

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 26 September 2024.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chair), Mrs S Prendergast (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker (Substitute for Mr P J Oakford), Mrs C Bell, Mrs S Chandler, Mr D Jeffrey, Rich Lehmann, Mr D Robey and Mr R J Thomas (Substitute for Mr C Simkins)

ALSO PRESENT: MR A Brady (virtual)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Royel (Director of HR & OD), Mr I Allwright (People Strategy Manager), Ms M Flegg (Workforce Development Strategy Manager) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

No declarations were received.

25. Minutes - 4 January 2024, 4 March 2024, 16 May 2024 and 12 June 2024
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2024, 4 March 2024, 16 May 2024 and 12 June 2024 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

26. Apprenticeships and Young People
(Item 4)

1. Michelle Flegg introduced the report which updated the Committee on the progress of the Apprenticeship agenda in KCC as well as other elements of the KCC Early Careers Development Programme.
2. Officers responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:
 - a. In response to a query about the promotion of the KCC apprenticeship Levy to external employers, Ms Flegg explained that the majority of employers were in Adults or Children's Services. There was a robust application process accessible via kent.gov.uk. Support was provided and applicants were required to identify how the funding for training would contribute to the delivery of KCC's strategic outcomes.
 - b. In response to a concern about avenues available to young children Ms Flegg explained that supported internships were a work-based study programme for young people aged 16-25 with special educational needs

and who had an education, health and care plan. KCC continued to offer opportunities for supported internships and apprenticeships with a goal of increasing the quantity and diversity of the internship placements.

- c. In relation to work experience, KCC was currently refining the application process to provide a learning experience in an enjoyable and effective manner.
- d. A Member commented on the data available for HoldCo companies, and how these compared with KCC's youth development offer. It was requested that this data be included in future reports. It was considered that clawback had decreased and this should continue to be monitored.
- e. A Member asked how attractive Kent's offer was and Ms Flegg considered it was a very attractive employer through the programmes offered, it was also the top graduate employer amongst public sector employers.
- f. The Chair asked that when the report was brought back to the committee it considered what KCC's next steps were in this area considering the development of national policy and those areas which were currently strong and those still developing.

RESOLVED that the Personnel Committee note the contents of the report and endorse the further development of the KCC Early Careers Programme.

27. Exclusion of the Press and Public

(Item 5)

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 involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EXEMPT ITEMS

(Open minutes)

(Ms M Flegg left the room before the start of these items)

28. Pay Update

(Item 6)

1. Ian Allwright introduced the report which provided an update on pay matters for the 2025/26 pay award.
2. Officers responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:
 - a. The potential dispute with the unions regarding the 2024/25 pay award was not pursued by the trades unions as there was not enough support to meet the statutory requirements. This, accompanied by the change of government and their response to the independent pay review body recommendations, provided the context to pay bargaining for 2025/26.
 - b. Staff meetings continued to be held to explain the new pay strategy for KCC before its start on 1 April 2025.

RESOLVED that the Personnel Committee note the report in relation to pay matters and context relating to 2025/26 pay bargaining.

29. Chief Executive Officer Recruitment Update

(Item 7)

Paul Royel introduced this report which provided an update on the recruitment review and process to secure the next Chief Executive Officer.

Mr Royel responded to questions of detail and noted comments made by Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Personnel Committee:

1. Note the findings of the review of our 2023 process and the contributions from professional recruitment agencies, CEOs and other senior staff across the country.
2. Note the progress and planned recruitment process for the Chief Executive Officer.
3. Receive a further report on this activity in January 2025.