

Report to: **Personnel Committee**



Date of Meeting 15th April 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

HR Update

Report summary:

This report provides an overview on some key areas of activity currently taking place within Human Resources. It also highlights where papers or policies are likely to come to Personnel Committee in the future.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

- To note the content of this update.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure the Council has a policy which meets legislation, alongside consideration of the Councils Strategic Priorities, commitment to the workforce and financial implications.

Officer: Gemma Roberts, Interim Corporate Lead – Human Resources.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Various elements of this update will have an equalities impact, which will be picked up in the relevant section.

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
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Report in full

1.0 Team Update

Jo Fellows, Corporate Lead for HR left EDDC in January. This resulted in a review of the current HR structure and the following changes were implemented from 1st February.

- The Executive Support Team moved under the line management of the Chief Executive.
- The Payroll Team moved under the line management of Finance (except for the HR Support Officers who remain within HR – see below).
- The National Management Trainee moved under the line management of the Performance Team.
- Gemma Roberts, the current HR Operations Service Manager is acting up as Corporate Lead – Human Resources for a period of up to 12 months, with her HR Operations Service Manager role covered by Sue Cockayne. HR Support will be line managed by Sarah Vincent, HR Advisor.

A structure chart detailing these changes is available at appendix 1.

2.0 Pay Award

In March we completed the Local Government Association Pay Survey and attended the South West Pay Briefing. National negotiations will be ongoing and the below staff communication was included in Stay Connected on 20th March 2025.

Pay Award for 2025/26

We want to keep you informed about the latest developments in the National Pay for 2025/26. The Trade Unions (Unison, GMB and Unite) have submitted their pay claim, which includes;

- **Salary Increase:** A consolidated pay rise of at least £3,000 for all NJC employees.
- **Minimum Hourly Rate:** A clear plan to achieve a minimum pay rate of £15 per hour.
- **Annual Leave:** An additional day of annual leave for all staff.
- **Working Hours:** A reduction in the standard working week by two hours, with no loss of pay.

What Happens Next?

The National Employers are currently consulting with local authorities through online regional pay briefings. Our Corporate Lead for HR, alongside Portfolio Holder Councillor John Loudoun attended the South West Briefing last Thursday. The feedback gathered from these sessions will inform the response to the pay claim.

As you may know from previous years, these negotiations can take time. If a final agreement is not reached by 1st April (which is highly likely), as in previous years, backpay will be arranged once the 2025/26 pay award is confirmed. We'll continue to keep you updated via Stay Connected as negotiations progress.

3.0 Review of Out of Hours Arrangements

Work continues on the review of out of hours arrangements across the Council. Two reports have been presented to ELT and good progress has been made, including a draft policy being created. Specific team requirements are currently being considered and proposals will be presented to cabinet in relation to associated financial cost, discussions will begin with UNISON and the policy will be brought to the next Personnel Committee for consideration.

4.0 People Strategy

Work has begun on the development of a People Strategy. Considering Local Government Re-organisation (LGR), the strategy will be focused and aim to support the workforce in getting ready for LGR, ensuring people are in the best possible place for the transition. There will also be a focus on retaining our best people and creating an environment where people can grow and thrive. Despite LGR ELT felt it is important to develop a strategy, demonstrating our commitment to the workforce and understanding that they are our most important asset.

5.0 People Survey

A staff survey has previously been discussed at Personnel Committee, as part of the development of the People Strategy, it is proposed we move to Pulse Surveys. This will allow the organisation to continuing understand how the workforce are feeling given the ever changing environment. In addition, it is hoped pulse surveys will encourage greater engagement and completion. The induction of pulse surveys will form part of the People Strategy action plan.

6.0 Work Experience

It is that time of year when HR begin to consider plan for a work experience programme. The programme will reflect last years and look to engage young people in the work of the Council. In addition, ELT have committed to offering meaningful work experience placements to student from the Deaf Academy. We are currently seeking opportunities and working with the academy to set up our first round of placements. This will be different to our summer offer and placements may take place throughout the year.

7.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

The action plan was presented at Cabinet on 2nd April for noting. Work will now begin to implement the plan. It is proposed that Edith Stokes, our EDI Adviser will attend the next Personnel Committee to provide an update on progress.

8.0 Supporting Care Experienced Young People

We recently advertised two apprentice opportunities and, for the first time actively partnered with Devon County Council (DCC) to engage care experienced young people. Our HR team met with DCC to explore ways we can provide better support, and we're currently developing informative materials to help professionals showcase the career opportunities here at East Devon District Council. Building on our commitment, the Corporate Lead for HR is preparing an Awareness Session to deliver at May Senior Leadership Team meeting to reinforce our role as Corporate Parents. Following this, we're excited to welcome young people themselves to deliver their impactful Total Respect workshop in June/July, ensuring their voices and experiences shape how we move forward.



Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications at this stage from the recommendations in the report. There are possible implications arising from the outcome of the pay award and the out of hours review but members will be updated specifically on these going forward.

Legal implications:

There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

Human Resources – Team Changes – Effective from 1st February 2025

