

COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject:	<i>Job Evaluation Project Review: Outcomes, Learning and Next Steps</i>
Committee:	<i>Governance, Policy & HR Committee</i>
Item Number:	<i>18</i>
Date:	<i>5 October 2026</i>
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Report status:	<i>For noting</i>
Confidential / Exempt:	<i>No</i>

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Committee with a reflective review of the Job Evaluation project. The report is for noting and is intended to set out what the project delivered, what was difficult, what has been learned and what action is being taken as a result.
- 1.2 The Job Evaluation project was a significant organisation-wide project. It moved the Council from one job evaluation scheme to another, involved rewriting every job description across the organisation, and included briefing every member of staff on how to complete their job evaluation questionnaire.
- 1.3 The aim was not simply to record what people were already doing. It was to describe the roles the Council needs to deliver services effectively now and in the future. The project has now gone live and the appeal process is complete.
- 1.4 The project delivered important technical outcomes and also highlighted learning about how complex change is led, explained and embedded across the Council.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is not to revisit individual outcomes or reopen the process. It is to capture the organisational learning while it is still current, and to explain the next steps being taken to strengthen job descriptions, management practice and future change activity.
- 1.6 The overall conclusion is that the project was necessary and has delivered a fairer and more transparent structure. The remaining work is to embed the new job descriptions and apply the learning to future change projects.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the outcomes and learning from the Job Evaluation project.
- 2.2 Notes the actions being taken to review how the new job descriptions are being used and to support clearer expectations, values and behaviours across the organisation.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Job Evaluation project was undertaken because many job descriptions had become outdated and did not clearly describe the roles the Council needed. Some descriptions reflected historic tasks or current ways of working rather than the responsibilities, standards and expectations required to deliver services effectively in the future. The previous pay structure also had limited progression in some grades and was not always supporting recruitment, retention or clarity about role expectations.
- 3.2 The project moved the Council from the previous job evaluation arrangements to the Greater London Provincial Council job evaluation scheme, with roles evaluated by South West Councils. The intention was to provide a consistent, externally supported and role-based way of assessing jobs across the Council.
- 3.3 The project involved organisation-wide staff briefings on how to complete the job evaluation questionnaire, manager discussions, completion of questionnaires, consistency checks, external scoring, pay modelling, staff consultation, union engagement and an appeal process.
- 3.4 This report should be read as a review of the project after implementation. It follows earlier reports to Committee, including the February 2026 report which set out the implementation position, consultation outcomes, contractual considerations, affordability position and recommended approach.

4. What the project delivered

- 4.1 The project has now been implemented. All roles are paid according to their job evaluation grading and there are no staff receiving market forces supplements.
- 4.2 Headline outcomes are:
 - the new scheme has gone live
 - all roles are now paid through the evaluated grading structure
 - no staff are receiving market forces supplements
 - one pay protection case has now been resolved through the annual pay award
 - 11 appeals were received, with 8 unchanged and 3 increased following additional information
- 4.3 The affordability of the scheme was supported by a managed vacancy savings approach. This remains an important area of ongoing monitoring to ensure the pay structure remains affordable without placing unsustainable pressure on service delivery or existing staff.
- 4.4 A significant positive outcome is the revised job description approach. Every job description was rewritten to describe the purpose of the role, its main responsibilities and what doing the job well looks like. It gives managers and staff a clearer basis for recruitment, induction, training, performance conversations and future development.

5. What worked well

- 5.1 The project addressed long-standing issues that had been raised through staff feedback, recruitment experience and outdated documentation. It created a clearer basis for paying

roles according to evaluated responsibility rather than legacy arrangements or market forces supplements.

- 5.2 The use of an external evaluator gave the Council a more independent and consistent process.
- 5.3 The staff consultation process led to changes to proposals. This included retaining a night and weekend working enhancement and retaining enhanced overtime for lower grades. This shows that feedback was considered and that the final approach was adjusted where this was affordable and operationally appropriate.
- 5.4 The revised job description template is a longer-term organisational benefit. It gives the Council a stronger foundation for clearer expectations, better recruitment, more meaningful performance and development conversations, and a more consistent understanding of what each role is expected to contribute to service delivery.

6. What proved difficult

- 6.1 Pay-related change is difficult even when the process is fair. Some staff compared their outcome with other roles and felt disappointed or unfairly treated, even where their own pay increased. This is difficult to remove entirely because staff will often judge fairness through what they know, or think they know, about other people's jobs.
- 6.2 The amount and complexity of information was also challenging. The project required detailed information because it affected pay, terms and conditions, job descriptions and appeals. However, the learning is that providing information does not automatically mean people feel reassured, involved or brought along with the change.

7. What this does and does not mean

- 7.1 The learning from the project does not mean that the project should not have been undertaken. The alternative was to continue with outdated job descriptions, limited pay progression in some grades, reliance on market forces supplements and less clarity about the roles the Council needs for future service delivery.
- 7.2 Staff dissatisfaction does not, in itself, mean that the evaluation process was unsound. It does, however, show that a fair process still needs clear leadership, confident managers and ongoing communication if staff are to understand and accept the outcome.
- 7.3 Some of the difficulties were anticipated, particularly that pay-related change would be sensitive and that not all staff would agree with the outcome. What was more significant than expected was the extent to which staff experience depended on local conversations, manager confidence and the consistency of messages across teams.
- 7.4 The learning is not about attributing blame to any individual or group. It is about recognising that organisation-wide change requires shared ownership, clear expectations and consistent follow-through at every level.

8. Key Learning

- 8.1 Leadership alignment needs to be tested before messages are cascaded. For future projects, this means agreeing the core message, likely staff impact and manager role before key communications are issued.
- 8.2 Managers need clearer briefings and expectations during complex change. This includes what they need to explain, what questions they should escalate, and how they should support

staff to understand what the change means in practice.

- 8.3 Manager confidence and consistency need to be understood more clearly. Where barriers arise, it will be important to distinguish between skill, capacity, confidence, willingness to change and unclear expectations, because each requires a different response.
- 8.4 The new job descriptions need to be actively used, not simply stored. Their value will depend on managers using them to support recruitment, induction, development, performance conversations and clarity about what each role is expected to contribute.
- 8.5 Where dissatisfaction continues after the formal process has concluded, it should be managed through normal management routes. This may include further explanation, support, clarification of expectations and, where necessary, performance or conduct conversations.

9. Actions and Next Steps

- 9.1 The Head of HR will review how the new job descriptions are being used in practice. This will include whether they are being used for recruitment, induction, one-to-one discussions, training plans and performance conversations.
- 9.2 Work on organisational values and behaviours is currently in progress. This will help clarify expectations and give managers and staff a shared language for discussing how work is carried out, not only what work is completed.
- 9.3 For future significant change projects, consideration should be given to agreed leadership checkpoints, clearer manager briefing information, short pulse checks, and earlier testing of whether key messages are being understood as intended.
- 9.4 The managed vacancy savings assumptions will continue to be reviewed through normal budget and workforce monitoring. Additional funding was agreed for the project, and the affordability model recognised that it would not be usual for 100% of roles to be filled 100% of the time.
- 9.5 The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that the pay structure remains affordable, while also checking that vacancy levels do not create unacceptable pressure on workloads, service resilience or delivery of agreed priorities.

10. Current Position

- 10.1 The Job Evaluation scheme has gone live, the appeal process is complete and there are no ongoing formal consultation conversations.
- 10.2 There is no evidence at this stage that staff have left specifically because of the Job Evaluation outcome. The remaining risk is less about formal process and more about how residual dissatisfaction is managed and how managers support staff to understand and work towards the expectations of their roles.
- 10.3 The project should now be seen as moving from implementation into embedding. The focus is therefore on managers using the new job descriptions well, identifying any development needs and supporting staff to understand what good performance looks like in their role.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1 The summary of this report sets out the overall conclusion, the project was necessary, has been implemented, and now needs to be embedded well.

11.2 The value of the project will now be judged by how well the Council uses the new job descriptions, supports managers to have clear conversations, and applies the learning to future change.

12. Implications

Implication Area	Impact	Comments / Mitigation
Financial	Low	The pay and grading structure has been implemented. Additional funding was agreed for the project, and the scheme was made affordable in part through managed vacancy savings. This reflects the wider expectation that staffing will not normally be at 100% of roles filled 100% of the time. Managed vacancy assumptions will remain under regular review through budget and workforce monitoring. There are no further financial decisions requested in this report.
Legal	Low	The report is for noting.
Risk	Medium	The main risk is residual staff dissatisfaction and inconsistent embedding of the new job descriptions. This will be mitigated through review of how job descriptions are being used, manager support and clearer links to values, behaviours and performance expectations.
Personnel	Medium	The project has staffing implications because it affects role clarity, pay, expectations, development and performance conversations. The formal implementation and appeals process is complete.
Environmental Impact	None	No environmental impact has been identified.
Equalities Impact Statement	Low	An Equality Impact Assessment and equal pay analysis were completed as part of the project. No further equality decision is requested in this report.
Community / Public Impact	Low	The project supports the Council's ability to recruit, retain and manage staff effectively, which supports service delivery to the public.
Procurement / Contractual	None	No procurement or contractual decision is requested in this report.
Property / Asset	None	No property or asset impact has been identified.
Data Protection	Low	The report should avoid naming individuals or including unnecessary personal data. The exempt status should be confirmed before publication.

13. Appendices / Background Papers

13.1 Appendix A – Job Description Template and Manager Guidance

Writing a Great Job Description

SECTION 1



Role Summary

The basics at a glance

- Agreed job title
- Team & line manager
- Grade & location
- Direct reports
- Team structure chart

SECTION 2



Role Purpose

Why does this job exist?

- 3–5 lines only
- Why the role exists
- Who it supports
- The value it delivers
- Plain English please

SECTION 3



Key Responsibilities

What the role owns

- 6–12 bullet points
- Group into themes
- What they own, not how
- Decision-making scope
- No daily micro-tasks

SECTION 4



Performance Standards

What good looks like

- Outcomes, not tasks
- Behaviours & approach
- Measurable indicators
- Link to team KPIs
- Quality, not repetition

SECTION 5



Skills & Experience

Essential vs desirable

- Keep essentials SHORT
- Capability, not years
- Think transferable skills
- Include behaviours
- Desirable = tiebreaker

SECTION 6



Contacts

Who they'll work with

- Key internal contacts
- External stakeholders
- Note why each matters
- Gives role context

SECTION 7



Working Conditions

The honest day-to-day

- Physical demands
- Environment & travel
- Shift / on-call needs
- Stress & pressure
- PPE / driving needs



Common Mistake #1 · Performance Standards (Section 4)

Don't repeat your responsibilities list. Describe the quality of delivery, not the task itself.

✗ NOT THIS

Attends SMT meetings and takes notes on actions.

✓ BETTER

Provides clear and accurate action updates from SMT meetings, ensuring key points are captured and shared promptly to support effective follow-through.



Common Mistake #2 · Essential Criteria (Section 5)

Avoid wish lists — long essential lists shrink your applicant pool and set unrealistic expectations.

✗ NOT THIS

Minimum 5 years payroll experience in local government.

✓ BETTER

Able to process payroll accurately and resolve pay queries confidently.

The 'Off Sick' Test

If this person was off for a month, what work would fall over?
Those are your core responsibilities for Section 3.

The 3-Part Test (Section 4)

(1) What must they achieve? (2) How should they go about it?
(3) How will I know it's going well?

Need more detail?

Each section above maps to the full guidance document. Refer to the relevant section number for worked examples, dos & don'ts, and template language.

Job Description template – Full Guidance document

This job description template is designed to describe the purpose, outcomes and accountabilities of the role not to list every small task. It should be clear enough that someone unfamiliar with the job could understand why it exists and what success looks like.

Write in plain English. Avoid internal jargon and acronyms where possible.

The information in the job description should be summarised from the information on the Job Evaluation Questionnaire.

Section 1: Role Summary (this section should take no more than 5 minutes – keep it factual)

Job Title	Use the job title that has been agreed rather than a locally used one. If you need to change the job title please liaise with HR to discuss the process of doing this.
Team	The team this role sits within
Reports to	The job title of the line manager – not the person's name.
Direct reports	Number and title of jobs this role manages
Grade	SCC grade 1-13
Location	Where the role is mainly based and whether it is site-based, office or hybrid Examples include: Arrive and depart from Council depot and work in the Parish of Salisbury Office based with hybrid working Multi-site operational role

Team structure Insert Team chart here

This helps new starters understand where the role sits and who they will work with day to day.

Section 2: Role purpose

What the high level purpose of the role

Explain how this role contributes to service vision, objectives and corporate priorities.

A short summary of 3-5 lines explaining:

- Why the role exists
- Who or what it supports
- The main value it delivers

Avoid:

- A task list
- Generic phrases like 'to undertake duties as required'

Senior or specialist roles may legitimately include specialist terminology, where necessary, but plain English should still be used wherever possible.

Example suggestions:

Operational Role Example:

This role keeps streets and public areas clean and safe by carrying out routine cleansing duties and responding to reported issues, helping maintain a high standard of the local environment.

Strategic role example:

This role leads the council's [XX] service, setting the direction for the team and making sure resources are used well to deliver outcomes for residents and meet the council's priorities.

Section 3: Key responsibilities

This section covers what the role owns, not how the person does it.

1. Every role should include at the end “Undertake other duties consistent with the responsibilities and seniority of the role, as required.”
- This section describes the main areas of responsibility for the role. Think of it as the core of the job the things this person is there to do and is accountable for delivering.

When writing this section:

- Group responsibilities into themes rather than listing every individual task makes work clearer for recruitment, staff development and performance conversations.
- Write about what the role owns, not how it does things step by step
- Aim for 6–12 bullet points - enough to cover the job without overwhelming
- Include any important decision-making boundaries where relevant (the job evaluation questionnaire can help with this)
- Avoid daily microtasks and repetition
- For roles with decision-making authority, include brief statements of discretion and escalation expectations.
- **Ask yourself:** If this person was off sick for a month, what areas of work would fall over? Those are your core responsibilities.

Section 4: Performance standards

What good looks like

- *What great outcomes look like*
- *How the role should be carried out*
- *How a manager can recognise strong or weak performance*

Example:

Responsibility – manage customer enquiries

Performance standard – enquiries are handled promptly and respectfully in line with policy with accurate information recorded (where required).

Vision statements and KPIs

Where a service has a published team vision and/or KPIs use this information in the performance standards. It is recommended to point to the vision or KPIs rather than writing them again. This allows for a change without needing to change job descriptions as a result of each change.

This section describes **how well the core responsibilities are being delivered**, not *what* the responsibilities are. The previous section (“Key Responsibilities”) sets out the areas of work the role owns. This section sets out **the standard those areas must be delivered to**.

Think of it this way:

- **Section 3 = what the job is there to do**
- **Section 4 = what good looks like when it’s done well**

Use this section to describe the *expected quality of advice, decisions, service or outputs* the role should deliver, not a second task list. Behavioural expectations relating to areas like communication, emotional intelligence, professionalism and resilience should be included in Section 4 – not in Section 3.

How to write strong performance standards

1. Focus on outcomes, not actions

Describe the results the role must achieve when it delivers its responsibilities well.

Ask yourself:

- *If this responsibility were delivered to a high standard, what would the outcome look like?*
- *What positive difference should the work make?*

Avoid repeating tasks already listed in Section 3.

2. Describe how the job should be done (behaviours and approach)

Every role has expectations about conduct, judgement, communication and professionalism.

Include **1–3 behavioural standards** that reflect how the post-holder should operate day-to-day particularly when their work influences others or supports decision-making.

3. Identify indicators or evidence of success

This is where you list the ways managers will know the role is being done well. These might include:

- Timeliness
- Quality checks
- Customer/resident feedback
- Compliance with policy
- Audit results
- Achievement of team or service KPIs

These indicators **don't need to be numbers**, but they must provide a fair, observable basis for reviewing performance.

The three-part test (apply to every standard you include)

For each expectation, check you can answer:

1. **What must this person achieve?**
2. **How should they go about it?**
3. **How will I know they're doing it well?**

If any of the three are unclear, the standard isn't ready yet.

Keep the scope realistic

Only include standards this role can directly influence.

If the outcome depends on others' decisions, frame the expectation around **the quality of advice, support or contribution**, not the final result.

Examples of strong performance standards

These examples illustrate the type of content this section should contain. They are not tasks they are statements about **quality and effectiveness**.

Results / Outcomes

- Work is completed to the [required professional or technical standard] for the service.
- Issues are identified early, resolved promptly, or escalated appropriately.
- Information provided is accurate, timely and supports good decision-making.
- Service users receive responses that are clear, courteous and compliant with policy.

How the Job Should Be Done

- Communicates clearly and with appropriate judgement.
- Treats colleagues, residents and partners with respect and professionalism.
- Uses discretion and maintains confidentiality where required.
- Supports colleagues and works collaboratively to resolve problems.
- Demonstrates initiative, sound decision-making and accountability.

Measures and Indicators

- Work completed within agreed timescales.
- Records and documentation maintained accurately.
- Compliance with statutory, regulatory or policy requirements.
- Positive feedback from customers, colleagues or partners.
- Relevant KPIs for the team/service are supported or met.

Final sense check before signing off

Ask yourself:

- *If this person struggled, would these standards give me a clear, fair basis for that conversation?*
- *If they excelled, could I recognise that specifically using these standards?*
- *Does this section describe quality and effectiveness without repeating tasks already covered above?*

If the answer to all three is yes, your performance standards section is complete.

Section 5: Prior skills and experience (what candidates **MUST** have)

What the person must bring with them

This section sets out essential non-negotiable i.e. what someone must bring with them on day one and what can't be trained quickly after appointment and what would be desirable but is not essential. Short, high quality essential criteria attract stronger and more diverse applicants.

Be realistic and focused. This section is what you will use to shortlist candidates when advertising the role.

Step 1: Decide What Is Essential

Essential criteria are the skills, knowledge or experience someone **must have to do the job safely and effectively from the start**.

If something is listed as essential, it means:

- You would not interview someone without it.
- You cannot train it quickly after appointment.
- The job could not be done properly without it.
- Check your essential criteria don't accidentally exclude good candidates, for example, requiring a driving licence when the job doesn't genuinely need one, or a specific qualification when the underlying skill is what matters.

Keep this list short.

Only include what is genuinely necessary.

Step 2: Decide What Is Desirable

Desirable criteria are helpful but not critical.

These can help you:

- Reduce a large number of applications
- Choose between strong candidates

If a candidate meets all essential criteria but not a desirable one, they can still be appointed.

Important Principles

Avoid Wish Lists

Do not include everything you would "like".

Focus only on what the job genuinely requires.

Too many essentials:

- Reduce your applicant pool
- Make recruitment harder
- Lead to unrealistic expectations

Think About Transferable Skills

Experience does not always need to come from the same sector.

For example:

- Customer service experience in retail may transfer to council front-line work.
- Supervisory experience in construction may transfer to managing operational staff.

Ask yourself:

Could someone have gained this skill somewhere else, in which case you can be less specific.

Write Criteria in Capability Terms – Not Years of Service

Avoid:

- “Minimum 5 years’ experience”
- “Extensive experience required”

Instead, describe what the person must be able to do.

Not helpful:

- “3 years payroll experience”

Better:

- “Able to process payroll accurately and resolve pay queries confidently.”

Focus on what you need, not how long someone has worked.

Define Behavioural Expectations

Skills alone are not enough.

Think about **how** the job should be done.

Behavioural expectations describe:

- How the person treats others
- How they handle problems
- How they respond to feedback
- How they approach safety and standards

Examples – Operational Role (e.g. Street Cleaning Supervisor)

Essential Criteria

- Able to supervise a small team and recognise good performance and address poor performance promptly and fairly.
- Understands safe working practices and applies health and safety procedures consistently.
- Can organise daily work to meet agreed standards and timescales.
- Communicates clearly with team members and members of the public.

Quick Checklist Before Finalising

Ask yourself:

- If someone does not meet this essential criterion, could they still do the job properly?
 - If yes → it is not essential.
- Have I written what they must be able to do, rather than how long they have worked?
- Have I included expectations about behaviour and standards, not just technical ability?
- Is the essential list short and realistic?

Section 6: Contacts

This section helps new starters quickly understand who they will be working with the most

Internal

To give candidates a flavour of who they will be working with, think about who the role holder works with and why

Example: Works with the facilities team to report and escalate persistent problem areas;

External

Liaises with residents and local businesses to respond to complaints and queries.

Section 7: Working conditions

This section describes the physical and any practical demands of the role.

It helps job application candidates understand what the job actually involves day to day before they apply not after they start.

Be honest and specific, vague phrases like 'some manual handling required' don't tell candidates what this means. A clear description protects both the candidate and the Council, it supports reasonable adjustment conversations, reduces people leaving a role quickly after starting and ensures people self select appropriately.

This is not about excluding people. It is about being transparent so that everyone, including those who may need adjustments, can make an informed decision and have the right conversation at the right time.

What to include:

Describe the physical and environmental conditions someone will regularly work in or be expected to meet. Focus on what is genuinely required to do the job safely and effectively.

For senior roles, or roles which require political sensitivity include a sentence describing the political context and expectations of impartiality.

Illustrative examples:

Environment and location

- Works outdoors in all weather conditions throughout the year, including cold, wet, and hot weather
- Works across multiple sites and is regularly required to travel between locations within the Salisbury area
- Works in a busy open-plan office environment with regular screen use
- Works in confined spaces or at height as part of routine duties (specify)

Physical demands

- Must be able to push and pull a loaded barrow weighing up to [X] kg on uneven ground, including hills
- Must be able to lift and carry equipment weighing up to [X] kg, including [specific item e.g. event poles, barriers, sandbags]
- Must be able to assemble and dismantle event structures, including gazebos with poles weighing up to 15 kg, unassisted or as part of a small team
- Must be able to stand and walk for extended periods, typically [X] hours per shift
- Must be able to sit for long periods using display screen equipment (DSE) in line with SCC DSE policy

Driving and vehicles

- Must hold a full, valid UK driving licence
- Must be able to drive [specify: e.g. a 3.5 tonne crew cab, a ride-on sweeper, a cage tipper, a passenger minibus]
- May be required to tow a trailer (specify category if relevant)

Uniform and PPE

- Required to wear full personal protective equipment (PPE) including [specify: e.g. hi-visibility clothing, steel-toecap boots, gloves] throughout the working day
- Required to wear a uniform and represent the Council in public-facing settings

Shift patterns and availability

- Works a shift pattern that includes early starts, late finishes, or weekend working (specify)
- May be required to respond to call-outs outside of normal hours (specify if on a rota)
- Role requires attendance at [specific locations or events] which may involve irregular hours

Stress, pressure and emotional demands:

- This role is regularly customer-facing and may involve dealing with members of the public who are frustrated, upset, or challenging in their behaviour. The ability to remain calm and professional under pressure is essential.
- This role involves managing competing deadlines and a high volume of requests at pace. There will be periods of sustained pressure, particularly around [specify: e.g. budget setting, seasonal demand, event delivery].
- This role carries responsibility for decisions that directly affect the safety or wellbeing of others. The post holder must be able to manage the pressure that comes with that responsibility and know when to escalate.
- This role involves regular exposure to distressing situations or vulnerable people, including [specify: e.g. safeguarding cases, complaints involving bereavement, enforcement action]. Appropriate support is available and described in the induction process.
- This role operates in a politically sensitive environment and may involve managing scrutiny from elected members, the media, or the public. The post holder must be resilient and exercise careful judgement in what they communicate and how.
- This role manages a significant budget and/or a large team, and carries accountability for service outcomes that are visible across the organisation. The post holder must be comfortable with that level of responsibility and the pressure it brings.

Political restriction

- Due to the advice given to Committees (or as this is the City Clerk position) this role is subject to political restriction. SCC has a policy which states what this means.