COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject:	*Review of CEO Appraisal*
Committee:	*Governance, Policy & HR Committee*
Item Number:	*17*
Date:	*5 October 2026*
Author:	*Tracy Adams, Head of HR*
Report status:	*Decision*
Confidential / Exempt:	*No*

1. Report Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress with the Year 1 CEO appraisal process agreed on 27 July 2026.

1.2 The agreed next steps have not been completed by the Panel within the original timetable. This means that the August objective-setting stage, the CEO self-assessment stage and the planned stakeholder feedback stage have not progressed in line with the process approved by Committee.

1.3 HR has provided procedural support to the Panel, including sending the agreed process, supporting documents and follow-up reminders. The responsibility for leading the appraisal process sits with the Leader of the Council, working with the Mayor, Chair of Governance with HR providing procedural support.

1.4 The report is brought forward because the original timetable is no longer deliverable. As the Council is now entering October, a proportionate revised process is needed so that the CEO appraisal can still be completed in a meaningful and timely way for the current reporting year.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

2.1 Requests that the appraisal panel revises Year 1 CEO appraisal process to fit the time available.

2.3 Notes the updated CEO self assessment form which aims to provide further clarity.

2.4 Notes that the Leader of the Council remains accountable for leading the process, supported by the Mayor, Chair of Governance with procedural support provided by HR.

2.5 Requests the panel arranges a date to meet with CEO within 7 working days of the Committee meeting.

3. Background

3.1 On 27 July 2026, the Governance, Policy & Personnel Committee approved the Year 1 CEO appraisal process. The agreed process included a Panel comprising the Leader of the Council, Mayor and Chair of Governance Committee, with HR providing procedural support.

3.2 The agreed timetable anticipated that CEO-specific objectives would be agreed in August, along with the CEO self-assessment and agreed stakeholder feedback.

3.3 Stakeholder feedback would be gathered during September/October, a progress review would take place in October/November, and the annual appraisal meeting would take place at the end of February or start of March.

3.4 Following the Committee decision, HR contacted the Panel and CEO on 30 July 2026 with supporting documents and suggested next steps. HR sent a further reminder on 25 August 2026. On 4 September 2026, HR advised the Chair of Governance that no confirmation had been received. The Chair of Governance replied on 5 September stating that he would speak to the Leader of the Council. A further chase was made by the Chair of Governance on 16 September.

3.5 No meeting has yet taken place to agree CEO-specific objectives, confirm the approach to the CEO self-assessment, or agree stakeholder feedback arrangements. The original process therefore requires revision if the appraisal is to remain practical, proportionate and meaningful for the current year.

3.6 The CEO is not responsible for any delay in this process.

4. Proposal

4.1 It is proposed that the Year 1 process is revised for the remainder of 2026/27. The revised process should focus on what can realistically and usefully be achieved in the time remaining, rather than attempting to complete each stage of the original timetable retrospectively.

4.2 The main focus should now be to agree clear CEO-specific objectives for the remainder of the reporting year, based on the themes previously agreed by Committee in March 2026. The objectives should be specific to the CEO and realistic within the shorter period before the annual appraisal meeting in February/March 2027.

4.4 The updated CEO self-assessment form sets out what should be completed before Meeting 1, what should be agreed at Meeting 1, and what should be completed at the end-of-year appraisal meeting. This should help the Panel and CEO understand their respective roles and reduce the risk of further delay or confusion.

5. Options Considered

5.1 Option 1 – Preferred Option

The preferred option is to approve the Appraisal panel can revise the process agreed in July Committee. This allows the appraisal to proceed in a structured but realistic way, while recognising that the original timetable is no longer achievable.

5.2 Option 2 – Alternative Option

An alternative would be to retain the full process within a shorter timeframe. This is not recommended, as seeking stakeholder feedback before objectives, support and expectations have been agreed would not allow a fair opportunity to demonstrate progress against them.

6. Financial Position

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the revised process.

7. Legal and Governance Considerations

7.1 The Council is required to undertake an annual appraisal of the Chief Executive in line with Standing Orders. A clearly agreed process supports good governance, accountability and consistency.

7.2 The revised process remains separate from any capability, conduct or disciplinary process. It is intended to support a development-focused appraisal discussion and clear agreement of objectives.

7.3 The Governance, Policy & Personnel Committee previously approved the Year 1 process and is therefore asked to approve the revised timetable and process for this appraisal year.

8. Consultation and Engagement

8.1 The original process was developed through discussions with Councillors and approved by Committee on 27 July 2026. Since approval, HR has contacted the Panel and CEO with supporting documents and suggested next steps and has sent follow-up communications to support implementation.

9. Strategic and Policy Alignment

9.1 The revised process supports the Council's governance arrangements by maintaining a clear appraisal process for the Chief Executive and confirming the roles of the Panel, CEO and HR.

10. Implications

Implication Area	Impact	Comments / Mitigation
Financial	None	There are no direct financial implications arising from the revised process.
Legal	Low	The Council is required to undertake an annual appraisal of the Chief Executive. The revised process supports a clearer and more deliverable approach for 2026/27.
Risk	Medium	The main risk is further delay if the revised timetable is not followed. This is mitigated by clarifying accountability, simplifying the process and using an updated self-assessment form.
Personnel	Medium	The process relates to the appraisal of the Chief Executive and requires engagement from the Panel and CEO. HR will provide procedural support only.
Environmental Impact	None	No environmental impacts have been identified.
Equalities Impact Statement	Low	No negative equalities impacts have been identified. A clear and consistent process supports fair treatment and transparency.

Community / Public Impact	Low	The appraisal process supports effective leadership and accountability, which contributes indirectly to the delivery of Council priorities and services.
Procurement / Contractual	None	There are no procurement or contractual implications.
Property / Asset	None	There are no property or asset implications.
Data Protection	Low	The self-assessment and appraisal notes will contain personal data and should be restricted to the CEO, Panel and HR. Stakeholder feedback is not part of the 2026/27 process, reducing data protection risk for this year.

12. Appendices / Background Papers

12.1 Appendix A – Revised CEO Self assessment form

12.2 Appendix B – Appraisal process agreed in Committee in July 2026

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.

Consideration for 2026/2027: Consider whether the stakeholder feedback is viable within the time available.

Process for 2026/2027: The CEO should complete Section 1 before Meeting 1, which is likely to take place in October 2026.

The Panel and CEO should then agree the CEO-specific objectives for 2026/2027 at Meeting 1 and record them in Section 2, together with any known challenges, risks, dependencies, support needed or decisions required.

The progress and evidence column should be completed at the end-of-year meeting, expected to take place in February or March 2027. Sections 3 to 5 should also be completed at the end-of-year meeting.

Section 1 – CEO 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

At Meeting 1, the Panel and CEO should agree the specific objectives for 2026/2027 (based on the themes agreed in Committee in March 2026 namely:

- Provide visible and accountable leadership of the Cost Improvement Plan
- Ensure the 2026/27 Bids and Savings commitments are delivered
- Strengthen organisational governance through a clear policy and document review programme
- Lead the development of a new Corporate Strategic Plan
- Deliver a council-wide people and performance plan

Record what has been agreed in the table below. Any known challenges, risks, dependencies, support needed or decisions required should also be noted at this stage. The progress and evidence column should be completed at the end-of-year meeting.

Objective	What was agreed at Meeting 1	Challenges, risks or dependencies	Support or decisions needed	Progress and evidence (to be completed at end-of-year meeting)
Objective 1				
Objective 2				
Objective 3				
Objective 4				
Objective 5				

Date of end of year meeting – This should be agreed to ensure that all are clear on when the review will take place:

The following sections are to be completed in end of year meeting (Feb/March 2027)

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 for 2027/2028

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	
Panel support or decisions agreed	
Date of end-of-year meeting, expected February or March 2027	

Stakeholder feedback

The Panel and CEO should agree who will be asked for feedback, the questions to be used. Feedback will be returned to Head of HR and provided to the panel. Feedback would form part of the Themes report for Committee – individual feedback will not be shared with Committee or Councillors outside the appraisal panel.

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.

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

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