

AGENDA 8, Enc iii) DRAFT Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held at 4:30pm on 21st April 2026

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr Lynne Grimshaw (Chair), Cllr Louis Brown, Cllr Marjorie Chambers, Cllr David Coyle, Cllr Mark Purvis, Cllr Paul Wright

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr John Tully, Cllr Kerry Davison

ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE

Sarah Eden – Executive Officer/RFO

PC26/029 WELCOME BY THE CHAIR

The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting and reminded members of the expected standards of conduct, including the requirement to speak through the Chair, the five-minute limit on speaking, and the importance of courtesy and respect in keeping with Standing Orders.

PC26/030 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr John Tully and Cllr Kerry Davison.

PC26/031 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

None.

PC26/032 DISPENSATIONS

None to consider.

PC26/033 DRAFT MINUTES OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24TH FEBRUARY 2026

It was **AGREED to APPROVE** the minutes as a true record.

PC26/034 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee received and considered the report from the Executive Officer on the current membership arrangements of the Personnel Committee, following the amendment agreed by Full Council in January 2026.

The Executive Officer outlined the background to the current eight-members and drew attention to the practical constraint identified in the report regarding the availability of members to serve on either disciplinary and grievance hearing and appeal panels. With eight members on the Committee, only ten councillors remained outside it, creating few to make up what is usually three hearing and three appeals. The Council had experienced this but managed.

The report presented four options for the Committee's consideration, ranging from retaining the current arrangements to various reduced and hybrid models. Members discussed the options in detail.

Members noted that town and parish councils are not subject to statutory political balance requirements in the same way as principal councils but recognised the practical value of membership arrangements that broadly reflect the Council's overall composition. It was acknowledged that decisions taken by the Personnel Committee carry greater authority, and are less exposed to challenge at Full Council, where the membership is seen to be representative. Following discussion, members expressed a clear preference for a hybrid model. The Committee agreed that:

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the Chair of the Council and the **Chair of the Finance and General Services Committee** should sit as ex-officio members, given their respective roles in direct line management of the Executive Officer;
all remaining members should be elected by Full Council rather than appointed by virtue of a named role;
that the remaining **four elected members** should be appointed, with two drawn from each of the two main political groups on the Council, in order to achieve broad political representation without resort to formal proportionality rules;
this would produce a committee of six members in total, reducing the structural risk to disciplinary and appeal panel pools while maintaining appropriate oversight of employment matters.

The meeting was reminded that the Personnel Committee elects its own Chair and Vice-Chair from the membership of that committee; there is no rule or terms relating to who that should be.

It was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council that the Terms of Reference of the Personnel Committee be amended to reflect a membership of six, comprising the Chair of the Council and the Chair of the Finance and General Services Committee as ex-officio members, together with four members elected by Full Council — two from each of the two main political groups — with effect from the Annual Meeting in May 2026.

It was **NOTED** that this recommendation will be brought to Full Council alongside the full Terms of Reference review in May 2026. The Executive Officer thanked members for considering this ahead and therefore allowing these to be drawn up in advance of the Annual Meeting.

PC26/035 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **AGREED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, permitted under Section 1 (2) LGA 1960, due to the confidential nature of the business being transacted.

PC26/036 STAFFING MATTER

The Committee received a confidential report from the Executive Officer on the recruitment of a Seasonal Neighbourhood Services Operative to support delivery of the 2026 high-season programme.

The Executive Officer presented the capacity analysis and duty planner supporting the proposal, which demonstrated that the high-season programme from May to September cannot be delivered within the permanent Neighbourhood Services Officer's working week alone, and that a fixed-term seasonal appointment is the appropriate model given the nature of the seasonal workload.

Members discussed the proposal in detail. Cllrs Brown and Wright raised questions about whether consideration should be given to a permanent second operative, and whether additional responsibilities could be identified to support a full-year post. The Executive Officer noted that a permanent post could not be justified on the basis of the current confirmed programme, that the premises position remained unresolved, and that recruiting ahead of agreeing what additional work would be involved was not a good use of resource. It was acknowledged that members have been asked for future scope, and this could be part of any separate discussions on the future of Neighbourhood Services but this did not affect the recommendation before the Committee.

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Concern was raised about the use of a fixed-term seasonal contract, describing this as contrary to good labour relations and questioning whether a seasonal appointment constituted a proper employment offer. It was argued that the council had historically employed two permanent operatives and that a range of additional tasks could be undertaken by a second operative during the winter months. It was confirmed that the council had not consistently maintained two permanent operatives, there was one operative historically. The Executive Officer made clear that the recommendation had been built from a duty plan developed around the council's current confirmed responsibilities. The contract was clarified; the use of fixed-term seasonal contracts for this type of work is standard practice across the sector and is entirely consistent with the Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002.

It was suggested that that residents would be concerned if there were a staffing underspend while work in the town went undone, and that the council should be bringing forward proposals to improve the town. It was noted that the Executive Officer could only respond to what had been formally brought forward for consideration — no councillor or member of the public had identified work by the Council that was not being done and should be. If members wished to bring forward proposals for an expanded service or additional responsibilities, that should be done as a separate matter through the proper process.

The majority of the Committee did not support the objections to the recommended seasonal role. It was therefore agreed that the recommendation before the Committee was sound, and that the case for an expanded or permanent post was a separate question that should not delay the recruitment needed to deliver the programme already committed to.

Members also noted the grading position for the post, the proposed contract terms, and the financial implications as set out in the report.

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the recruitment of a Seasonal Neighbourhood Services Operative on a fixed-term contract. In view of the timescale this would be June to October/November. It was also **AGREED** that Cllrs should be encouraged to give consideration to whether there were additional responsibilities or areas of work that could support a fuller-year appointment in future, and to bring any such proposals forward for discussion in the proper way.

Meeting Ended.