Employment Committee
Wednesday 19 November 2025

A meeting of the above Committee will be held at Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa, on Wednesday 19 November 2025, at 6.00pm, available for the public to watch via the Warwick District Council YouTube channel.

Councillor M Collins (Chair)

Councillor I Davison	Councillor J Payne
Councillor K Gorman	Councillor S Syson
Councillor R Hales	Councillor N Tangri
Councillor R Margrave	Councillor C Wightman
Councillor J Melrose	Councillor H Yellapragada

Agenda

1. **Apologies & Substitutes**

   (a) to receive apologies for absence from any Councillor who is unable to attend; and
   (b) to receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, notice of which has been given to the Chief Executive, together with the name of the Councillor for whom they are acting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

   Members to declare the existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

   Declarations should be disclosed during this item. However, the existence and nature of any interest that subsequently becomes apparent during the course of the meeting must be disclosed immediately. If the interest is not registered, Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

   Members are also reminded of the need to declare predetermination on any matter.

   If Members are unsure about whether or not they have an interest, or about its nature, they are strongly advised to seek advice from officers prior to the meeting.

3. **Minutes**

   To confirm the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 24 September 2025.
   (Pages 1 to 12)

4. **Corporate Apprenticeship Programme Update**

   To consider a report from People & Communications. **(Pages 1 to 12)**

5. **Chief Officer Recruitment**

   To consider a report from People & Communications. **(Pages 1 to 9)**

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Employment Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24 September 2025 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa, at 6.00pm.

Present: Councillors Collins (Chair), Davidson, Gorman, King, Melrose, Payne, Syson, and Yellapragada.

Officers: Sophie Vale – Principal Committee Services Officer; Tracy Dolphin – Head of People and Communications; and Daniel Keating – Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Business Partner

7. **Apologies and Substitutes**

(a) apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davison and Hales; and
(b) there were no substitutes.

8. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

9. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2025 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update 2025**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of People and Communications which provided an update on the planned direction of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) at Warwick District Council. This work aligned with the Council's People Strategy 2023 -2027 and would follow the appropriate Committee cycles/briefings for Councillors.

The report provided an update on the action plan (Appendix 1 to the report) from the previous September 2024 report. EDI provided a foundation for the Council's Corporate Strategy and was recognised as an integral part of the culture of the organisation, a key theme within the People Strategy and Service Area Plan for People and Communications.

The action plan detailed in Appendix 1 to the report provided an update to key initiatives.

The recommendations from the September 2024 report had been added into the Council's overall EDI plans, to look at all areas of diversity.

In September 2024, Employment Committee endorsed the commitment to the 'Race at Work Charter' which asked organisations to make a public commitment to improving equality of opportunity in the workplace with seven key objectives. These included commitments to:

1. appoint an Executive Sponsor for race equality;
2. capture ethnicity data and publicise progress;

3. commit at board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying;
4. make equity, diversity, and inclusion the responsibility of all leaders and managers;
5. take action that supported Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse employee career progression;
6. support race inclusion allies in the workplace; and
7. include Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse-led enterprise owners in supply chains.

All areas of the Race at Work Charter were being worked on through various initiatives and practices. This included endorsement of an executive sponsor as an EDI Champion; capturing Diversity Data across the organisation and publishing pay gaps as part of the guidelines; publication of the anti-hate crime statement; updates to the Dignity at Work policy; EDI training for all staff which included Allyship; fair recruitment practices; manager training on diversity and discrimination; and inclusion of equality in procurement which related to updated legislation 'Procurement Act 2023'.

The role of EDI Champion would help encompass and support EDI from a senior position. Appointing a senior leader as an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Champion showed Warwick District Council's (WDC) further commitment in this area. Part of the Race at Work Charter required an Executive Sponsor for race equality, and WDC wanted to encompass all the protected characteristics within this. The launch of the EDI champion would align with WDC's communications and engagement plan linked to the other priorities outlined in the report.

The Workforce Steering Group had endorsed the nomination that the Head of Community Protection be appointed as EDI Champion, because this service area already championed EDI related events and projects. This role would act as a lead spokesperson internally, a voice on key groups to add value and importance to engagement, and a recognised advocate for Councilor questions and the wider community. Further promotion and engagement were planned.

Disclosure rate for the self-disclosure of diversity data had reduced from 59% to 58%. This was due to a percentage of new starters opting to not disclose their data and other people leaving the organisation that had declared their diversity data. An example of ethnicity data disclosure for other local authorities (2024/2025 reporting apart from Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) which was 2019) was provided in paragraph 1.2.3 in the report.

The continued challenge to increase self-disclosure rates was being addressed by implementing a communication plan to educate employees about the importance of ethnicity disclosure, the benefits to the organisation and the impact on fostering an inclusive workplace through:

- general messaging and using the intranet;
- targeting senior leaders / managers; and
- approaching areas of the business with low disclosure rates.

The most recent campaign to all managers was sent out in August 2025.

The external website was updated to reflect WDC values and vision around EDI and also highlighted commitment to the Disability Confident Level 2 Scheme that the Council signed up to. The Recruitment Hub as well as links for new starters provided an enhanced experience for those looking at joining the Council or as part of their onboarding experience.

The anti-hate crime statement was published in August 2024 with the purpose of uniting staff and Councillors in a shared approach. This demonstrated WDC's standpoint to the public in a way that cut across all engagement and interaction with organisations, businesses and stakeholders and demonstrated that WDC was an inclusive place of work.

A hate crime was an offence committed against a person or property motivated by the perpetrator's hostility and prejudice towards people because they were seen as being different. No hate crime was acceptable.

Everyone had a right to live without fear, hostility, and intimidation from others because of who they were. Under the legislation (https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/hate-crime), this included crime based on race, religion or belief, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

The Council had now published the agreed anti-hate crime statement internally and externally. It could be found on the EDI Intranet page homepage and the external page.

The United Kingdom's Supreme Court ruled that the terms "woman" and "sex" referred to a "biological woman and biological sex" under UK equality laws. This was the result of a long-running court battle between For Women Scotland Limited and The Scottish Ministers. Whilst the wider impact of this decision on the community was not yet clear, it should be emphasised that trans and non-binary people remained protected under equality legislation through the protected characteristic of "gender reassignment".

Warwick District Council had a firm commitment to a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, discrimination, and harassment of any kind, both in the community and the workplace, as outlined in the Anti-Hate Crime Statement, and would continue to support anyone who raised an issue under the Dignity at Work Policy.

Interim guidance was published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (An interim update on the practical implications of the UK Supreme Court judgment | EHRC). However, there was a delay, with the expectation that the EHRC would publish an updated Code of Practice August/Sept 2025 and then the Employment Code of Practice at a later date. When this was published, WDC would seek legal advice and act accordingly. This would be communicated internally and externally.

The first series of Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Workshops were delivered from November 2024 to March 2025. This session highlighted key information, how to complete an EqIA and who to contact for help, feedback, and advice. So far, 52 officers had attended these sessions. There was one session per quarter planned for new starters or those looking to refresh their knowledge on the subject.

All EqIA related information was available on the EDI Intranet page, with on-going support available from the EDI Business Partner. There was also external information posted about EqIA's.

A central bank of completed EqIA's was now available as a way to access best practice and avoid EqIA's becoming lost on individual or team drives.

In 2023/2024, West Midlands Employers delivered a series of 'Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Workplace Behaviour' workshops to equip staff with the fundamentals of EDI. The key objectives for participants were to gain an understanding of EDI and the link to workplace behaviours; examine individual and organisational responsibilities and explore ways to challenge exclusionary behaviours.

294 staff attended sessions of which over 90% of participants agreed (65.3%) and strongly agreed (25.3%) that the course was beneficial to their personal development. These sessions were now a core component (mandatory) of the WDC Induction. Those staff who were not previously able to attend were required to join.

As of May 2025, 471 staff had attended the EDI and Workplace Behaviours Workshop. Immediate feedback from participants showed that most attendees self-reported being 'not confident' or 'somewhat not confident' at the start of the session, which then shifted to over 80% of participants reporting 'somewhat confident' and 'extremely confident'. Key words on the word clouds were 'interesting, informative, valuable, beneficial, useful and thought-provoking'.

This had been further supported by ongoing conversations and raising awareness through the following events:

a) 'Neurodiversity and ADHD Awareness' for all colleagues and managers – 98 attendees. 60% of staff reported feeling 'not confident' before the session, with 83% then reporting 'confident' or 'extremely confident' by the end of it. Key words reported were 'eye-opening, engaging, helpful, informative, interesting';
b) 'Neurodiversity and Autism Awareness' for all colleagues and managers – 119 attendees in total with similar feedback compared to the ADHD Awareness events. Key comments were 'engaging, informative, interesting, insightful'; and
c) information and support related to the menopause had been highly requested by staff. As a result, WDC ran two 'Menopause Awareness in the Workplace sessions' in June 2025. One for staff and one for managers. A total of 64 people attended the 'all colleagues' session, with 48 of staff reporting to feel either 'not confident' or 'neutral' around their understanding of Menopause in the Workplace. By the end of the 75-minute session, 47 shifted to 'somewhat confident' and 'extremely confident' in their knowledge and understanding.

For the 90-minute line manager session of which 35 attended, 19 started out as 'neutral' or 'not confident', transforming into 24 people in the 'extremely confident' and 'confident' category. These sessions would be repeated in November 2025, and on an annual basis.

A Menopause Awareness intranet page was created to align with the above sessions. This page contained information covered in the sessions, internal Menopause Champion videos of their lived experience, signposting, and a manager handbook. This page had 186 views since its creation.

All Councillors received an email on the 3 July 2025 with qualitative feedback, the two-week timed recordings, link to the Menopause intranet page, and more updates.

Legislation in October 2024 raised new duties for employers related to Sexual Harassment. This meant taking reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment to employees, workers, contractors from all areas, such as from colleagues, customers, external parties, and others. The Employment Committee was asked to approve the policy (Appendix 2 to the report) and associated supporting actions below.

The steps WDC had taken to meet this new duty included the following:

a) updates to the Dignity at Work Policy to explicitly define sexual harassment and all related information;
b) intranet page created which held all related information, signposting and where to get support;
c) new addition to risk assessments and a checklist for managers
d) new quiz on Meta to direct people to the updated Dignity at Work Policy and ensure understanding of the new duty;
e) updates in the EDI & Workplace Behaviours Workshop to include information on sexual harassment;
f) updates to the HR for Non-HR manager training to include information on sexual harassment;
g) Managers Forum updated in November 2024 with the new legislation and upcoming changes; and
h) Sexual Harassment Awareness training for all colleagues via Meta (ten-minute interactive module) and a 60-minute online session in September 2025 with Inclusive Employers.

In terms of alternative options, doing nothing was not an option, however, consideration of resources and capacity was imperative to consider the priorities of the Council's EDI agenda.

In response to questions from Members, the Head of People & Communications and the EDI Business Partner stated that:

- in 2021/22, WDC had moved to a new payroll system, and sensitive data was not allowed to be moved across systems. Prior to this, 97% of diversity data had been declared, but the new system meant that all employees needed to declare again;
- because most people had provided diversity data as a new starter, it had been difficult to encourage people to fill it in again;
- there had been six campaigns to encourage self-disclosure;
- because it was not mandatory, WDC could not force people to self-disclose, but encouraged people to fill in the form as 'preferring not to say' was still useful data;
- WDC was part of the West Midlands Equality Network and did regular benchmarking exercises with other local authorities. WDC was not

doing anything different to its peers; the lack of data was mainly due to the new payroll system and the subsequent difficulties with getting people to redeclare;
- the most recent campaign had used a multi-media approach and had tried to promote the benefits of diversity data as an incentive to get people to declare;
- it was challenging to overcome the friction between staff knowing they should self-disclose, and actually logging on to iTrent to fill it in;
- WDC received an annual report from Warwickshire County Council about disclosure rates. The report showed that a major contribution to the lack of data was the ratios of people leaving and joining;
- they were very careful about how data was interpreted. Analysis would not be undertaken if a sample was so small that individuals were at risk of being identified;
- managers had attended a meeting in which external support had been brought in to educate on menopause awareness. At the meeting, they asked for two volunteers – one male, one female - to become menopause champions for the Council;
- the male perspective on menopause had been included in subsequent training videos on the subject;
- menopause was a difficult subject for some, but it was important to provide appropriate signposting and ensure that staff felt that they had support;
- out of the 160 employees who attended the menopause awareness training sessions, approximately 30% had been men. This was somewhat representative of the wider Council, which consisted of 60% female and 40% male employees;
- if any employee disclosed a disability, the Council would ensure reasonable adjustments were made where necessary and would refer to Occupational Health for further assistance. Disability support was tailored to individual need;
- from a training and awareness perspective, there was non-HR manager training available which covered disability;
- WDC was a disability competent employer, meaning that any disabled applicant who met the essential criteria for a role was automatically shortlisted for interview;
- the updated sexual harassment policy, if approved, would be uploaded onto the Council's intranet to ensure access by all employees; and
- the Inclusive Employers membership would not be renewed. It had been useful but was not meeting value for money expectations. Annual membership was £3900, which gave access to two 60-minute training sessions and online resources. Sessions on their own cost £850 plus VAT.

Members thanked officers for their work on this campaign, and emphasised the importance of continuing EDI initiatives.

It was proposed by Councillor Margrave, seconded by Councillor Melrose and

Resolved that

(1) the follow up actions from the EDI Update Report Sept 2024 (Appendix 1 to the report) be noted; and

(2) the Sexual Harassment Policy and associated actions (Appendix 2 to the report) be approved.

11. **Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Reporting as at 31 March 2025**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of People and Communications which presented the mandatory gender pay gap information that must be reported to Central Government and published on the Warwick District Council (WDC) website. It also presented the Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting and recommended its publication by the Council.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, with effect from 30 March 2018, it was a requirement to report and publish specific gender pay gap information. The report was the seventh annual statement.

Although this was not a legal requirement, in June 2020 the Council decided that "in order to support its consideration of the report and the monitoring of the action plan, the Council required the publication of relevant annual data, including an Ethnicity Pay Gap report alongside the current Gender Pay Gap report". The WDC gender pay and ethnicity pay gap reporting figures had been calculated using the standard methodologies used in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. The data included the following types of staff: employees with a contract of employment (part-time, full-time, permanent and fixed term) and casuals/workers (glossary in Appendix 1 to the report).

Under the Equal Pay Act 1970, men and women must receive equal pay for:

- the same or broadly similar work;
- work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation scheme; or
- work of equal value.

WDC had a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex or ethnicity. In order to achieve this WDC:

- operated job evaluation methodology to grade all jobs, using the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme to ensure that jobs were paid fairly;
- ensured that allowances were awarded fairly and consistently across the Council; and
- re-evaluated job roles and pay grades as necessary to ensure a fair structure.

For the purposes of pay gap reporting as at 31 March 25, Warwick District Council paid 546 people, 320 females (59%), 226 male (41%).

Bonus pay definition was classed as "any remuneration that was in the form of money, vouchers, securities, securities options or interests in securities and related to profit sharing, productivity, performance, incentive or commission." Non-consolidated bonuses were included. For WDC, this captured Long Service Awards and one-off honoraria payments.

The table at paragraph 2.1 in the report showed the WDC Gender Pay Gap figures as at 31 March 2025, together with a comparison of the 31 March 2024 figures, the 31 March 2023 figures, and the earliest recorded figures at 31 March 2018.

In summary, the mean gender pay gap had diminished by 1% from 2024 to 2025, this was due to more women being in the upper pay quartile since records began in 2018. Relating to the median gender pay gap, a positive trend had been identified from 2018 to 2024 with no change for 2025.

- The Mean Gender pay gap was 10.7%
  - a decrease of 1% since 31 March 2024
  - a decrease of 4.6% since 31 March 2018

- The Median Gender pay gap was 7.6%
  - the same as 31 March 2024
  - a decrease of 3.3% since 31 March 2018

- The Mean Gender Bonus pay gap was -33.2% and the Median bonus pay gap was -40%. These figures were skewed due to a greater than average one-off honorarium payment.

- The percentage of women in the lower quartile was 53.3%
  - a decrease of 20.1% since 31 March 2024
  - a decrease of 9.7% since 31 March 2018

- The percentage of women in the lower middle quartile was 65.4%
  - an increase of 1.4% since 31 March 2018

- The percentage of women in the upper middle quartile was 57.4%
  - a decrease of 7.2% since 31 March 2024
  - a decrease of 3.6% since 31 March 2018

- The percentage of women in the upper quartile was 58.4%
  - an increase of 15.9% since 31 March 2024
  - an increase of 20.4% since 31 March 2018

WDC continued to review and promote the inclusive benefits of the organisation as part of the ongoing Recruitment, Retention, and Remuneration project, these included:

- flexible working - all employees had a statutory right to request flexible working. This right applied from the first day of employment. Employees did not have an automatic right to work flexibly. All requests would be given serious consideration and agreed unless there was a genuine business reason not to. This included a contractual change to the number of hours worked, the times at which they were worked and the work location. This could help people remain in a role that best reflected their skills, whilst also having a working pattern to reflect other responsibilities;
- agile working - WDC's People Strategy, and Values reflected the ambition as an organisation to embrace digital opportunities, innovate and enable people to see work as what they do, not where they do it.

WDC delivered creative, customer-focused, high-performing services and positively contributed to the Council priorities within an agile working environment. This gave even greater flexibility on work location and managing individual work hours, with a focus on outputs;

- recruitment and representation at Senior Leadership level – the Senior Leadership team was made up of 50% female and 50% male which was representative of the local and national population. Diversity data of Chief Officer recruitment was monitored to ensure a representative pool of candidates;
- policy updates – changes to WDC Adoption policy in 2024 now matched the maternity policy where the requirement to pay back 12 weeks half pay unless returning to work for a minimum of three months was waived. This amendment also supported the aim of the Council to support family friendly policies and as a benefit in the recruitment processes; and
- menopause awareness - studies from the UK-based Fawcett Society revealed that 10% of women left their jobs due to menopause symptoms, while 25% considered leaving. WDC were continuing to work with Workforce Steering Group and internal Menopause Champions to increase awareness in this area. Following on from a session for Managers Forum, in June 2025, two Menopause Awareness in the Workplace sessions took place for colleagues and managers. There were 48 colleagues who reported either 'not confident' or 'neutral' around their understanding of Menopause in the Workplace. By the end of the 75-minute session, 47 shifted to 'somewhat confident' and 'extremely confident' in their knowledge and understanding.

  For the 90-minute manager session of which 35 attended, 19 started out as 'neutral' or 'not confident', transforming into 24 people in the 'extremely confident' and 'very confident' category. These sessions would be repeated in November 2025, and on an annual basis.

  Both sessions were recorded to enable those that couldn't attend to be able to listen to the session. A Menopause Awareness intranet page was created to align with the above sessions. This page contained information covered in the sessions, internal Menopause Champion videos of their lived experience, signposting, and a manager handbook. This page now had over 170 views since creation.

  All Councillors received an email on the 3 July 2025 with qualitative feedback, the recordings, link to the Menopause intranet page and more updates.

As a learning point from the March 2024 report, controls had been put in place to ensure that all data review underwent robust checks. It was imperative to recognise that the information reported related to ethnicity was not a mandatory requirement for staff and was voluntarily disclosed. This was stated on WDC application forms.

The continued challenge to increase self-disclosure rates was being addressed by implementing a communication plan to educate employees about the importance of ethnicity disclosure, the benefits to the organisation and the impact on fostering an inclusive workplace through:

- general messaging and using the intranet;
- targeting senior leaders / managers; and
- approaching areas of the business with low disclosure rates

The most recent campaign was launched August 2025 and WDC would continue to monitor and encourage disclosure.

Ethnicity was a special category of personal data, and therefore due to the low number of disclosures, it was not possible to provide a more detailed breakdown as this could constitute personal data and directly identify individuals. Furthermore, as a result, the data provided could not be classed as representative of the organisation, which WDC were continuing to address.

After benchmarking with other Councils, the aspirational figure for disclosure was 90% for WDC to ensure the data could be used to inform further on other areas.

The table at paragraph 3.4 in the report showed disclosure rates for other Councils. To help target groups that had 'not declared' rather than 'preferred not to say', WDC had reviewed the evaluation of the data and separated this for 2024 & 2025. This was shown in the table at paragraph 3.5 in the report.

Data calculated in previous reports had 'not declared' included in the 'White British' category. The data shown would now only compare 'white' and 'not-white' data and had not included those that had 'not declared' or 'preferred not to say' as previously.

The table at paragraph 3.6 in the report showed the WDC Ethnicity Pay Gap figures as at 31 March 2025, together with an updated comparison of the 31 March 2024.

It was not possible to provide a summary of analysis or trends for this information based on the rationale set out above.

As Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting was not mandatory, it was not possible to give a national picture for comparisons.

Addressing the underlying causes of a gender pay and ethnicity pay gap as well as developing an effective action plan, was an ongoing and iterative process, and the data should not be reviewed in isolation. The Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion action plan as part of the People Strategy had been reviewed to ensure actions could be aligned to the gender and ethnicity pay gap. This was supported by consideration of comparative data to be able to benchmark best practice both internally and externally and working with wider groups, for example the West Midlands Equalities Network.

The 'Equalities, Diversity, Inclusion, and Workplace Behaviours' sessions 2023/2024 were attended by 294 staff. 90% of participants agreed (65.3%) and strongly agreed (25.3%) that the course was beneficial to their personal development. From January 2024, the total of people attending this session was 471 which was now mandatory for new

starters.

All managers and those involved with recruitment attended 'Recruitment & Selection' training which looked at bias in recruitment, interview techniques, following a fair & clear process and related legislation. All managers attended the 'HR for non-HR Managers' training that had a focus on equality, legislation, types of discrimination, being aware of bias and being a consciously inclusive and considerate manager.

The EDI plan and approach of the Council looked at all areas of EDI. This included looking at all areas of equality and diversity when it came to Equality Impact Assessments and toolkit for managers on this. Awareness continued on significant themes and topics internal information on key areas, such as; Menopause, LGBTQ+ & History Month, Race Equality Week, Neurodiversity, ADHD and Autism Awareness Days. This ran alongside the Inclusion Calendar linked to engagement and communication of key events.

The Council continued to promote and review the benefits of working for Warwick District Council through the 'family friendly' policies, for example maternity and adoption 'pay back' scheme withdrawn; health and well-being cash plan scheme; agile working; continued development of flexible working options that supported effective work life balance; and development opportunities including an increased promotion of 'work apprenticeship' training.

In terms of alternative options, none were considered as Gender Pay Gap reporting and publishing was required by law.

In response to questions from Members, the Head of People and Communications and the EDI Business Partner stated that:

- WDC had a flexible working policy which set out the statutory right to request flexible working arrangements;
- this policy was in addition to the agile working policy, which enabled employees to work from anywhere;
- agile working was dependent upon business needs and operational requirements of a given post, as well as the certainty of confidentiality within the work space;
- the agile working policy was part of the Council's People Strategy and the commitment to smarter working practices;
- recent staff surveys had shown that staff valued agile working, and it was a benefit for recruitment and retention;
- days in the office were not mandatory on an organisational level, but could be implemented by managers depending on the requirements of a given post; and
- there was no gender pay gap reporting within ethnicity pay gap data due to a lack of data. Only 50% of non-white employees had self-reported ethnicity data, so a gender and ethnicity cross-section could not be undertaken because of the risk of identifying individuals.

It was proposed by Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Melrose, and

Recommended to Council that

(1) the Gender Pay Gap reporting as of 31 March 2025, as detailed in the report, be published and

(2) the Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting as of 31 March 2025, as detailed in the report, be published.

(The meeting ended at 6.37pm.)

CHAIRMAN
19 November 2025

Agenda Item 4

Employment Committee
19 November 2025

Title: Corporate Apprenticeship Programme Update
Lead Officer: Tracy Dolphin Head of People and Communications/ Elaine Priestley HR & Payroll Manager
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rebecca Davidson
Wards of the District directly affected: None directly impacted.

Approvals required	**Date**	**Name**
Portfolio Holder	3.11.25	Rebecca Davidson
Finance	31.10.25	Andrew Rollins
Chief Executive	31.10.25	Chris Elliott
Head of Service(s)	31.10.25	Tracy Dolphin
Section 151 Officer	31.10.25	Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer	31.10.25	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group	-	

Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	No
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No
Accessibility Checked?	Yes

Summary

This report presents an annual update in relation to the Warwick District Council Corporate Apprentice Programme as requested by Employment Committee.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Employment Committee:

(1) Notes the content of the report and the Apprenticeship Update.

(2) Notes that although the Public Sector Apprenticeship target was discontinued with effect from 31st March 2022, Warwick District Council continues to publish progress voluntarily.

1.0 **Reasons for the Recommendation**

1.1 **This is an annual report provided for Members consideration.**

1.1.1 The public sector apprenticeships target concluded on 31 March 2022. From 1 April 2022 there is no longer a target set for public sector employers.

1.1.2 The funding for the Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme is £182,500 for 2025/2026. It is important to note this is not part of service area budgets and roles are not guaranteed at the end of it.

1.1.3 As of October 2025, since its launch in 2018 the Corporate Apprentice Scheme has funded opportunities for thirty-four apprenticeships. At the time of reporting:

- 15 out of 34 secured alternative employment within the Council, 3 of whom have subsequently gone on to work elsewhere
- 8 out of 34 are still undertaking their apprenticeships
- 11 out of 34 successfully completed their apprenticeships and left for other opportunities.
- 2 left prior to completing their apprenticeship

Recent recruitment includes:
Planning Apprentice – Level 7 RTPI
Project Management Apprentice – Green Spaces L4
Horticulture Apprentice – Landscape L2

And are in the process of recruiting:
Committee Services Apprentice – Business Admin L3
Community Safety team Apprentice – Safeguarding Support Officer L3

In addition to this, outside of the Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme budget, Service area currently funds and support a further 5 apprentices.

1.1.4 It is particularly positive to report that several former Apprentices have progressed their careers to managerial and professional roles and many continue to study.

1.2 **Levy Funded Training**

1.2.1 The Apprenticeship Levy was initiated by the UK government in April 2017, for all employers paying a wage bill of more than three million per year. Employers that meet the criteria are required to pay 0.5% of their payroll each month as a levy tax. This levy can then be reinvested back into the workforce in the form of Apprenticeship training. The Apprentice Levy is calculated monthly directly from payroll using a 0.5% apportionment of the Councils Gross Pay Bill. This was calculated to be £94,130 for 2024/2025 payroll. After applying the allowance and adjustments, the total Apprenticeship Levy paid by the council for 2024/2025 payroll was £79,737.

1.2.2 The Council can access its Levy contribution plus a 10% top up (based on 99.36% of the levy paid), to fund Apprenticeship training funding each year. This equates to £87,148 for 2024/2025. Any unspent balances roll into the next year. Should the Levy funding be exceeded, 80% of excess costs would be topped up by the government.

1.2.3 To maximise the use of the Apprenticeship levy the Council has taken the opportunity to secure apprenticeship training for existing members of staff, in addition to training funded for those employed as Apprentices. In 2024/2025 £62,379 was paid to training providers. This has funded training for nineteen staff, largely at degree level.

1.2.4 To date a total of circa £725,200 of levy funded training has been accessed.
- £404,700 of Levy Funded training has been accessed for established members of staff
- £276,500 for apprentices employed via the Corporate Fund; and
- £44,000 for apprentices employed directly by Service areas.

1.2.5 Four members of staff who joined the Council as apprentices have gone on to study at degree level.

1.2.6 With effect from 1st January 2026 the government is changing how level 7 apprenticeships are funded.
'*The government is refocusing investment towards young people at the start of their working lives, rather than those already in work with higher levels of prior learning and qualifications. What's changing from 1 January: Level 7 apprenticeships will continue to be government-funded for young people aged 16 to 21, and for care leavers or those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who are under 25 at the start of their apprenticeship in England. Any apprentice who started a level 7 apprenticeship before 1 January 2026 will continue to be funded through to completion'.*

1.2.7 The Council has joined other voices, in lobbying that the level 7 RTPI Chartered Town Planner should be excepted as a vital pathway into the profession to bolster the capacity to deliver the increasing need for housing. Currently up to 70% of those studying via the Chartered Town Planner apprenticeship work and train in Local Government and without access to levy funding they will not be able to train and enter the planning workforce.

1.2.8 To support our Development Services team an RTPI Apprentice has been recently recruited, and an existing member of the team staff is being supported to study the level 7 RTPI qualification with effect from September 2025.

1.3 **Public Sector Apprenticeship Target**

1.3.1 Public sector bodies with 250 or more staff in England had a target to employ an average of at least 2.3% of their staff a as new apprentices within the period of 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2023. This has now ended but is positive to note that from a low starting point of 0.2% Warwick District Council achieved an average of 1.7% over this time. This is a significant increase from its starting point but is constrained by available funding.

1.3.2 **Public Sector Apprenticeship Reporting**

Whilst the target was abandoned in 2022 a requirement for Public Sector employers to report statistics continued. However, this is no longer the case as the DFE advised as below. '*There is no longer a statutory target for public sector apprenticeships. Given the burden placed on public sector organisations to submit their employee and apprenticeship data to the Department, feedback from providers was sought to establish the relevance of these statistics going forwards. The feedback confirmed that there would be no detriment to end reporting on public sector apprenticeships. Therefore, the department will cease to publish further Public Sector Apprenticeship statistics'*.

It is therefore no longer possible to provide benchmarking statistics. Warwick District Council data, which is published on the website, is given below.

Reporting percentages	**2017-2018**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**
Percentage of apprenticeship starts (both new hires and existing employees who started an apprenticeship) as a proportion of employment starts between 1 April to 31 March	1.5	6.2	6.4	10.7
Number of employment starts	68	79	94	75
Percentage of total headcount that were apprentices on 31 March	0.2	1.2	1.2	1.8
Percentage of apprenticeship starts (both new hires and existing employees who started an apprenticeship) between 1 April to 31 March as a proportion of total headcount on 31 March	0.2	1.0	1.2	1.7
Headcount as 31st March	476	486	495	531

1.4 **Promotion of Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme/Work Experience**

1.4.1 Some examples of how the scheme is promoted:

During the academic year 2024/2025 staff from the Human Resources team attended five Career/Job fairs/Next steps events held in schools. In addition to this during National Apprenticeship week we, together with one of our apprentices, supported the Coventry Apprenticeship Fair. These events supported promotion of not just the apprenticeship scheme but career opportunities for local government. These opportunities enable us to engage with Careers Advisers and young people in the District and the West Midlands Area to talk about career and further education opportunities not just at Warwick District Council but also within the wider area of local government.

1.4.2 During 2024/2025 the Council has continued to support requests for work experience from students within our district. Some students undertaking work experience within specific service areas, which is supplanted by our corporate work experience event which was held in July 2025. The three-day event continues to give students the opportunity to learn more about Warwick District Council and the services we provide as well as to gain valuable practical work experience. The work experience programme was open to schools within our district, schools we have been collaborating with, and the opportunity was also extended to children of members of staff. As part of the programme students had the opportunity to work within departments of their choice, learn more about important topics which may affect their careers in the future as well gain an understanding of the role of their local Council. The programme continues to be designed and run by staff from across the Council.

1.4.3 Feedback from participants included:

"They were amazing, put so much effort in and did so much to show me what their job was. I sat in on interesting meetings and the brief they set me really helped me apply what I had learned from being out and about seeing what the Council does"; "Nice to go out and about and get the general gist of how everything works"; "Interesting placement – not a place I was initially going to";"I liked how friendly people were when they were showing me things, very interesting"; "Nice people – explained everything and great advice"; "Great representation of planning and its different aspects which have helped me understand if I want to consider it as a possible career".

1.5 **Next Steps**

1.5.1 It is important to recognise the success of the Apprenticeship Programme within the Council. The number of opportunities offered is controlled by the budget available. Following the success of the 2025 recruitments, and commitments to longer-term high-level apprentices, the next tranche of recruitment will take place in 2027/28.

1.5.2 To further support and promote the Apprenticeship offering at Warwick District Council, one of our former apprentices has taken on the role of 'Apprenticeship Ambassador', their remit includes:

- Visiting careers fairs to speak to students about apprenticeships at WDC
- Being a voice and representing the current and future WDC apprentices at

corporate meetings (Ways of Working, Workforce Steering Group, Employment Committee)

- Working with HR to improve opportunities for current WDC apprentices, including the way that they work and opportunities
- Working with HR to look at the process for employing future apprentices, including the type and level of apprenticeships that are offered and the time of year they are advertised
- Working with HR to look at how to retain apprentices subject to roles available after they have completed their qualification, to keep the experience and knowledge within WDC.

1.5.3 In conjunction with this an Apprentice networking Group has been set up and launched during National Apprenticeship week with a facilitated session exploring behavioural preferences and communication styles. Following the positive feedback further sessions included 'giving and receiving feedback' and 'imposter syndrome'. This is to support personal networking, development and professional growth.

2 Alternative Options

2.1 Not considered as the scheme is linked to our Recruitment Retention and Remuneration project aligned to 'Grow your Own' talent.

3.0 Legal Implications

3.1 None

4.0 Financial Services

4.1 The Apprenticeship Scheme is funded from an allocated budget. This is regularly reviewed to ensure monitoring of the scheme where there is an overlap into the next financial year.

5. Corporate Strategy

5.1 Warwick District Council has adopted a Corporate Strategy which sets three strategic aims for the organisation as highlighted below:

5.2 **Delivering valued, sustainable services** – The Apprenticeship scheme aligns with the Corporate Strategy's aim of delivering valued, sustainable services. By putting a focus on 'grow our own', the council demonstrates its commitment to positive employment practices and an inclusive culture where people can thrive. Measurements include 'Number of apprentices that secure a permanent role with the Council'. It is important to recognise that whilst we strive to ensure a career pipeline this is dependent on roles available.

5.3 **Low cost, low carbon energy across the district -** The report primarily focuses on a review of the scheme. It does not have a direct impact on the Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy objective, nor contribute directly to this strategic aim. Indirectly, by creating an environment to 'grow our own' and working with people from different backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints, we can help to find more creative and pioneering ways to potentially help tackle issues related to sustainability and lowering carbon energy. It helps to ensure everyone has a voice and can collaborate, bringing their own unique viewpoints.

5.4 **Creating vibrant, safe, and healthy communities of the future** – By fostering a positive work environment for those starting in their careers or enhancing it further, the council indirectly supports the broader goal of community well-being, ensuring the council reflects a commitment to social responsibility, which can positively influence community perceptions. Although the report does not directly address this objective, it indirectly aligns with the council's broader vision of a vibrant and inclusive community.

6. **Environmental/Climate Change Implications**

6.1 No implications

7.0 **Analysis on the Effects of Equality**

7.1 The Council's recruitment processes include best practice in the promotion of equalities.

8.0 **Data Protection**

8.1 No implications

9.0 **Health and Wellbeing**

9.1 There is a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of existing employees utilising the training element of the apprenticeship programme to support skills and knowledge enhancement. Equally there has been feedback from teams where our new apprentices have joined to indicate a rejuvenation of having an apprentice join the team to bring new ideas, creativity and innovation.

10.0 **Risk Assessment**

10.1 There is a risk of not recruiting to posts, which is monitored.

11.0 **Consultation**

11.1 Report reviewed with SLT/JCF November 2025

Corporate Apprentice Programme Update (Appendix 1)

1. Apprentices Funded by Corporate Scheme

Apprentice Post	Qualification and Level	Service Area
April 2018 to March 2019		
Revenue Apprentice	L3 Bus Admin	Finance
Data Analyst Apprentice	L4 Data Analyst	ICT
Digital Marketing Apprentice	L3 Digital Marketing Diploma	People and Communications
Arts Development Apprentice	L3 Community Arts	Culture
NS Bus Admin	L2 Bus Admin	Neighbourhood Services
Building Control Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Development Services
April 2019 to March 2020		
Democratic Services Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Democratic Services
Construction and Surveying Apprentice	L4 Construction and Surveying	Assets
Construction and Surveying Apprentice	L3 Construction and Surveying	Assets
AAT Apprentice	L2 & 3 AAT	Finance
Arts Development Apprentice	L3 Events Asst	Culture
Licensing Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Health and Community Protection
April 2020 to March 2021		
Finance Admin Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Finance
Customer Services Advisor Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Finance
Business Admin Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Culture
Project Management Apprentice	L4 Project Management	Neighbourhood Services

Apprentice Post	Qualification and Level	Service Area
Learning and Engagement Apprentice	L3 Cultural Learning and Participation Officer	Culture
Digital Marketing	L3 Digital Marketer	People and Communications
April 2021 to March 2022		
Project Management Apprentice	L4 Project Management	Neighbourhood Services
Project Management Apprentice	L6 Project Management	ICT
April 2022 to March 2023		
Business Admin Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Development Services (Building Control)
Learning and Engagement Apprentice	L3 Cultural Learning and Participation	Culture
Business Admin Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Finance
April 2023 to March 2024		
Events Apprentice	L3 Events Asst	Culture
Climate Change Project Mgmt Apprentice	L4 Project Management	Climate Change
Digital Marketing	L3 Digital Marketer	People and Communications
Community Wellbeing Support Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Community partnership
April 2024 to March 2025		
Assistant Accountant	L2 & L3 AAT	Finance
Environment Health Officer Apprentice	L6 BSc Degree Environmental Health	Community Protection
Customer Services Apprentice	L3 Customer Service	Customer & Digital
Learning and Engagement Apprentice	L3 Cultural Learning and Participation	Culture
April 2025 Onwards		

Apprentice Post	Qualification and Level	Service Area
Project Management – Green Space Apprentice	L4 Project Management	Climate Change
Planning Apprentice	L& Chartered Town Planner	Development Services
Horticultural Apprentice	L2 Horticulture	Green Space

2. Internal Apprenticeship Training Funded by Government Levy

See table below:

Internal Apprenticeships	Qualification and Level	Service Area
Procurement	L4 Procurement Practices	Finance
Building Control	L3 Construction and Building Control	Place Arts and Economy
Monitoring Officer	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy
Planning	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy
Building Control	L6 Building Control	Place Arts and Economy
Accountancy	L7 CIMA	Finance
Audit (career grade)	L7 Internal Audit	Finance
Audit (career grade)	L7 Internal Audit	Finance
Service Desk	L6 Cyber Security	ICT
ICT	L7 MBA Senior Leader Masters	ICT
Building Consultant*	L6 Building Control	Place Arts and Economy
Business Support (Building Control) *	L6 RTPI BA Professional Management (Chartered Manager)	Place Arts and Economy

Internal Apprenticeships	Qualification and Level	Service Area
Audit	L7 Internal Audit	Finance
Accountancy *	L4 AAT	Finance
Trainee Building Surveyor *	L6 Chartered Surveyor	Assets
Planning	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy
Revenues	L5 Operations/ Departmental Manager	Finance
Planning	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy
Trainee Building Surveyor *	Building Surveying BSC L6	Housing
Audit	Internal Audit L7	Finance
Audit	Internal Audit L7	Finance
Planning	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy

*__Originally employed as apprentices__

APPRENTICE SALARY SCALES 2025

Level	Apprentice Salary bands from April 2024 including Working for Warwick Award 23 & 24 = 4.2%	
Point 1 WDC	£291.19 per week (£ £8.87 per hour) £15,194 per annum (NMW for 16-17 yr old – (£7.55)	All New Starter WDC Apprentice 1.4.25 -18% pay increase
Point 2	£385.91 per week (£10.43 per hour) £20,136 per annum (NMW for 18-20 yr old- £10.00)	18th birthday and have complete 12 months of the scheme 1.4.25 -16.3% increase
Point 3	£ 471.01 per week (£12.73 per hour) £24,577 per annum (NMW 21 & over £12.21)	21st birthday and have complete 12 months of the scheme. 1.4.25 - 6.7% increase

To be updated each year in line with appropriate rates

Apprentice rate add NMW % pay award to existing rate

(Annual rate is hourly x 37 divided by 7 x 365.25)

Levels of apprenticeship

Name	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	GCSE
Advanced	3	A level
Higher	4,5,6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

Agenda Item No 5
Employment Committee
19 November 2025

Title: Chief Officer Recruitment
Lead Officer: Chris Elliott, Chief Executive, Tracy Dolphin, Head of People and Communications
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ian Davison, Councillor Lowell Williams, Councillor Jessica Melrose
Wards of the District directly affected: All

Approvals required	**Date**	**Name**
Portfolio Holder	4.11.25	Cllr Davison/Cllr Lowell Williams/Cllr Jessica Harrison
Finance	3.11.25	Andrew Rollins
Chief Executive	3.11.25	Chris Elliott
Head of Service(s)	3.11.25	Tracy Dolphin
Section 151 Officer	3.11.25	Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer	3.11.25	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group		

Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	Yes: Recommendation to Council
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No
Accessibility Checked?	Yes

Summary

This report sets out proposals for recruitment (permanent) to the post of Strategic Director as per the guidelines set out in the Chief Officer Recruitment Process. The Council faces significant challenges in the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), its Medium-Term Financial Strategy, service demands and the requirement for stability within the Senior Leadership Team is imperative.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Committee:

(1) As per the Chief Officer Recruitment Process (Appendix 1) appoints a sub-committee of five Councillors to support the recruitment process of Strategic Director comprising of a sub-Committee of five Members to be appointed proportionate to the administration, 2 Green, 1 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 Conservative for the dates of Shortlisting 25.11.25 (14:30 – 15:30) and Final Interview 3.12.25 (12.30 – 16.00).

(2) As per the Chief Officer Recruitment Guidelines the Sub Committee agrees for the aligned Portfolio Holder(s) to attend every stage of the recruitment process to listen to the discussions and will provide their view of the candidates at the shortlisting and final interview stages. They will not form part of the decision making Sub-Committee, unless duly appointed by the relevant Committee as a member of that Sub-Committee.

1 Reasons for the Recommendation

1.1 The drivers to make a permanent appointment to this post include LGR; continuity on key projects and structures within the service area; alignment of resources to the corporate strategy; Change Programme; Customer and Digital Services deliverables and Senior Leadership capacity and resilience.

1.2 It is proposed that the process of making a permanent appointment to the Strategic Director; that a sub-Committee of five Members be appointed proportionate to the administration, 2 Green, 1 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 Conservative.

1.3 Timetable and Process

1.3.1 As per the Chief Officer Recruitment process the decision to recruit based on the needs of the organisation has been recommended to the Leader/Portfolio Holder and Chair of Employment Committee. Group Leaders have been informed of this decision.

1.3.2 This Council usually as part of its recruitment processes, advertises vacant posts internally first, as part of the process of encouraging staff development but has in some circumstances also advertised externally at the same time. It is proposed, after consideration with the Portfolio Holder and Head of People and Communications to advertise the Strategic Director role internally for this campaign based on the rationale above.

1.3.4 As per the Council's Pay Policy any posts where the salary is greater than £100,000, Employment Committee recommends the appointment to Full Council for approval. Therefore, subject to the appointment of the Strategic Director post, the Employment Sub Committee recommends the appointment to the next Full Council.

2.0 Alternative Options

There are a variety of options that could have been considered but given the political direction to achieve and consider the key priorities and direction of travel those options are not appropriate.

3.0 Legal Implications

There are no implications arising at this stage.

4.0 Financial Services

The proposals will be cost neutral.

5.0 Corporate Strategy

Warwick District Council has adopted a Corporate Strategy which sets three strategic aims for the organisation. The Senior Leadership Structure is a key aspect in in delivering valued, sustainable services in order that the Council can continue to focus its efforts and activities on the needs of its residents, communities and businesses.

6.0 Environmental/Climate Change Implications

The environmental implications of the proposals directly link with the key objectives of the Council.

7.0 Analysis of the effects on Equality

There are no direct Equality implications of the report.

8.0 Data Protection

There are no data protection implications.

9.0 Health and Wellbeing

The proposals aim to recognise that the Senior Leadership Team are experiencing exceptional demands on their time, with both statutory responsibilities and political aspirations needing to be delivered.

10.0 Risk Assessment

The risks associated with these proposals are to ensure that there are sufficient resources, capacity and continuity to address existing services and projects.

Background papers: None

Supporting documents: Chief Officer Recruitment Process (Appendix 1)

Chief Officer Recruitment Process (October 2025)

This policy applies to JNC Heads of Service, Deputy Chief Executive, Strategic Director and Chief Executive roles, as defined in the constitution as Chief Officer.

The policy refers to the Chief Executive but this role may be fulfilled by the Deputy Chief Executive or Strategic Director.

Where the procedure below refers to the Sub-Committee this will be replaced by the whole Committee when recruiting to the position of Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service.

When recruiting to the Role of Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, no Officer from the Council will be present during interviews, with exception of the Head of People & Communications and Monitoring Officer (or appointed deputies if they are unavailable or candidates) who will be available to Members.

Contents:

1. The decision to recruit
2. Temporary recruitment
3. The recruitment timetable
4. Advertising and information packs
5. Longlisting
6. The first interview
7. Selection tests
8. Shortlisting
9. The final interview
10. Making the decision
11. The job offer
12. Induction
13. Feedback to Candidates

1. The Decision to Recruit

As part of overall organisational development and recruitment processes all vacancies including those of Chief Officer level are reviewed to align with the needs of the organisation and the structures that support this. The Chief Executive will consider these points, in deciding whether or not to recommend to the Leader(s), relevant Portfolio Holder(s) and the Chair of Employment Committee that a vacant senior post should be filled, and whether on a permanent or temporary basis, (and how see Section 2). Group Leaders will be informed of this decision.

The Chief Executive will consider with the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) and Head of People and Communications whether the role should be advertised internally first or internally and externally at the same time.

In the case of a decisions to recruit to the role of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) the Head of People and Communications will liaise with the Leader of the Council and Monitoring Officer.

2. Temporary recruitment

Where it has been identified that there is a requirement to recruit on a temporary basis either as:

- Secondment
- Acting Up
- Interim

The existing Council policies/guidelines will apply.

3. The Recruitment Timetable

The recruitment timetable will be managed by Human Resources. They will produce a timetable to ensure that there is sufficient time to ensure the administration required runs smoothly based on the aligned process/guidelines.

The Employment Committee will appoint a sub-committee that in line with adopted procedures will appoint Deputy Chief Executive, Strategic Director and Heads of Service ("Chief Officers"), as set out in the Constitution.

It is vital that Members on the Sub Committee respond as soon as possible to requests for availability and consider who will be their substitute, who has to be a member of the Employment Committee, if they are not available for the process.

Employment Committee will recommend to Council the appointment of the appointments to one of the three statutory roles or posts where the salary is greater than £100,000 in line with adopted procedures (pay policy).

The final interviewing panel will consist of trained Members that participated in the shortlisting panel. Each stage of the selection process will be a separate meeting.

4. Advertising & Information Packs

The Council seek to maximise the opportunities for alternative careers for employees facing potential job loss through redundancy. The highest priority will be given to maintaining the security of staff as it is Council policy to avoid redundancy wherever possible. Therefore, staff "at risk" are provided with the opportunity to apply or could be offered the post as "suitable alternative employment" for Chief Officer positions prior to internal/external advertising. This aligns with the Redeployment Policy and Procedure which applies to all employees within the Council. If recruitment is not successful via those at risk, then wider advertising can be used. The main method of which is through the Councils web page. In addition other external methods may be used; these could include a specialised publication relevant to the service.

Advertising attracts a significant cost and it is important to monitor the response rate to different media to ensure that the right mix is being used; HR in conjunction, where relevant with external support will ensure a diverse range of publications and blended approach is applied and analysed for response rates.

Members need to be aware of the dangers of canvassing from any potential applicants; this would disqualify the applicant and could be a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.

The Portfolio Holder may attend every stage of the recruitment process to listen to the discussions and will provide their view of the candidates at the shortlisting and final interview stages. However, they will not form part of the decision making Sub-Committee, unless duly appointed by the relevant Committee as a member of that Sub-Committee. If they do not form part of the Sub-Committee written authority must be received from the Chairman of the Sub-Committee to attend.

5. Long Listing

This is the first stage of the selection process where the applications that have been received are matched against the person specification for the job. The candidates who demonstrate the closest match to the person specification will be invited for a screening interview. Where more than 20 candidates match the essential criteria those matching the essential criteria will then be assessed against the desirable criteria with no more than 20 candidates progressing to the next stage.

However, any applicant who has declared a disability and who meets the essential criteria will automatically be included in the longlisting process.

If four, or less, applications are received a decision may be made, by the Chief Executive, to forgo the longlisting and first interview stage and proceed directly to the shortlisting stage.

Long-listing will take place as soon as possible following the closing date for applications. This first stage of selection is carried out by a panel that consists of the Chief Executive, the Portfolio Holder and the Head of People & Communications. The panel may also be joined by an independent specialist advisor.

When the recruitment is to the role of the Head of Paid Service the decisions in respect of Long Listing will be taken by the Employment Committee with support from external independent advisors as considered appropriate.

6. The First Interview

This is conducted by the panel who undertook the long-listing. The purpose of this interview is to check the application and measure the candidate's qualifications, achievements and experience against the person specification. At this stage any candidates will be assessing whether the Council offers the opportunities and challenges that they are looking for. The Longlisting process must of course remain free of bias or discrimination and the decision not to invite a candidate for interview must be objectively justified.

7. Selection Testing

Selection tests may be used to support the information gained from the first interview. They are designed to further test the criteria required by the person

specification and job description and to provide candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills in different ways.

The types of tests that can use include: numerical and verbal reasoning, in-tray exercises, group exercises, written questions, behavioural assessments and presentations.

8. Short-Listing

It is the role of the Chief Executive and Head of People & Communications to guide and advise Members in relation to the shortlisting and interview process.

A short-listing meeting will be arranged as soon as possible after the first interviews. This will be in the form of a meeting of the Sub-Committee. This Sub-Committee should be politically proportionate; this is a private meeting with the need for a published agenda.

The results from the first interviews will be fed back to the meeting by the long listing Panel.

At this stage the Sub-Committee will receive copies of the application forms for those candidates who have been put forward from the first interview. Members will also receive the job description and the person specification. It is the role of Members to read the applications and familiarise themselves with the candidates who have applied and consider any questions they want to raise at the short-listing meeting.

The aim at this session is to decide which, if any, candidates are suitable to go forward to the final stage of the process. The decision must be made on demonstrable evidence taking all the information that has been gathered into account.

Members must only shortlist those candidates who have demonstrated the ability to meet all the requirements of the job. In senior level recruitment this often comes down to no more than three or four candidates. It is at this stage that members need to decide candidates to continue with the process.

Members will keep the copies of the applications for the shortlisted candidates to bring with them on the final interview day. Applications must be kept securely during this period as they contain personal data. The unsuccessful candidates' forms must be handed in to HR so that they can be destroyed appropriately

Following the short-listing meeting, HR will produce a timetable for the final interview day depending on the number of candidates chosen.

9. The Final Interview

The final interview will be a separate meeting of the Sub-Committee. This is a private meeting with a published agenda.

The membership of the Sub-Committee will be those who sat on the shortlisting. The Chair appointed by the Councillors on the Sub-Committee, will be responsible for ensuring that the interviews run to schedule.

The interview may include a presentation to the Sub-Committee. The Chief Executive, Head of People & Communications and an independent advisor, as considered appropriate, will also be present to provide advice.

The Head of People & Communications with support from the independent advisor, where considered appropriate, will supply a list of suggested questions that the Sub-Committee can choose from and agree in advance of the interviews, and who will ask which question; they will also receive a scoring sheet for summarising the assessments.

The interviews will normally start with the candidate's presentation after which the Sub-Committee may ask questions on the presentation. This is followed by an interview with all Sub - Committee members asking questions. The purpose of the questions is to draw out the candidate's skills, knowledge and experience and ask them to demonstrate how they match to the requirements of the job.

The questions are deliberately the same to all candidates to ensure consistency and fairness although Members can ask supplementary questions to follow through any points which have been made by the candidate or to encourage them to expand their answer. There may also be further questions designed specifically for the candidate based on any feedback from tests completed prior to the interview

Members should have in mind the range of answers they would expect to their question and any key points they would expect the candidates to bring out. Conducting interviews is a mentally demanding activity, necessitating the need to concentrate throughout a series of interviews, at the same time making enough notes to objectively mark each candidate against the criteria for the position.

Scoring takes place at the end of each interview, time for which is allowed in the timetable. The name of the candidate should be added to any notes made which will form part of the final paperwork.

All paperwork must be passed back to the Head of People and Communications at the end of the final interview day.

10. Making the Decision

At the end of the interview the Chair will allow time for final reflection on the candidate (s) and then invite discussion from all Sub-Committee members on each candidate in turn. The Chief Executive/HR or Independent advisor will remind the Sub-Committee of the results from the first interview stage so that these can be considered as part of the final decision.

The aim is to appoint the best candidate for the job. If this falls short of the expected standard, Members should decide not to make an offer.

11. The Job Offer

Candidates are not expected to wait too long for the outcome of the interview.

Prior to the offer being made the Chief Executive or the Head of People and Communications will write to the Cabinet to inform them of the proposal to appoint and give them a specified period (no more than 36 hours) in which to inform the Leader of the Council if they have any objections to the appointment. The Leader will consult the Cabinet on this and provide a response. This is a requirement of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 for councils operating executive arrangements.

If no objections are made the successful candidate will be contacted, by the Chief Executive or the Head of People and Communications. They will then inform the Sub-Committee and Cabinet of the decision.

It should be noted that in respect of the appointments to one of the three statutory roles or posts where the salary is greater than £100,000 (as per pay policy) it needs to be made clear that the offer is subject to confirmation by Council.

A written offer of employment will be prepared by HR subject to pre-employment checks (for external candidates).

12. Induction

The appointment will be announced via an email from the Chief Executive, Leaders and Chairman of the Sub-Committee to all Councillors and on the intranet. For certain positions the Councils strategic partners would also be informed.

It is quite likely that external appointees may have to give up to three months notice to their current employers, so it may be some time from the recruitment process to the start date during which Members may hear little or nothing of their new member of staff.

It is also quite common for external appointees to want to familiarise themselves with the Council before they start so they may decide to come to committee or Cabinet meetings as an observer. They may even be able to join training events or be present at significant decision making meetings during their notice period. These will all be part of the transition between one employer and another.

Once the official start date is reached a full induction programme will commence which will involve the new jobholder meeting Members at appropriate times.

13. Feedback to Candidates

This will be given by the Independent Advisor, Recruiting Manager or Head of People and Communications on behalf of the Council on request. Councillors will not be required to give feedback.