

Report to: Personnel Committee

Date of Meeting 31st March 2026

Heading/Title: HR Update

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr John Loudoun

Director/Assistant Director: Melanie Wellman

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Key decision No

If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

1. Background

Generally, Human Resources continue to be busy with business as usual, development activity and support to key organisational projects, such as LATco, Exmouth Town Hall and considerations for Community Asset Transfer. This report provides an overview of some key areas of activity across the organisation in relation to people activity.

1.1 People Strategy & Staff Survey

We held a staff briefing on the 11th March, providing an update on Local Government Reorganisation, the people strategy, plans for the project management office and EdenServ, the new Recycling and Waste Local Authority Traded Company.

We are focusing on visibility and communication following feedback from staff in the staff survey and we hope that staff briefing support in showing the commitment to improve in these areas. A further staff briefing is being planned for 4-6 weeks to update on Directorate Plan and the year ahead.

Key areas of update in relation to the people strategy and staff survey include;

Mentoring

The introduction of a mentoring programme is something that's come through strongly via staff feedback. A framework has now been developed, and we're currently putting the infrastructure around it. Our plan is to go live in April.

Coffee & Connect

We heard from staff that they want to know each other better and connect across the organisation. This has become more of a challenge post covid so we want to be intentional in creating opportunities for people to come other and would be looking for this to be driven by staff. We held a lunchtime coffee and connect to mark International Women's Day. It went really well and we hope for more in future.

Total Reward Information

We committed to creating a one-stop show that brings together the full reward package. This has been developed and we are just in the process of finalising to then share and go live on the One Team East Devon hub. We will also look to create an external version to support recruitment and attraction



Staff Survey and Directorate Priorities

Staff feedback has been fully integrated into the people strategy action plan and as you are aware each directorate has identified three priority areas. All Directors have now agreed actions and are being communicated and discussed locally.

Staff Led Groups – How We Connect / Safe & Supported

As part of the strategy we want to ensure employees have a voice and input in different ways. To support this and ensure employee perspective is understood in key areas we are setting up two staff lead groups, relating to how we connect and how we ensure staff feel safe and supported. We have developed a purpose and terms of reference for these groups and will shortly facilitate a kick off meeting for both.

Performance Excellence Reviews (PERs) & 1-2-1 Review

To ensure PERs and 1-2-1's align with the people strategy and refreshed behaviours we are in the process of reviewing both. This includes a review of the annual timing of PERs, as the current window does not work for a number of teams.

1.2 Employment Rights Act

The Employment Rights Act 2025 represents the most significant overhaul of UK employment law in a generation. It updates and amends major existing legislation, including the Employment Rights Act 1996, and forms a central part of the Government's *Plan to Make Work Pay*, aimed at improving job security, fairness and working conditions across the labour market. The Act received Royal Assent on 18 December 2025 and is being implemented in stages across 2026 and 2027.

Work will take place over this period to ensure we comply with changes as they go live, updating policies and procedures as required. We have recently shared an update with all managers to ensure they are informed of the changes and what they mean for East Devon District Council.

1.3 Team representing East Devon at the South West Challenge

We have a team of four representing the Council at the South West Challenge on 26th March. The challenge involves making decisions about a fictional authority. It is a brilliant opportunity to showcase skills, teamwork and creativity and get a taste of what its like to be a senior manager.

1.4 We Grow - Learning and Development

Grow Our Own

We currently have 14 active apprentices. Between April 2025 and March 2026 we have had nine apprentices successfully complete their programme. Our apprentices are across a mix of levels from level 6 to 2. No levy funds have expired during the last financial year, and the Council is currently spending an average of £7,887 per month on apprenticeship training.

The government's 10% top up on levy contributions is due to be removed as part of national apprenticeship funding reforms taking effect from April 2026. This means that the Council will no longer receive the additional 10% uplift on levy payments from 2026 onwards. While this does not impact the current financial year, it will reduce the total levy funding available in future, however the actual top up payments are small in comparison to the Council's overall monthly contribution and at this stage the 10% top up is not expected to impact significantly. We will continue to ensure that apprenticeship funding is spent within 24 months to avoid losing this through expired funding and monitor closely.

Learning and Development Plan

The 2026/27 learning and development plan is currently being developed. In line with people strategy commitment under the Grow theme we are looking at the training offered and how it is delivered. Considering the 70:20:10 model, as detailed below and ensuring we offer a blend of methods, ensuring we are not only focusing on formal training opportunities but also understanding the impact of on-the-job experience and learning from colleagues (as demonstrated through the introduction of the mentoring programme). We are also considering whether full days to move to ½ days to better accommodate busy workloads.

70:20:10 Model

Human Resource Learning and Development



At the end of 2025 we piloted change and resilience workshops, which received positive feedback (see comments below) and all participants reporting increased confidence in dealing with change. Given this we are now incorporating these throughout 2026/27 as part of our committed to prepare people for Local Government Reorganisation.

“Understanding different mindsets and being able to see practical strategies and coping mechanisms was incredibly valuable. More people in our team should attend this course.”

"Learning how to deal with and understand change, and the coping mechanisms that can support this, was extremely helpful. More staff, including managers, should attend"

Linked to the review of PERs we will also be looking to introduce a learning analysis to engage managers on what is needed from the learning plan for the coming year. This will be introduced in 2026 to inform the 2027/28 plan.

1.4 Streetscene Workforce Update

Great work has been happening in Streetscene to address workforce matters. Streetscene have combined permanent and seasonal resourcing needs to better utilise agencies to meet demand. All roles have been reviewed to ensure they are only asking for essential and this has resulted in the need for a driving license being removed as a requirement for some roles. Alongside this a new application form has been created which will be used for future recruitment campaigns to support engagement and accessibility.



A recruitment fair was held on the 13th March, taking place at Camperdown Depot. This resulted in 15 people registering interesting. In addition, there are plans for date in April at Manstone Depot.

We are in the process of reviewing the induction pack to ensure a robust approach to onboarding to ensure all new starters have a positive experience.

1.5 New Benefit – Additional Voluntary Contributions



Payroll have been working hard to introduce a new benefit for staff. From May 2026 we will be offering staff the opportunity to increase their pension savings through a salary sacrifice scheme, known as additional voluntary contributions (AVC). This will result in savings on tax and national insurance (NI). The Council will also achieve an NI saving.

This is being sourced through My Money Matters who will facilitate the implementation of the scheme.

2 Recommendations/Decision

To note the content of this update.

3 Reasons for Recommendations/Decision

To ensure members of Personnel Committee are up to date with activity taking place across HR.

4 Options

N/A

5 Relevance to Council Plan/priorities

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure
- A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services

6 Financial Comments/Implications

There are no direct financial implications in the recommendations.

7 Legal Comments/Implications

There are no direct legal implications in the recommendations.

8 Risk Implications

Not applicable.

9 Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)

Equality consideration is embedded within HR practice and where required Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken for relevant work.

- 10 HR and Workforce Implications**
As detailed within main body of report.
- 11 Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)** Not applicable.
- 12 Climate Change Implications** Not applicable.
- 13 Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications** Detailed within main body of report, where applicable.
- 14 Procurement and Social Value implications** Not applicable.
- 15 Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications** Not applicable.
- 16 Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations** Not applicable.
- 17 Digital and Data** Not applicable.
- 18 Consultation and Engagement** Not applicable.
- 19 Communications** Not applicable.
- 20 Next Steps** Not applicable.
- 21 Appendices** Not applicable.
- 22 Background Papers** Not applicable.

Proposed Report Sign Off process

Please make sure you have obtained the relevant sign off and the date completed before submitting your report to Democratic Services.

	Officer Name	Date requested	Date Completed
Legal & Governance	Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer	12/3/2025	13/3/2025
Finance	Section 151 Officer or Deputy S151 Officer	17/3/2025	17/3/2025
Communications	communications@eastdevon.gov.uk		If applicable
Digital and Data	digital@eastdevon.gov.uk		If applicable
Engagement	engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk		If applicable
HR	HR Lead		If applicable
Equalities	Equality Officer		Required
Chief Executive	Chief Executive		If applicable
Director	Relevant Director	12/3/2025	Required
Assistant Director(s)	Relevant Assistant Director(s)	N/A	Required
Cabinet Lead Member(s)	Relevant Lead Member (s)	20/3/2025	Required
Executive Leadership Team	ELT	17/3/2025	Required
Strategic Leadership Team	SLT		If applicable