

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, 23 January 2025.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chair), Mrs C Bell, Mr A Brady, Mrs S Chandler, Mr M A J Hood (Substitute for Rich Lehmann), Mr A J Hook, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr P J Oakford and Mr D Robey

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Chief Executive), Mr R Smith (Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health), Mr P Royel (Director of HR & OD), Mr I Allwright (People Strategy Manager) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

9. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 1)

Apologies were received from Mrs Shellina Prendergast, Mr Charlie Simkins and Mr Rich Lehmann, for whom Mr Mark Hood was substituting.

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

(Item 2)

There were none for this meeting.

11. Minutes - 28 November 2024

(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2024 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chair.

12. Adult Social Care and Health Management Structure

(Item 4)

(Richard Smith, Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health was present virtually for this item).

1. Mr Richard Smith introduced this report which set out proposals to redefine the director roles within adult social care, changing the Director Adult Social Care (ASC) – East and the Director Adult Social Care – North and West to become two Directors of Operations with accountability and responsibility for Short Term Preventative Services and Long Term Statutory Care Services.
2. Officers responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:

- a. No changes were proposed to locality social workers. Assistant Directors continued to manage within the footprint of geographical areas.
- b. Would the timing of the proposals destabilise the current structure within ASC? The proposals related to the roles reporting directly to the Corporate Director only. It was necessary to have clear accountability and responsibility in relation to the Care Act from Directors, there would be minimal change below Director level.
- c. Members considered it would be beneficial to brief the Chair and Vice-Chair of Adults Social Care Cabinet Committee on the proposed changes.
- d. In response to feedback on the proposals, concerns and mitigations, Mr Smith explained that the Assistant Directors had been positive about the proposals which gave greater clarity over roles.
- e. Information sharing would be ongoing and included different areas including NHS, managing technology and establishment of open-door services.

RESOLVED, unanimously, that Personnel Committee recommend to County Council:

The posts of Director of Adult Social Care North and West Kent and Director of Adult Social Care East Kent; are redefined to introduce the new posts of Director of Operations - Short Term Support and Director of Operations - Long Term Support.

13. 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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EXEMPT ITEMS

(Open minutes)

14. Verbal update on Securing Kent's Future - Objective 4

(Item 6)

(Amanda Beer, Chief Executive Officer was present for this item and left the room once it had concluded).

1. Following an update to Personnel Committee in October 2024 on Securing Kent's Future – Objective 4, the Government had published the English Devolution White Paper and the Leaders of KCC and Medway Council had written to the Minister for Local Government and Devolution to formally request that Kent and Medway be included in the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP).
2. Members considered the clear messages in the White Paper and subsequently from Government that both Devolution and Local Government Reform would progress across the country whether or not KCC and Medway were accepted onto the DPP. In light of the consequential impact of this, including on senior

management capacity, Members agreed with Amanda Beer's proposal that the previous proposals made around Objective 4 would not be progressed.

RESOLVED to NOTE the update on Securing Kent's Future – Objective 4.

15. Pay Bargaining

(Item 7)

(Paul Royel, Ian Allwright and Dave Shipton were present for this item)

1. Mr Allwright introduced the report which provided a summary of the position from this year's Local Pay Bargaining process.
2. Endorsement of the proposed action was requested, prior to approval being sought from County Council in February 2025.
3. Mr Allwright, Mr Royel and Mr Shipton answered questions of clarification from Members:

RESOLVED, by majority vote, that Personnel Committee endorses and recommends to County Council:

- A minimum general pay award of up to the provision within the draft budget for all Kent Scheme staff with the corresponding adjustment, based on KCC's pay principles to the Council's pay scales.
- In recognition of the continued desire to pay at least the equivalent of the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage an increase in our lowest grade to £12.71 per hour which will maintain our position above the national minimum wage and 11 pence per hour above the Living Wage for April 2024 (and includes the minimum requirement to satisfy the National Living Wage of £12.21 per hour for employees aged over 21).
- An, in principle decision, to increase annual leave by one day where the current allocation is less than 30 days leave as part of the commitment to realise equalisation for all staff.
- A commitment to establishing a joint working party to deal with the issue of expenses payments and processing.

In accordance with paragraph 16.31 of the Constitution, Mr Brady asked that it be recorded in the minutes that he abstained on the vote.

16. Chief Executive Officer Recruitment Update

(Item 8)

(Mr Paul Royel was in attendance for this item)

1. Mr Royel introduced the report which provided an update on the planned recruitment process to secure KCC's next Chief Executive Officer.
2. Following the announcements around Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation the environment for recruitment had changed considerably. There continued to be questions around timings of the decisions KCC faced.

3. Mr Royel responded to questions of clarification from Members.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to:

- Note the progress and planned recruitment process for the Chief Executive Officer.
- Receive a further report on this activity and to consider the implications of the Government's decision on the Devolution Priority Programme at the March 2025 meeting.
- Agree to extend the current temporary employment of Amanda Beer as Chief Executive for a period of up to 6 months.