

Agenda for Personnel Committee Wednesday, 28th January, 2026, 10.00 am

Members of Personnel Committee

Councillors: E Rylance (Chair), J Loudoun (Vice-Chair), P Arnott, A Bailey, B Bailey, K Blakey, V Bonetta, J Brown, M Chapman, T Dumper, J Heath, N Hookway, Y Levine and E Wragg

Venue: Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton

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(or group number 01395 517546)
20th January 2026



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- 1 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 8)
To agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 September 2025.
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Declarations of interest
Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)
- 4 Public speaking
- 5 Matters of urgency
Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online
- 6 Confidential/exempt item(s)
To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the Press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
- 7 People data (Pages 9 - 16)
- 8 People Strategy update (Pages 17 - 20)
- 9 Staff survey update (Pages 21 - 25)
- 10 Corporate Health and Safety Policy update (Pages 26 - 47)

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[Decision making and equalities](#)

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EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Personnel Committee held at Council Chamber,
Blackdown House, Honiton on 10 September 2025**

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.05 am and ended at 12.17 pm

1 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 15th April 2025 were confirmed as a true record.

2 Declarations of interest

None.

3 Public speaking

Two statements were read out on behalf of previously registered public speakers, who were now unable to attend in person.

Statement from Mr P Quantrill

"I request East Devon council to desist from any existing or further investments in LGPS Funds.

Israel is guilty of genocide in Gaza and has been for decades in Palestine.
Israel is guilty of Apartheid in Palestine and as with the South African government in the 90s, they should be made to realise the world will not stand by and let their actions continue.

Companies in our High Streets , such as Barclays Bank, McDonalds, Next, Starbucks, L'Oreal and many, many more are complicit in supporting and funding this Israeli government and their military campaigns in Gaza and large parts of Palestine.
Anything this council can do to stop the funding will hopefully bring peace to the people of Palestine."

Statement from Ms T Sanders:

"Palestinians are facing the most horrific violence imaginable right now.
It could not be more urgent that LGPS funds be divested- ensuring Public Services monies are not funnelled into companies which are enabling the Israeli Government's apartheid and genocide against Palestinians.
In this context there are clear legal duties not to be complicit in assisting these atrocities.
Many councils are listening and taking positive action to stop aiding Israel.
This council is NOT powerless, and it must end all financial ties linked to Israel."

The Chair responded as follows:

Thank you very much for your statements.

The Council's pension fund is managed by Devon Pension Fund and concerns should be raised with them directly.

We do, however, note the points that you have made this morning.

Cllr Wragg spoke of her experience as a County Councillor and that the County authority do take ethical concerns seriously.

4 **Matters of urgency**

None.

5 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

None.

6 **Annual Health and Safety Report 2024/25 and Corporate Safety Workplan 2025/26**

The presented report set out the work undertaken by the Corporate Safety Team through the year, and the work plan for 2025/26.

The report covered:

- Accidents and incidents, broken down into type;
- Training undertaken by staff;
- Workplace inspections and audits;
- Tests, drills and evacuations
- Policies and reports;
- Ongoing work
- Work Programme for the coming year.

Discussion by the committee included:

- Welcoming the recording of near-miss events, which provided valuable information;
- Data available currently was difficult to break down into specific trends; the replacement of recording software would help provide better informed data, but it was stressed that any significant incidents were always followed up and learnt from;
- The culture of reporting was changing, following promotion of the reporting mechanisms;
- Whilst Councillors were not regarded as employees, advice was offered to them on a regular basis for their role;
- Tribute given to officers dealing with difficult role and the increase in verbal abuse from the public;
- Assessments were made of the council offices, and refined following review such as the recent evacuation practice of a full Council meeting. Councillors requiring assistance had already been identified and measures put in place to assist them in case of emergency;
- Councillors were encouraged to report any near-miss, accident or incident and the contact means for doing so would be circulated;
- The office temperature met with the statutory requirement; however personal comfort levels vary.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The Chair thanked Matt and his officers for their work.

7 **People Data: Annual Report 2024/25**

The report set out statistics of the workforce for the 2024/25 period.

Headline Findings

- **Headcount:** 557 staff (↑1.08% / 6 FTE), still below budgeted 565.4 FTE.
- **Pay:** Most staff are in Grade 4 (£35–41k). Significant growth in Grade 6 roles (↑23%). Average pay £33,151 (slightly below national council average £34k).
- **Directorates:** Place is now the largest (44.34%) following service restructuring.
- **Salary Costs:** ↑10.56% this year (slower growth than last year's 14.8%).

Workforce Trends

- **Market Supplements:** Increased from 11 → 21, mainly to address Housing Surveyor shortages.
- **Travel Costs:** Down for the 4th year (↓8.16%).
- **Recruitment Costs:** ↑ to £2,232 per head due to executive recruitment. Excluding these, costs would have fallen. Benchmark = £3–5k per head.
- **Vacancy Rate:** 6.82% (better than 12% benchmark).
- **Turnover:**
 - Combined = 13.08% (↑ from 11.25%, but still below LGA benchmark 13.5%).
 - Voluntary = 10.93% (close to national 12%).
 - Highest voluntary turnover: Housing (16.9%) and Governance (16%).
 - Non-voluntary turnover steady at ~2%.

Learning & Development

- **Training:** 508 attendees (↑ from 483), feedback positive.
- **Apprenticeships:** ↑90.9% since 2022/23 (17 → 21). No levy funds lost for the first time (prev. losses £3.8k–£14.9k). EDDC exceeds typical council uptake.

Attendance & Absence

- **Average Days Lost:** 10.24 per FTE (slightly ↑ from 10.05).
 - Benchmark: 10.59 days (regional), 8.8 days (national LG average).
- **Absence Causes:** Stress, anxiety & fatigue = 27.9% of cases (highest in Health & Housing).
- **Absence Patterns:** Long-term ↓7.3%, but short-term ↑5.4% and medium-term ↑19.8%.

Workforce Profile

- **Age:** Average 49 (national council average 47).
- **Diversity:**
 - Ethnic minority staff = 3.24% (↑ from 1.6%, still well below national 16%).
 - Staff with disability = 5.94% (↑, slightly above council average 5%).
- **Gender:** 52.6% female / 47.4% male.

In summary the data is showing as a Council we are performing well against benchmarks. Notable positives include decrease in travel, for both cost and supporting our Climate Change Strategy, Learning and Development engagement and apprenticeships. Absence continues to be an area which requires further consideration and we need to continue to closely monitor the use of market supplements.

Discussion by the committee included:

- Seeking clarification on the number of posts not included in the report, due to being funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – in response, this information would be supplied to the councillor after the meeting;

- Salary overall cost had increased due to promotion and recruitment of an Assistant Director, not due to headcount;
- Committee were reminded of the work undertaken to help manage staff absence, including the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), policy and processes in place, and close working between the HR business managers and Manager to support a return to work;
- Grow Our Own work included links with Devon County Council, in relation to those with care experience, this helps engage both a diverse and younger workforce;
- Higher vacancies were seen in the Streetscene service, and workforce planning was taking place to help address the needs of the service;
- Impact of absence of staff on remaining team members was discussed and acknowledged.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The Chair congratulated Gemma Roberts on her recent promotion to the role of Assistant Director for People and Performance.

8 **People Data: April - July 2025 quarterly report**

The report presented to committee for the period of April to July 2025 was considered.

Headcount has stabilised but dipped slightly from late 2024. Vacancy recording changes explain a sharp increase in reported vacancies, following alignment between HR and Finance records. Agency use has risen slightly due to seasonal demands. Absence rates were climbing, driven by stress-related factors which had become the leading cause of long-term absence. Wellbeing initiatives and the recent staff survey will be central to addressing these challenges, with HR business partners again working closely with Directors.

Discussion by the committee included:

- In response to benchmarking questions, whilst some benchmarking was done with a diverse range of organisations, the most comparable data was with other local authorities, especially neighbouring ones;
- In respect of marketing supplements, careful management of impact and an annual review is made when those are withdrawn. The review includes assessment of impact on service delivery;
- Streetscene have a seasonal demand for agency workers; other agency staff are often put in place to cover vacancies while awaiting recruitment for key service posts. Numbers relating to the planning service would be checked as requested, and supplied to the committee.

RESOLVED to note the report.

9 **Out of Hours Policy**

The Committee were asked to approve a new corporate policy on standby and call-out (“out of hours”) arrangements, following recommendations from the 2022 Reward Review and 2023 audit recommendations.

Issues identified with the existing policy were inconsistencies, and varying rates of pay for out of hours work. Cabinet received and considered the proposals on 4 June 2025.

In response to a question on mileage rates, claiming for travel was limited to the distance between the normal place of work (council offices) and the site, in line with existing policy and employment contracts. In more recent years, many out of hours issues could be managed remotely, therefore not requiring the office to travel.

RESOLVED that

1. The new Out of Hours Policy be approved;
2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Governance and Portfolio Holder for Council and Corporate Co-ordination to agree any minor changes to the policy, following final comments from Unison.

10 **People Strategy**

The committee were previously informed of the development of a People Strategy at their meeting in April.

This document set out the components of the strategy for 2025 to 2028, setting out the ambitions that surrounded the One Team East Devon ethos:

- Connect: areas of focus on connecting to the One Team East Devon through shared values and behaviours; total reward package; recognition; and fostering a diverse and inclusive environment;
- Grow: focus on development of “Focusing on Great Managers” programme; Grow Our Own initiative; review current “We Grow” offer;
- Thrive: focus on Change and Resilience; developing a continuous feedback cycle; safe and supported team; “Happy, Healthy, Here” initiatives

The refreshed Behavioural Principles and new Management Commitments were also set out. The Strategy is planned to be launched in October.

Comments from the committee included:

- What was the cost of developing the strategy? In response, the committee were informed that this was part of the HR budget in terms of staff time, not an additional cost to the authority;
- Key refresh to help get the best from employees;
- Suggestion to include simplicity and accuracy in all communications; and to include accountability;
- Welcomed the approach, which was good practice elsewhere.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11 **LGR and impact on staff**

The committee were reminded of the current timeline for devolution, with new arrangements set to go live on 1 April 2028. Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2026 (TUPE) would protect existing staff, automatically transferring employment to the new employer whilst maintaining the existing terms and conditions of employment. Pension rights were protected under separate legislative provisions.

Support is available to staff via the Council’s “Happy, Healthy, Here” scheme; and the pending People Strategy, soon to be in place, were hoped to help staff navigate their way through the transition period to the new employer.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

E Rylance (Chair)
J Loudoun (Vice-Chair)
T Dumper
P Hayward
Y Levine
E Wragg

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
R Collins

Officers in attendance:

Matthew Blythe, Assistant Director Environmental Health
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Gemma Roberts, Assistant Director for People and Performance

Councillor apologies:

P Arnott
A Bailey
B Bailey
K Blakey
J Brown
N Hookway

Chair

Date:

Report to: **Personnel Committee**

Date of Meeting: 28 January 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



People Data Report

Report summary:

This report provides key data on the workforce, to support policy decision making and an overview of workforce matters.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That the Committee note the content of the report.

Reason for recommendation:

To support policy decision making and an overview of workforce matters.

Officer: Gemma Roberts, Assistant Director People and Performance
Gemma.Roberts@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☒ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- ☐ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☐ Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information [211130 People Data Proposals Report for Personnel Ctte FINAL.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ A supported and engaged community
 - ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
 - ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
 - ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services
-

Report in full

1. This latest people data report reflects the data available up to the end of November 2025 unless otherwise stated. Analysis is summarised below, with the full data at Appendix 1.
2. Particular areas to note from the people data are:
 - 2.1 Headcount and FTE have increased since July, moving from 556 to 565 and from 519.35 to 529.34 FTE respectively. This brings the workforce closer to the budgeted FTE of 565.4, strengthening operational capacity heading into the last quarter of the financial year.
 - 2.2 Market Supplements are currently being applied to 10 posts and the number of employees in receipt of a market supplement has increased by 1 since the last reporting period, with a current total of 22. This market supplement has been applied following recruitment to a post which has previously been identified as requiring a Market Supplement. Market Supplements are for specific roles where recruitment and retention are challenging due to market forces. All market supplements are subject to annual review; the next annual review will be in April 2026.
 - 2.3 As previously reported, a vacancy administration change was implemented last year to better align records with Finance and assist accurate budget monitoring. This process has been successful, and work is now taking place to ensure where budget is moved to support other activity and vacancies these are accurately reflected in the system. This work is ongoing; Finance and HR are currently working with Assistant Directors to understand the current position, which will allow for easy reconciliation moving forward. Given this, current figures being reported will change following the conclusion of this piece of work. At the time of writing the total number of vacancies reported on the HR system has increased from 66 to 67.
 - 2.3.1 The current number of posts being actively recruited to at the time of writing is 29, appointments have been made to 14, which are pending start. The remaining 38 posts are being reviewed, as part of the work mentioned at 2.3. We know this figure will reduce once this work has been completed.
 - 2.3.2 Agency filled positions have increased by 2 with a total of 29. The increase is due to backfilling for sickness absence and a vacant post pending recruitment.
 - 2.3.3 The average length of time to fill a vacancy is 57.28 days a slight decrease from the previously reported 59.12 days (LGA reports circa 100 days as a benchmark).
 - 2.4 Cumulative voluntary turnover stands at 6.95% to November, with a projected year-end of 10.42% (down from a July projection of 11.56%). Combined turnover is

8.55% year-to-date, with a projected year-end of 12.82%. The LGA cite 13.5% as the average annual turnover rate across all authorities in England. Overall we have had 48 leavers to end of November, the majority voluntary (81.2%). Retirements account for one quarter (25%), indicating the importance of succession planning and knowledge transfer. Career moves (accepted another role, career progression, permanent offers from Fixed term roles, relocation/travel) are the largest single theme at 27.1%, pointing to development aspirations among leavers.

- 2.5 Following a recent benchmarking exercise through Infinistats it was revealed that the majority of SW Councils do not include phased return in their sickness reports. Given this, we have now removed phased returns from our sickness absence calculations. The rationale is that once an employee has returned to work, they are considered fit for duty and therefore not classified as absent. This adjustment will support more meaningful benchmarking and performance analysis going forward.
- 2.5.1 The projected end-year sickness absence is 10.60 days lost per FTE, an improvement on the July forecast of 11.42 FTE days lost per FTE though still above the corporate target of 8.5 and the 2024/25 outturn of 10.28. Work-related stress is the leading cause of long-term absence. If we extrapolate long term sickness absence from the total number of days lost, the projected end- year sickness absence would be 5.71 FTE days lost per employee. Targeted interventions continue, including wellbeing support, management training, and case management for complex absences. We are also revising the frequency of Stress related training so that it more prominent feature in the mandatory training plan.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications in the recommendations.

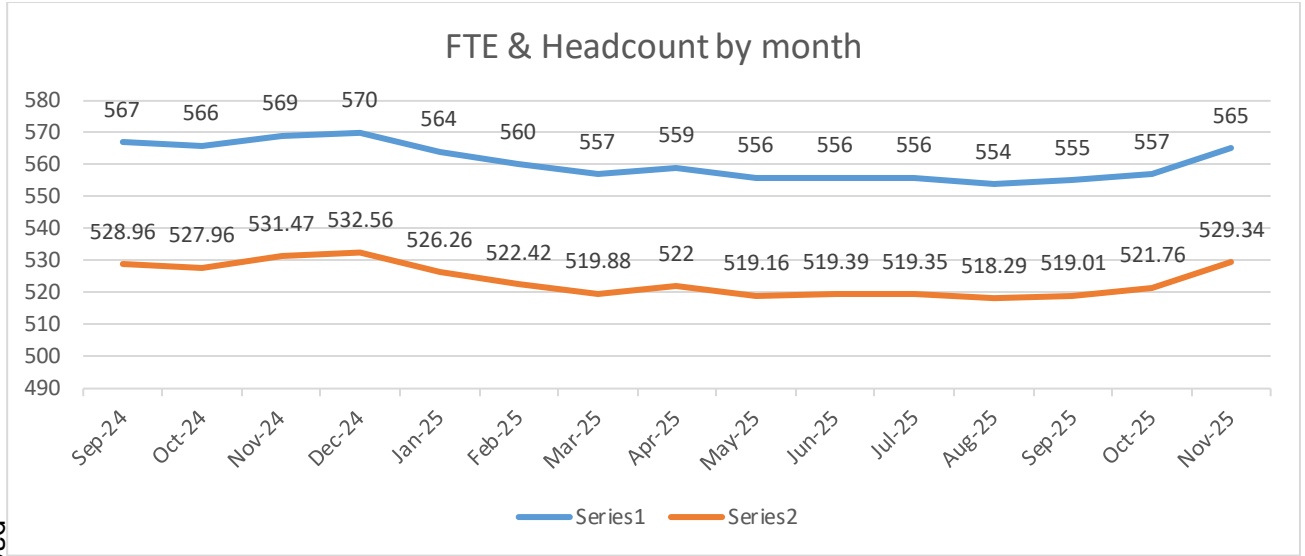
Legal implications:

There are no specific legal implications requiring comment.

East Devon District Council People Data

Data as at: 30.11.25

Headcount



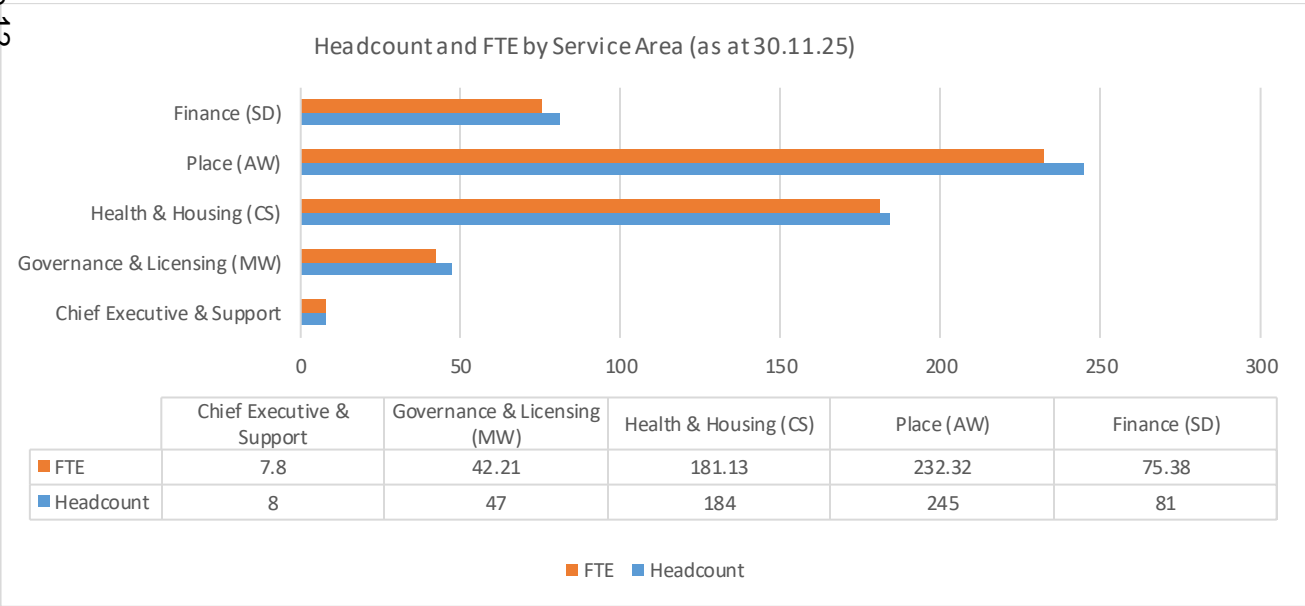
Actual Headcount:	565
Full Time Equivalent (FTE):	529.34
Budgeted FTE for 2025/26	565.4

This data incorporates permanent, fixed term and apprentice employees. It excludes casuals, agency workers and contractors.

Headcount is the actual number of employees.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE) measures employees in a way that makes them comparable although they may work a different number of hours per week. The unit is obtained by comparing an employee's average number of hours worked to the average number of full time hours. A full-time person is therefore counted as 1 FTE, while a part-time worker is a proportion of 1 FTE. For example, a part-timer employed for 18.5 hours a week where full-time work consists of 37 hours, is counted as 0.5 FTE.

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Vacancies, Agency Workers, Market Supplements

	This month (30.11.25)	Last reporting period (31.07.25)
Total Vacancies for EDDC (Recruiting in Progress & Not Recruiting)	67 (11.85% of headcount)	66 (11.87% of headcount)
Total number of Market Supplements	22	21
Average length of time to recruit a vacancy from the point of advertising.	57.28 days	59.12 days
Total Positions filled by Agency	29	27

Last Reporting Period – this was 31 July 2025, as reported to Personnel Committee in September 2025.

NOT Recruiting Vacancies - Vacancies that are not currently part of the recruiting process. This may be because they are on hold or recruitment is being prepared, or being backfilled internally by honorarium or secondment whilst decisions are being made.

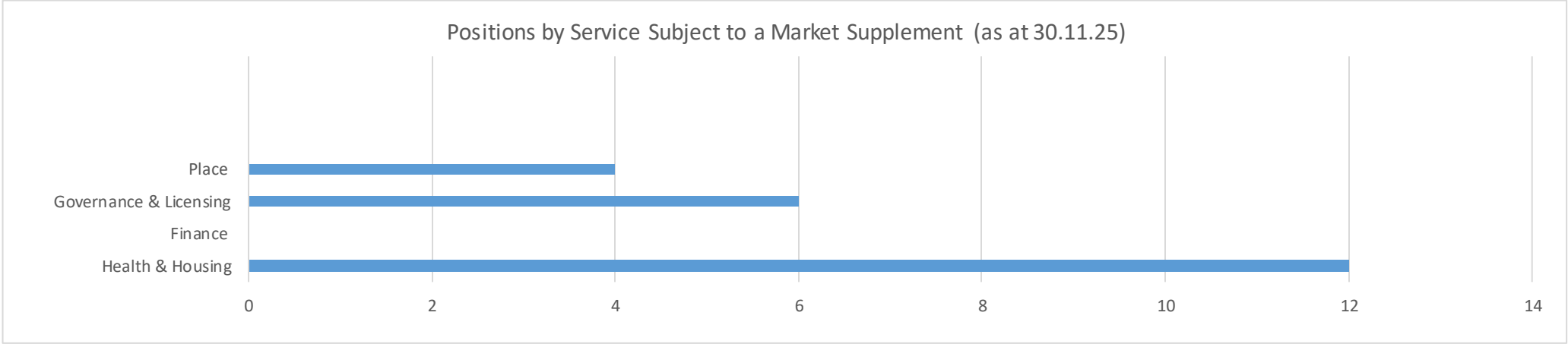
Recruiting in Progress - Vacancies being recruited to.

Average length of time a vacancy is vacant – this counts the number of calendar days a Recruiting in Progress Vacancy has been vacant. The count is from either when the post became vacant or when a new recruitment campaign was added to the HR system. It is only possible to calculate this figure for the Council as a whole due to HR system capabilities.

Agency - The number of posts that are currently filled by Agency Workers. The numbers by Service or costs are not held centrally in the HR system but HR and Finance are currently working on improvements to where data is held.

Market Supplement – An additional payment made in excess

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Turnover

Cumulative Voluntary Turnover as at 30.11.25	Projected Voluntary Turnover to 31.03.26	Cumulative Non-Voluntary Turnover as at 30.11.25	Projected Non Voluntary Turnover to 31.03.26	Cumulative Turnover (Voluntary & Non-Voluntary) As 30.11.25	Projected Turnover (Voluntary & Non Voluntary) to 31.03.26
6.95%	10.42%	1.60%	2.4%	8.55%	12.82%

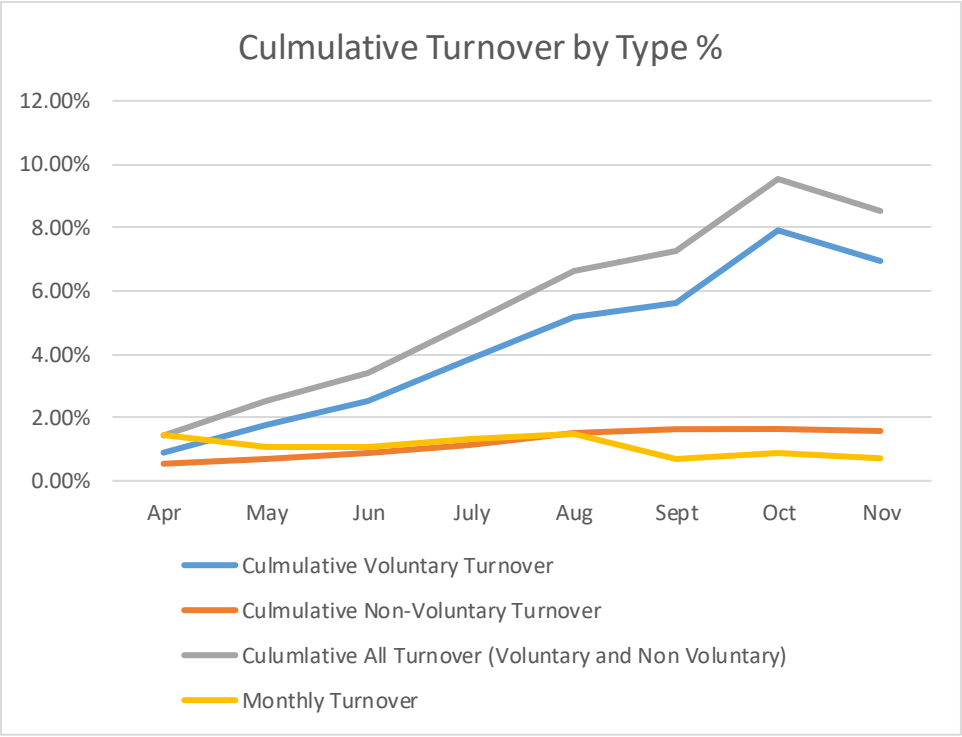
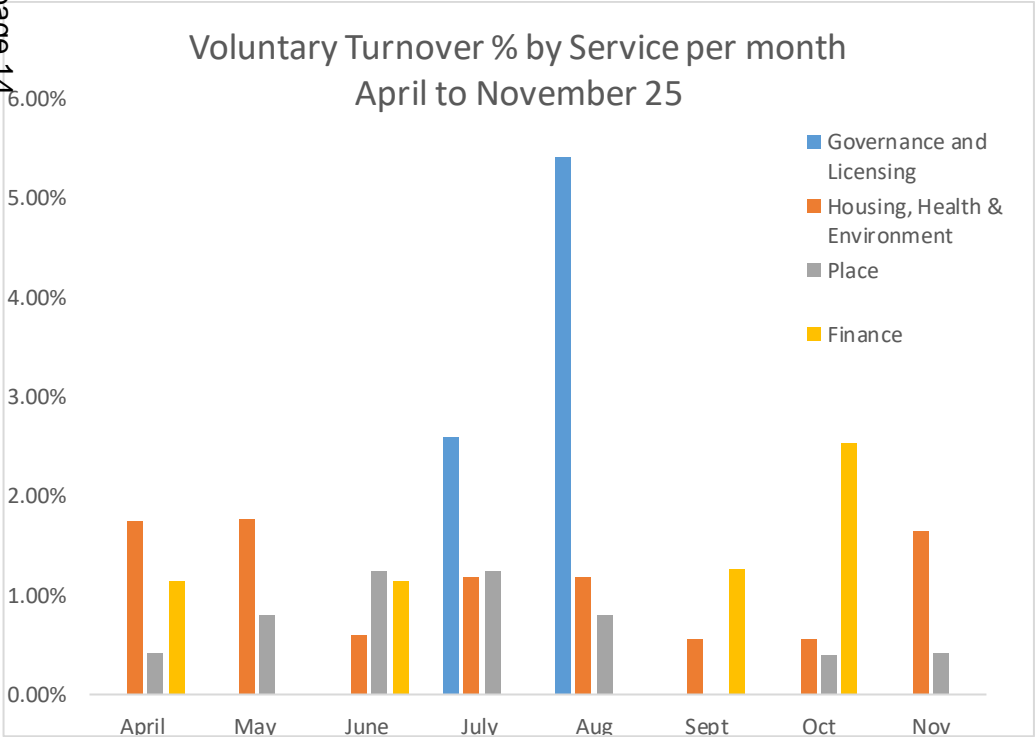
Employee turnover is measured by the percentage of leavers during a period and is shown as a cumulative month on month trend.

Voluntary turnover only includes resignations.

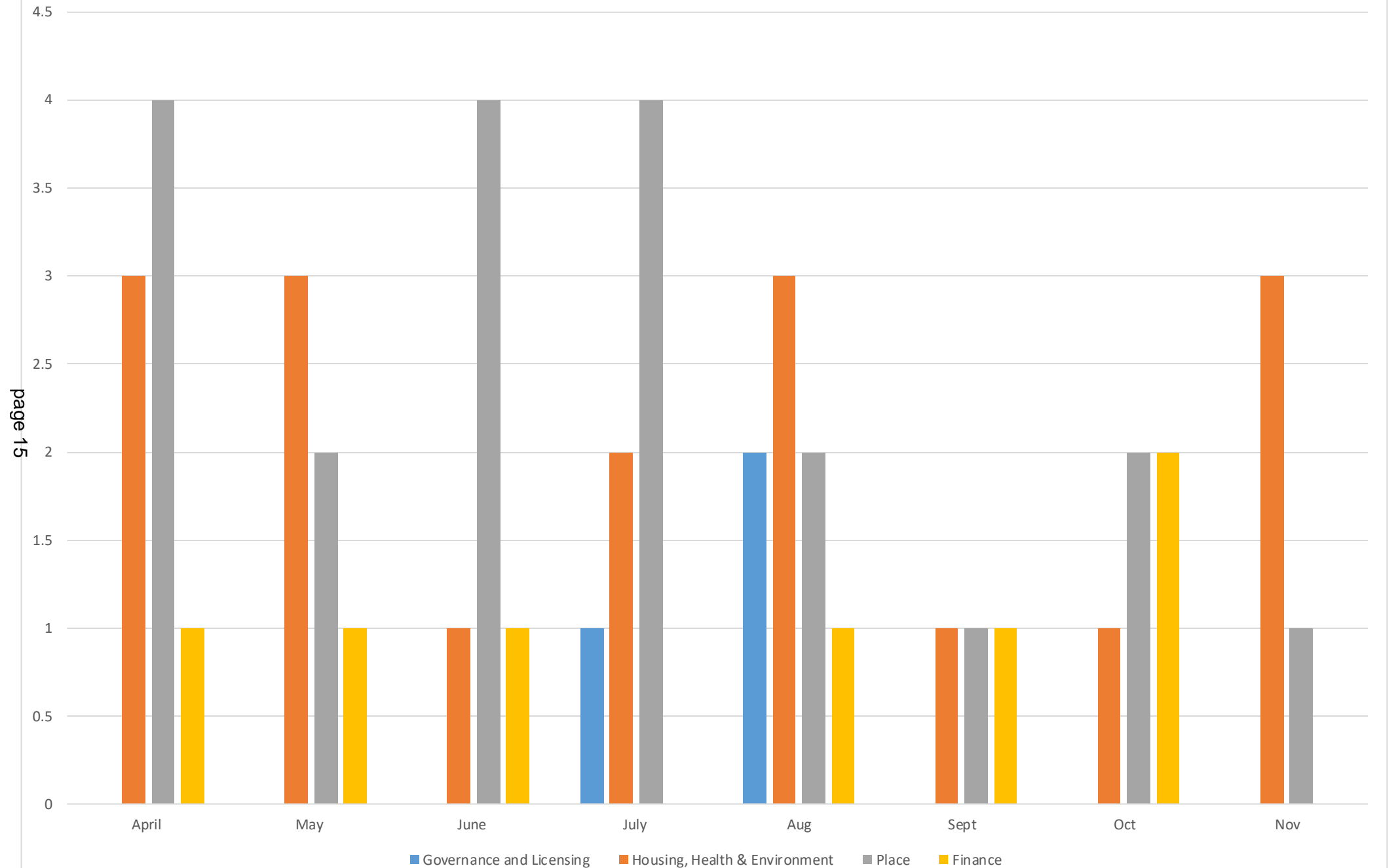
Non-voluntary Turnover includes dismissals, redundancy, end of fixed term contracts, and ill health retirement.

Projected turnover figures are estimates for the whole year based on information to date, this figure will fluctuate and stabilise as we progress through the fiscal year.

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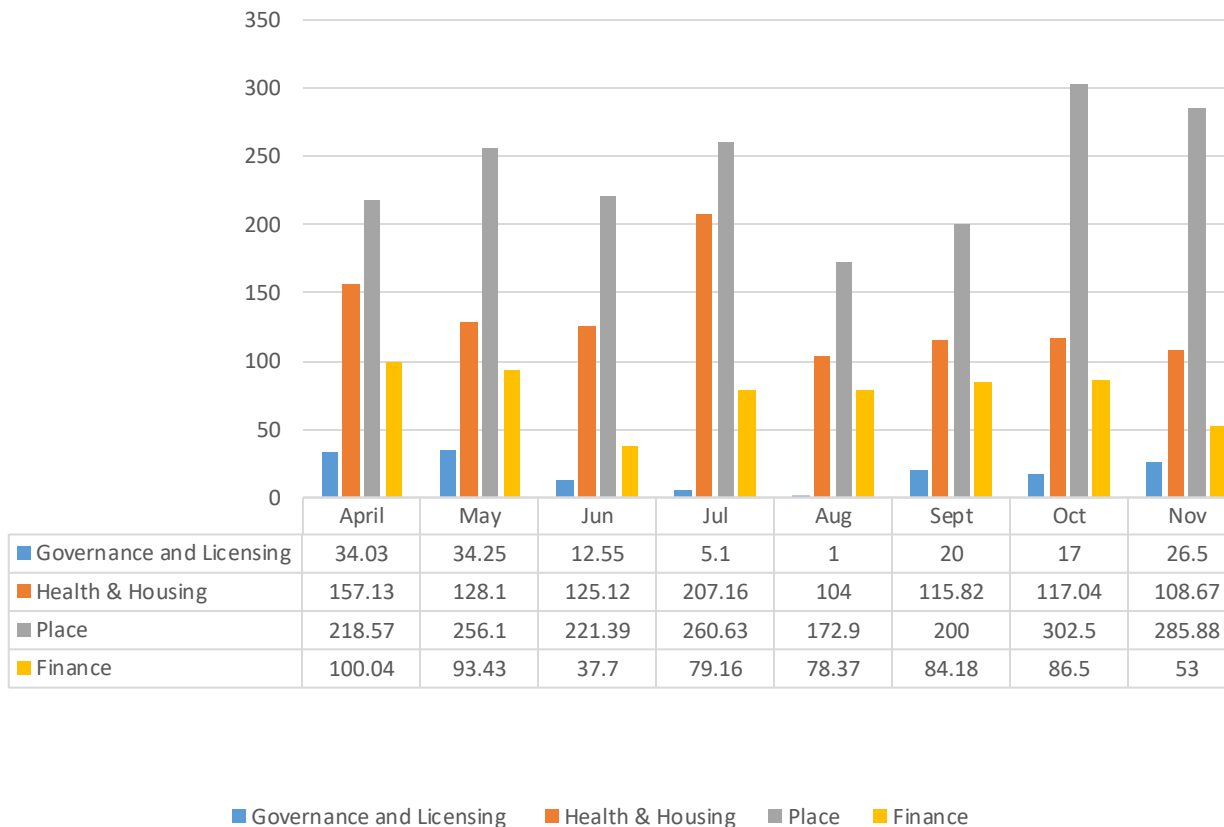
Actual Leavers by Service for the period April to November



Sickness Absence

Working days lost per FTE (Apr 25 to November 25)	Working days lost per FTE (Apr 24 to November 24)
7.07 FTE Days	6.46 FTE days

Total FTE working days lost per service (April 25-November 25)



Top 3 reasons for absence

Short term (<8 days)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cold/Flu 2. Stomach, Kidney, Liver, Digestion 3. Neurological, headaches & migraines
Medium term (>8 days, <2 months)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) 2. Hospital Treatment 3. Hospital treatment/operation
Long term (>2 months)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stress, Anxiety, Fatigue (work) 2. Other Muscular-Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression/Anxiety (Personal)

**Based on current information the projected figure for end of year absence per FTE is currently 10.60 days per FTE, the annual target is 8.5 days per FTE*

Figures in brackets denote the average days lost per month per FTE

Report to: **Personnel Committee**

Date of Meeting 28th January 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Report summary:

This report provides an update on the successful launch of the Council's new People Strategy, People Focused, and outlines progress on associated actions designed to embed the strategy across the organisation. It highlights key engagement activities, current progress, and the next steps to ensure the strategy delivers on its ambitions.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That the Personnel Committee:

1. Notes the successful launch of the People Strategy – People Focused.
2. Endorses the ongoing implementation of the strategy and key actions.
3. Supports continued engagement and communication to embed the strategy across the organisation.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure members are informed of progress and support the delivery of a strategy that underpins organisational culture, staff wellbeing, and service excellence.

Officer: Gemma Roberts, Assistant Director – People & Performance

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Assets and Economy
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☒ Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- ☐ Environment - Nature and Climate
- ☐ Environment - Operational
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Equalities impact assessment will be undertaken for specific actions as part of the implementation of the strategy.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information n/a

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ A supported and engaged community
 - ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
 - ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
 - ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services
-

1.0 Background

The People Strategy, People Focused, was officially launched on 25 November 2025 following engagement with staff through surveys, focus groups, and the collection of information obtained through the staff suggestion scheme, exit interviews and general feedback. The strategy sets out clear ambitions under three themes:

- **Connect** – Our ambition is for people to have a sense of belonging, be proud to work here, feel engaged, and recognised. That everyone can do their best work in a purpose driven environment, focused on excellence in leadership, where people are accountable, and are connected.
- **Grow** – Our ambition is for everyone to grow and develop, in a way that works for them and the organisation, putting people in the best place for the future. Managers are clear on expectations and are developed to be highly capable, positive, confident and dynamic.
- **Thrive** – Our ambition is for people to feel they have a voice, are Happy, Healthy, Here and thriving; feeling ready for change and equipped to continue making a meaningful impact in the communities we serve. People are trusted and valued, owning their performance, career and growth.

A full copy of the strategy, can be found at appendix 1.

Supporting elements include refreshed organisational behaviours, a Management Charter, and a Customer Charter, all designed to reinforce a positive culture and high-quality service delivery.

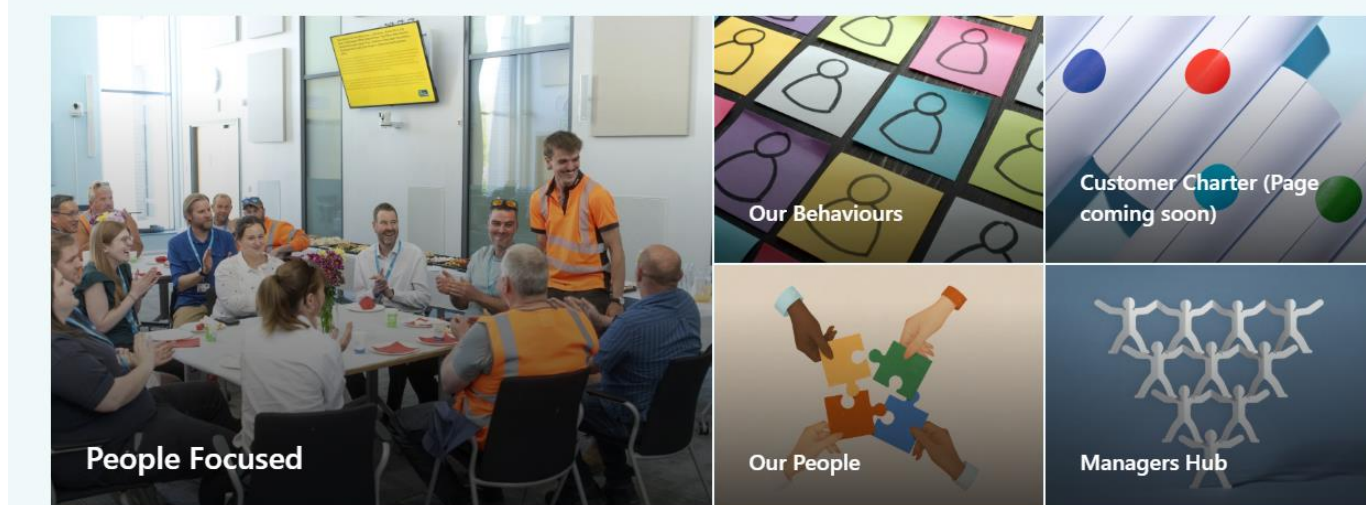
2.0 Launch Activities

The launch was marked by a series of engagement events:

- **Virtual Staff Briefing:** Led by the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director for People and Performance, introducing the strategy and its importance.
- **SLT Floor Walks and Depot Visits:** Direct engagement with staff across sites to answer questions and gather feedback.
- **Coffee, Cake & Connect Sessions:** Informal opportunities for staff to discuss the strategy and share ideas.



- One Team East Devon Hub launched: Dedicated site, which will evolve and develop over time. As part of the launch the hub includes FAQs, the full strategy, the strategy on a page, videos (all support engagement with the strategy in a way that works for different people), the refreshed behaviours, a 'Our People' section, which has people profiles and staff stories.



3.0 Current Position

Since the launch we have:

- The weekly staff newsletter has been re-branded and is now called 'One Team East Devon' and weekly news is categorised under the relevant strategy theme.
- Continued to develop the hub. We have seen positive engagement on the hub with 390 views on our People Focused page.
- Begun encouraging staff to get involved by seeking volunteers for our staff led groups both under Connect and Thrive.
- Published the action plan sitting behind the strategy, Focusing on Action.
- Continue to review and communicate with staff on action from the staff survey.
- Piloted Change and Resilience workshops, with the aim of rolling this out across the organisation during 2026.

Focusing on Action is now live and provides a practical framework for delivering the strategy. Key actions include:

- Connect:
 - Establishing staff-led groups such as *How We Connect* to champion engagement.
 - Developing a Communication & Engagement Plan to ensure consistent messaging.
- Grow:
 - Launching a mentoring programme to support career development.
 - Reviewing recruitment and induction processes to attract and retain talent.
 - Creating a Managers Hub with resources and guidance.
- Thrive:
 - Develop an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training programme, aimed at enhancing awareness across the organisation.
 - Refreshing one-to-one and performance reviews, to align them with the new strategy.
 - Roll out change and resilience workshops across the organisation.

Progress updates will be shared regularly via newsletters, intranet posts, and staff forums.

4.0 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and People Focused

People Focused has been positioned to provide an anchor over the next couple of years to demonstrate our support and commitment to our staff and ensure we do not lose sight of the importance of our people during this time. With LGR a lot is out of our control, but the strategy supports in taking control where we can and supporting our staff to be in the best possible place, alongside focusing on how we can support staff with the change process.

5.0 Next Steps

- Embed People Focused and deliver on actions within the focusing on action, action plan. Forming a key deliverable for the Governance Directorate Plan.
- Continue embedding the refreshed behaviours through team discussions and leadership visibility.
- Monitor and report on action plan delivery, including measurable outcomes.
- Maintain two-way communication with staff to ensure feedback informs ongoing improvements and action.

Financial implications:

There are no new financial implications arising from this report. (SD)

Legal implications:

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report.

Appendix 1

Link to full strategy - [People Focused.pdf](#)

Report to: **Personnel Committee**

Date of Meeting 28th January 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Staff Survey - Update

Report summary:

This report provides Members with an overview of the findings from the recent staff survey, highlighting key themes, areas of strength, and areas requiring improvement, alongside actions being taken.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That the Personnel Committee note findings and acknowledge action being taken based on employee voice.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure members are informed of progress and can see action being taken, which underpins the people strategy and associated action plan.

Officer: Gemma Roberts, Assistant Director – People & Performance

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Assets and Economy
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☒ Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- ☐ Environment - Nature and Climate
- ☐ Environment - Operational
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Equalities impact assessment will be undertaken for specific actions as part of the implementation of the strategy.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information n/a

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ A supported and engaged community
- ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
- ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services

1.0 Background

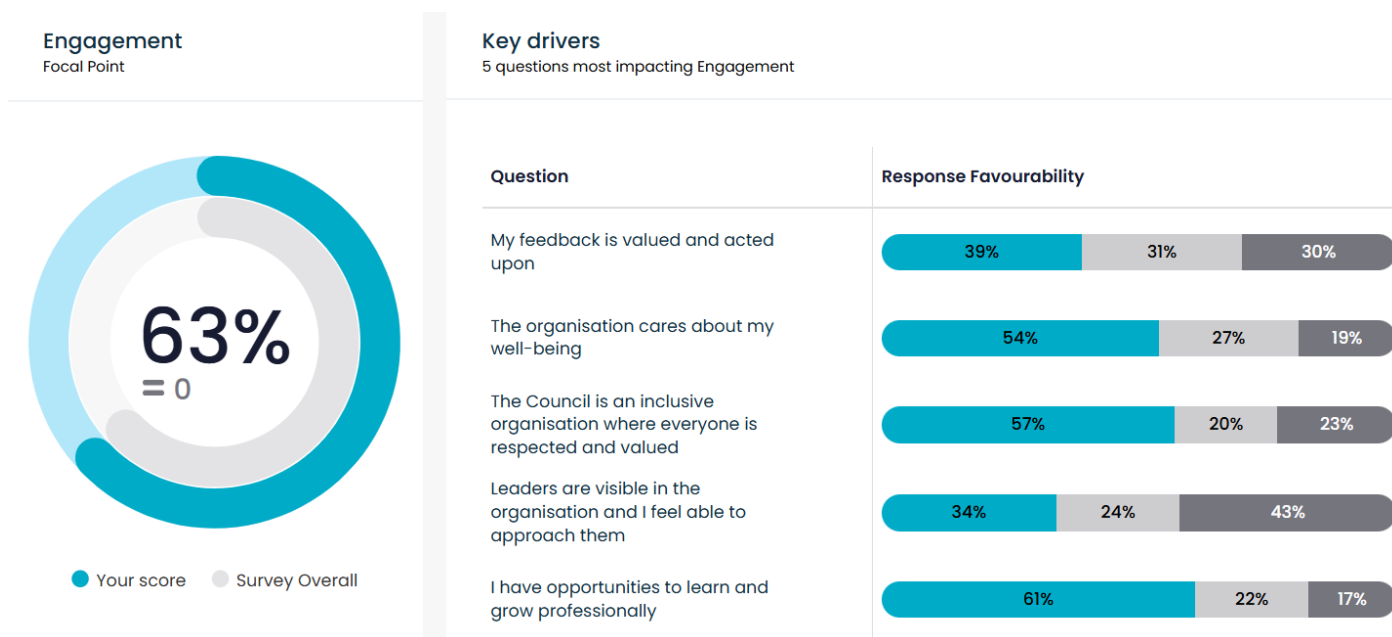
The staff survey was conducted across the organisation to gather feedback on engagement, wellbeing, leadership, and working environment. The survey included both quantitative ratings and qualitative comments, enabling a comprehensive view of employee experience.

The survey ran for 4 weeks, closing on 12th August. We had a 60% return rate. Due to staff concerns around anonymity we only asked staff to state which directorate they were in.

We have engaged People Insights, a company who specialise in surveys to support with analysis.

2.0 Headline Results

2.1 People Insights have grouped our engagement questions and provided an overarching engagement rating of 63%. Alongside this it has identified the five questions most impacting on engagement for those that responded to the survey. This is detailed below.



2.2 What's going well

Teamwork and manager support
84% agree their team works well together
79% feel supported by their manager
Work-life balance and flexibility
72% agree the organisation supports a healthy work-life balance
Meaningful work
75% find their work fulfilling and meaningful

2.3 Areas for improvement

Leadership visibility and communication
34% agree leaders are visible and approachable
39% believe feedback is acted upon
Workload and capacity

54% feel their workload is manageable
Bullying and harassment
27% reported witnessing bullying or harassment in the last 12 months, however, 65% reported they are confident in raising issues of bullying or harassment.

3.0 Action being Taken

3.1 Initial communication to staff

There has been ongoing communication with staff on how we are considering the results of the staff survey. This included initial communication providing all percentage responses, infographic and initial 'you said, we have or will' responses. Through the launch of the people strategy and action plan we have been clear how the staff survey has informed this work. Communication will be ongoing to ensure we improve staff view on their feedback being acted upon.

3.2 Senior Leadership Team (SLT) away days

As part of the SLT away days' time was spent reviewing and considering the survey results and how these influence our priorities as a leadership team. This resulted in the introduction of leadership commitments, see point 3.4 below).

3.3 People Strategy

The launch of the people strategy is a key action, and the live action plan shows how staff voice is being incorporated. Alongside this there is an action to introduce an ongoing feedback loop to ensure people feel heard. This includes the creation of two staff led groups gaining insights direct from staff. We delayed development and launch of the people strategy to allow the staff survey to take place and be fully considered in its development.

3.4 Leadership commitments

Following feedback, we introduced a leadership commitment for each theme of the people strategy. This demonstrates commitment to staff and accountability. In addition, all SLT members have made a people pledge, these have been published on the one team east devon hub. We will have this, alongside progress on the people strategy as a standing item on the SLT meeting agenda.

3.5 Directorate specific actions

Each directorate has identified three priorities specific for their directorate based on directorate specific feedback. The areas of focus for each directorate are provided at appendix 1.

3.6 Bullying and Harassment Training

A wholesale review of mandatory training is underway. As part of this we have changed the frequency requirement for our harassment, bullying and victimisation training from 3 to 2 years. In addition, new preventing sexual harassment in the workplace training was introduced in November 2025. It is positive that 65% of staff feel confident in raising bullying and harassment and given this we want to take the opportunity to explore responses further. Gaining a better understanding of what is sitting behind responses to this question, so consideration can be better given to what next steps.

3.7 Workload and Capacity

Work has taken place with Cabinet to consider organisational priorities, and this has influenced Directorate Plans, which now include a section with agreed areas where work will stop/pause. Directorate SLT's continue to priorities and are taking a more considered approach to resourcing requirements. Work will continue and plans include further exploration of responses on workload and pressure to gain a greater understanding to inform what action may be needed in this area.

3.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

People Focused, as our new people strategy is the key anchor for acting upon the results of the staff survey. The 'Focusing on Action', action plan, clearly details where feedback from the staff survey has influenced proposed action. The strategy has measurables for each theme and there will be an ongoing process of monitoring, evaluation and reporting linked to the people strategy actions. This will include regular reporting to SLT and updates at Personnel Committee. As mentioned, we also plan to do further surveys to understand key aspects in more detail and will commit to annual staff surveys moving forward. This will allow us to understand how staff are feeling, which will be key alongside the backdrop of Local Government Reorganisation.

We recognise that culture change and resulting visible improvements are a gradual process, therefore we will need to remain focussed on consistency in our approaches whilst keeping a clear vision for the future and our desired outcomes.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications from this report. (SD)

Legal implications:

This is an important survey that gives us important feedback on the way that staff are feeling. It is therefore important that we take due consideration of and act upon the outcome of that survey. This report outlines the positive steps that are being taken. MW

Appendix 1

 Housing & Health	 Place
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Having the tools and resources needed to do the job effectively2. Feeling that feedback is valued and acted upon3. Having a realistic and manageable workload	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Senior Leadership Team visibility and openness2. Capacity and workload management3. Resources and equipment to do the job effectively
 Finance	 Governance
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Finding work meaningful and fulfilling2. Feeling connected as a team3. Being connected to your line manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Gaining a greater understanding of responses to bullying and harassment2. Feeling informed about updates and changes3. Finding work meaningful and understanding what is expected

Examples of action to be taken to address these priorities

- Connecting to the frontline – back to the floor
- Being clear on what is expected but also what not to do
- Decision making matrix to go live

- Review opportunities for process simplification, remove non-value activity to support the release of capacity
- Directorate away days
- Regular team meeting with Director and Assistant Director presence
- Monitor and report on key measures relating to the customer charter
- Frequent Director drop-in sessions
- Directorate specific pulse surveys, where appropriate (ensuring we do not generate survey fatigue)

Report to: **Personnel Committee**

Date of Meeting 28 January 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Corporate Health and Safety Policy Update

Report summary:

East Devon District Council has a moral and legal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its staff, members, customers and partners. For this reason, the Council employs specialist, qualified officers who are based in the Environmental Health Service, to advise the Council on health and safety matters and ensure compliance.

It is a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 that the Council prepare a written statement of general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of employees. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy achieves this and this review ensures that it is up to date.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

- Approve the revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Council is compliant with Health and Safety law.

Officers: Matt Blythe, matt.blythe@eastdevon.gov.uk, Jeremy Prichard, Jeremy.pritchard@eastdevon.gov.uk.

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Assets and Economy
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☒ Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- ☐ Environment - Nature and Climate
- ☐ Environment - Operational
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The current policy is out of date and does not reflect recent changes to the organisation. Whilst the content is still technically accurate, being out of date does introduce some risk should an enforcement agency intervene.

Links to background information

Appendix 1 – Draft Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ A supported and engaged community
 - ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
 - ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
 - ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services
-

Report in full

1. Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, imposes duties on employers for the health and safety of its employees and non-employees who are affected by the ‘work activity’.

One of the requirements of the Act is:

Every employer to prepare and as often as may be appropriate revise a written statement of his general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of his employees and the organisation and arrangements for the time being in force for carrying out that policy, and to bring the statement and any revision of it to the notice of all of his employees.

Failure to comply with these requirements can have serious consequences – for both organisations and individuals. Sanctions include fines, imprisonment and disqualification.

2. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy

The Council has had a policy in place for many years. The latest format was first produced in 2004 and was last fully reviewed in 2017, although the Chief Executive signs an updated Health and Safety Policy Statement each year. This means that it does not fully reflect the changes that have occurred within the organisation or the wider health and safety field. As such a full review of the policy has been carried out – both as part of a wider audit and review by the Corporate Safety Team.

The review found that the technical aspects of the policy were still valid (although the majority of the detail is contained in separate arrangements – such as policies and procedures covering specific safety aspects). However structural changes have not been reflected and there some gaps in responsibilities.

The Policy has been updated to address these issues. The main changes are:

- Now reflects current structure.
- Wording updated and clarified.
- Now clarifies member responsibilities.

3. Conclusions

The updated Corporate Health and Safety Policy now reflects the structure of the Council and reflects the Council’s commitment to health and safety. It also helps the Council meet its statutory requirements.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implication arising from this report.

Legal implications:

To follow

Issue details	
Title:	Health and Safety Policy
Version number	Version 3.4
Officer responsible:	Assistant Director - Environmental Health
Approved by:	Personnel Committee
Approval Date:	
Review date	
Review date	
Review date	

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Introduction

Policy Approval

The Council's original policy was approved by Executive Board in 2004 and the Policy statement was approved and signed annually by the Council's Chief Executive. This review reflects the current management structure and clarifies arrangements for the organisation and delivery of corporate health and safety.

Why do we need a policy?

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, requires employers with five or more employees to produce a written health and safety policy. The policy identifies posts with specific responsibility for health and safety and sets out how to manage and implement the health and safety arrangements in the organisation. This will actively promote a health and safety culture and help reduce accidents and work-related ill health.

Our Policy

Successful health and safety management demands a comprehensive health and safety policy and that policy must be fully implemented and needs to be a relevant consideration in all of our decisions. The Council commits to achieving high standards of workplace health and safety and this policy is intended to promote the safety, health and well-being of our staff and contractors and to protect others who may be affected by our work activities, such as our customers and the general public. We believe that all of our employees have a vital role in protecting themselves, their work colleagues and the public from workplace hazards.

Our Approach to Risk

The Council's approach to risk management is laid out in [Risk management policy and guidance](#) which can be found on the East Devon intranet site. Consideration of risks to health and safety will be made in accordance with this policy.

How will we go about it?

This policy will be made available to all employees on Sharepoint and on the intranet. Physical copies can be provided on demand. The Health and Safety Policy Statement will be displayed on all notice boards.

All staff will be provided with suitable and sufficient training in health and safety for their job role under the umbrella of this policy and in accordance with our Health and Safety Training Matrix and any specific requirements of their role.

Some health and safety advice and guidance is presented here in this policy. The Corporate Health and Safety Team will provide advice and support on specific areas of concern on request.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team comprises:

February 2026

Version 3.4

- Assistant Director - Environmental Health
- Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises)
- Corporate Safety Officer
- Operational Health and Safety Officer

Advice is also available directly from line managers and a designated service safety officer from the relevant service area. Further information for managers is available from our Managers' guide for new employees and Managers' checklist for temporary employees.

Safety inspections of all Council workplaces may be organised and carried out by members of the Central Joint Safety Panel.

Health & Safety Policy Statement

Each year the Chief Executive will review the state of health and safety management in the Council and sign the Health and Safety Policy Statement. A pro-forma of this statement is shown in Appendix 1.

1. Responsibility for Health & Safety at East Devon District Council

1.1. **The Chief Executive** has overall responsibility for all health, safety and welfare matters within the Council and will ensure their effective and successful management. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the Council's Health and Safety Policy is applied across all Council operations and that workplace health and safety is managed corporately through a progressive strategy.

1.2. **The Leader of the Council, supported by Cabinet Members**, has the overall leadership role for the health, safety and welfare of employees and others within East Devon District Council's area of undertakings.

They will provide strategic direction and oversight by ensuring suitable resources are made available to discharge East Devon District Council's health, safety, welfare and fire responsibilities.

1.3. **The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Council & External Engagement** represents Cabinet in Corporate Health and Safety matters. The Portfolio Holder will receive reports and actively monitor and promote health and safety across the Council raising matters with Senior Management and Personnel Committee.

1.4. Council has delegated to **Personnel Committee** the power to devise and develop overall health and safety policies, training and development plans.

1.5. **Service Directors along with the Chief Executive** who make up the **Executive Leadership Team (ELT)**, shall be responsible for the application of the Council's Health and Safety Policy within their Directorates.

1.6. **Service Director – Finance** shall ensure that all liability is covered by appropriate insurance.

1.7. **Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)** is responsible for considering and recommending policies and processes which ensure the Council fulfils its obligations and responsibilities for health, safety and welfare. They will consider health and safety issues raised by the Central Joint Safety Panel. The SLT will be delegated the responsibility for implementing the Council's health and safety policy in all Services by the Chief Executive.

1.8. **Assistant Director – Environmental Health** is designated as the Corporate Health and Safety Champion responsible for promoting Health & Safety and bringing specific safety issues to SLT. They are also responsible for:

- The Council's Corporate Safety Policy and the Corporate Safety Health and Safety Action Plan;
- Developing and maintaining a training matrix specifying the minimum mandatory corporate health, safety and welfare training needs for all employees.

- Routine inspections of all Council workplaces and practices to ensure the Council's statutory obligations are being met.
- Managing the corporate safety team.
- Advising Members, Chief Executive, Service Directors and Assistant Directors on the Council's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and specifically of the health and safety implications of any unsatisfactory working conditions for Council employees.
- Liaising with the Health and Safety Executive and through the Assistant Director - People and Performance with the Council's Occupational Health Provider on relevant matters.
- Maintaining a programme for monitoring and evaluating all hazards in the District Council (Risk Mapping) relating to the prevention of accidents and illness arising from work activities including risks to the public;
- Overseeing the delivery and implementation of the Corporate Safety Action Plan.

1.9. Assistant Director – People and Performance shall provide information about and publicise corporate health and safety training opportunities. They are also responsible for:

- Making arrangements for such mandatory training as necessary and maintaining records of completed training in a reportable format via Nexus Totara.
n.b. For all non-mandatory local health and safety training identified as necessary by line managers, or through other channels, it will be the responsibility of **The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises)** and the **Corporate Safety Officer** to assist line managers by advising on the suitability and sourcing of possible courses.
- Advise the Assistant Director - Environmental Health on the implications of the Council's Safety Policy insofar as they relate to personnel matters.
- Consult and negotiate with Appointed Safety Representatives of recognised Trade Unions on those aspects of the Council's Safety Policy which affect their conditions of employment.
- Ensure that Appointed Safety Representatives of recognised Trade Unions are provided with adequate facilities and training to carry out their functions, and that arrangements are made for joint consultation;

1.10. Directors and Assistant Directors are responsible for the application of the policy within their directorates/services.

To enable this, they will:

- Ensure observance of the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act, 1974 and other relevant legislation and insist that safe working practices are observed at all times;
- Propose a Service Safety Officer to act as liaison officer for health and safety matters on his/her behalf for day-to-day matters
- Ensure that the responsibilities of the Service Safety Officers are properly assigned, accepted and performed
- Ensure that Appointed Safety Representatives of recognised Trade Unions are provided with such facilities and assistance as they may reasonably require for the purpose of carrying out their statutory functions
- Ensure the allocation of sufficient budget to meet health and safety obligations.
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient assessment are undertaken of risks to the health and safety: (a) of their employees at work, and (b) of persons not in their employment who may be affected by the conduct of their employees in connection with their undertaking. Preventative and protective measures should be adopted to combat the risks identified in the course of the risk assessment process.

1.11. **Managers must** consider the implications for health and safety in any decision they make. Where their decision may compromise health and safety or there is any uncertainty, they must discuss this with their Line Manager.

1.12. **The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises) and the Corporate Safety Officer will:**

- Act on behalf of the Assistant Director - Environmental Health and on request provide advice on all aspects of health, safety and welfare at work to all senior staff, managers, employees, partner organisations and contractors.
- Co-ordinate the Council's approach to fulfilling the terms of its Safety Policy and Arrangements and developing strategies for the effective management of health, safety and welfare.
- Monitor adherence to statutory obligations and the Council's Safety policy against previously agreed goals.
- Be responsible for planning, delivering and reporting on compliance audits, carrying out investigations of reported accidents, incidents, near misses and other workplace hazards that have been reported.
- Ensure the completion and review of the Council's Health and Safety Policy and that satisfactory arrangements are in hand for implementing this policy;

- Assess the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Policy and recommend any changes to it which may be required from time to time;
- Produce a Health and Safety Plan covering all elements of health, safety and welfare and monitoring the compliance of the Council in achieving its targets;
- Ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that managers are conversant with their responsibilities and are able to develop their knowledge and skills in order to fulfil these obligations;
- Promote and foster, through dissemination of information, training, publicity and other suitable means, cultural improvements within the Council in terms of health, safety and welfare issues applying to normal general working practices;
- Assess risks (and assist others to assess risks) to health and safety of employees, contractors and to the public in Council owned, maintained and occupied premises, depots, work areas, sites and working activities, and ensuring that necessary arrangements are made to prevent danger to health from these risks;
- Notify the Health and Safety Executive of accidents, dangerous occurrences and industrial diseases as prescribed under statutory requirements;
- Advise on the drawing up and implementation of safe systems of work and assist service managers and team leaders in researching, preparing, conducting and drafting suitable and sufficient risk assessments to reflect current best practice and covering the full range of work activity within their service areas.
- Carry out periodic inspections to identify unsafe plant, unsafe working conditions and unsafe premises;
- Ensure compliance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) through checks and audits.
- Advise on the safety and design and use of plant and equipment;
- Advise on the purchase of protective clothing and safety equipment and ensure that it is issued and used by employees correctly;
- Provide information about accident prevention techniques;
- Promote a health and safety training programme via the H&S Training Matrix and provide safety training for employees;
- Periodically review the suitability and sufficiency of the Council's mandatory corporate safety training programme and revise the programme accordingly;
- Investigate accidents, incidents and "near misses" to Council employees and other persons on Council premises or caused by a Council activity, record accident statistics and recommend means of preventing recurrences;

- Organise a fire drill/evacuation not less than twice a year or appropriate depending on Council office premises maintaining an appropriate number of fire wardens and/or fire sweepers providing them with regular refresher training and ensuring that all firefighting equipment is regularly serviced and inspected;
- Attend the Central Joint Safety Panel and provide professional advice on health and safety matters;
- Provide health and safety training and maintain records of this
- Advise Directors and Assistant Directors on their responsibilities under the Act,
- Maintaining contact on health and safety matters with the Service Safety Officers, Appointed Safety Representatives, and other local authorities, Fire Officers, and Health and Safety Executive;
- Undertake any other health, safety and welfare duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Assistant Director – Environmental Health.

1.13. **Managers and Team Leaders** are responsible to their Director and/or Assistant Director for ensuring that working conditions and personnel, employees of partner organisations and contractors under their control comply with statutory obligations relevant to the work being undertaken and also with arrangements under the Council's Safety policy and;

- be fully conversant with this policy and be responsible for its implementation within their areas of responsibility;
- have working knowledge of statutory requirements and agreed codes of practice applicable to the work on which they are engaged;
- ensure that applicable safe working practices are incorporated into their methods of work and instruction;
- report any damage or defects in plant and/or equipment immediately and take effective measures to eliminate any hazards from the areas within which employees under their control are working;
- produce written risk assessments of identified hazards to the employees or those affected by their work. Regularly review risk assessments and ensure they are updated when there is a change to practices, procedures or equipment and forwarded to the Corporate Safety Team
- restrain employees from, and not require them to take, unnecessary risks that may cause injury to themselves or others;
- ensure that all employees under their control, particularly those undergoing training, are made aware of and adopt safe working practices;

- ensure all employees under their control are issued with and make proper use of personal protective clothing and equipment appropriate to the tasks upon which they are engaged, and
- investigate and report all accidents , incidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences and take such appropriate measures as may be necessary to prevent a recurrence.
- ensure they have suitable and sufficient health and safety training.

1.14. Service Safety Officers are responsible for:

- Liaising with the Corporate Safety Officer for advice and assistance on the effects and application of the Council's Health and Safety policy within their service, and
- Advising and assisting Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers and Team Leaders and other members of staff within their service on health and safety matters.
- Co-ordinating and monitoring health, safety and welfare in their Services. These duties should include:
- monitoring the effective application of this policy.
- identifying potential hazards and dangerous practices and reporting on same to appropriate persons with a view to resolving the problems;
- liaison with the Corporate Safety Officer on health, safety and welfare issues which affect the staff of the Service;
- contact with Union Appointed Safety Representatives with the object of resolving local health, safety and welfare problems.
- Attending the Central Joint Safety Panel.

1.15. Appointed Safety Representatives of recognised trade unions will, through their Directors, be provided with such facilities and assistance as they may reasonably require for the purpose of:

- carrying out their statutory functions in accordance with the Regulations on Safety Representatives and Safety Committees 1977, and any arrangements made by or with the Council and
- co-operating with the Council on all aspects of health, safety and welfare at work and assist the Council in promoting accident prevention generally and with the distribution of relevant information to employees.
- helping the Service Safety Officers carry out their annual safety review.

1.16. Unions. The Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1977 and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996, require

the Council to consult with employees' representatives on certain matters which affect the employees they represent. These matters are:

- the introduction of any measures that may substantially affect the health and safety of employees
- the arrangements for appointing 'competent persons'
- any health and safety information that must by law be provided to employees
- the planning and organisation of health and safety training for employees
- the health and safety consequences of new technology to employees Information on these types of issues should be presented to the Safety Panel in good time so that proper consultation may take place.

1.17. The Central Joint Safety Panel provides a forum for management, employees and Unions to consider and review safety matters arising from Council activities. Specific roles include:

- The study of accident statistics and trends, so that reports can be made to management on unsafe or unhealthy conditions and practices, along with the recommendations for remedial action;
- Examination of annual health and safety inspections of all EDDC workplaces and maintaining records of this;
- Consideration of reports from **The Principal Environmental Health Officer** (Commercial Premises) and the **Corporate Safety Officer** setting out the Council's health and safety compliance audit work plan along with consideration of any completed audit reports.
- Consideration of reports from appointed safety representatives;
- The development, introduction and monitoring of safety rules and safe systems of work;
- The appraisal and monitoring of the effectiveness of safety training;
- Reviewing of safety and health communication and publicity in the workplace,
- The provision of a link with the appropriate inspectors appointed by the Health and Safety Executive;
- The extent of coverage of council activities by Corporate Health and Safety risk assessments.
- The review of existing or introduction of new health and safety policies as new legislation dictates.

The panel will consist of equal numbers of representatives of the **employers** and **employees**.

It will meet on a 3 monthly basis, but a special meeting can be convened at the instigation of the Chairman and Vice Chairman to discuss any business requiring urgent attention.

1.18. All employees shall exercise personal care for their own health, safety and welfare and for the health, safety and welfare of others who may be affected by their work activity. They will co-operate with the Council to enable it to carry out its responsibilities and statutory requirements. They must not intentionally or recklessly interfere or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare. In particular all employees shall:

- Familiarise themselves with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and relevant policies;
- Work in accordance with safe working practices relevant to any task undertaken.
- Make full use of all appropriate protective clothing and safety equipment provided by the Council.
- report any defects, hazards or other items, that could give rise to an unsafe place of work.
- Report all accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences.
- Undertake any training identified as required to deliver their role safely.

1.19. Elected Members have a key role to play in ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of entire communities. Their decisions can have a major influence on the health and safety of both local authority employees and the public.

1.20. All Contractors have a responsibility for their own safety and those affected by their work activity. They must follow agreed method statements, permits to work and any procedures/safe practices required of council employees. This includes adhering to The Management of Contractors policy.

2. Arrangements for implementing the Health and Safety Policy

2.1. Training

2.1.1. It is the Line Manager's responsibility to ensure that all employees that they supervise are given the appropriate Health and Safety training to enable them to undertake their duties within a safe working environment. Managers are required to ensure that:

2.1.2. Regular reviews of appropriate safety training are undertaken. Corporate Safety Team provide guidance to managers within the Health and Safety

Training Matrix. Managers should pay particular attention to the need to review training needs that may arise following the introduction of any new plant or machinery or as a result of implementing new processes, procedures, accidents or modified work methods.

- 2.1.3. Employee's annual Performance Excellence Review includes a formal review of any Health and Safety issues and identifies any training needs.
- 2.1.4. Each service will make the necessary arrangements for ensuring that all employees receive sufficient, 'on the job' safety training.
- 2.1.5. Records of all training undertaken are retained on the iTrent and Nexus Totara databases by the HR Training team and on the Training Matrix by the Corporate Safety Team.
- 2.1.6. All new starters will receive a basic introduction to Health and Safety through mandatory training as advised by line manager. Welcome Meetings are delivered regularly and provide an element on Health and Safety delivered by the Corporate Safety Team.
- 2.1.7. The Assistant Director - People and Performance (assisted by the Corporate Health and Safety Team) will provide mandatory Health and Safety training courses via the Nexus Totara system. The definitive list of mandatory training courses is held on Nexus Totara but corporate health and safety training currently comprises:
 - Health and Safety Induction course.
 - Introduction to Health and Safety at Work
 - Introduction to Manual Handling
 - Slips and Trips and Falls
 - Display Screen Equipment risk assessment
 - Fire Safety and Evacuation
 - Handling Workplace Stress
- 2.1.8. Many other health and safety topics are available. Training needs will be assessed annually by line managers through the performance excellence review process and those training needs will reflect the requirements shown in our training matrix and will be detailed in training and development plan for each employee.

2.2. Planning, Reporting, Safety Inspections and Audits

- 2.2.1. The Corporate Safety Team will provide an annual workplan, identifying priorities for the next financial year. This will be reported to SLT for comment and approval.
- 2.2.2. SLT will ensure that safety performance is effectively monitored through regular reporting. The Corporate Safety Team will provide an annual report and quarterly updates to SLT and to Personnel Committee.
- 2.2.3. The Corporate Safety Team will produce and deliver an ongoing programme of inspections and audits. Outcomes for each service being reported back directly to Assistant Directors and Managers and will form part of reports to SLT.
- 2.2.4. In addition SLT and Managers should make arrangements for monitoring the safety performance within their services/teams. These may include:
 - A review of arrangements for health, safety and welfare by working with each service manager with a risk mapping checklist.
 - Regular reviews of: safety arrangements, safety inspection reports, hazard reports, accident reports, and measures to improve safety within the services.
 - Review of current Health and Safety risk assessments and safe working practices.
 - Ensuring that Health and Safety is a standing item on any team meetings.
 - Supporting any relevant projects or work co-ordinated by the Corporate Safety Team that is required to deliver Council priorities.

2.3 Risk Assessment

- 2.3.1 The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 3, places a duty on employers to assess risks and hazards to the health and safety of all employees and anyone else who may be affected by their work activity.
- 2.3.2 This written assessment will enable the necessary preventative and protective measures to be identified and undertaken. A corporate Risk Assessment template is available for this purpose.
- 2.3.3 The Directors and Assistant Directors will ensure that risk assessments are undertaken by the appropriate managers. All members of staff will be involved in the risk assessment process which will cover areas such as Noise, COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health), Work Equipment, Manual Handling, Working at Height, Display Screen Equipment (DSE), and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In

addition, assessments will be required for Young People at Work, Pregnant and Nursing Mothers, Violence to Staff and Stress.

- 2.3.4 Assessments must be reviewed annually or revised if the situation, task or equipment used changes or if the situation task or equipment changes or as a result of accidents. The Corporate Safety Team can offer advice and support if required.

2.4 Accident Reporting & Recording Procedures

- 2.4.1 All accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences” must be reported by the line manager responsible for the injured employee (or by a suitable responsible colleague acting in their absence) using the on-line system and investigated so that the risk of a recurrence is minimised.
- 2.4.2 The Principal Environmental Health Officer or the Corporate Safety Officer will receive notifications of all reported accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences. They will take appropriate steps to ensure that a proportionate and timely investigation is carried out, any controls identified and implemented and complete a record of all actions taken.
- 2.4.3 If it is appropriate to do so they will make a statutory notification to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) on behalf of the Council either immediately upon receipt of qualifying accidents or incidents or immediately following a resultant absence period following the accident or incident of more than 7 days.

2.5 Hazard Reporting Procedure

- 2.5.1 Whenever a health, safety or welfare enquiry or a report of a hazard is made, the appropriate remedial measures to secure health and safety must be taken as soon as possible, if accidents are to be avoided. Normally when an employee makes a report, their supervisor or manager should be informed without delay in order that suitable action may be taken to reduce or remove the hazard. An on-line accident or incident reporting form must be completed unless it is a minor hazard that can be immediately dealt with by the employee themselves.
- 2.5.2 Employees are also encouraged to contact their Service Safety Officer to make them aware of their report. The reporting procedure is as follows:
- The on-line form is completed and sent which will inform the Corporate Safety inbox.
 - The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises) or the Corporate Safety Officer may contact the employee or line manager to check if the hazard has been dealt with.

- The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises) or the Corporate Safety Officer may need to contact the Assistant Director or refer to SLT if the hazard requires their intervention.

2.5.3 The outcome of each investigation will be reviewed and may lead to changes in the arrangements for ongoing health, safety and welfare in that service (and potentially other related services) including a further risk mapping review of that service, a review of risk assessments or the identification of a training need.

2.5.4 Each Service is responsible for ensuring that:

- All employees are made aware of the enquiry and hazard reporting procedure.
- Action is taken to produce a satisfactory conclusion to each hazard report and that the system is properly monitored.
- The reports, investigations and outcomes are reported quarterly to SLT for review.

2.6 First Aid

2.6.1 The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises), and the Corporate Safety Officer will develop and maintain a first aid training programme and arrange for the appointment of a sufficient number of qualified First-Aid trained staff to meet statutory requirements.

2.6.2 Medical advice on matters of occupational health will be sought by the Assistant Director - People and Programmes. The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises) and the Corporate Safety Officer may also contact the Employment Medical Advisory Service, where it is appropriate to do so.

2.6.3 Corporate Safety Officer will ensure that First Aid Boxes are provided and maintained at each workplace. A prescribed leaflet "General first-aid guidance for first aid boxes" will be kept in each Box.

2.6.4 Managers of services provided in remote locations will be supported with advice from The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises) and the Corporate Safety Officer.

2.6.5 The location and names of qualified "First-Aiders"/Appointed Persons will be displayed on notice boards at Blackdown House and Exmouth Town Hall.

2.6.6 All employees should seek first aid treatment for injuries received at work.

2.6.7 Details of the incident must in all cases be reported and recorded on the on-line Accident Form.

2.7 Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

2.7.1 The HSE is the body responsible for enforcing health and safety legislation in relation to local authority health and safety. The HSE may contact the Council in relation to:

- A reported accident/incident.
 - A complaint.
 - A routine inspection.
 - A matter of specific concern.
- 2.7.2 The Assistant Director Environmental Health must receive copies of all correspondence received from or sent to the HSE. They are responsible for ensuring that SLT are updated.
- 2.7.3 The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Premises)/Corporate Safety Officer must be notified of any visits/inspections to be carried out or undertaken by the HSE
- 2.7.4 Whenever possible during the inspection/visit of an HSE. Inspector, the Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial) / Corporate Safety Officer and/or representative of the Service being visited/inspected, should be present.

2.8 Other Arrangements

- 2.8.1 Relevant Health and Safety Policies and Procedures include (non-exhaustive);
- Asbestos Policies (Housing and Property Services)
 - Bomb and other Threats Policy
 - Legionella Policy
 - Lone Working Policy
 - Vibration Policy
 - Violence at Work Policy
 - Young People at Work
 - The Management of Contractors Policy

3 Outcomes

- 3.1 The policy demonstrates management's commitment and support and outlines delegated responsibility and arrangements which will:
- ensure better health and wellbeing of employees
 - reduce the number of accidents
 - reduce sickness due to work related ill health
 - help avoid litigation claims as a result of work-related accidents and ill health.

4 Performance Monitoring

4.1 Health and safety performance is monitored through:

- the Health and Safety Action Plan
- Inspections
- audits
- accident and complaint investigations
- work related ill health statistics
- accident statistics

4.2 Performance will be reported through quarterly and annual reports to ELT/SLT/Personnel Committee/Central Joint Safety Panel.

5 Policy Consultation

5.1. The Health and Safety Policy has been produced and revised in consultation with the SLT, Unison and Central Joint Safety Panel.

6. Policy Review

6.1. A full review of this policy will be carried out at least every three years. If there are any significant changes relating to health and safety this period may be brought forwards.

Appendix 1. Proforma Annual Policy Statement

East Devon District Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer, and will provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy workplace and work environment for all of its employees and those who are not its employees, e.g. customers, contractors and the public who may be affected by its activities, or in premises it makes available as a place of work. Similarly, the Council will strive to ensure the wellbeing of its employees.

The Council has the following underlying beliefs:

- The workforce is our most important asset.
- Health and Safety is a management responsibility integral to service provision and must be considered in all decision making.
- Effective Health and Safety management is based on a common understanding of risks and controlling them through good risk management.
- The preservation of human and physical resources is an important means of minimising costs.
- Accidents, ill health and incidents are usually preventable.

The Council will take all reasonably practicable steps, including making available sufficient funds and resources to meet its responsibility and ensuring the provision of:

- Safe plant, equipment and systems of work.
- A safe place to work.
- A healthy working environment.
- Sufficient welfare facilities and arrangements.
- Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.

A system of reviewing procedures and auditing their effectiveness will be maintained to ensure the proper management of Health and Safety within the authority.

- Every employee has a duty to assist the Council in achieving these aims by:
- Exercising personal care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Co-operating with the Council to enable it to carry out its responsibilities.
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfering or misusing anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.

Signed:

Date: