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Minutes

Meeting of : Governance, Policy and HR Committee
Date : Monday 27 July 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, J Wells

Officers: Asa Thorpe, Janine Whitty, Tracy Adams, Andrew Hunt, Sean Saunders

Others present: Cllr A Suddards

There were no members of the public or press present.

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1. **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee:**

Andrew Hunt, Corporate Manager, called for nominations of the Chair of the Governance, Policy and HR Committee.

Proposed by: Cllr P Podger
Seconded by: Cllr J Nettle

A vote was taken and it was:

Resolved that:

1.1 Cllr B Dalton was elected as Chair of the Governance, Policy and HR Committee.

Cllr Dalton called for nominations of the Vice-Chair of the Governance, Policy and HR Committee.

Cllr J Wells nominated Cllr T Last.

Proposed by: Cllr J Wells
Seconded by: Cllr S Charleston

Cllr P Podger nominated Cllr J Nettle.

Proposed by: Cllr P Podger
Seconded by: Cllr B Dalton

A vote was taken and it was:

Resolved that:

1.2 Cllr T Last was elected as Vice-Chair of the Governance, Policy and HR Committee.

2. Apologies:

Cllr E Rimmer was absent.

3. Public Questions/Statement Time:

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

4. Councillor Questions/Statement Time:

Cllr A Suddards read a statement regarding the wording of the Trans Inclusion Policy. The Committee noted the statement.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting of the Governance, Policy and HR Committee held on 23 March 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Proposed by: Cllr P Podger
Seconded by: Cllr J Nettle

6. Declarations of Interest:

Asa Thorpe, Chief Executive Officer, declared an interest in Items 14 and 15, as these related to matters concerning the Chief Executive Officer appraisal process, and advised that he would leave the meeting during consideration of these items.

7. Dispensations:

No dispensations were requested or granted.

8. Chair's Announcements:

The Chair made no announcements.

9. Budget Outturn / Monitoring Report – Corporate & HR

Janine Whitty, Head of Corporate & Interim Deputy Chief Executive Officer, presented the Budget Monitoring Report for 2026/27 to the end of May to the Committee.

It was:

Resolved to:

9.1. Note the financial position at the end of May.

10. Councillor Training Update:

Janine Whitty, Head of Corporate & Interim Deputy Chief Executive Officer, presented the Councillor Training Report to the Committee. Members discussed how the training had been delivered, including both online and in-person sessions. The Chair encouraged Members to make full use of the training courses available.

Moved by the Chair: Cllr B Dalton

A vote was taken and it was:

Resolved to:

10.1. Note the training opportunities provided to councillors so far during 2026 and the current levels of attendance.

10.2. Agree that the following training shall be mandatory for all Salisbury City Councillors:

- Procurement Training
- Data Protection Training
- Planning Training (all sessions within the planning training programme)
- Safeguarding Everyone Level 1
- Finance Training
- Governance Training.

10.3. Agree that councillors who are unable to attend a scheduled session must complete an approved alternative session, recorded briefing, or equivalent training within a reasonable period.

10.4. Agree that a record of mandatory training attendance and completion be maintained and reported annually to Full Council.

11. Request for a Revised Post:

The Committee received the report, presented by Sean Saunders, Health & Safety Manager. Members noted that the proposal would replace a vacant Estates Officer post with a revised Estates & Health and Safety Officer role at Grade 5, funded from existing budgets.

Proposed by: Cllr J Nettle
Seconded by: Cllr S Charleston

A vote was taken and it was:

Resolved to:

11.1. Approve the establishment of an Estates & Health and Safety Officer post at Grade 5.

11.2. Agree the recommendation to Full Council to approve the funding of the role from within existing Facilities Budgets.

12. HR KPI Data:

Tracy Adams, Head of HR, presented the Workforce Key Performance Indicators Report (KPI) for March to May 2026 to the Committee. Members discussed the sickness absence statistics and requested that the percentage of working days lost be included for future comparison. Members were also advised that KPI data could be reviewed retrospectively for up to three years.

It was:

Resolved to:

12.1. Note the HR workforce KPI data for the period March to May 2026.

13. HMRC Consideration of New Petrol Reimbursement Rate:

The Committee received the report, presented by Tracy Adams, Head of HR. Members considered the proposal to increase the business mileage reimbursement rate in line with the HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payment rate.

Proposed by: Cllr B Dalton

A vote was taken and it was:

Resolved to:

13.1. Approve payment of 55p per mile for the first 10,000 business miles for employees using their own car or van on authorised Council business, backdated to 6 April 2026.

13.2. Approve backdated payments for eligible mileage claims already paid at 45p per mile from 6 April 2026.

13.3. Delegate authority to the Head of HR, in consultation with the Responsible Finance Officer and the Head of Environmental Services as Policy Owner, to update the relevant policy documents to reflect any future changes to HMRC-approved mileage reimbursement rates.

Asa Thorpe, Chief Executive Officer, left the meeting at 19:30 and took no part in the consideration or determination of Items 14 and 15.

14. Policy Review - HR:

The Committee received the report, presented by Tracy Adams, Head of HR. Members considered the proposed updates to the Council's HR policies and procedures to reflect legislative changes, governance updates and practical amendments.

Cllr J Nettle proposed, seconded by Cllr Podger, that paragraph 14.4 of the Trans Inclusion Policy be amended to read:

"We recognise that access to suitable toilet facilities is important for all employees, whether trans or not."

The motion was put to the vote and was not carried.

A vote was taken and it was:

Resolved to:

14.1. Approve the updated HR policies and procedures attached as appendices to this report.

14.2. Agree to amend the probation period for new staff from 6 months to 4 months.

14.3. Note that the proposed changes were shared with Trade Unions at the six-monthly meeting held on 22 July 2026 and the verbal update provided to the Committee on any comments received.

14.4. Note that the updated policies will be communicated to staff and implemented across the Council.

15. CEO Appraisal 2026/27 Process and Revised Job Description:

Tracy Adams, Head of HR, presented the proposed Chief Executive Officer Appraisal Process for Year 1.

Proposed by: Cllr J Wells
Seconded by: Cllr S Charleston

A vote was taken and it was:

Resolved to:

15.1. Approve the proposed CEO appraisal process for Year 1.

16. 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 20:05 hours.

Please note: These are unsigned Minutes. Signed copies can be requested for viewing by emailing corporate@salisburycitycouncil.gov.uk.