



Andover Town Council

To **consider** and agree the terms on which the mockumentary project should proceed.

Item No.

17a

Produced for: Full Council

By: Town Clerk

Date of Report: 13 Feb 2024

Background:

The Mockumentary project, related media and meetings have recently brought the Town Council into focus in the National Newspapers. All Councillors are concerned that the Council's reputation should be raised as much as possible, however opinions on how the project should proceed are divided.

Proposer: Cllr

Seconder: Cllr

Proposals:

- i. To continue with the project provided that conditions (to be confirmed) are agreed by the students and Councillor Hughes; and
- ii. to agree that if the conditions are not agreed to by all parties, that the project will be abandoned.

Conditions for review: (councillors to decide on exact wording)

- A. That the Scripts are approved by Full Council.
- B. That the final versions of the videos are approved by Full Council before any footage or media is published in the Council's name.
- C. That all students sign over Intellectual Property Rights to the Council.
- D. That Councillor J Hughes signs over all Intellectual Property rights to the Council for future mockumentaries without charge.
- E. That the Scripts are approved by the organisations involved and key stakeholders before publication.
- F. Any request by the Council to amend or alter scripts or footage must be complied with or the work experience will not be approved, and the Council will not approve the final pieces for publication.
- G. Scripts and footage are supported by legal review, completed risk assessment and equality impact assessment and press lines.

Councillor J Hughes has advised the Clerk on the evening of Wednesday 7th Feb, that the students are now not happy about having their scripts reviewed. They feel that their creativity is being squashed.

Whilst it is in the nature of young adults to question authority and to want to push boundaries, it is also quite clear that when undertaking work experience it is not normal to dictate to your "employer" what your working conditions are, or how you will undertake the tasks, or that anything you produce is yours.

After a lot of consideration of this issue, the Town Clerk feels that it may be in the Council's best interests to cancel the work experience (or even the whole project) if the students and/or Councillor J Hughes do not wish to comply with Council's requirements. (whatever Councillors decide they are.)

This is not a recommendation, but a last resort, which would be sad to implement after all the work that has been done to facilitate the Mockumentaries and work experience so far.

Considerations:

Original Proposal:

It is proposed that Andover Town Council develop a series of 'mockumentaries' in collaboration with various organisations within Andover which can then be uploaded to various media platforms (Andover Town Council's website and Facebook page to begin with). Minimal equipment will be required to facilitate this, and Cllr J Hughes report is attached. (Peter Hearn is the lecturer at Andover College)

Extract:

Peter Hearn, has given his approval to this project and would like to discuss how we can incorporate the college into this to add more experience to his students and this would, in turn give us potential access to camera equipment. The college themselves do not have these microphones, however Peter is trying to get the college to invest in them.

This resulted in the following Minute:

It was proposed by Councillor J Hughes and seconded by Councillor S Waue and RESOLVED: FOR – 12, AGAINST – 1, ABSTENTIONS – 1, that Andover Town Council develop a series of mockumentaries, in collaboration with various organisations within Andover, which can be uploaded to various media platforms. Action: Town Clerk and Councillor J Hughes

It was clear from the start that Councillor Hughes wished to involve the Andover College Students in the project and given that they are part of the target audience that the Mockumentaries were being developed to appeal to, this made sense.

Councillor Hughes asked both the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk if the students could be considered to be taking part in Work Experience if they were to participate in the project for two weeks of their college time.

This was approved by the Town Clerk, on the basis that the Mockumentaries were being made by a Councillor on behalf of the Council, and any help or assistance with this task was therefore saving Officers of the council from having to assist when needed. Additionally, it was another small way that the Council could help young people in the Town.

The following was sent to the College on 18th December 2023.

Hello Peter,

I have discussed the below email and the project in total with Joe. We have agreed that an officer does not necessarily need to be present when the presentation is given to students.
Can you please advise if Cllr Hughes would need to be DBS Checked by the college in order to be allowed to work with the students on a one to one basis?

If that is a requirement, or you feel it would be good practice to have that completed, can you please arrange from your side? The Town Council would be happy to cover the cost if you can arrange to invoice us.

I am more than happy to provide you with a letter confirming that the project can be considered as work experience with the Town Council. In order for us to do this, we need to clarify that the students would be considered as "volunteers" in helping the council with our social media presence. This then allows them to be covered by our insurance, but they would additionally need to complete daily sign in sheets for the days where they are working with us.

Could you please give me proposed start and end dates for the project along with the approximate amount of hours that you expect the project to take? I will then put this in the formal letter. Please also let me know who to address it to, if not to yourself.

We expect that all the work will be carried out either in the college, at organisations or charities own premises, or at various locations around town. All outside locations will be Risk Assessed prior to any work starting. Please advise if you would prefer to approve any locations before they are used?

In terms of Safeguarding or other Health and Safety issues, can you please advise if there are any other measures you would like us to take?

We intend to provide:

1. A Letter that can be sent home to parents to advise them what the project will entail.
2. **A consent and GDPR form for students to complete asking them to confirm that they are happy to be filmed, for us to hold their details for the duration of the project, and that any resulting footage becomes the property of Andover Town Council and that they will be credited with assisting with the production.**

We will be issuing Work Experience Certificates at the end of the project and expect these to contain just the students name, the start and end dates for the project and the Mockumentary Titles that have been contributed to.

We will not be able to assess or grade any work, nor give personal references for students individually.

The Council is very much looking forward to the partnership with the college on this venture, and are excited to see what the students can produce.

If you have any further questions please let me know, however I look forward to your response so that we can get a formal letter over to you.

The officers discussed with Councillor Hughes that some procedures and paperwork would need to be put in place to work with the college.

Risk Assessments, Insurance coverage, sign in/out sheets, GDPR consent forms, approval of scripts.

The Deputy Town Clerk visited the college with Councillor Hughes, on Wednesday 17th Jan 2024 and her note from the next day includes:

"It was confirmed on numerous occasions that, whilst the greatest care will be taken not to stifle creativity, Full Council will need to approve the scripts before they are used. It was also suggested that the Charities/non-profit may want to have a look at the final product prior to it being released. It was suggested that the students and Joe start to put together the scripts for Council approval and that an EM may need to be called in order for them to be approved prior to the start date of 19th Feb."

The Town Clerk discussed with Cllr J Hughes that it may be easier to have a Working Group review the scripts as soon as they had been written. **Cllr Hughes was comfortable that Councillors Neate, Waue, Reynolds and Bird be involved in this.** It was not suggested that these councillors give a final sign off, but instead highlight anything that could be considered a problem, and give the students opportunity to make changes before filming began.

This idea was discussed at the recent P&R Committee meeting on 31st January, but it was not progressed as Councillor R Hughes felt that the WG would need Terms of Reference, which could only be approved by Full Council at their next meeting. Without this solution, if filming starts, the students and organisations will be taking a risk on Council ultimately not approving the finished product.

The GDPR consent form has been reviewed by our legal advisors and the attached document is approved. All students and Councillor J Hughes will be expected to sign it.

Our legal advisers also mentioned: "You may want to have a more specific acknowledgment / record of assignment of any IP rights signed by Cllr Hughes so the position is unequivocal."