

# AGENDA

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**Meeting:** Staffing Policy Committee

**Place:** Kennet Room - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN

**Date:** Thursday 12 September 2024

**Time:** 2.30 pm

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Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Ellen Ghey - Democratic Services Officer of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718259 or email [ellen.ghey@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:ellen.ghey@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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## **Membership**

Cllr Stuart Wheeler (Chairman)

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Helen Belcher OBE

Cllr Richard Britton

Cllr Richard Clewer

Cllr Carole King

Cllr Jacqui Lay

Cllr Ashley O'Neill

Cllr Ricky Rogers

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## **Substitutes**

Cllr Liz Alstrom

Cllr Caroline Corbin

Cllr Mel Jacob

Cllr Simon Jacobs

Cllr Kathryn Macdermid

Cllr Nabil Najjar

Cllr Tom Rounds

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# 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 or substitutions for the meeting.

2 **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (*Pages 5 - 10*)

To approve and sign as a true and correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 March 2024.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

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

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements through the Chair.

5 **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

### Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so **at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting**. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. Please contact the officer named on the front of the agenda for any further clarification.

### Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution.

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 on **Thursday 5 September 2024** in order to be guaranteed of a written response. In order to receive a verbal response, questions must be submitted no later than 5pm on **Monday 9 September 2024**. 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        **Apprenticeship Update** *(Pages 11 - 18)*

To receive an update on the Council's Apprenticeship Programme, including a progress report on the recruitment of apprentices, how we are using it to target early careers, and the use of our apprenticeship levy.

7        **Potential Strike Action**

To receive a verbal update on potential strike action.

8        **Update on Review of Terms and Conditions**

To receive a verbal update on the review of terms and conditions.

9        **Refer a Friend Policy** *(Pages 19 - 32)*

To receive an update on the introduction of a policy for the 'Refer a Friend' scheme.

10       **Appointment of Members to Sub-Committees** *(Pages 33 - 36)*

To appoint the Membership of the following Sub-Committees:

- Senior Officer Employment Sub-Committee
- Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee
- Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee

11       **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered as a matter of urgency. Urgent items of a confidential nature may be considered under Part II of this agenda.

**PART II**

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

**None**

## Staffing Policy Committee

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### MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 MARCH 2024 AT KENNET ROOM, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

#### **Present:**

Cllr Stuart Wheeler (Chairman), Cllr Helen Belcher OBE, Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Ashley O'Neill, and Cllr Ricky Rogers

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#### 10 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Richard Clewer
- Councillor Tamara Reay
- Councillor Jacqui Lay

#### 11 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 January 2024 were considered.

Following which, it was:

#### **Resolved:**

**The Committee approved and signed the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2024 as a true and correct record.**

#### 12 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 13 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman informed the Committee that the order of the agenda would be amended to accommodate conflicting work commitments for the officer presenting Agenda Item 6. Therefore, Agenda Items 6 and 7 would be alternated.

#### 14 **Public Participation**

There were no statements or questions submitted.

## 15 **Driver Health Screening**

Paul Collyer, Head of Occupational Health & Safety, presented the report which proposed changes to DVLA medical examinations and assessments of fitness to drive.

It was explained that officers were proposing to introduce a mandatory health screening every two years for all employees who were contractually designated as required drivers for the Council and whose role included driving vehicles that carried passengers and/or work equipment/materials other than in a pool car or privately owned motor car. Therefore, it was clarified that the affected cohort were drivers of Council owned vehicles such as gritters, mobile libraries, minibuses, and vans, and totalled approximately 140 employees.

Officers further explained that regular health screening procedures were already in place for other groups of employees and given recent increase in the number of employees within Passenger Transport, the scale of usage, and the severity of possible outcomes for the affected employees while undertaking their roles, officers felt that the proposed screenings were a reasonably practicable measure.

During the discussion, points included:

- As per Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the policy, it was clarified that the proposed two-yearly screenings would be in addition to those required in line with DVLA guidelines for holders of valid HGV/LGV/PCV licences.
- It was confirmed that the proposed changes would not affect those employees driving private vehicles or pool cars, only those who drove Council assets as the vehicles were by nature bigger, heavier, and/or carrying passengers/work equipment.
- Officers clarified that if the changes were to be implemented, the screenings for the 140 affected employees would be staggered over the next 12 months, with the procedure being included as part of the onboarding process for new starters.
- It was confirmed that the proposed screenings could be fulfilled through existing resources and therefore the only cost that officers were predicting would be that of the employees' time in attending and travelling to the appointment. However, it was clarified that the appointment would be accounted for as part of an employee's contracted hours and the appointment's location could be negotiated on an individual basis in order to minimise service disruption across the county.
- Officers noted that the Passenger Transport Service had been consulted in respect of the proposals as they held the majority of those affected employees, and it was confirmed that they had no objections and were happy to support the measures and accommodate accordingly.
- It was confirmed that if an employee was found to not be fit to drive through the screenings, then the standard HR policies would apply and redeployment among other employment options would be considered.

- Members queried the legal implications to the Council if despite these checks, an employee were to have a medical episode resulting in an accident while driving a Council vehicle. Officers noted the proposals were a reasonably practicable mitigation measure to reduce the risk of such an event. However, officers agreed to draft and circulate to Members a written response to the concerns raised.
- Officers highlighted that if an employee were to be diagnosed with a condition that could affect their fitness to drive, they would be legally required to inform the DVLA, but were not legally required to inform the Occupational Health Team.
- It was explained that consultations on the proposals had followed the conventional route through the Corporate Leadership Team, Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), and Trade Unions, all of which supported the changes.
- It was additionally confirmed that if the policy was implemented, then it would result in a formal change to existing employees' terms and conditions.
- In the event that an employee chose not to engage with the screening process, it was confirmed that the normal HR policies would apply to ensure that officers were confident of employees' fitness to drive based on the information available to them.
- Members highlighted the importance of balancing the rights of Council employees when considering that there were existing national regulations and legislation in place to report relevant health conditions, and that the proposed changes could result in an employee being deemed fit to drive by the DVLA, but not fit to drive a Council owned vehicle. Members additionally felt that further detail was required within the policy with regard to the procedures to be followed if an employee didn't pass or refused to undertake a screening, and what the contractual implications would be for existing employees.

Following which, it was:

**Resolved:**

**The Committee resolved to defer the item to the next meeting to properly consider the points, and necessary policy amendments, raised during debate; to include legal implications and contract of employment implications for existing employees.**

16 **Gender Pay Gap Report**

Laura Fisher, HR & OD Strategy Manager, presented the annual report on gender pay gap data, which was required to be published by 30 March 2024, with the figures based on data from 31 March 2023.

Officers highlighted the key findings of the report with particular reference made to the mean and median gaps in comparison to the data recorded for 2022.

Members queried the definitions of mean and median averages, and why the Council's gender pay gap was lower than that of the national public sector gender pay gap, as per Paragraph 14 of the report. Officers explained that the averages would differ based on the makeup of the workforce at the time a review took place.

After which, it was:

**Resolved:**

**The Committee noted the contents of the gender pay gap infographic report and action plan, and the obligations placed on the Council with regards to the publication of gender pay gap data.**

17 **Equalities Monitoring Report**

Laura Fisher, HR & OD Strategy Manager, presented the updated annual inclusion and diversity employment monitoring report to the Committee.

It was reiterated that the Council were required to produce the report annually as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in line with the Equality Act 2010. As such, the figures in the report were based on workforce data as of 1 October 2023 and were collected from equality monitoring exercises through the Council's management information system (SAP), recruitment system (Talentlink), the results from the annual equality monitoring questionnaire, and the employee experience survey.

Particular reference was made to Paragraph 15 of the covering report, with officers emphasising that they were looking to continue improving under-25s representation within the workforce. Officers then highlighted the figures detailed in Paragraphs 17 and 21, noting the increases in employees' disclosing their ethnicities and employees' from BME backgrounds, and further explained that the decrease in staff turnover was reflective of the job market stabilising after recent years.

During the discussion, points included:

- Members queried if the higher percentage of those employees' who did not identify with their sex as registered at birth in comparison to that of the Wiltshire population as a whole as per the census data was artificially inflated as a result of 23% of the workforce choosing to not answer the question. In response, officers acknowledged that the lower response rate would have an impact on the results but noted that the reasons for why people chose to not answer the question was unknown and as such, any inferences would be conjecture.



- It was emphasised that the equality monitoring questionnaire was anonymous, and officers were working hard to promote an inclusive atmosphere and to ensure that employees' felt comfortable in answering any personal questions for data monitoring purposes.
- Members emphasised the values of Wiltshire Council and queried how these were promoted within the recruitment process. Officers explained that inclusion and diversity was discussed as part of the interview process, and then upon appointment, the Council's values were explored in more detail within a new starter's induction.
- In response to a question, officers confirmed that they were in the process of identifying trends in respect of disciplinary and grievance cases, and that further information would be submitted to the next Committee meeting.

Following which, it was:

**Resolved:**

**The Committee noted the contents of the report, and that the information would be fed into the action plan linked to the new Inclusion Strategy.**

18 **Statutory Legislation Effective April 2024**

Laura Fisher, HR & OD Strategy Manager, provided a verbal update to the Committee on a number of employment law changes coming into effect from 6 April 2024. Consequently, officers were reviewing all relevant policies to ensure compliance with these statutory legislations. The following was highlighted:

**Employment Relations (Flexible Working Act) 2023**

- It was explained that employees now had the right to request flexible working from their start date, and therefore employees were no longer required to have 26 weeks of service to be entitled to make the request.
- Employees could now make two flexible working requests every 12 months instead of one.
- Employers now needed to respond and make a decision on each request within two months instead of three.
- The existing requirement for the employee to explain what effect, if any, the change might have on the employer and how that effect might be managed, was now removed.
- The impacted policies were noted as being the Flexible Working suite of policies.

### The Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023

- Redundancy protection now covered pregnancy and for a period after the employee's return to work instead of the previous protection which applied to just the period of maternity/paternity leave.
- The protection now applied from the date the employee notified the employer of pregnancy and up to 18 months following the birth or adoption placement of the child.
- The impacted policies were noted as being Service Redesign and Redundancy policies.

### Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024

- Fathers/partners were now permitted to divide statutory paternity leave into one week blocks rather than taking it all at once.
- Fathers/partners were now permitted to take leave at any time during the first year, rather than only the first eight weeks after birth or adoption placement of the child.

Officers confirmed that as the changes to existing policies would be minor, they were not proposing to bring each effected policy for Members' consideration to the next meeting of the Committee.

After which, it was:

#### **Resolved:**

**The Committee noted the update.**

#### 19 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 1.00 - 1.50 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Ellen Ghey - Democratic Services Officer of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718259, e-mail [ellen.ghey@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:ellen.ghey@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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## Apprenticeship Update

### Purpose

1. To provide Staffing Policy Committee with an update on the council's apprenticeship programme, including a progress report on the recruitment of apprentices, how we are using it to target early careers and the use of our apprenticeship levy.

### Background

2. The apprenticeship levy came into effect in March 2017. All businesses with a PAYE bill of over £3 million per year must pay 0.5% into the levy. Levy funds can only be used for apprenticeship training. The funds go into the Digital Apprenticeship Service account (DAS), and a monthly direct debit is set up to transfer them to the training provider's DAS account.
3. It is the council's strategy to recruit and develop new apprentices who will develop their career within the council. The policy is therefore clear that services should ensure that there will be a budgeted post in the structure for the individual to move into at the end of their apprenticeship, and new apprenticeships are always targeted towards these posts.
4. The council is also committed to providing apprenticeship opportunities for existing employees, upskilling them and providing them with potential future career progression opportunities. An apprenticeship enables the employee to gain a qualification, alongside work experience, which is relevant to the service area / team they are employed in.

### Main considerations

### Types of apprenticeships

5. The different types of apprentices referred to within this report are:
  - New apprentices - employees recruited into a specific apprenticeship post since the levy's introduction in March 2017. These apprenticeship roles are linked to substantive posts within the council structure and apprentices move into these posts upon successful completion of their apprenticeship.

- Upskilling apprentices - current employees completing an apprenticeship within their current post. They remain in their current post after completing their apprenticeship, but the intention is that it will afford them greater career progression opportunities.

### **Apprentice numbers and take-up – April 2023 - 2024**

6. We currently have 181 staff enrolled in apprenticeship programmes, ranging from Level 2 to Level 7 (31/3/24). 34 of these have been employed directly into apprenticeship positions, and 147 are existing staff undertaking upskilling apprenticeships. We have 28 staff undertaking apprenticeships in maintained schools. The age range across new and upskilling apprentices is from 17 to 58. A list of current apprentices is provided at appendix 1 and a breakdown of apprentices in each directorate is provided at appendix 2.
7. Since April 2023, we have had 96 staff start apprenticeships across all levels.
8. Since April 2023, 60 staff have successfully achieved their apprenticeships. Ten of these were new apprentices, and all moved into their substantive roles and remain working at the council.
9. 60% of our newly recruited apprentices are under 25.
10. Our first cohort of Social Worker apprentices achieved their apprenticeships in January 2024. They have all remained with Wiltshire Council and have moved into ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) Social Worker roles.
11. We have annual cohorts for the Wiltshire Leader programme. Part of this offer is apprenticeships for existing and aspiring managers which demonstrates our commitment to our managers and future leaders.

### **Apprenticeship levy transfers**

12. Under new apprenticeship rules updated in April 2024, employers can now transfer 50%(was previously 25%) of their levy to other organisations to pay for apprenticeship training.
13. HR & OD have worked closely with the BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB) group to ensure Wiltshire Council are able to offer transfers. We are currently supporting Early Years settings, Adult Care settings and some partners within ICB.

14. HR & OD are working closely with Families and 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 and Skills teams.

### **Care Leavers**

15. As part of our apprenticeship offer, if any Wiltshire care leaver applies for one of our apprenticeships and meets the minimum requirements, they are guaranteed an interview and supported through an offer of a mock practice interview. The care leaver offer also includes CV writing tips from an HR&OD officer.

### **Partnership working**

16. HR&OD is working with the BSW ICB apprenticeship group in the joint procurement of apprenticeships, through Salisbury Managed Procurement Services (SMPS). The group meet monthly to share information on apprenticeships. We are the only local authority to have a regular presence in this group.

17. South West Councils holds regular meetings and updates for apprenticeships. We have a strong presence in this group and attend meetings to share information about apprenticeship providers.

### **Training providers**

18. We have 55 different apprenticeship standards being delivered by 42 different training providers. Provider details for each apprenticeship is available at appendix 1.

19. All providers go through Salisbury managed procurement services. The HR&OD team regularly contact providers and monitors apprentices' progress to ensure that they are progressing well. If additional support is needed, the training provider or the HR&OD team can provide it.

20. We monitor the success and timely success rates with providers throughout the apprenticeships to ensure quality and value for money.

### **Financial Implications - April 2023 – March 2024**

21. The table below shows the fund available for the apprenticeship programme.

Apprenticeship levy paid	£1,026,029
Levy spent	£708, 346
Levy Sunset	£166, 406
Levy transferred	£38,432.5

22. Funds in the DAS account are available for 24 months from the point at which they are deposited account, to draw down to pay training providers to deliver apprenticeships.

23. After this 24-month period, the funds expire, a process known as “sunsetting”. They are then moved out of the DAS (Digital Apprenticeship Service) account and become available for smaller employers to access via a central government grant scheme.

### **Early Careers engagement**

24. We regularly attend school and college career fairs to make young people aware of the range of services we provide and the opportunities available to build a career at Wiltshire Council.

25. Volunteers from across the council support with mock interviews at Wiltshire Schools to help young people get interview experience.

26. We have run challenge days at local schools to give young people a more detailed look into our service areas; working with the school effectiveness team, we are aiming to increase the range of services involved for the next academic year.

27. The Wiltshire Council careers fair allows us to interact with young people and their parents.

28. We offered 8 T-level placements to 16 – 19 yr old students from Wiltshire College; these are across Business Management, Social Care and ICT.

29. From April 2023 – March 2024, we offered 30 work experience placements. From April 2024 – August 2024, we have offered 36 placements so far.

### **Next steps**

30. To work with Gloucestershire & Wiltshire partnership to increase our levy sharing and to support more SMEs in Wiltshire that align with Wiltshire Council priorities with apprenticeship funding for their employees.

31. Working closely with service areas to utilise apprenticeships for 'hard to fill' roles and allowing staff to progress internally and build a career at Wiltshire Council.

#### **Environmental impact of the proposal**

32. N/A.

#### **Equalities impact of the proposal**

33. The apprenticeship programme supports Wiltshire Council's commitment to supporting under 25yrs and early careers.

#### **Risk Assessment**

34. N/A.

#### **Financial Implications of the proposal**

35. Wiltshire Council is required to pay 0.5% of its PAYE bill each year into the Apprenticeship Levy fund which we can draw down on to fund the cost of apprenticeship training. Any unspent funds that we pay to the Levy are made available for smaller employer to access via a central government grant scheme.

#### **Recommendations**

36. SPC are asked to note the contents of this report and the work undertaken to support the apprenticeship programme and early careers.

**Tamsin Kielb**  
**Director HR&OD**

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Report Author: Kathryn Partington, OD Consultant - Apprenticeships

#### **Appendix 1 – Current apprenticeships August 2024**

<b>Apprentice title</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Upskiller</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>School</b>
Accounts/Finance assistant	2		1	
Accountancy Taxation professional	7	2		
Adult care worker	2	2		
Applications support lead	4		1	
Assistant accountant	3		2	
Associate Project management	4	1	1	
Building control surveyor	6	1		
Business admin	3	1	13	
Business analyst	4	1		
Chartered Legal executive	6	4		
Chartered Town planner	7	1		
Children, young people and families manager	5	1		
Children, young people and families practitioner	4	11		
Civil engineering degree	6	5	2	
Civil engineering senior technician	4		1	
Civil engineering technician	3		6	
Coaching professional	5	2		
Commercial procurement & supply	4	1		
Community Health & wellbeing worker	3		2	
Customer service specialist	3		1	
Customer service practitioner	2		1	
Data analyst	4	4		
Data protection & information governance	4	1		
Data scientist	6	4		
Early years educator	2			3
Early years practitioner	3			1
HR Business Partner/Consultant	5	1		1
Employability practitioner	4	4		
HR Support	3	1		
Information communications technician	3		1	
Junior Energy manager	3	1		
Lead Adult care worker	3	6		
Lead practitioner in adult care	4	13		
Leader in adult care	5	6		
Learning & Development Business consultant	5	1		



Library, information and archives assistant	3		1	
Occupational therapist	6	8	2	
Operations/Departmental manager	5	17		
Personal trainer	3		1	
Professional accounting technician	4	1		
Rehabilitation worker (visual impairment)	5	1		
School Business manager	4			3
Senior Healthcare support worker	3	6		
Senior Leader	7	3		3
Senior People professional	7	1		
Social Worker	6	17		
Software development technician	3	4		
Systems thinking practitioner	7	1		
Teacher	6			7
Teaching assistant	3			12
Team leader	3	11		
Trading standards professional	6	3		
Vehicle maintenance & repair, light vehicle	2		1	
<b>Totals</b>		<b>148</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>30</b>

**Appendix 2 – Current apprenticeships per Directorate (August 2024)**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>New start apprentices</b>	<b>Upskilling apprentices</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of apprentices against Directorate headcount</b>
Legal & Governance	2	9	11	3.53
Assets & Commercial development	1	2	3	1.23
Finance & Procurement	4	6	10	3.8
HR & OD	0	4	4	2.98
ICT	2	10	12	9.1
Transformation & Business change	0	6	6	14.28
Adult social care	2	55	57	2.84
Education & Skills	0	7	7	2.84
Families & Children	7	29	36	4.19
Commissioning	2	0	2	2.04
Public Health	2	1	3	4.05
Environment	0	3	3	1.77
Leisure, culture & communities	2	4	6	0.55
Highways & transport	12	9	21	3.23
Planning	0	3	3	1.75
Economy & regeneration	0	1	1	2.17

## Refer a Friend Policy

### Purpose

1. The purpose of the report is to update SPC on the introduction of a policy for the Refer a Friend scheme.

### Background

2. To improve recruitment of hard-to-fill roles, a pilot scheme was introduced in 2022 to provide a referral incentive to Wiltshire Council employees who made a successful referral of a friend for an eligible vacancy.
3. The objective of the scheme is to encourage existing Council employees to recommend friends to employment with the Council, in specified hard-to-fill positions, to improve recruitment and retention for these roles.
4. Incentive payments are paid on a twofold basis, an initial payment to the employee of £250 is made once the individual referred has commenced employment and the remaining £250 to the referred employee once they have successfully completed their probationary period.
5. The scheme is currently managed by the Recruitment Team with HR Business Partners liaising with services to approve identified hard-to-fill roles as being eligible for the scheme. There is a requirement that roles are hard-to-fill however, the assessment criteria for eligible roles, under the scheme, does not extend beyond this.
6. A formal policy is now required following the pilot to ensure a consistent and fair approach.
7. A copy of the pilot's terms and conditions can be found at Appendix 1 and a list of current eligible roles can be found at Appendix 2.

### Main considerations

8. The recruitment team have reported the scheme has been effective in achieving the scheme's objectives, in respect of supporting recruitment and retention of hard-to-fill posts.
  
9. Some of the highlights of the scheme include:
  - 9.1 Since its launch, there have been a total of 160 referrals, with 140 employees having successfully completed their 26-week probationary period.
  - 9.2 Since its launch, Highways and Transport have received the most referrals, with 51 candidates having proven eligible, 47 of which have been retained following probation.
  - 9.3 There has been considerable cost savings for services, namely in Reablement where 5 successful referrals in occupational therapy, under the scheme, prevented the Council having to utilise a recruitment agency, saving a minimum cost of £6,450 per vacancy.
  - 9.4 Furthermore, the scheme has reduced the Council's reliance on employment of agency workers which costs approximately 59% more in comparison to employed members of staff across service areas, with identified eligible roles.
  
10. Hard-to-fill roles are currently defined as a role which has been advertised a minimum of three times with no appointments made, typically over a period of 3-6 months.
  
11. Directors are required to approve posts as eligible under the scheme. This is due to the need to maintain consistency and compliance across service areas.
  
12. It is proposed that an evidence-based assessment, which follows a consistent approval process should be introduced under the policy consistent with the approval process for market supplement payments. The HR Strategy team will act as custodians of the assessment and approval process and maintain records for quality assurance purposes, with sign off of eligible posts by the Director HR&OD in conjunction with CLT.
  
13. HR Business Partners will continue to liaise with services to identify hard-to-fill roles and work in collaboration with HR Recruitment and HR Strategy at the appropriate stages.

## **Environmental impact of the proposal**

14.N/A

## **Equalities impact of the proposal**

15. This policy will be taken to the equality impact assessment panel on 11th September 2024. All comments from this panel will be considered.

## **Risk Assessment**

16. There is need for standardised criteria for assessing the eligibility of posts under the scheme to ensure consistency and an audit trail of an evidence-based approval process.

17. Quality assurance needs to be maintained to ensure fair and consistent governance of the scheme.

## **Financial Implications of the proposal**

18. It is not proposed to make any adjustments to the payments offered under the scheme, with payments continuing to be paid from service salary budgets.

## **Recommendations**

19. That SPC approve the implementation of a Refer a Friend policy formalising the pilot scheme introduced in 2022.

**Tamsin Kielb**  
**Director HR&OD**

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Report Author: Ellie Schamroth, HR Strategy and Policy Officer

## Appendix 1 – Pilot terms and conditions

### Refer a friend pilot scheme

#### *Overview of the scheme*

To improve our recruitment to some of our hard to fill roles.

If you refer a friend for one of the eligible roles and they are successfully recruited, you will both be paid an incentive of £250.

The process is simple, once you tell your friend about the post, all they need to do is state that you have referred them in their application form, providing your name and work email address in the free text box available. If your friend is successfully recruited, you will be contacted by HR to arrange the payment.

#### *Scheme terms and conditions*

1. You are only eligible for the payment if the person you refer is successfully recruited to the post.
2. You will only receive your incentive payment when your friend commences employment
3. Your friend will receive their payment once they have successfully completed their 6 months probationary period
4. The incentive will be paid by the service area where the successful candidate is employed.
5. The payment is subject to subject to tax and national insurance but will be non-pensionable.
6. For a referral to be successful, the person being recommended must not be already employed in any capacity by Wiltshire Council and must be successfully appointed through a recruitment process.
7. The person recommended must not have worked for Wiltshire Council in the last 12 months.
8. To make a referral the referrer must be employed on a permanent or fixed term contract basis with the council. This scheme does not apply to bank workers, agency staff, consultants, or councillors.
9. The referred employee must be offered a permanent contract of employment with the council. The scheme does not apply to employees offered fixed term, or temporary contracts.
10. There is no incentive payable for referring a candidate for a vacancy where the referrer is the hiring manager, or where they have any involvement in the interview and selection process.

If you have any questions regarding the refer a friend scheme, please contact [recruitment@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@wiltshire.gov.uk)

## Appendix 2 – Current eligible roles

Service	Eligible job roles
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; DASS</b>	<b>Experienced Social Worker - Level 3</b> <b>Experienced Occupational Therapist</b> <b>Support Worker</b> <b>Senior Support Worker</b>
<b>Children's Services</b>	<b>Experienced Social Worker - Level 3</b> <b>Experienced Occupational Therapist</b> <b>Child Care Officer</b> <b>Child Care Officer Assistant</b>
<b>Planning</b>	<b>Principal Planning Officers</b> <b>Principal Planning Officers</b> <b>Principal Enforcement Officer</b> <b>Senior Enforcement Officer</b> <b>Senior Planning Officers</b> <b>Planning Officers Level 2</b> <b>Planning Officers Level 1</b>
<b>Highways and Transport</b>	<b>Passenger Assistant</b> <b>Passenger Vehicle Driver</b>
<b>Leisure, Culture and Communities</b>	<b>Receptionist</b> <b>Facilities Operations Officer</b> <b>(Facilities Operations Operative)</b> <b>Cleaner</b> <b>Duty Manager</b> <b>Fitness Consultant (Fitness</b> <b>Instructors)</b> <b>Recreation Assistants</b>

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## Wiltshire Council Human Resources

### Refer a Friend Policy

This policy can be made available in other languages and formats such as large print and audio on [request](#).

#### What is it?

This policy provides advice and guidance on the Refer a Friend scheme.

#### Who does it apply to?

1. This policy applies to all Wiltshire Council employees on a permanent or fixed term contract with at least 12 months service, unless a separate contractual policy applies to a transferred employee to whom separate TUPE terms and conditions of employment apply. This policy does not apply to teaching and non-teaching staff employed in maintained schools or academies.

#### When does it apply?

2. This policy applies to recruitment of hard-to-fill roles and provision of a referral incentive to Wiltshire Council employees who make a successful referral of a friend for an eligible vacancy.
3. This policy also covers the process for applying to have a role assessed as eligible under the Refer a Friend scheme.

#### When does it not apply?

4. Employees under the Wiltshire temporary bank, casual workers, agency staff, consultants and councillors are not eligible to make a referral under the scheme.

5. Hiring managers or employees involved in the selection and interview process for an eligible role, are not permitted to make a referral relating to that role under the scheme.
6. Existing Wiltshire Council employees cannot be referred for eligible positions under the scheme.

### **What are the main points?**

7. Wiltshire Council offers a Refer a Friend scheme to improve recruitment of hard-to-fill roles.
8. Eligible employees, who refer a friend, that is successfully recruited to a specified, hard-to-fill role, will receive an incentive payment of £250, once the referred employee commences employment.
9. The referred employee will be paid an incentive of £250 subject to successfully completing their probationary period with Wiltshire Council.
10. All referrals must be made at the point of application and the referrer must be named in the application form. Any retrospective referrals made after the point of application will not be accepted.

### **Approval of eligible job roles**

11. A list of approved eligible job roles is held centrally by the HR Strategy team.
12. Before managers can request a job role to be eligible for the Refer a Friend scheme, they must complete a proposal in the form of a business case\* (*\*live link to business case form to be included\**).
13. Managers should consult with their relevant Strategic HR Business Partner and Recruitment Consultant to prepare the business case. Once completed, the business case must be signed by the relevant Director.

14. Supporting evidence/information required as part of the business case should include (but is not limited to):
- i) The number of times the role has been advertised without a satisfactory response;
  - ii) Response to adverts both in terms of quantity and quality of candidates;
  - iii) Wider recruitment context applicable to the role such as national or local skills shortages;
  - iv) Any existing recruitment or retention incentives/payments in place for the post (e.g. market supplement).
  - v) Impact of vacant role on service delivery.
15. Once complete, the business case should be sent by the Strategic HR Business Partner to [hrstrategy@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:hrstrategy@wiltshire.gov.uk).
16. The HR Strategy team will review the business case and may ask for further information, if required.
17. The Director HR&OD in conjunction with the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) will agree whether to approve the role for the scheme based on the business case and the evidence provided.
18. A copy of the final business case and CLT decision will be retained by the HR Strategy team for future record.
19. The relevant Strategic HR Business Partner and HR Recruitment Consultant will be notified whether the role has been approved for the scheme.

### **The referral process**

20. Once an employee refers an eligible role to their friend, they must direct them to apply for the vacancy via the council's [careers site](#).

21. If the role is eligible, there will be a relevant question within the online application form for the candidate to indicate the referrer's name and email address.
22. All referrals must be submitted as part of the application form to be considered under the scheme.

### **Payment of incentives**

23. The referrer is only eligible for the incentive payment if the referred individual is successfully recruited to the vacancy.
24. The referrer will receive the incentive payment, in full, once the referred individual commences employment with Wiltshire Council.
25. The referred employee will receive the incentive payment, in full, once they have successfully completed their probationary period with Wiltshire Council.
26. All payments are processed by the HR Payroll team and paid as part of the employee's salary.
27. The Recruitment team are responsible for notifying the HR Payroll team once the conditions of the scheme have been met and an incentive payment is due.

### **Liability to tax**

28. All incentive payments are liable to deductions for income tax and national insurance but are non-pensionable.

### **Review of eligible roles**

29. Eligible roles will be reviewed on a yearly basis (usually each April) unless otherwise stated for business reasons.
30. The HR Strategy team will carry out the review taking into account factors, such as: recruitment and retention difficulties and skills, shortages within the area of specialism and the impact of the refer a

friend scheme payment.

31. The outcome of the review will be discussed with final decision agreed by CLT.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### Employee responsibilities

32. Eligible employees under this policy can direct referrals to apply for vacancies via the Council's [careers site](#).
33. Eligible employees should remind referrals to state that they have been referred, as part of their job application form.

### Manager responsibilities

34. To follow the guidance of this policy and not make a referral for eligible vacancies if involved with the selection and interview process of the particular role.
35. Complete a proposal in the form of a business case to request a job role to be eligible for the Refer a Friend scheme.
36. Consult with their relevant Strategic HR Business Partner and Recruitment Consultant to prepare the business case for signed approval of their relevant Director.

### HR responsibilities

37. To maintain a list of approved eligible job roles for the Refer a Friend scheme.
38. To process business case proposals received by managers, in a timely manner, to promote business continuity.

## Definitions

**Referrer** – a Wiltshire Council employee who has referred a friend for an eligible job vacancy as part of the Refer a Friend scheme.

**Referred employee** – an individual who has been referred by a Wiltshire Council employee for an eligible role and successfully recruited.

**Eligible job role** – roles that have been approved under the Refer a Friend scheme and are held centrally by the HR Strategy team. They are also sometimes referred to as 'hard-to-fill roles' under this policy.

**Incentive payment** – A payment of £250 paid to Wiltshire Council employees who refer friends that are successfully recruited to an eligible role. In addition, a payment of £250 paid to referred employees, upon successful completion of their probationary period with Wiltshire Council.

## Equal Opportunities

This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed to identify opportunities to promote equality and mitigate any negative or adverse impacts on particular groups.

## Data protection (privacy notice)

Wiltshire Council processes personal data collected during all stages of this policy and procedure in accordance with its data protection policy as required by GDPR. Data collected is held securely and is only disclosed to and accessed by individuals for the purpose of completing the disciplinary process and procedure.

Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and must be reported in accordance with the Council's data protection policy. Any such breaches may result in an investigation which could lead to action under the disciplinary procedure. The full privacy notice can be read [here](#).

## Advice and guidance

If you require help in accessing or understanding this policy or completing any of the associated forms you should contact your line manager or trade union representative if you are a member.

If, due to the nature of your query, it is not appropriate to contact your line manager you should contact your head of service who will nominate an appropriate manager or colleague to help you.

See [guidance for managers – giving advice on policies](#).

### **Further information**

Recruiting managers who would like to consider eligibility of a role under this scheme should contact the Recruitment team and their Strategic HR Business Partner.

General queries regarding this policy should be raised as a service request via the Oracle Helpdesk.

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## Wiltshire Council

### Staffing Policy Committee

12 September 2024

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#### Appointment of Members to Sub-Committees

##### Purpose of Report

1. To appoint the membership of the following Sub-Committees:
  - Senior Officer Employment Sub-Committee
  - Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee
  - Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee

##### Background

2. Paragraphs 2.4.4-2.4.15 of Part 3B of the Constitution sets out that the Staffing Policy Committee will establish the sub-committees set out at paragraph 1 of this report, to deal with matters relating to the dismissal or disciplinary action against individual members of staff and staff grievances.
3. It is rare for any of the sub-committees to be required to meet, with no such meetings in 2023/24. However, there is a need to confirm their memberships in the event that they would be required.

##### Main Considerations

4. The Senior Officer Employment Sub-Committee is responsible for dismissal and disciplinary action against certain Chief Officer posts set out in the constitution.
5. The Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee is authorised to hear appeals against dismissal or disciplinary action from the Senior Officer Employment Sub-Committee or the Head of Paid Service.
6. The Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee is authorised to hear appeals under stage 2 of the council's grievance procedure.
7. Sub-Committees, like Committees, are required to be politically balanced unless there has been a vote without objection by Full Council setting out otherwise. Accordingly, as each Sub-Committee comprises three Members, these would need to be two Conservatives and one Liberal Democrat.
8. The Senior Officer Employment Sub-Committee and Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee are required to include at least one Member of the Cabinet. Substitutes of the main Staffing Policy Committee may be appointed as Sub-Committee Members.
9. It is also advised that all Members and Substitutes of the Staffing Policy Committee are explicitly confirmed to be able to be substitutes for the Sub-Committee Members, to enable flexibility.

10. Additionally, as the Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee can hear appeals from the Senior Officer Employment Sub-Committee, it is recommended that different Members are appointed to those Sub-Committees.

### **Safeguarding Implications**

11. There are no safeguarding issues arising from this report.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

12. There are no equalities impacts arising from this report.

### **Risk Assessment**

13. There are no risk issues arising from this report.

### **Financial Implications**

14. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Public Health Impact of the Proposals**

15. There are no public health impacts arising from this report.

### **Environmental Impact of the Proposals**

16. There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

### **Legal Implications**

17. There are no legal implications.

### **Proposal**

18. To appoint three Members each to the following Sub-Committees:

- Senior Officer Employment Sub-Committee
- Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee
- Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee

19. To agree that all Members and Substitute Members of the Staffing Policy Committee may serve as substitutes for the above sub-committees.

**Kieran Elliott**

**Democracy Manager (Democratic Services)**

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### **Appendices**

Appendix A – Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committees

### **Background Papers**

None

## **Appendix A – Sub-Committee Terms of Reference**

### **(Part 3B of the Constitution)**

- 2.4.4 The Staffing Policy Committee will establish the following sub-committees to deal with matters relating to the dismissal or disciplinary action against individual Members of staff and staff grievances.

#### Senior Officers' Employment Sub-Committee

- 2.4.5 This sub-committee is authorised to dismiss and take disciplinary action against the officers categorised below as defined within the associated "Chief Officer posts" document in accordance with the officer employment procedure rules:

- 2.4.5.1 The Head of Paid Service;
- 2.4.5.2 Statutory chief officers;
- 2.4.5.3 Non-statutory chief officers;
- 2.4.5.4 Deputy chief officers;
- 2.4.5.5 Assistants for political groups.

- 2.4.6 For this purpose, the sub-committee shall comprise at least three Members, at least one of whom shall be a Member of the Cabinet.

- 2.4.7 This sub-committee is also authorised to consider and respond to grievances raised by officers in the categories listed above under stage two to the Council's grievance procedure. For the determination of such grievances the sub-committee shall comprise at least three Members. There is no requirement for any of those Members to be a Member of the Cabinet.

#### Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee

- 2.4.8 This sub-committee is authorised to hear appeals against dismissal or disciplinary action:

- 2.4.8.1 By the Senior Officers' Employment Sub-Committee in relation to the senior officers specified above;
- 2.4.8.2 By the Head of Paid Service in relation to other staff.

- 2.4.9 The Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee has power in the case of an appeal against a warning to:

- 2.4.9.1 Dismiss the appeal;
- 2.4.9.2 Allow the appeal;
- 2.4.9.3 Allow the appeal and substitute a different warning (greater or lesser);
- 2.4.9.4 Dismiss the employee.

2.4.10 The Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee has power in the case of an appeal against dismissal to:

2.4.10.1 Dismiss the appeal;

2.4.10.2 Dismiss the appeal but offer to re-engage the employee in the same or another post with effect from a date to be determined;

2.4.10.3 Allow the appeal and reinstate;

2.4.10.4 Allow the appeal and reinstate with a written or final written warning.

2.4.11 In the case of any appeal against dismissal or disciplinary action in respect of a senior officer as identified above, the Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee shall comprise at least three Members, at least one of whom shall be a Member of the Cabinet.

2.4.12 No Member who was involved in determining a matter which is the subject of an appeal will be appointed to the Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee.

#### Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee

2.4.13 This Sub-committee is authorised to hear appeals under stage two of the Council's grievance procedure.

2.4.14 The Sub-committee shall comprise at least three Members to hear an appeal. There is no requirement for any Member to be a Member of the Cabinet.

2.4.15 No Member who was involved in determining a matter which is the subject of an appeal will be appointed to the Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee.