Induction Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Induction Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	1.0
Date of implementation	26 June 2025

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
Personnel Committee	25 June 2025

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 1st July 2028 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision

CONTENTS

1 Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures and responsibilities for onboarding and inducting new and existing employees at Cherwell District Council. The aim is to ensure that every new team member feels welcomed, supported, and equipped to begin their role successfully and that existing employees transition into new roles smoothly.

2 Objectives

- Cherwell District Council (CDC) is committed to ensuring that all new employees have a structured induction programme within their first six months of joining. The induction also includes any employees moving to a new role internally, this will be tailored by the line manager to ensure only the necessary parts are covered, for example a move to a leadership role or new team or department.

- Through an effective induction, an employee becomes familiar and accustomed to their job requirements and working environment, as well as gaining an understanding of the Council, its policies, procedures, and values, enabling them to contribute quickly and effectively to the Council's ambition. Its aim is to ensure the effective integration of a new employee into the Council for the benefit of both parties.

- This policy applies to all new employees of Cherwell District Council both in permanent and temporary positions and to all employees transferring to new positions

- Agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns are required to attend the Council's corporate induction and participate in any essential training events that are relevant to their role. They are also expected to proactively obtain sufficient knowledge about the Council that enables them to effectively carry out their roles to the standards expected of all Council employees.

- New managers or employees moving to a managerial role for the first time will be offered additional managerial training to facilitate the new role, to enable them to gain the skills and knowledge required for a manager within the Council.

3 Onboarding/Pre-employment Activities

Once the employee has accepted the offer of employment, the necessary pre-employment activities will take place. As part of the onboarding process the following steps will be completed:

- The new employee will be sent a link from the HR Team to the Council's HR System to help assist with the onboarding process and the pre-employment checks.

- The HR Team will issue the offer letter and will carry out pre-employment checks eg right to work and references, medical questionnaire, qualification verification.

- Once agreed with the manager the start date will be communicated by the HR Team to the new employee. HR will then issue the contract of employment.

- New employees will be given access to relevant HR Policies, Team Structures, Benefits, Organisation Values, Employee Assistance Programme, Pension information via the HR onboarding platform, the link will be sent from the HR Team once the signed contract of employment has been returned.

- Managers will arrange the setup of payroll, email, system logins and IT equipment.

- Managers will create an induction plan and schedule prior to the new employee starting – see Appendix 1 and 2 for examples.

4 Induction

Corporate Induction - All staff including agency, contractors and casual staff (as appropriate) will be booked on to the corporate induction by the HR Team and advised of dates, and will be set up with access to complete CDC's corporate e-learning modules. The corporate induction includes and is not limited to:

- Attendance at a face-to-face induction day that will be ran quarterly with the Chief Executive, and include showcasing of the work of the council to new joiners.

- Attendance at a Meet the Chief Executive session

- Completion of the Council's e-learning package to complete mandatory corporate modules.

- Attendance at a Safeguarding Awareness Session.

- New Managers starting with the organisation or employees moving into a managerial role will be advised and booked onto the relevant managerial programme – please see Appendix 3 for the programme.

- **First Day -** On their first day the new employee will attend the office, unless otherwise instructed, for:
  - Welcome meeting with Line Manager.
  - IT equipment collection and relevant systems access check.
  - Assigning of an onboarding buddy.
  - Workplace tour or virtual orientation.
  - Introduction to the team.

- **First Week** – In the first week the new employee will start to familiarise themselves with the Council and their team through:
  - Detailed role briefing and expectations.
  - Introduction to performance management and objective setting system.
  - Role-specific training or shadowing.
  - Access to e-learning system to complete mandatory corporate training modules.
  - Clarification of probation period and performance

- **First Month and beyond**
  - Ongoing check-ins with Line Manager.
  - Role-specific training and/or shadowing.

5 Probation

- To ensure that all new employees appointed to the Council meet and maintain the required standards of attendance, timekeeping, conduct and performance they will be subject to a 6-month probation period (twelve months for apprentices).

- During the probation period regular meetings will be set up by the line manager with the employee, to discuss progress and to allow timely remedial action to be taken if required. Documented probation review meetings will take place after the employee has completed 3 months and 5 months employment.

- Confirmation of appointment is dependent upon the satisfactory completion of the probation period. In addition to successful probationary reviews, the probation period is only deemed to be complete once the new employee has completed all induction forms, mandatory training and the probation form has been completed on the HR/Payroll system by the Manager.

- See the Probation Policy on the Staff Intranet for further information.

6   Support and Development

The Council values their employees and supports them in their on-going development. There are a number of tools available for staff to engage in and employees can apply for further Learning and Development to support their role:

- **Buddy Scheme –** new employees will be assigned a team buddy by their Line Manager within the first week of employment. This buddy will help them to orientate themselves with the organisation, please see Buddy Scheme Process on the intranet.

- **Training Opportunities** – The Council has a number of learning opportunities for staff to take advantage of. Employees have access to Bookboon (audio and on-line books on personal development), Quarterdeck (short modules of learning and live monthly training sessions on personal development), West Midlands Coaching and Mentoring (access to confidential coach or mentor), Additional Learning and Development appropriate to role – see **Learning and Development Policy and Learning and Development pages** for further information.

- **Feedback** – we value feedback and encourage new starters to feedback to HR and their Manager on the onboarding experience. New employees will be sent an on-line feedback form within 3 months after starting and again after 12 months.

- CDC is an equalities-led, disability-compliant employer. Please feel confident to discuss any access requirements with your line manager so that we can support you at work

7   Roles and Responsibility

Employees have a responsibility to:

- Carry out the relevant induction activities indicated to them by their manager and included in the induction process.

- Be proactive and take ownership of their own induction with the support of their manager.

- Apply the knowledge and skills gained through induction when performing in their role.

- Maintain the records required throughout the induction process.

Line Managers have a responsibility to:

- Setup an induction for the new employee in readiness for their first day. See Appendix 1 and 2 for the new starter checklist and sample induction schedule.

- Ensure new employees complete the appropriate induction process within the agreed timescale.

- Allocate time and commit to personal input into each induction.

- Guide new employees through the information and support available to them.

- Support employees and encourage and enable them to be proactive in conducting their own induction.

- Address any difficulties the employee may be experiencing.

- Ensure that new employees understand their role and expected standards.

- Ensure that new employees understand how their performance will be monitored and reviewed throughout the induction period, and the implications of failing to meet the expected standard of performance throughout the induction period.

- Provide feedback through regular 1-1 sessions during the induction period.

- Address and support any performance issues and agree measures to improve performance.

- Prepare the employee for the Appraisal process (set goals, discuss career aspirations, and develop personal development plans through an appraisal meeting) at the beginning, mid and end of year.

- Maintain the records required throughout the induction process.

- <u>The Human Resources team have a responsibility to:</u> Coordinate contracts, induction materials, policies, compliance training, and feedback collection.

- Provide and maintain the induction process on iTrent.

- Provide advice and support to managers as required.

- Provide advice on induction for individuals with particular requirements.

8 Monitoring and Review

HR will regularly review the onboarding and induction process using feedback from new starters and managers. This policy is reviewed every 3 years or in line with legislative updates or organisational changes.

9 Additional Help and Guidance

For any further help and guidance, managers and new staff can contact the HR Team at humanresources@cherwell-dc.gov.uk.

For UNISON members, the UNISON branch email is unison@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Appendix One - New Starter Checklist

Managers should prepare the New Starter Checklist ahead of the new employee starting, giving plenty of time to allocate tasks to relevant staff as required to help with the induction process.

Thought should be given to the job role that the new employee is undertaking and relevant training arranged with other teams or with someone within the new starter's team as who could demonstrate/help the employee eg Finance System (if the employee is to authorise or raise POs), Procurement Team for the raising of contracts.

New Starter Checklist		
Employee Name:		
Job Title:		
Start Date:		
Line Manager:		
Team/Department:		
Prior to employee's arrival		
Task	**Who's Responsible?**	**Date Task Completed**
Create a personalised induction programme		
Inform colleagues of your new employee's arrival		
Log a ticket with the IT service desk portal for a computer login		
Organise office equipment (e.g. laptop, telephone, stationery)		
Organise Personal Protective Equipment (if required)		
Allocate a buddy		
Employee's First Day		
Introductions to team colleagues, relevant Assistant Director(s) and main points of contact and Buddy		
Ensure P45 and bank details have been given to HR or to the payroll team directly		
A tour of the office that includes toilets, kitchen, break out areas, car parking and bike shelters		

Explain what to do in the event of a fire – fire exits, meeting point etc		
Explain the process for calling a first aider and what your new employee should do if they have an accident at work		
Obtain badges for access to the building and car park		
First Week and beyond		
Ensure that your new employee completes corporate e-learning and attends all new starter training sessions		
Ensure your new employee has updated their details and added a professional photograph to the shared staff phonebook on the intranet and itrent ESS		
Confirm your new employee is aware of their annual leave entitlement, about how to book leave and about any local approval requirements		
Explain the flexi scheme and any local arrangements for office cover		
Explain what your new employee must do in the event that they are unable to attend work due to sickness		
Confirm the probation process and how your new employee can access support if they require it		
Clarify the overall building security arrangements and any local lone worker arrangement		
Set your new employee relevant appraisal objectives to take them through to the appraisal year end (March each year)		
Ensure your new employee is aware of the process for claiming mileage and expenses		
Show your new employee how to book a meeting room and a desk within Castle Quay		
Confirm your new employee is aware of how to access all our HR policies		
Apprise your new employee of any confidentiality requirements with your area and the organisation		

Explain our safeguarding responsibilities and how to report any concerns		
Provide an explanation of systems and the employee's working environment		
How to log into the IT system (check their account is active)		
How to access ITent ESS/MSS		
CDC's shared drive structure		
Email and calendars access/use		
The shared staff phonebook on the intranet		
The intranet site and intranet activity calendar		
How to use MS Teams both as the telephone system, chat and meeting space		
Confirm your new employee is clear about their hours of work and break times		
Office Handbook		
Arrange in-house role dependant training eg Finance System, Procurement Process etc and build this into the Induction Schedule where appropriate.		
How to request Learning and Development support for activities and qualifications		
Show where the new starter can find the Learning and Development Resources can be found eg Quarterdeck, West Midlands Coaching and Mentoring and Bookboon		

Appendix Two - Induction Schedule Template

Managers can use the following Induction Schedule as guidance and can adapt as required for their new employee. The induction schedule should be prepared well before the employee starts.

Induction Schedule Template – First Week	
Employee Name:	
Job Title:	
Start Date:	
Line Manager:	
Team/Department:	

Day 1 – Welcome and Orientation			
Time	**Activity**	**Responsible Person**	**Location/Platform**
09:00–09:30	Welcome & Introduction to Buddy	Line Manager	Office / Virtual
09:30–10:30	Office Tour / Virtual Walkthrough	Line Manager / Buddy	Onsite / Teams / Zoom
10:30–11:00	IT Setup & System Access	IT Support	Desk / Remote Support
11:00–12:00	Introduction to Company Mission & Values	Line Manager	Meeting Room / Online
12:00–13:00	Lunch with Team / Buddy	Team / Buddy	Office / Virtual
13:00–14:00	System Training (Email, HR, Comms Tools)	Buddy	Office / Virtual
14:00–16:00	Meet the Team & Key Department Overviews	Line Manager / Dept Leads	Various / Virtual
16:00–16:30	Day 1 Reflection & Q&A	Line Manager	Office / Virtual

Day 2 – Tools, Culture & Compliance			
Time	**Activity**	**Responsible Person**	**Location/Platform**

Induction Schedule Template – First Week			
09:00–10:00	Introduction to Team Processes / Workflows	Line Manager	.
10:00–13:00	Corporate e-learning	Buddy	
13:00–14:00	Lunch & Informal Team Meet	Team	
14:00–16:30	Shadowing or Introductory Tasks	Assigned Colleague	

Day 3-5 – Role-Specific Training & Integration			
Time	Activity	Responsible Person	Location/Platform
Wednesday	Shadowing and Practical Task Introduction	Team Lead	
Wednesday	Introduction to KPIs / Goals	Line Manager	
Thursday	Attend Team Meeting	Team	
Friday	Check-in & Feedback on First Week	Line Manager	
Fri	Review Induction Schedule and Next Steps	Line Manager	

Appendix Three – New Manager Programme

When a manager starts with the Council or an existing employee moves into a managerial role, they will be sent a welcome email outlining the programme below. The manager will automatically be booked onto relevant HR training sessions and advised of the dates but these are also available for existing managers to attend as well and are bookable via Employee Self Service (ESS).

HR Management Training
The HR Business Partners run management sessions on a quarterly basis covering Sickness Absence Management and Recruitment and Selection. If you have not already been booked onto these sessions, you can book yourself on or change your scheduled date yourself by logging into **itrent ESS, select Learning** and the courses will show on the right-hand side of the screen.

First Steps into Management: sink or swim!
This course is run by HQN and is advantageous for those starting off in management or who may like a refresher. We have always received very good feedback from staff who have attended. Please follow the link to details and dates. To attend this course please complete the Learning and Development Application Form, sign and return this to Teresa.reed@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, Learning and Development Manager, who will book the course for you.

Quarterdeck
Quarterdeck is our on-line short e-learning modules, which can be used to supplement the above course. You will need to register yourself with an account using this link or via the Quicklinks on the intranet. These modules cover a variety of subjects and are short, sharp, timely and interactive. Quarterdeck also provide a monthly live session, which you can book yourself on once you have created your account and a list of these will be found in Quarterdeck under **Courses, Live** and include subjects such as Focus, Difficult People, Difficult conversations and much more. Any problems with creating an account, please contact Teresa.reed@cherwell-dc.gov.uk.

West Midlands Coaching and Mentoring
We are also a part of the West Midlands Coaching and Mentoring pool which gives you access to 100 professionally qualified coaches from a broad range of backgrounds, all of whom are, or have been serving public sector officers. Mentors have experience and expertise in a variety of specialist service areas, at various leadership levels and in various organisations, use the link to login WM Coaching or visit our Cherwell page.

Level 3 Team Leader or Level 5 Departmental Manager

If you are thinking of a management qualification, why not have a look at the Level 3 or Level 5 Management qualification.   We can support managers with this qualification via the apprenticeship levy and it will take approximately 12 – 18 months to complete.

If you are interested have a look at our provider City Skills and if you would like to participate, contact Teresa Reed, Learning and Development Manager at Teresa.reed@cherwell-dc.gov.uk.

iTrent Appraisal

We currently use iTrent check-ins for carrying out appraisals within the organisation. There are guides available on the intranet, which will take you through the process by if you wish to have 1:1 guidance on how to use the check-ins, please contact Teresa.reed@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, who will be happy to take you through the process.

Additional Resources to aid the New Employee Induction

- Office Handbook available on the staff intranet

- Probation Policy available on the staff intranet under Human Resources, Policies and Procedures

- Learning and Development Policy available on the staff intranet under Human Resources, Policies and Procedures

- Buddy Process available on the staff intranet under Human Resources, Polices and Procedures

- Induction Pages available under Human Resources on the staff intranet