# PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

**Thursday, 19th November, 2026**

**2.00 pm**

Darent Room, Sessions House,
County Hall, Maidstone

Kent County Council
kent.gov.uk

# AGENDA

# PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

**Thursday, 19th November, 2026, at 2.00 pm**
**Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone**

Ask for: **Anna Taylor**
Telephone **03000 416478**

**Membership (13)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Reform UK (7): | Ms L Kemkaran (Chair), Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Miss D Morton and Mr P Webb |
| Liberal Democrat (2): | Mr M Ellis and Mr A J Hook |
| Restore Britain (1): | Mr O Bradshaw |
| Green (1): | Mr S Jeffery |
| Conservative (1): | Mr H Rayner |
| Labour (1): | Ms C Nolan |

## UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

1 Apologies and Substitutes

2 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.

3 Minutes - 11 May and 14 September 2026 (Pages 1 - 6)

4 HMRC Mileage Rate for KCC Employees **– to follow**

5 Workforce Update **– to follow**

# EXEMPT ITEMS

*(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)*

Benjamin Watts
Deputy Chief Executive
03000 416814

**Wednesday, 11 November 2026**

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

# PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 11 May 2026.

PRESENT: Ms L Kemkaran (Chair), Mr O Bradshaw, Mr W Chapman (Substitute for Mr M Harrison), Mr B Collins, Mr M Ellis, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Miss D Morton, Ms C Nolan, Mr H Rayner, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE (Substitute for Mr A J Hook) and Mr P Webb

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Chief Executive), Mr B Watts (Deputy Chief Executive), Ms D Christie (Assistant Director People Operations) and Mrs A Taylor (Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Scrutiny))

## UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

### 25. Apologies and Substitutes
*(Item 1)*

Apologies had been received from Mr Harrison, for whom Mr Chapman was substituting, Mr Hook for whom Mr Streatfeild was substituting and Mr Jeffery.

### 26. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
*(Item 2)*

No declarations were received.

### 27. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2026
*(Item 3)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2026 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### 28. Exclusion of the Press and Public
*(Item 4)*

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

## EXEMPT ITEMS

(Open minutes)

### 29. Senior Management Structure
*(Item 5)*

*Open minute of an exempt item.*

1. Mrs Beer introduced the report and outlined the rationale for proposals to make amendments to the senior management structure of the council and options for recruitment to senior level posts currently being covered on an interim basis.

2. Officers responded to questions and comments from Members including the following:

    a. It was confirmed that the change of reporting line for the Director of Public Health from the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care to the Chief Executive was supported by the current post holders and wouldn't be a diminution of responsibilities.

    b. In relation to the options presented around senior officer appointments, concerns were raised around timing of decisions in relation to Local Government Reorganisation, some members favoured the option of an open recruitment process. Officers confirmed that KCC would not exist in its current form within two years and future unitary authorities would ultimately determine appointments.

    c. Other Members were cautious about open recruitment and noted the need to balance financial considerations with organisations needs, these members favoured permanent appointments.

RESOLVED that the Personnel Committee:

1. Recommend to County Council, for consideration at its meeting on 21 May 2026, the change in the report line for the Director of Public Health from the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health to the Chief Executive.
2. Agree the extension of the interim arrangements for the people and posts named at 6.2 in the report beyond the 6-month period which is delegated to the Chief Executive
3. Agree that for the post at:
    a. 6.2.2 – option F as set out in the report.
    b. 6.2.3 – option F as set out in the report.
    c. 6.2.4 – option E as set out in the report.

# PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 14 September 2026.

PRESENT: Ms L Kemkaran (Chair), Mr O Bradshaw, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr M Ellis, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr S Jeffery, Ms C Nolan, Mr R Palmer (Substitute for Miss D Morton), Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE (Substitute for Mr A J Hook), Mr P Webb and Mr N Williams (Substitute for Mr H Rayner)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr B Watts (Deputy Chief Executive), Mrs K Hunter (Head of People Strategy), Mrs S Hunter-Jones (People Policy Team Manager) and Mrs A Taylor (Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Scrutiny))

## UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

### 30. Apologies and Substitutes
*(Item 1)*

Apologies had been received from Miss Morton, for whom Mr Palmer was substituting, Mr Rayner, for whom Mr Williams was substituting, and Mr Hook, for whom Mr Streatfeild was substituting.

### 31. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
*(Item 2)*

Mr Palmer declared that he was an adult volunteer with the Kent Air Cadets (Air Training Corps).

### 32. Cadet Force Adult Volunteers Special Leave
*(Item 3)*

1. Mrs Susie Hunter-Jones introduced the report which set out a revised proposal to introduce a formal special leave entitlement of up to two weeks per leave year for Cadet Force Adult Volunteers in support of the Council's commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant and its Gold Employer Recognition Scheme status. She reminded Members that the Committee had previously deferred consideration of the matter to enable additional analysis and information to be provided.

2. Officers outlined the additional information that had been provided since the Committee's previous consideration of the matter, including estimated costs, benchmarking against other authorities, and the rationale for limiting the proposal to Cadet Force Adult Volunteers rather than extending it to other volunteering groups. Members were advised that the proposal would support the Council's Armed Forces Covenant commitments and that the currently known level of eligibility suggested a limited financial impact.

3. Mr Watts and Mrs Hunter-Jones answered questions of clarification from Members and noted comments which included the following:

a) Members discussed whether further work should be undertaken to establish the number of employees involved in cadet and other volunteering organisations and were advised that, whilst possible, such work would require officer capacity and resources;
b) Some Members considered that the proposal should remain focused on Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and the Council's Armed Forces Covenant commitments, whilst others expressed the view that similar consideration should be given to volunteers undertaking comparable roles in other organisations;
c) Members discussed whether support for Cadet Force Adult Volunteers was necessary to maintain the Council's Gold Award status and were advised that the proposal was not a formal requirement but would strengthen the Council's position during future revalidation;
d) Members noted the wider national emphasis on increasing participation and recruitment within cadet organisations and the role employers could play in supporting volunteers;
e) Members discussed the Council's existing volunteering leave arrangements and the potential for future consideration of wider volunteering activity across the organisation.

4. Members expressed differing views regarding the proposal. Some Members supported the recommendation as an appropriate means of recognising and supporting Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and the Council's Armed Forces Covenant commitments. Other Members raised concerns regarding fairness and the principle of providing enhanced leave to one group of volunteers but not others.

5. Following debate, the recommendation set out within the report was put to the vote and was carried by majority vote.

**RESOLVED** that the Personnel Committee agree the proposal to introduce a formal special leave entitlement of up to two weeks per leave year for Cadet Force Adult Volunteers to support Kent County Council's Gold Employer Recognition Scheme award, effective from 1 October 2026.

*In accordance with paragraph 16.31 of the Constitution, Mr Jeffery asked that it be recorded in the minutes that he voted against the recommendation. Mr Ellis and Mr Streatfeild abstained on the vote.*

**Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

**(Open minutes)**

## 33. KCC Employee Probation Policy

*(Item 4)*

1. Mrs Hunter introduced the report which set out proposed changes to the Council's probation policy, including reducing the standard probation period from six months to three months, introducing a revised probation review framework, and providing flexibility to extend probation in exceptional circumstances. Members were advised that the proposed changes had been developed in response to forthcoming employment legislation and associated organisational risks.

2. Mr Watts and Mrs Hunter answered questions of clarification from Members and noted comments which included the following:

    a) Members discussed the importance of effective induction, onboarding and early performance conversations to ensure new employees were supported during their probationary period;
    b) Clarification was provided regarding how the proposed arrangements would be communicated to new starters and incorporated into induction processes;
    c) Members discussed workplace attendance, access to managers and colleagues, and the importance of ensuring new employees felt supported and integrated within teams;
    d) Questions were raised regarding whether the shorter probation period could impact existing induction programmes and officers confirmed that service-specific induction arrangements would continue alongside the revised policy framework;

3. The recommendation set out within the report was put to the vote and was carried by majority.

**RESOLVED** that the Personnel Committee agree:

a. a reduction of the current probation period from six months to three months;
b. a revised structured probation review framework;
c. flexibility to extend probation for up to one month in exceptional circumstances or up to two months where extenuating circumstances relating to reasonable adjustments apply; and
d. the new policy applying to all new starters from 1 October 2026.

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