

COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject:	<i>CEO Appraisal</i>
Committee:	<i>Governance, Policy & Personnel Committee</i>
Item Number:	<i>15</i>
Date:	<i>27 July 2026</i>
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Report status:	<i>Decision</i>
Confidential / Exempt:	<i>No</i>

1. Report Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to approve the proposed CEO appraisal process.

1.2 This report sets out the background, proposed process, and governance considerations to support a clear and consistent approach to how the Chief Executive is managed and supported.

1.3 An illustrative CEO appraisal process is being shared with this Committee following a series of discussions with 3 Councillors. The process is designed to provide clarity on roles, accountability, and expectations, while supporting a development-focused approach.

1.4 This report is being brought forward to ensure there is a clearly defined and agreed process in place for the 2026/27 appraisal year. Without an agreed process there is a risk of inconsistency in how the appraisal is conducted and how responsibilities are understood.

1.5 The recommended course of action is that the Committee agrees the proposed Year 1 CEO appraisal process.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

2.1 Approves the proposed CEO appraisal process for Year 1.

3. Background

3.1 In line with the Scheme of Delegation the Council is required to undertake an annual appraisal of the Chief Executive. Current arrangements provide limited detail on how this should be delivered in practice.

3.2 Between April and June 2026, a series of meetings were held with the Chair of Governance, Leader of the Council, previous Mayor and current Mayor to develop a clearer and more structured approach.

3.3 These discussions identified the need for a more clearly defined CEO appraisal process, including agreed responsibilities, structured evidence gathering and clear separation from formal capability and disciplinary procedures.

4. Proposal

4.1 The proposed CEO appraisal process is a structured annual cycle supported by an Appraisal Panel comprising:

- Leader of the Council (lead role)
- Mayor
- Chair of Governance Committee

4.2 Alongside the panel Head of HR has a role in supporting Councillors and CEO with the process.

4.3 The process has been designed to ensure:

- Clear accountability and ownership
- A fair, transparent and evidence-based approach
- A practical and proportionate process for Councillors

4.4 The process includes the following key stages:

- Stage 1: Committee approval of process
- Stage 1a: Agreement of CEO-specific objectives
- Stage 2: CEO self-assessment
- Stage 3: Stakeholder feedback and evidence gathering
- Stage 4: Progress review meeting
- Stage 5: Annual appraisal meeting

4.6. This proposed process is intended as a Year 1 framework. It has been developed through discussions with the Appraisal Panel and is presented to Committee to establish clear accountability, governance arrangements and roles. The process may be refined in future years as experience is gained and the Council's wider performance management framework is implemented.

5. Options Considered - Optional

5.1 Option 1 – Preferred Option

Approve the proposed CEO appraisal process.

5.2 Option 2 – Alternative Option(s)

Agree and confirm amendments to the existing process.

5.3 Option 3 – Do Nothing, Continue without a formally agreed process. This would:

- Leave accountability and responsibilities open to interpretation
- Reduce consistency in how the appraisal is undertaken
- Increase reliance on informal arrangements

5.4 The preferred option is recommended as it provides a clear and deliverable framework while allowing for refinement.

6. Legal and Governance Considerations - Optional

6.1 The Council is required to undertake an annual appraisal of the Chief Executive.

6.2 This report is being presented alongside updates to the Council's Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation. The intention is that these documents and the proposed process are aligned.

6.3 The process clearly distinguishes between:

- Development-focused appraisal
- Capability or disciplinary processes

6.4 A defined process supports clear governance, accountability and consistency.

7. Consultation and Engagement

7.1 This process has been developed through four meetings with:

- Chair of Governance Committee
- Leader of the Council
- Previous Mayor
- Current Mayor

7.2 Key outcomes included:

- Agreement that the appraisal should be led by a Panel comprising the Leader, Mayor and Chair of Governance.
- Agreement that the process should be development-focused and separate from capability and disciplinary processes.
- Agreement that stakeholder feedback and confidentiality arrangements should form part of the process.

8. Strategic and Policy Alignment

8.1 Salisbury City Council is currently developing an organisation-wide performance management framework, which is in pilot stage.

8.2 To avoid delay, this report proposes a Year 1 CEO appraisal process.

8.3 The CEO process will be reviewed and aligned with the organisational framework once it is finalised.

9. Implementation and Next Steps

9.1 Subject to the Committee's decision, the next steps will be as follows:

July: Committee approval

August: Agreement of objectives (timing may require flexibility due to CEO leave)

August: CEO self-assessment
 September–October: Evidence gathering
 October–November: Progress review
 February–March: Annual appraisal meeting

9.2 Further detail on the process stages and indicative timeline is set out in Appendix A.

9.3 Timings may require adjustment depending on availability and should be agreed between the panel and CEO.

9.4 Implementation responsibility will sit with the Panel, supported by HR.

10. Implications

Implication Area	Impact	Comments / Mitigation
Financial	None	
Legal	Low	Process provides clarity and supports compliance
Risk	Low - Medium	Reduced through clear process and roles
Personnel	Medium	Process provides structured support and clarity and requires Councilor engagement.
Environmental Impact	None	
Equalities Impact Statement	Low	Process details clear approach
Community / Public Impact	Medium	Effective CEO through a clear process to support performance
Procurement / Contractual	None	
Property / Asset	None	
Data Protection	Low	Specific data restricted to panel and HR – themed report provided to Committee.

11. Appendices / Background Papers

- 12.1 Appendix A – CEO Appraisal process Year 1
- 12.2 Appendix B – CEO Self Assessment template
- 12.3 Appendix C – CEO Job Description

Appendix A - Salisbury City Council - CEO appraisal process

PANEL

Leader of Council Leads the process	Mayor Panel Member	Chair of Governance Panel Member	HR supports
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Stage 1

Process agreed and signed off

Target: July — Committee sign-off

Panel reviews process, confidentiality boundaries and objectives framework

Process formally signed off at Governance, Policy & Personnel Committee

Accountable: Leader of Council | Supported by: HR

Stage 1a (year 1) Confirm specific objectives

Target: August — Panel

Committee agreed 6 organisational priorities in March 2026.

Panel & CEO agree CEO specific focus under each heading

Accountable: Leader of Council | Supported by: HR | Output: SMART style objectives

Stage 2

Preparation - CEO self-assessment

Target: August

CEO reflects on achievements and development needs from JD and objectives

Completes self-assessment document ahead of evidence-gathering stage

Stakeholders agreed and CEO & Panel agree stakeholder questions

Accountable: CEO | Shared with: Panel of 3 and HR only

Stage 3

Stakeholder evidence gathering

Target: September / October

HR supports panel to collect feedback from agreed stakeholders using agreed questions

Themed summary prepared by HR - raw feedback seen by panel and HR only

Collected by: HR | Raw feedback: panel + HR only

Stage 4

Progress review meeting

Target: October / November

Panel meets CEO to review achievements against job description & objectives

Discuss what is on track, identify emerging issues, agree support needed

Written note agreed - confidential to panel and HR

Accountable: Leader of Council | Attended by: Full panel

Stage 5

Annual appraisal meeting

Target: End of February / start of March

Panel feeds back on key achievements, specific strengths and themes from CEO self-assessment and stakeholder feedback (in a private meeting).

2 professional development objectives for the coming year discussed and agreed with panel

Accountable: Leader of Council | Attended by: Full panel | Supported by: HR

Themed report - Governance, Policy & Personnel Committee

22 March 2027 | High-level themes only - no personal details shared | Prepared by HR in consultation with Leader of Council

Appendix B - CEO self-assessment

Purpose: This self-assessment is intended to support a focused, evidence-based and development-focused conversation between the CEO and the Appraisal Panel. It is not intended to be a performance, conduct, capability or disciplinary process.

Confidentiality: As detailed in Appraisal journey.

Section 1 – Overall reflection

1. What are the main things you feel have gone well this year?
2. What has been most challenging, and what would help going forward?

Section 2 – Review against CEO-specific objectives

For each agreed objective, please provide a short reflection using the prompts below.

Objective	Progress and evidence	Challenges, risks or dependencies	Support or decisions needed
Objective 1			
Objective 2			
Objective 3			
Objective 4			
Objective 5			

Section 3 – Leadership, relationships and values

1. How have you supported Councillors, SMT, staff and/or partners during the year?
2. How have you demonstrated the Council's values in your leadership and decision-making?

Section 4 – Feedback and learning

1. What feedback or themes have you heard during the year?
2. What have you taken from that feedback, and is there anything you would like to explore further with the Panel?

Section 5 – Looking ahead

1. What support, clarity or decisions would help you be successful?
2. What one or two development areas would you like to focus on?

Panel discussion and agreed outcomes (this should be agreed at the end of the discussion by both panel and CEO):

Area	Agreed notes
Key strengths recognised by the Panel	
Key achievements recognised by the Panel	
Development themes agreed	
Stakeholder feedback to be gathered	Who should be asked for feedback? For example: Councillors, Senior Management Team, wider staff and/or external partners (if so who):
Questions to be used	Panel and CEO to agree the questions before feedback is requested, in line with the agreed appraisal roadmap

	(some suggestions have been added to the end of this document):
Panel support or decisions agreed	
Date of progress review meeting (October or November)	

Potential stakeholder feedback questions

The questions below are offered as suggestions (starter for 10) for the stakeholder feedback stage. Questions being asked should be agreed by the Panel and CEO before feedback is requested.

Suggested rating scale: 1 = rarely or not yet evident; 4–6 = sometimes evident; 7–9 = often evident; 10 = consistently and clearly evident; N/A = not enough direct experience to comment.

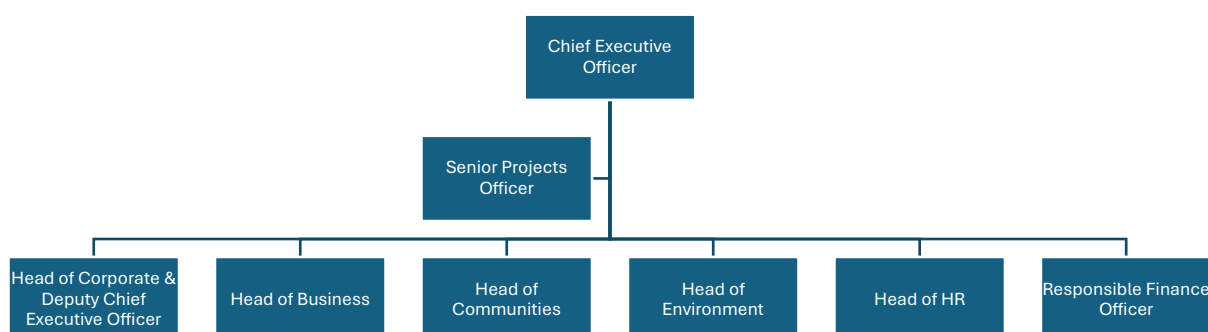
On a scale of 1-10:

1. **How clear is the CEO in setting direction and explaining the Council's priorities?**
2. **How well does the CEO help people understand options, risks and implications before decisions are made?**
3. **How confident are you that the CEO follows through on agreed priorities and commitments?**
4. **How well does the CEO build trust and constructive working relationships through their leadership approach?**

Optional comment box: Please provide one example of something the CEO does particularly well.

Section 1: Role Summary

Job Title	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Team	Senior Management Team
Reports to	Full Council
Direct reports	Head of Corporate & Interim Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Head of Business, Head of Communities, Head of Environment, Head of HR, Responsible Finance Officer and Senior Projects Officer
Grade	13
Location	Multiple Council-owned sites, mainly based at the Guildhall



Section 2: Role purpose

The Chief Executive Officer provides strategic leadership to the organisation, ensuring the effective delivery of the priorities set by Full Council. The role translates the vision and direction of elected Members into coherent corporate strategy, clear operational plans, and high-quality, outcome-focused service delivery for residents and communities.

The Chief Executive acts as the principal policy adviser to Members, supporting robust, evidence-based decision making, and ensuring the Council operates in a lawful, safe, efficient, and financially sustainable manner.

The CEO is responsible for setting organisational direction, driving performance, and ensuring continuous improvement across all services. The role fosters a high-performing, inclusive, and collaborative culture, enabling the organisation to respond effectively to local needs, deliver value for money, and build strong partnerships across the public, private, and voluntary sectors.

Section 3: Key responsibilities

1. Strategic & Organisational Leadership

- Provide overall strategic and organisational leadership, ensuring delivery of the priorities set by Full Council and translating political direction into clear corporate strategy, operational plans, and measurable service outcomes.
- Set and drive the organisational direction to deliver high-quality, resilient, and value-for-money services, ensuring alignment of resources to priorities.

2. Governance, Assurance & Risk

- Ensure the Council operates lawfully, safely, and in accordance with all statutory, corporate, and regulatory requirements, providing assurance to Members and the community.
- Maintain and strengthen effective governance, performance management, and risk frameworks, ensuring emerging issues are identified, managed, and escalated appropriately.

3. Finance & Resource Leadership

- Provide strategic oversight of the Council's financial position, including revenue, capital, and major programmes, ensuring long-term financial sustainability.
- Lead corporate financial planning, prioritisation, and resource allocation within approved frameworks and delegated authority.
- Ensure the Council's financial resilience and solvency.

4. Leadership of People & Culture

- Lead, develop, and inspire the Senior Management Team, building leadership capacity and accountability across the organisation.
- Foster a high-performing, inclusive culture characterised by professionalism, ethical behaviour, and continuous improvement.
- Ensure consistent and compliant application of all relevant legal, regulatory, and corporate requirements, including HR, health & safety, and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Embed and model the Council's values across all levels of the organisation.

5. Partnerships & External Influence

- Build, maintain, and influence strong relationships with residents, businesses, partners, and community stakeholders to deliver shared priorities and outcomes.
- Represent, advocate for, and negotiate on behalf of the Council at local, regional, and national levels, protecting and enhancing its reputation.

6. Innovation, Improvement & Change

- Lead and champion innovation, transformation, and continuous improvement to enhance service quality, efficiency, and financial resilience.
- Ensure the organisation is adaptable and responsive to changing local needs, policy direction, and financial constraints.

7. Member support & Political Awareness

- Provide high-quality, impartial, and timely professional advice to Members, supporting effective decision-making and good governance.
- Foster constructive and effective Member–officer relationships, underpinned by trust, clarity of roles, and political awareness.

Lastly, Undertake any other duties commensurate with the responsibilities and seniority of the role.

Section 4: Performance standards

1. Governance, Risk & Control

The Council demonstrates strong governance and internal control, with transparent decision-making, effective risk management, and a culture of accountability, compliance, and informed challenge.

2. Financial Stewardship

Financial planning is robust and sustainable, aligned to Member priorities. Public resources are managed responsibly with disciplined oversight and clear articulation of financial risks and trade-offs.

3. Organisational Leadership & Culture

The organisation demonstrates professionalism, accountability, and continuous improvement. The CEO models visible, inclusive, values-led leadership and fosters wellbeing and constructive performance dialogue.

4. Service Performance, Improvement & Change

Services adapt effectively to changing needs, informed by data and insight. Innovation is encouraged, delivering measurable improvements in outcomes and value for money.

5. Member Support & Decision Making

Advice to Members is high quality, timely, impartial, and evidence-based, enabling effective decision-making. Communication is clear, with sound judgement and strong political awareness.

6. Professional Conduct & Resilience

The CEO demonstrates professionalism, integrity, discretion, and resilience, maintaining impartiality and composure while managing complexity and sensitive issues.

Section 5: Skills and experience

Essential

- Strategic leadership with ability to translate political priorities into deliverable outcomes
- Strong political awareness and judgement, operating effectively in a democratic environment
- Deep understanding of local government governance, statutory duties, and risk
- Strong financial acumen, ensuring sustainability and sound resource management
- Ability to lead, inspire, and develop high-performing senior teams and organisational culture
- Proven ability to build and influence strategic partnerships and stakeholder relationships
- Skilled in driving performance, transformation, and continuous improvement
- Excellent communication and influencing skills with diverse audiences
- High levels of professionalism, integrity, resilience, and personal impact

Desirable

- Understanding of commercial approaches and income generation in the public sector
- Experience of place-based leadership beyond organisational boundaries
- Ability to leverage digital, technology, and data to improve services
- Experience leading through crisis or complex system-wide challenges
- Experience influencing at regional or national level
- Broad knowledge across the range of local government services

Section 6: Contacts

Internal

Senior Management Team, elected Members (including Committee Chairs and Group Leaders), staff and volunteers across all services and locations, and statutory officers such as the RFO and Monitoring Officer.

External

Residents and communities, businesses, contractors and suppliers, public and voluntary sector partners, membership and representative bodies, regulators and inspectorates, central government departments and agencies, other local authorities, and regional partnerships and networks, as well as other democratically elected officials.

Section 7: Working conditions

- Based mainly at Guildhall with regular presence across Council sites.
- Requires resilience, political awareness and ability to manage significant and complex competing demands.
- Includes evening/weekend and on-call commitments.
- This role is politically restricted under council policy.