

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Personnel Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 15 April 2025**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 10.35 am

#### **20 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 January 2025**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **21 Declarations of interest**

None.

#### **22 Public speaking**

None.

#### **23 Matters of urgency**

None.

#### **24 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

None.

#### **25 Carers and Special Care Leave Policy**

The new Carers and Special Leave Policy was presented to the committee, in light of the introduction of the Carer's Leave Act.

The Act aims to support employees in managing their work while fulfilling essential caregiving duties. In reviewing the requirements of the Act and the existing policy in place for compassionate leave and special care leave, the new policy had been drafted that covered the entitlement and improved upon it. This meant that the Act requirement of five days leave would also be paid leave, with the continued entitlement to special care leave of three days unpaid leave.

In response to a question about the potential abuse of the policy, the committee were reassured that the procedures and criteria, set by legislation, would be used correctly through full training for managers. The Chair voiced his view that the organisation, both through managers and employees, would act in good faith if making an application for leave using this policy.

**RESOLVED that the Carers and Special Leave Policy as set out in the report be approved.**

## 26 **People Data**

The committee received the regular update on key people data up to end February 2025.

Data highlighted included:

- Headcount decreased by 6 to 560;
- One reduction in market supplements, with annual review completed;
- Vacancies reduced from 32 to 29, with progress in some posts at the time of the meeting leaving 13 vacancies with no current known outcome. This was a clear decrease against headcount to 5.17%;
- Slight increase in time taken to fill vacancies, exacerbated by the Christmas leave period when recruitment tends to pause;
- Voluntary turnover rate was 11.56%, higher than at the end of 2023/24 year outcome of 8.89%. A detailed analysis would be presented to the committee in the year end people data report;
- Number of days lost forecast for 2024/25 per FTE is similar to the 10.05 days outcome, higher than the target of 8.5 days. Benchmarking data suggests that comparable councils are also experiencing similar levels. The committee were provided with the most common reasons for days lost and the steps taken to mitigate and offer assistance to employees.

Discussion included:

- Data comparisons with similar authorities that offer the same or similar services was more helpful for benchmarking than other authorities or the private sector;
- National benchmarking data was also taken into account;
- More detailed breakdown of the data would be set out in the annual People Data that would come before the committee at their next meeting;
- Regular scrutiny took place on the vacancies.

**RESOLVED that the committee noted the report.**

## 27 **HR Update**

The committee were provided with an update on the work of the Human Resources Team covering:

- Changes to team structure
- Pay Award – negotiations were at a national level and the outcome awaited
- Review of Out of Hours Arrangements progressing well
- People Strategy
- People Survey – using pulse surveys that were more frequent and focussed than the traditional annual staff survey
- Work Experience
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
- Supporting Care Experienced Young People

The committee welcomed the range of work carried out by the team, in particular supporting the partnership with Devon County Council to engage care experienced young people. The committee were advised of the wide range of support options that could help build a CV with skills and experience.

**RESOLVED** that the committee noted the update.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

J Loudoun (Vice-Chair)  
P Arnott  
K Blakey  
T Dumper  
E Wragg

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow

**Officers in attendance:**

Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Gemma Roberts, Interim Corporate Lead - Human Resources  
Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)

**Councillor apologies:**

E Rylance  
A Bailey  
B Bailey  
J Brown  
P Hayward  
M Martin  
T McCollum

Chair .....

Date: .....