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Minutes

Meeting of	:	The Governance, Policy and HR Committee
Date	:	23 March 2026
Meeting held in	:	The Guildhall, Salisbury
Commencing at	:	1830 hours

Present:

Chair**:** Cllr B Dalton.

Vice Chair: Cllr T Last.

Cllrs S Charleston, J Nettle, P Podger, S Rideout.

Officers: Asa Thorpe, Tracy Adams, Janine Whitty and Clare Dickinson.

There were 0 members of the public and 0 members of the press present.

Cllr T Last left the meeting at 2030 hours.

1. **Apologies:**

   No apologies received.

2. **Public Questions/Statement Time:**

   There were no questions or statements submitted by members of the public.

3. **Councillor Questions/Statement Time:**

   There were no questions or statements submitted by councillors.

4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

   The minutes of the Governance, Policy and HR Committee meeting held on 13 October 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Proposed: J Nettle
Seconded: P Podger

5. Declarations of Interest:

No declarations of interest were received.

6. Dispensations:

No dispensations were requested or granted.

7. Chair’s Announcements:

The Chair made no announcements.

8. Budget Monitoring Report - Corporate & HR:

The Committee noted the financial position for Corporate & HR, including variances relating to software licences and the unfilled Bid Officer post.

Resolved that:

8.1 The Committee notes the financial position at the end of January and officers’ explanation for the variances.

9. Corporate Update:

The Committee received a verbal update from Janine Whitty, Head of Corporate. The update included progress across procurement, cyber security, councillor support, civic events, policy development, and a forthcoming council-wide data audit.

Proposed: Cllr Nettle
Seconded: Cllr Podger

A vote was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

9.1 The Committee notes the contents of the report.

9.2 The CEO, in liaison with the Chair of Governance, move for Officers to take a report to Full Council regarding mandatory training for Councillors.

10. Complaints Policies:

The Committee received updates to both the Complaints Policy and the Managing Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy, noting the revised terminology. The Committee also noted the change in the responsible Head of Service for the policy.

Proposed: B Dalton
Seconded: P Podger

A vote was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

10.1 The Committee approve the updated Complaints Policy.

10.2 The Committee approve the revised and renamed Managing Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy.

11. Training Update Report:

The Committee received a report detailing progress in staff training, including strong uptake across programmes, completion of the Senior Leadership training, and new mandatory modules such as sexual harassment training. The report also highlighted the move toward a more systematic development approach, including improved onboarding and induction processes and the continued use of training tie-in agreements for high-cost courses.

Proposed: B Dalton
Seconded: J Nettle

A vote was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

11.1 The Committee notes the contents of the report.

12. The Year in Review:

The Committee received an update on honoraria, HR casework and sickness levels, noting that honoraria had been used to cover operational gaps and that case numbers remained within the expected range. The report also covered planned improvements to succession planning, ongoing work on stress-related matters including organisational stress risk assessments, and trends in leavers and internal promotions.

Proposed: B Dalton
Seconded: S Charleston

A vote was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

12.1 The Committee notes the contents of the report.

13. Employment Rights Act Changes:

Tracy Adams, Head of HR, presented a report detailing the statutory changes to family-friendly leave effective from 6 April 2026. The report further detailed current staff toilet arrangements remain legally compliant and that the Trans-Inclusion Policy will continue to be reviewed.

Proposed: B Dalton
Seconded: P Podger

A vote was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

13.1 The Committee notes the contents of the report.

14. Human Resources Data:

Updates included that the vacancy uptake rate was up slightly in last quarter, mainly due to Christmas and the lag created by that. There will also be a managed vacancy target going forward, and information will be provided to ensure transparency.

Proposed: B Dalton
Seconded: S Charleston

A vote was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

14.1 The Committee notes the contents of the report.

15. Exclusion of Press and Public:

Council considered whether to exclude the press and public for items 16, 17, 18.

Proposed: B Dalton
Seconded: S Charleston

A vote was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

15.1 In accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 16, 17 and 18 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (Paragraph 1 – ‘Information relating to any individual’).

The meeting moved to Exempt at 1946 hours.

16. Managing Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour - Annual Report:

17. Casual Rate of Pay:

18. CEO Appraisal Process:

19. Urgent Matters (if any) which by reason of special circumstances the Chair, decides should be considered as a matter of urgency:

There were no matters considered under this item.

The meeting closed at 2040 hours.

Signed versions of the minutes are available on request.