

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 4 December 2025.

PRESENT

Miss H. Butler CC (in the Chair)

Mrs. L. Broadley CC
Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC
Mr. G. Cooke CC
Mr. H. Fowler CC
Mr. S. J. Galton CC
Mr. A. Innes CC

Mr. B. Lovegrove CC
Mr. J. Miah CC
Mr. P. Morris CC
Mr. O. O'Shea JP CC
Mr. P. Rudkin CC
Mrs B. Seaton CC

28. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

29. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

30. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

31. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

32. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

33. Presentation of petitions under Standing Order 35.

There were no petitions.

34. Pay Policy Statement 2026/27.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which sought approval for the submission of the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 to the

County Council for approval on 18 February 2026. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

- (i) In response to a question asked, the Director stated that the purpose of the Pay Policy Statement was to set out the Council's policies relating to the pay of its workforce. The Statement was reviewed annually and enabled elected members of the Council to make decisions on pay.
- (ii) It was noted that the most recently revised pay structure had taken effect from 1 April 2019, in order to ensure that the provisions set out by the National Joint Council (NJC) pay award for 2019/20 were met. An analysis of the pay structure was expected to take place in 2026, against considerations in relation to pay negotiations for 2026/27, an increase in the national minimum wage, and the Council's financial position, in order to determine whether a review of the structure should be required.
- (iii) A question was asked regarding the approval process of the Pay Policy Statement. The Director for Law and Governance advised that the Employment Committee, as the body responsible for determining the terms and conditions on which staff held office, was the body responsible for approving the Pay Policy Statement for submission to full County Council. Under Section 38 of the Localism Act, local authorities in England and Wales were required to produce a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year which must have been approved by full County Council. The Council was therefore required to publish the Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 on or before 1 April 2026. As the Policy Statement was not an executive function, it would not be considered by the Cabinet or by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In the event that the Committee did not approve the Policy Statement for submission to full County Council, amendment of the Policy Statement would be required, as per recommendations made by the Committee. It would then be presented to the Committee at a future meeting for approval for submission to full County Council.
- (iv) It was noted that the Council adopted a local pay and grading structure, but that it was similar to the national Local Government Pay and Grading Structure. The Council remained part of the national pay bargaining machinery and was committed to applying NJC and Joint National Council (JNC) pay awards to employees on grades 2 to 22 inclusive. The grading of all posts in the Council, except Centrally Employed Teachers, was determined using the nationally recognised Hay Job Evaluation Scheme. It was noted that all employees were usually appointed to the minimum pay point applicable to the grade of the post. However, managers had discretion in some circumstances in order to appoint to a higher pay point, subject to the maximum of the grade.
- (v) The Council continued to publish the salary paid to each of its senior officers. The figures included taxable benefits. It was noted that the Chief Executive received an additional payment for their role as Electoral Registration Officer.
- (vi) In response to a question asked regarding the last time Council employees had not received an annual salary increase, the Director agreed to provide this information following the meeting.

It was moved by Mr. J. Miah CC and seconded by Mr. B. Lovegrove:

“That the Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 be approved for submission to full County Council”.

The motion was put and carried, seven members voting for the motion and six against.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council’s Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 be approved for submission to the full County Council at its meeting on 18 February 2026.
- (b) That the Director of Corporate resources be requested to provide the Employment Committee with information relating to the last time the Council employees had not received an annual salary increase, following the meeting.

35. Workforce Report 2025-26, Quarter 2 Update.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on workforce information and performance measures for Quarter 2 of 2025/2026. This included details relating to headcount, Full Time Equivalent (FTE), absence rates and reason, and reported completion of Annual Performance Reviews (APR). A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 8”, is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

- (i) With regards to attendance management, the Director stated that return to work interviews continued to be conducted with staff by managers after any period of absence. Managers were responsible for applying the Council’s Attendance Management Policy. The Policy provided a procedure framework for managers in order to support an employee where there were concerns regarding an employee’s ability to carry out their role to a satisfactory level due to medical reasons. It was noted that managers were expected to apply the policy in a fair, consistent, and supportive manner, taking all reasonable steps to assist the employee in order to reach and maintain required levels of attendance and performance whilst balancing the need for service delivery. Where long-term illness impacted on an employee’s ability to attend work and their ability to perform their role, it was expected that most cases would be resolved within 12 months. Where concerns continued, it could be necessary for the Council to consider terminating the employee’s employment once the appropriate stage of the policy had been reached. The Director agreed to provide members with information relating to the number of employees dismissed due to poor attendance.
- (ii) With regards to support for staff experiencing mental health concerns, the Director stated that managers received training regarding managing stress at work in order to support employees within their teams. Employees could also be trained as an accredited Mental Health First Aider. The course taught individuals to recognise, understand, and respond to someone who was experiencing a mental health issue. It was noted that the wellbeing service was crucial in supporting staff to continue to work and therefore contribute to service delivery. Members were assured that where trends were identified within service areas, stress risk assessments were undertaken in order to recognise and address areas of concern.

- (iii) It was noted that the average absence rate across all public sector services was 3.8%, in comparison to the Council's average absence rate of 3.48%. The Director stated that work would continue to be undertaken in order to reduce the average absence rate to below the Council's target of 2.88%.
- (iv) It was noted that a detailed analysis of attendance management activity in the Adults and Communities Department would be presented to the Committee at the meeting on 5 February 2026.
- (v) A question was raised regarding the non-disclosed category for sickness absence. The Director stated that managers were encouraged to ensure that sickness absence data was entered into the system. However, members noted that some of this data related to individuals not declaring a reason for sickness during the self-certification period.
- (vi) In response to a question raised, the Director agreed to provide the Employment Committee with a report relating to Occupational Health, at a future meeting.
- (vii) A member questioned whether the Committee could be presented with data relating to disciplinary action and performance management, with a focus on how quickly issues were resolved. The Director suggested that this information could be presented within a future Workforce Update.
- (viii) A question was asked with regards to the cost of agency staff across the organisation. That the Director of Corporate Resources agreed to provide the Committee with information relating to the annual cost of agency staff per head, following the meeting.
- (ix) Concern was raised that context had not been presented alongside percentages relating to absence data. The Director agreed to provide context alongside percentages within future reports presented to the Committee.
- (x) With regards to the reported number of open HR Cases, the Director stated that this referred to the number of cases which were active in the system as they required ongoing monitoring. This included circumstances where the issue in question had been resolved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update on workforce information and performance measures for Quarter 2 2025/26, including details relating to headcount, Full Time Equivalent (FTE), absence rates and reason, and reported completion of Annual Performance Reviews (APR), be noted.
- (b) That the Director of Corporate Resources be requested to provide the Employment Committee with:
 - (i) A detailed analysis of attendance management activity in the Adults and Communities department, at the meeting on 5 February 2026.
 - (ii) A report relating to occupational health, at a future meeting.
 - (iii) Information relating to disciplinary action, at a future meeting.

(iv) Information relating to the annual cost of agency workers, following the meeting.

36. Organisational Change Policy and Procedure: Action Plans.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which presented the current Action Plans which contained provision for compulsory redundancy and details of progress made with their implementation. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the update of the current Action Plans which contain provision for compulsory redundancy and details of progress on their implementation, be noted.

37. Date of future Meetings.

RESOLVED:

That meetings of the Committee in 2026 would take place at 10:00 on the following dates:

5 February 2026

21 May 2026

10 September 2026

10 December 2026

38. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the remaining item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 4, 5 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

39. Working Arrangements Policy – Consultation Feedback and Implementation.

The Committee considered an exempt report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the feedback received from staff, staff network groups and trade unions, following consultation on the Council's proposed Working Arrangements Policy and Guidance, and sought a decision from the Committee regarding how the Council should proceed. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 13', is filed with these minutes. The Report was not for publication virtue of paragraphs 4, 5 and 10 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Director responded to questions regarding the proposed Working Arrangements Policy and Guidance, as well as feedback received from staff, staff network groups and trade unions. The Committee were presented with four options for consideration regarding how the Council should proceed.

It was moved by Mr. M. Charlesworth CC and seconded by Mr. H. Fowler CC:

“That Option D, as outlined within paragraph 51 of the report, be supported”.

The motion was put and carried, eight members voting for, and five voting against.

It was noted that external legal advice would be sought in order to ensure the Committee received an independent opinion. This advice would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That Option D, as outlined within paragraph 51 of the report, be supported, subject to the consideration of external legal advice which is to be presented at the next meeting of the Employment Committee.

10.00 - 11.43 am
04 December 2025

CHAIRMAN