

Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD, on 25 June 2025 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chair)
Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitute Members:

Councillor Mark Cherry (In place of Councillor Lynne Parsons)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Lynne Parsons

Officers:

Claire Cox, Assistant Director Human Resources
Susan Blunsden, HR Manager
Carly Richardson, HR Assistant
Martyn Surfleet, Democratic and Elections Officer

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

4 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

5 Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 26 March and 21 May 2025 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

6 Chair's Announcements

There were no Chair's announcements.

7 Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no requests to address the meeting.

8 Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 4 of 2024-25

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to update the Committee on Cherwell District Council's (CDC) workforce as at the end of quarter 4 of 2024/25, including measuring staff well-being and highlighting the actions officers were taking to address any issues.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Brant advised that there were no issues, risks or concerns to highlight.

In response to a question regarding the use of agency staff and whether solutions to recruit and maintain staff to mitigate this were being looked at, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that the use of agency staff varied by department, and the purpose of using agency staff was to ensure services were maintained. The shortages impacting some departments, including planning, were a national issue, CDC was mitigating by targeted recruitment as well as graduate schemes.

In response to a question regarding information on how many applicants per ethnic group went on to successfully secure a position at the Council, the Assistant Director Human Resources advised that in its current format this was not captured in the report, but she would seek to include in future reports.

Resolved

- (1) That the workforce profile statistics for quarter 4 of 2024/25 (financial year dates) be noted.

9 Policy Review Updates

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to two HR policies: Neonatal Leave and Pay Policy and Induction Policy.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Brant, explained that the Induction Policy had been reviewed and updated following feedback from new starters to ensure that, whilst there would be individual service requirements by way of induction, corporate

information provided to new starters would be standardised, and that the reworked process would provide clarity to managers on the requirements within induction. The Neonatal Policy was a new policy brought forward following new legislation in April 2025 to support employees whose newborn child required neonatal care following birth.

In response to a suggestion to include workplace adjustments and accommodations for new starters being discussed and agreed as part of the onboarding and induction process in the Induction Policy, the Assistant Director Human Resources agreed that revisions to the policy would be made to include these suggestions.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Neonatal Leave and Pay Policy be approved for implementation.
- (2) That, having given due consideration, subject to the inclusion of provisions for any workplace adjustments or accommodations to be agreed with a new starter as part of their induction, the Induction Policy be approved for implementation.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm

Chair:

Date: