worker for the Ian Clough Hall
* Received advice on employment law changes to staff’s annual leave. Ensuring that, the council emphasise to staff that annual leave is taken each year, and no payments for leave not taken, are made.

Within the office we now comply with Health and Safety regulations, as directed by our adviser including, an accident book, first aid kit, Health and Safety certificates are displayed, and fire risk assessments are completed.

As a manager of five staff, I have found their services and advice to be timely and clear. With simple directions from their staff, I have been able to handle staff matters with confidence, knowing that the advice I have received is lawful and correct.

**Moving forward**

In June 2020, the three year contract will expire. I have already been approached by two other companies working within the same industry who would like to quote the council for similar services within six months of the deadline. Therefore, I will approach the Governance committee for direction closer to this period for delegated authority in seeking competitive quotes for service.

**Louanna Winch – Town Clerk**

**April 2019**