AGENDA

Meeting: **Staffing Policy Committee**

Place: **Access the meeting online here.**

Date: **Wednesday 3 June 2020**

Time: **2.00 pm**

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Kevin Fielding 01249 706612, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, or email kevin.fielding@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225) 713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Membership:

Cllr Stuart Wheeler (Chairman) Cllr Carole King
Cllr Tony Jackson (Vice-Chairman) Cllr Ricky Rogers
Cllr Richard Clewer Cllr John Smale
Cllr Mike Hewitt Cllr Philip Whitehead
Cllr Hayley Illman

Substitutes:

Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philipe MBE Cllr Gordon King
Cllr Peter Evans Cllr Ian McLennan
Cllr David Halik Cllr Jo Trigg
Cllr Bob Jones MBE Cllr Tony Trotman

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Public Participation

Please see the agenda list on following pages for details of deadlines for submission of questions and statements for this meeting.

For extended details on meeting procedure, submission and scope of questions and other matters, please consult Part 4 of the council's constitution.

The full constitution can be found at this link.

For assistance on these and other matters please contact the officer named above for details

AGENDA

PART I

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1   **Apologies for absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

2   **Minutes of Previous Meeting** *(Pages 5 - 12)*

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 8 January 2020. (Copy attached)

3   **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4   **Chairman's Announcements**

5   **Public Participation**

During the ongoing Covid-19 situation the Council is operating revised procedures for public participation. Members of the public can view the meeting online and statements and questions will be taken in written form.

View Meeting Online Here

Public Guidance on how to access an online meeting

Statements

Members of the public who wish to submit a statement in relation to an item on this agenda should submit it to the officer named on this agenda **no later than 5pm on Friday 29 May 2020.**

Those statements should:

- ·   State whom the statement is from (including if representing another person or organisation)

- ·   State clearly the key points

- ·   If read aloud, be readable in approximately 3 minutes

Those statements in accordance with the Constitution will be included in an agenda supplement.

Questions

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than **5pm Wednesday 27 May 2020** in order to be guaranteed of a written response**.**

In order to receive a verbal response questions must be submitted no later than **5pm Friday 29 May 2020**. Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6   **Quarterly Workforce Report January-March 2020** *(Pages 13 - 18)*

To consider the Quarterly Workforce Report.

7   **Code of Conduct** *(Pages 19 - 36)*

To consider the attached report on the Code of Conduct.

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PART II

<u>Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed</u>

None

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Staffing Policy Committee

MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2020 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Stuart Wheeler (Chairman), Cllr Tony Jackson (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Hayley Illman, Cllr Carole King and Cllr Philip Whitehead

Also Present:

Cllr David Halik, Mike Osment (UNISON)

1 Membership of Committee

The Committee noted that at its last meeting held on 26 November 2019, Full Council appointed Cllr Stuart Wheeler as Chairman of the Committee in place of Cllr Allision Bucknall and Cllr Carole King to the vacancy caused by the resignation of Cllr David Jenkins.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ricky Rogers and Cllr John Smale.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 14 November 2019.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

5 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's Announcements made at the meeting.

6 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present or councillors' questions.

7 Appointment of Sub-Committees

The Committee reviewed the membership of its sub-committees following changes made at the last meeting of Council to membership of this Committee:-

Resolved:

To appoint members to serve on the sub-committees of this Committee
for the remainder of the municipal year as set out below:-

(a) **Senior Officers Employment Sub-Committee**
Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cllr Richard Clewer & Cllr Hayley Illman.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Bob Jones MBE, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philipe, Cllr Philip Whitehead, Cllr John Smale, Cllr Ian Thorn and Cllr Tony Trotman.)

(b) **Appeals Sub-Committee**
Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cllr Richard Clewer & Cllr Hayley Illman.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philipe, Cllr Philip Whitehead, Cllr Ian Thorn and Cllr Tony Trotman.)

(c) **Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee**
Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cllr Tony Jackson & Cllr Hayley Illman.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr David Halik, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr John Smale, Cllr Ian Thorn and Cllr Tony Trotman.)

8   **Smoke Free Sites - Update**

The Committee considered a report by the Director, Public Health which provided an update regarding the implementation of the Wiltshire Council smokefree sites initiative that was approved by this Committee in November 2018.

 In November 2018 this Committee agreed the following recommendations for Wiltshire Council sites to become smokefree which included:

- The removal of the council smoking policy (including supporting the removal of smoking breaks for staff during work time);

- The revision of the council vaping policy to allow vaping on site away from public view;

- Support for all council sites to go smokefree starting as a rolling programme in March 2019:

    - Phase1 included Monkton Park (Chippenham), County Hall (Trowbridge) and Bourne Hill (Salisbury) including carparks.

- Phase 2 included all campus sites, leisure centres and libraries to go smokefree if not already done so.

The aspirational time line was to have the majority of council sites smokefree by the end of March 2020.

The Committee was informed that some staff had accessed health trainer support to assist in giving up smoking and quite a few had been supported to quit. During the second phase of the programme, depots had been targetted and a number of depot staff had engaged. It was interesting to note that some of these staff had switched to vaping which was allowed.

It was noted that there were about 12 sites where smoking was still taking place, including a query about whether all special education schools were currently smoke free. It was anticipated that six of these sites would be smoke free by April 2020.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report and confirm support for the final phase of implementation of smoke free sites.

9   **Pay Policy Statement**

The Committee received a report setting out an updated Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2020/2021 for approval, prior to agreement by Council and publication on the Council's website.

It was reported that under Chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011 every local authority must prepare a pay policy statement for every financial year. Wiltshire Council originally published its pay policy statement in February 2012 and the updated policy was now required to be published on the Council's website by 1 April 2020.

The policy had been updated to include:

- A revised introduction providing an update on the council's progress with apprenticeships, annual budget and workforce total.

- An amendment to the reference of Corporate Director following the tier 1 restructure and the change in job title to Chief Executive Officer.

- An updated total number of council employees and the latest pay ratios.

- The annual budget will be set in January/February in time for approval at full Council.

- The role of Returning Officer following the tier 1 restructure will be agreed in time for approval at full Council.

The Committee discussed the updated policy and noted the two areas which would need updating prior to the policy being presented to Council.

Resolved:

To approve the draft policy to be presented at Full Council on 25 February 2020, subject to:

- **Updating the current annual budget, and**

- **A decision being made as to which officer would carry out the role of Returning Officer.**

10   **Amendments to Business Travel and Mileage Allowances Policy**

The Committee considered a report by the Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development which set out proposed changes to the Council's business travel and mileage allowances policy, with the intention to implement this with effect from 17 February 2020.

The updated policy would require that, wherever possible, staff should attend at their normal place of work and use a pool car for business journeys.

The amended policy simplified the calculation method for mileage an employee could claim when travelling for business purposes if their journey was not starting from their normal place of work and did not include a journey to their normal place of work.

Under the new policy employees would be required to deduct their normal home to workplace mileage (their "normal commute") from any business mileage claimed.

Members were informed that the draft policy had been agreed by the Joint Consultative Committee in December 2019 and this was confirmed by Mike Osment, Branch Secretary, UNISON.

During discussion, it was considered that some employees might need some support in interpreting the new policy but Members were assured that this would be made available from their managers who would be fully briefed and there would also be support available from the HR advisory and policy teams.

Resolved:

To confirm agreement to the proposed changes to the Council's business mileage and allowances policy.

11   **Sickness Absence Update**

Thought was given to a report by the Director, Human Resources &

Organisational Development which provided an update on the Council's sickness absence position following a request for a more detailed analysis of sickness absence at its previous meeting.

The Committee noted that in Wiltshire, the absence rate over the 2018/19 financial year was 9 days lost per FTE, which cost the Council around £3M; this was consistent with the previous long-term trend.

The current 2019/20 financial year rate was projected to be around 8.7 days lost per FTE, indicating an improvement from the consistently stable long-term trend.

A report by the Local Government Association stated that the average absence rate for single/upper tier authorities only was 10.2 days, which was significantly above Wiltshire's absence rate.

It was noted that the Council's sickness absence followed a very clear seasonal trend with an increase in short term absences in the latter two quarters (October to March) of the financial year due to the cold and flu season. This was particularly prevalent in frontline areas that were working closely with the public or vulnerable residents.

Accordingly, the social care services had the highest absence rates at the Council, projecting for the 2019/20 financial year as follows:

- 22.7 days lost per FTE in Learning Disabilities and Mental Health (LDMH)
- 19.9 days in Access and Reablement
- 8.0 days in Families and Children's Services

All other directorates were projected to be under the corporate average for 2019/20.

The Committee was informed as to what measures had been taking place to address this issue and it was noted that Families & Children's Services had been working diligently to reduce stress related absences. To date, alongside a consistently reducing absence rate, they had also reduced stress related absence by 20%.

Members were informed that HR would continue to monitor absence trends in other directorates and undertake early interventions when required.

During discussion, Members noted in particular the higher than average absence rate in the LDMH teams and the significant number of staff leaving during the 2019/20 half year period. The service had been reviewing whether there were any underlying issues that might be causing this and considered that difficulties with management, the structure and case load management might be contributory factors.

In the Mental Health Service, absence in the Western team was significantly lower than in the North and South teams. Members were pleased to note that HR was working with the service to understand if there was anything that could be learnt that could be applied to the other teams to help reduce their absence rates and accordingly, an action plan was being drawn up in consultation with Occupational Health.

Members were also pleased to see a continuing improvement in the sickness absence trend in Families & Children's Services since 2017/18.

Resolved:

(1)   To note the contents of the report.

(2)   To request an update in 6 months' time on progress that was being made to reduce the sickness rates in those areas with the highest rates of absence.

12   **Apprenticeship Update**

The Committee received a report by the Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development which provided an update on the Council's apprenticeship programme, including progress on the recruitment of apprentices and the use of apprenticeship levy.

It was noted that by January it was anticipated that 2.2% of the Council's workforce would be undertaking apprenticeships. Although this was slightly below the Council's 2.3% apprenticeship target, the feedback received from the Council's Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) account manager was that Wiltshire was doing very well compared with other organisations. If schools were excluded then Wiltshire would be well above the target of 5.4%. Members were pleased to note that Wiltshire was one of the few local authorities to guarantee a job for all its apprentices once they had completed their training. Wiltshire had a higher number of upskilling apprentices than other local authorities within the Council's local networks. Other local authorities had higher numbers of apprentices in schools but Wiltshire had a larger number of maintained schools.

The Committee was informed that under new apprenticeship rules, employers were now able to transfer 25% of their levy to other organisations to pay for apprenticeship training. Wiltshire's HR & OD were working closely with BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Group to ensure Wiltshire was able to offer transfers for 6 trainee nursing associates who were based in CP practices around Wiltshire. Wiltshire was also using its apprenticeship levy to fund 11 trainee nursing associates for Wiltshire Health and Care. It was pleasing to note that HR & OD were also working with Families & Children's social care teams to be able to offer transfer funds to employers willing to employ a Wiltshire care leaver, supported by the Virtual School and Employment & Skills teams.

The Committee noted that the number of departments participating in the apprenticeship scheme was increasing. Members were informed that apprenticeship standards were gradually expanding and further apprenticeship places would become available as the range of standards increased. Social work standards were now available which would allow apprenticeships to be established in this area.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report and to request a further update in May 2020.

13   **Date of Next Meeting**

       Resolved:

       To note that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee was due to be held on Wednesday 18 March 2020 at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

14   **Urgent Items**

       There were no urgent items of business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 11.25 am)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Roger Bishton of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 713035, e-mail roger.bishton@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

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Quarterly Workforce Report

January – March 2020

Observations and exceptions

Important note: The current situation with COVID-19 commenced at the end of this quarter and therefore may have some influence on these figures but it is likely that this will have a greater impact on the next quarter figures.

Since July – September 2018 quarter there has been a steady increase in the headcount figure, as seen in the graph on the right. This quarter has seen the first slight drop to 4723 from 4787. However, this drop is not as significant as it would first appear as there has been a review of variable contract employees who have not been paid within the last year. Excluding these leavers from the figures, the headcount has actually decreased by only 8, see adjusted line in orange;
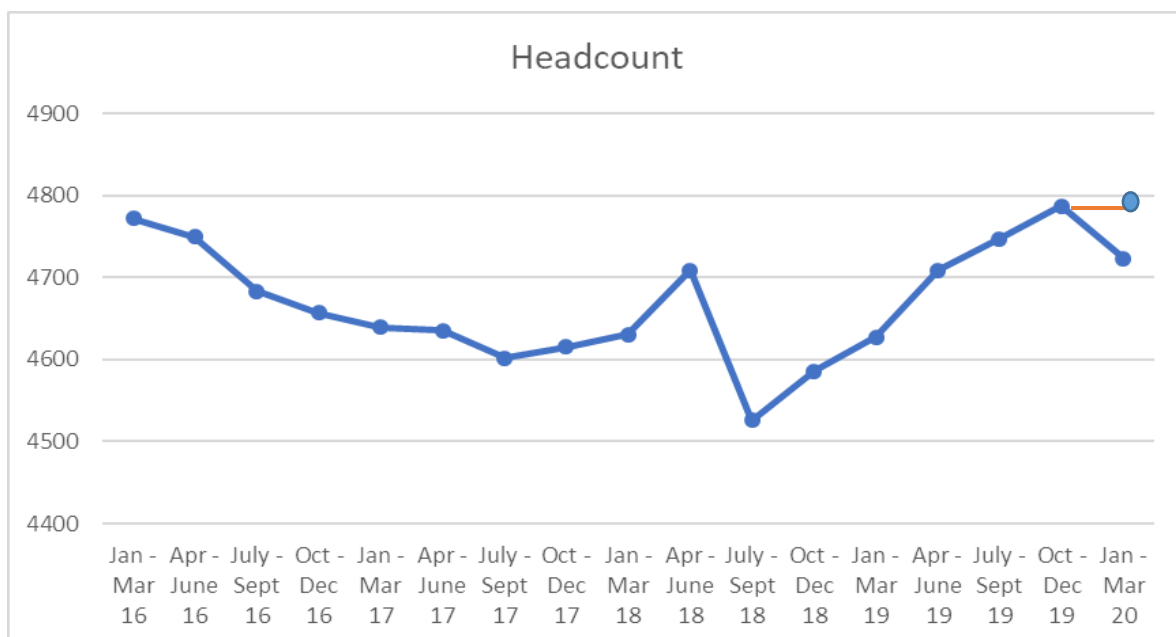

Looking at a comparison between starters and both voluntary and non-voluntary leaver types since April 2019, there have been more starters than leavers (as per the trend in the previous graph). The distribution of the increase in headcount over the last year is spread across most directorates, however four directorates have seen a net reduction in headcount during this period. They are the Executive Directorate, Learning Disabilities and Mental Health, Education and Skills and Joint Commissioning. Reviews of these reductions with HR Business Partners has highlighted that all of these areas have undergone restructures over the last year, so such reduction are not cause for concern.

Conversely, the Families and Children, Access and Reablement, and Housing and Commercial Development directorates have seen the largest positive increase in headcount over the last year.

Analysis of these increases for Families and Children indicates that a significant part of the increase relates to the recruitment of new social workers and keyworkers over the period. Access and Reablement have similarly increased their number of Reablement workers, and Housing and Commercial Development's increase has largely come from new Multi Trade Operatives. These have resulted from targeted recruitment campaigns undertaken by HR Resourcing in conjunction with the service areas to enable agreed growth to cover obligations to the community, meet increase demand and fill long standing vacancies within these services.

Comparison of starters and leavers 19/20
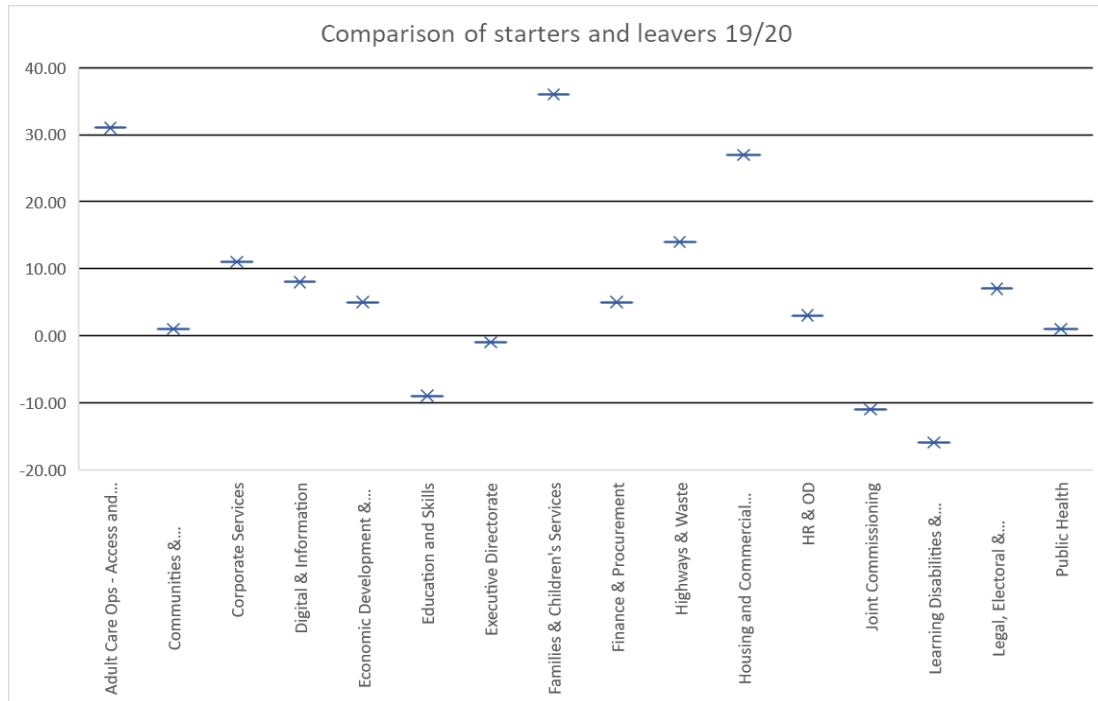
This increase in recruitment of permanent staff may have contributed to a decrease from £1.93m in the previous quarter to £1.80m this quarter in the cost of agency staff that we are currently using. It should be noted that we still have agency staff covering some similar positions due to current market conditions affecting recruitment, and to support one off projects.

Agency Costs

Quarter 1	£1,975,971
Quarter 2	£2,208,364
Quarter 3	£1,938,694
Quarter 4	£1,799,784
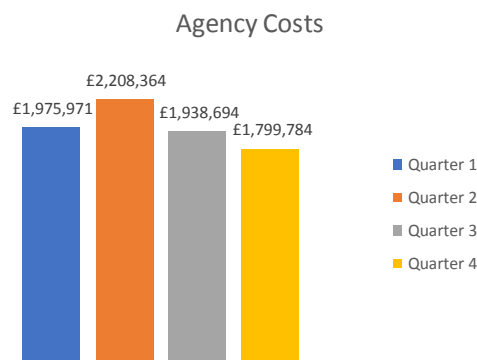
Recent cessation of the use of agency staff in a small number of relatively high cost positions within Economic Development & Planning and Digital & Information, combined with smaller reductions in the use of agency workers in other areas, has contributed to this saving, and has resulted in a reduction of 6.4 FTE of posts being covered by agency workers compared to last quarter.

Examples of the high cost positions no longer being covered by agency workers include;

Interim Director of Economic Development and Planning
Director of LEP
ICT Project Manager
ICT Technical expert

Page 14

Workforce Demographics

Headcount	
Quarter 1	4709
Quarter 2	4747
Quarter 3	4787
Current quarter	4723

FTE	
Quarter 1	3487.3
Quarter 2	3506.7
Quarter 3	3571.5
Current quarter	3560.8

Disability	
Quarter 1	7.4%
Quarter 2	7.1%
Quarter 3	8.5%
Current quarter	8.2%

Ethnicity (BME)	
Quarter 1	2.9%
Quarter 2	2.8%
Quarter 3	2.9%
Current quarter	3.0%

% of staff on equivalent Council grades

Legend: Quarter 1, Quarter 2, Quarter 3, Quarter 4

Grade	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
HAY	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%
L-O	3.8%	3.8%	3.9%	3.9%
H-K	10.2%	10.4%	10.5%	10.2%
B-G	9.9%	9.8%	9.9%	9.8%

Headcount by age band

Legend: Quarter 1, Quarter 2, Quarter 3, Quarter 4

Age bands: 65+, 55-64, 45-54, 35-44, 25-34, Under 25

Page 15

Sickness Absence

Top 5 sickness absence reasons by FTE days lost

Legend: Quarter 1, Quarter 2, Quarter 3, Quarter 4

Categories: Stress/Depression/Mental Health/Fatigue, Cold/flu and other infections, Other muscular/skeletal, Back and neck, Stomach

Sickness absence breakdown Quarter 4

- Short: 23%
- Medium: 23%
- Long: 54%

Long term absence = 20 calendar working days or more in the quarter
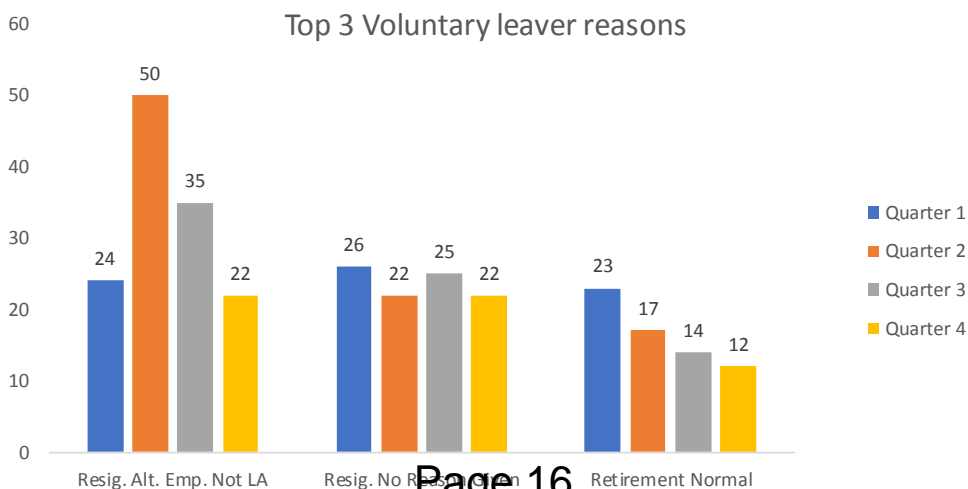Medium term absence = more than 5 days (less than 20)
Short term absence = 5 or less
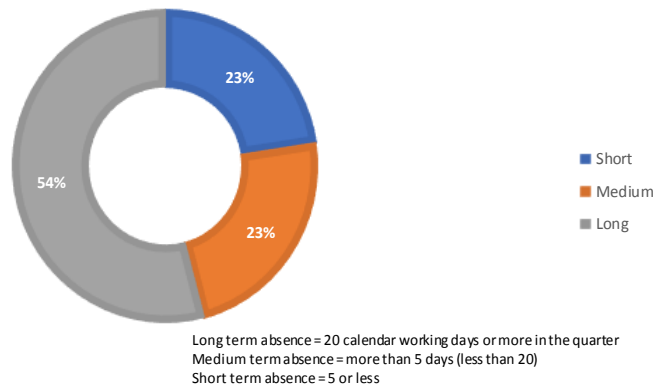
Turnover

Leavers 'under 25 years old'		
Quarter 1		11
Quarter 2		20
Quarter 3		11
Current quarter		15

Leavers with less than 1 years service		
Quarter 1		22
Quarter 2		29
Quarter 3		17
Current quarter		22

Top 3 Voluntary leaver reasons

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Resig. Alt. Emp. Not LA	24	50	35	22
Resig. No Reason given	26	22	25	22
Retirement Normal	23	17	14	12

Employee costs

Permanent employee salary costs

£26,942,599 — Quarter 1
£27,223,548 — Quarter 2
£27,879,441 — Quarter 3
£27,755,120 — Quarter 4

Sickness Absence Costs

£791,103 — Quarter 1
£662,229 — Quarter 2
£933,707 — Quarter 3
£872,478 — Quarter 4

Casual employee salary costs

£489,147 — Quarter 1
£579,651 — Quarter 2
£513,440 — Quarter 3
£433,895 — Quarter 4

Agency Costs

£1,975,971 — Quarter 1
£2,208,364 — Quarter 2
£1,938,694 — Quarter 3
£1,799,784 — Quarter 4

Advisory Cases

Disciplinaries

	new cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Quarter 1	17	
Quarter 2	23	6
Quarter 3	15	-8
Current Quarter	10	-5

Absence & Health

	new cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Quarter 1	164	
Quarter 2	156	-8
Quarter 3	176	20
Current Quarter	169	-7

Grievances

	new cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Quarter 1	4	
Quarter 2	5	1
Quarter 3	6	1
Current Quarter	6	0

Improving work Performance

	new cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Quarter 1	5	
Quarter 2	4	-1
Quarter 3	4	0
Current Quarter	8	4

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WILTSHIRE COUNCIL   **AGENDA ITEM NO.7**

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE
3 June 2020

Code of conduct

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to outline proposed amendments to the council's code of conduct policy following the agreed changes to the behaviour framework.

Background

2. The code of conduct:
    *   sets out minimum standards of behaviour for employees;
    *   provides guidelines to help maintain and improve standards;
    *   aims to protect the reputation of both employees and the council.

3. The current code of conduct policy currently has a separate "General Principles" document which sits alongside and outline 10 expected behaviours to support staff to understand what the Councils minimum expectations of conduct are.

4. The general principles do not explore what poor behaviour looks like. This has resulted in the council's behaviour framework, which does include examples of both good and bad behaviour, being the preferred document when dealing with issues relating to poor behaviour such as disciplinary or improving work performance procedures.

5. A report went to CLT in February 2020 recommending changes to the behaviour framework and code of conduct which were agreed.

Main changes

6. We have replaced the behaviour framework with the new "EPIC Values" document, removing all references to behaviour.

7. The removal of the council's behaviour framework and introduction of "EPIC Values" has meant that information currently within the behaviours framework policy has needed to be incorporated into the code of conduct policy, including:
    *   information about misconduct;
    *   information about 'Mental health, drugs and alcohol issues';
    *   information about 'if you experience poor behaviour';
    *   additional information about roles and responsibilities.

8. As part of the review of the Code of Conduct policy we have reviewed and modernised the code of conduct principles, renamed these 'behaviour principles' and aligned them to our values.

    The principles have been updated through the amalgamation and simplification of the principles in the current code of conduct and the current behaviours framework. as follows:

    - **Current Code of Conduct principles:** selflessness, honesty and integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, personal judgement, respect for others, duty to uphold the law, stewardship and leadership.

    - **New "Behaviour principles":** honesty and integrity, accountability and selflessness, openness, objectivity and respect, leadership, working together, doing your best.

9. A "behaviour principles guidance document" has been written to sit alongside the policy to support these behaviour principles. This document includes examples of what each of these principles does and doesn't look like in the workplace, providing managers and staff with a clear single point of guidance on how all staff are expected to conduct themselves as a minimum within our organisation.

10. The information in the guidance document has mainly been drawn from existing examples in the behaviours framework, and where necessary these have been modernised and updated.

11. We have worked closely with stakeholders to ensure that the examples from the behaviours framework that are most commonly referenced have been retained in this new document.

Main considerations

12. Key stakeholders, including the recognised unions, have been consulted on proposed recommendations; they are supportive of this approach and have been involved in the proposed revisions of the code of conduct.

13. These key stakeholders have confirmed these proposed changes would be sufficient in supporting with the management of poor behaviours.

14. To ensure the revised code of conduct policy is embedded across the organisation, communication will be delivered via a manager wire and a global message to the wider organisation to make managers and employees aware that the code of conduct has been updated. This will happen before the launch of the new EPIC Values and ahead of the behaviour's framework being replaced.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

15. None

2

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

16. An EIA was completed when the policy was originally created, however we will take the amended policy through an EIA review on 9 June 2020 as part of the implementation.

Risk Assessment

17. None

Financial Implications

18. None

Options considered

19. None

Recommendation

20. That Staffing Policy Committee approve the changes to the code of conduct policy.

Joanne Pitt
Director – HR&OD

Report Authors: Rebecca Spence, Strategic Delivery Officer
                          Helen Strong, Associate Business Partner

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: None

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Wiltshire Council Human Resources

Code of Conduct Policy and procedure

This policy can be made available in other languages and formats such as large print and audio on request.

What is it?

Wiltshire Council's code of conduct:
- sets out minimum standards of behaviour for employees
- provides guidelines to help maintain and improve standards;
- aims to protect the reputation of both employees and the council.

This code of conduct is not exhaustive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

Go straight to the section:

- Who does it apply to
- My responsibility
- Introduction
- Behaviour at work
- Interests
- Political neutrality
- Outside commitments
- Confidentiality
- Time, facilities and publications
- Equality
- Gifts, hospitality and sponsorship
- Uniform and PPE
- Speaking to the media
- Misconduct
- Mental health, drugs and alcohol issues
- Are there any exemptions?
- Roles and responsibilities
- Further advice and information

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Who does it apply to?

This policy applies to all Wiltshire Council employees unless a separate contractual policy applies to a transferred employee to whom separate TUPE terms and conditions of employment apply.

This policy applies to centrally employed teachers but does not apply to teaching and non-teaching staff employed in maintained schools or academies.

What is my responsibility?

You need to:
   • read this policy;
   • ensure you understand it;
   • ask if there are any points that are unclear;
   • use this code of conduct, alongside other council policies, to guide you in your role.

Breach of this code of conduct may lead to disciplinary action which could result in dismissal. Please refer to the disciplinary procedure for more information.

What are the main points?

Introduction

1.   The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of behaviour from local government employees.

2.   You represent the council and are trusted to act in a way which promotes the council's interests and protects its reputation.

3.   You are accountable for your actions and should ask your manager for advice if you are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

Behaviour at work

4.   The council has a set of behaviour principles which describe how you are expected, as a minimum, to carry out your work for Wiltshire Council.

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5. Wiltshire Council behaviour principles have been aligned to Nolan's [7 principles of public life](#) which underpin the members code of conduct and are the basis of ethical standards for those appointed to public office.

6. Wiltshire Council behaviour principles are grouped into seven categories:

    - Honesty and integrity
    - Accountability and selflessness
    - Openness
    - Objectivity and respect
    - Leadership
    - Working together
    - Doing your best

7. These principles set out how you are expected to behave to support the council's vision and values, and the way you should expect your colleagues and managers to behave.

8. The Wiltshire Council behaviour principles guidance provides further details and example of acceptable behaviour and conduct in relation to:

    - How we do things
    - How we treat others
    - What we say and how we say it
    - How we can expect to be treated

Interests

9. Conflicts of interest may occur if a decision of the council could affect you, or close friends and relatives, either positively or negatively.

10. Interests could include

    - involvement with businesses which have existing or proposed contracts with the council;

    - membership of organisations or groups which may oppose council policies;

    - roles undertaken outside of work (e.g. acting as a school governor, a member of an NHS trust board)

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11. You should ask yourself the question "Would a member of the public think that my family or I would benefit from the connection between my personal interest and my employment with Wiltshire Council?"

12. If the answer is yes then you must declare the interest using the [online form](#) or in writing to the head of governance.

13. Under section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 you must disclose any interest in an existing or proposed contract in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Political neutrality

14. You must not allow your own personal or political opinions to interfere with your work.

15. When engaged on council business you must not wear or display items (badges, banners etc.) which indicate your support or opposition to any political party.

16. You must respect the individual rights of all councillors and assist them, regardless of their political group, to carry out their responsibilities. Any advice given should be impartial, objective and helpful.

17. Under the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 certain employees are in politically restricted posts which restricts their political activities outside of work. These restrictions form part of their contract of employment and post holders receive full details on appointment.

Outside Commitments

18. Your activities outside of work should not conflict with your duty to the council.

19. Employees on grade I (spinal point 18) or above must obtain written consent from their executive director before engaging in any other business or accepting additional employment.

20. Any additional employment should not conflict with the council's interests or have the potential to bring the council into disrepute.

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21. You may not set up a business, or accept a job with a business, which is in direct competition with the council.

22. If you work for another organisation you may not act as a messenger between that organisation and the council. Formal channels of communication must be maintained.

23. Any secondary employment must not be carried out during your contracted council working hours, nor whilst on standby for official call out purposes unless such employment can be undertaken from your home.

24. It is your responsibility to monitor the number of hours you work and to ensure that you are rested and refreshed and able to carry out your role. On average you should not work more than 48 hours in total each week unless you have opted out of the working time regulations.

Confidentiality

25. You must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or improper disclosure of information does not occur as a result of your actions.

26. You must not disclose personal or financial information about any other member of staff or service user without the express consent of that individual or authorisation from your corporate director.

27. Confidential information, belonging to the council, should not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it.

28. You must not use any information obtained in the course of your employment to cause damage to the council or for personal gain or benefit. Nor should you pass information on to others who may use it in such a way.

Time, facilities and publications

29. You must spend all of your contracted hours working for the council.

30. You may not make personal use of the council's property or facilities (stationery, photocopiers, car parks etc.) unless authorised to do so by your manager. Computers and software may only be used in line with the Email, Internet and Computer Use policy and other related policies

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including the data protection policy, personal use of social media policy and acceptable usage policy.

31. You may only use the council telephones to make or receive private calls in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of your manager.

32. Any public funds entrusted to you must be used in a responsible and lawful manner.

33. If you want to publish any material which you have written in connection with your duties or in which you describe yourself as holding a position within the council you must first gain the consent of your executive director.

34. If, in the course of your work, you create a copyright work (for example a procedures manual or a software programme); patentable invention; design capable of registration; this would become the property of the council and, if appropriate, you would be required to cooperate in the registration formalities.

35. You may retain fees for any lectures delivered with the agreement of your executive director.

Equality

36. The council is firmly committed to the principles of equality and diversity and has a positive duty to promote these within the community it serves.

37. You must treat colleagues, clients and customers with respect, do not discriminate unlawfully against any person and treat members and co-opted members of the authority professionally.

38. If you have any involvement in making appointments you should ensure that your decisions are based only on the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. If any applicant is a close personal friend or relative you should not be involved in the appointment process.

39. You should not be involved in any decisions relating to discipline, pay or promotion of close personal friends or relatives.

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Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

For further details see [personal relationships at work and other related matters policy](#).

Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship

40. You must not accept any fee or reward for work done other than your pay and allowances as set out in your contract of employment except as set out in paragraphs 37 and 38 below.

41. It is an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts to accept gifts, loans, fees or rewards as an inducement to act in a certain way in your official capacity.

42. You may accept small items (e.g. inexpensive pens, diaries, flowers, chocolates) but they must be registered.

43. You may only accept an offer of a more significant gift (as a guide worth more than £25) or hospitality (e.g. visits, meals, sporting events etc.) if there is a genuine need to do so in order to represent the council in the community.

44. Gifts, benefits and hospitality offered to you or members of your family as a consequence of your employment must be declared using the [online form](#) or in writing to your manager whether accepted or not.

45. You should never accept significant gifts or hospitality from service users, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers.

46. If an external organisation wishes, or is sought, to sponsor a council activity the rules concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors. Your executive director must be involved in any decision.

47. Where the council wishes to sponsor an event or service no employee or member of their family must benefit unless full disclosure of interest has been made to the relevant executive director. All sponsorship must be recorded.

Uniform and PPE

48. Uniforms are provided for some employees and these should be worn unless otherwise agreed with the director.

49.   Suitable personal protective equipment will be issued and must be worn where a risk assessment indicates it is appropriate.

Speaking to the media

50.   Approaches from all national press, radio or TV stations or specialist press should be directed to the media relations team who will discuss the nature of the story and then contact the appropriate officer or member asking them to respond.

Misconduct

51.   Employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner at work. Serious misconduct and/or criminal offences committed during or outside of working hours which bring you or the council into disrepute may be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

52.   If you display continued poor behaviour or conduct at work your manager may choose to address this with you via one of the following policies:

- dignity at work (if you are the subject of a complaint by another employee)
- improving work performance
- disciplinary

If you experience poor behaviour

53.   If you experience poor or inappropriate behaviour or conduct at work, you may address this via the following policies:
- dignity at work
- grievance

Mental health, drugs and alcohol issues

54.   Remember that someone's inappropriate behaviour or conduct may be the result of a mental health issue. Poor behaviour should be investigated for any links with a mental health issue. It may be helpful to refer to guidance on Mental Health Awareness

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55.   You may experience inappropriate behaviour or conduct at work due to someone's use of alcohol, drugs or other substances. Someone's use of substances can also be linked to a mental health issue – it may be helpful to refer to guidance for managers – misuse of drugs, alcohol or other substances.

Are there any exemptions?

No – however some parts of the code of conduct will have more of an effect on senior, managerial and professional employees than others.

Many employees are responsible under their own professional codes of conduct. In cases where professional codes of conduct appear to conflict with the council's own code advice should be obtained from your director.

Roles and responsibilities

Employee responsibilities

56.   To read this policy together with the Wiltshire Council behaviour principles guidance and to ensure you understand the minimum conduct expected within the Council and discuss anything you are unsure of with your manager.

57.   To read and understand the key HR policies referred to in this policy.

Line manager responsibilities

58.   To provide additional advice and guidance on any points within the code of conduct. You should be aware that some employees with protected characteristics may require additional support with understanding the code including potentially staff from different cultures, certain disabilities and other protected characteristics.

59.   To signpost employees to relevant policies, documents and guidelines including Wiltshire Council behaviour principles guidance.

60.   To address any incidents where employees are consistently not behaving in an appropriate way, via the relevant policy.

61.   To investigate whether a mental health or disability issue may be affecting the employee's behaviour at work and to put measures in place to support the employee with this.

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HR responsibilities

62.   To provide guidance on this policy.

63.   To support managers with any training required.

Further advice and information

There are a number of related documents and policies which you should be aware of:

Wiltshire Council Constitution
Media relations protocol
Data protection policy
Personal use of social media policy
Personal relationships at work and related matters
Dignity at work policy
Equality and diversity policy
Disciplinary procedure
Wiltshire Council behaviour principles guidance

For further information please speak to your manager, director or contact a member of the HR advisory team.

Wiltshire Council behaviour principles guidance document

The Council's behaviour principles:

- set out minimum standards of behaviour for employees;
- provide guidelines to help maintain and improve standards;
- protect the reputation of both employees and the council.

These seven behaviour principles are not exhaustive and do not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

Behaviour principle	What it looks like?	What it doesn't look like
Honesty and integrity	- You follow the code of conduct at all times and publicly role model the principles in a positive way. - You are trustworthy and reliable. - You appropriately challenge assumptions and unhelpful behaviour.	- You treat property in a way that is likely to cause damage or allow others to do so. - You knowingly use the council's resources unlawfully, inappropriately or for you own personal gain.
Accountability and selflessness	- You uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in you. - You act selflessly and in terms of the public interest at all times - Everything you do is to achieve the vision of the council and to benefit the customer. - You inform others when you are aware of potential issues and acknowledge when you make a mistake. - You plan your own time and workload to meet your objectives. - You balance competing priorities to meet standards and expectations.	- You knowingly break the law. - You are influenced in making decisions that are not in the public interest - You manage your time poorly and do not deliver what is expected of you. - You ignore problems, don't use your initiative and hide behind your job description rather than taking ownership. - You behave in a way that might put others at risk.

Openness	• You are transparent about your actions and those of the authority and are prepared to give reasons for those actions. • You communicate relevant information regularly and effectively. • You stand by difficult decisions and openly acknowledge errors.	• You fail to keep customers and colleagues informed. • You fail to share information with your manager. • You dismiss alternative ideas and discourage colleagues from suggesting new ways of doing things. • You ignore negative feedback seeing it as a personal attack rather than a way to develop yourself or your performance.
Objectivity and respect	• You act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. • You promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect. • You are compassionate, caring and empathetic to both colleagues and customers. • You recognise good performance and take time to thank and praise others.	• You close down others by being judgemental, interrupting or talking-over them. • You are disrespectful, insensitive or unhelpful to customers or colleagues and your manner causes upset to others. • You allow disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour to take place. • You make little or no effort to understand things from your customer or colleague's point of view.
Leadership	• You live the council's values, lead by example in demonstrating behaviours, and inspire others. • You encourage innovation by engaging and seeking ideas from others and embrace change in a positive and supportive way. • You challenge and confront poor performance in a timely manner and publicly role model expected conduct. • You are an engaging leader supporting your team to deliver the councils vision whilst recognising talent and good performance and developing your team.	• You are self-interested and fail to acknowledge colleague and customer perspectives. • You use emotional instability as a management tool. • You adopt a command-and-control approach. • You refuse to share information to maintain an advantage over others. • You resist positive change and stifle innovation within your team.

	• You resolve conflicts and disagreements quickly and professionally. • You see failure and problems as an opportunity to learn and develop.	
Working together	• You share skills and knowledge and encourage and support others. • You work together with colleagues and customers and take the time to build effective and rational working relationships. • You work well with people who have different ideas, perspectives and backgrounds. • You listen to and involve colleagues and external customers and respond positively to suggestions before making decisions. • You encourage working together for the benefit of customers.	• You show little sign of co-operating within your team or working in partnership. • You don't ask others for opinions or ideas. • You purposely put-up barriers to stop working differently or discourage change from happening.
Doing your best	• You work to the best of your ability at all times and try your best even in times of change or adversity. • You are punctual and friendly and demonstrate a positive professional attitude. • You promote and drive continuous improvement by asking 'How could we do this better?'.	• You are unwilling to be exposed to change or uncertainty and stick to outdated methods. • You do not deliver what is expected of you. • You show a lack of concern in the quality of your work. • You display a negative attitude towards colleagues and customers. • You don't listen to, research or question information for a better understanding. • You do not accept colleagues as internal customers.

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