



**Committee:** PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**Date:** TUESDAY, 3<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 2026

**Venue:** LANCASTER TOWN HALL

**Time:** 6.00 P.M.

## A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations by Councillors of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

Councillors are reminded that, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests which have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. (It is a criminal offence not to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest either in the Register or at the meeting).

Whilst not a legal requirement, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9 and in the interests of clarity and transparency, Councillors should declare any disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared in the Register, at this point in the meeting.

In accordance with Part B Section 2 of the Code Of Conduct, Councillors are required to declare the existence and nature of any other interests as defined in paragraphs 8(1) or 9(2) of the Code of Conduct.

3. **Minutes**

To receive as correct records the Minutes of meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026 (previously circulated).

4. **Items of Urgent Business authorised by the Chair**

5. **People Plan Update** (Pages 3 - 13)

Report of Organisational Development Manager.

6. **Inclusive Recruitment** (Pages 14 - 19)

Report of the OD Manager and Senior HR Business Partner.

7. **Pay Policy Statement** (Pages 20 - 43)

Report of the Chief Officer – People and Policy.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

### **(i) Membership**

Councillors Jason Wood (Chair), Caroline Jackson (Vice-Chair), Phillip Black, Paul Hart, Sally Maddocks, Paul Newton and Paul Stubbins

### **(ii) Substitute Membership**

Councillors Mandy Bannon, Keith Budden, Alan Greenwell and Sam Riches

### **(iii) Queries regarding this Agenda**

Please contact Stephen Metcalfe, Democratic Support - email [sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk).

### **(iv) Changes to Membership, substitutions or apologies**

Please contact Democratic Support email [democraticsupport@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:democraticsupport@lancaster.gov.uk).

MARK DAVIES,  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,  
TOWN HALL,  
DALTON SQUARE,  
LANCASTER, LA1 1PJ

Published on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

<b>People and OD Committee</b>
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**People Plan Update  
3 March 2026**

**Report of Organisational Development Manager**

<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>
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To provide an update on the progress of the production of the refreshed People Plan 2026-28.
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This report is public.
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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the People and OD Committee receive a progress update of the refreshed People Plan.**

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The current People Plan was developed as a three year plan (2023-26) to enable the Council Plan to be delivered through its employees. It set out five key priorities as a set of commitments: we are an employer of choice, we are one team, we are serious about learning and development, we are future focussed; and, we lead with courage and compassion.

The strategy was designed to align with Our Values and was built on a foundation of evidence gathered through staff consultation, organisational data, and external assessment via Investors In People, which result in the achievement of Established Silver.

**2.0 The creation of a new People Plan**

- 2.1 The People Plan 2023-2026 has delivered significant progress across recruitment, onboarding, wellbeing, inclusion and learning. Notable achievements included:
- Introduction of a Recruitment Strategy, including empowering managers to manage their own recruitment through a new Applicant Tracking System
  - Induction and onboarding overhauled, including the reintroduction of a refreshed corporate induction
  - Introduction of a benefits platform, including staff discount schemes and a car scheme to lease electric and plug-in hybrid cars
  - Exit interviews redesigned
  - Continued commitment to Real Living Wage
  - Wellbeing Strategy, including introduction of an employee assistance programme, counselling, team wellbeing plans, wellbeing passports and Mental Health First Aiders

- Employee Engagement Strategy, including staff survey, manager network, employee voice forum, improved internal communications, annual staff event (Connecting Colleagues)
- Inclusion Strategy to support existing active staff networks
- Introduction of a performance conversation framework, including the Annual Conversation
- Learning and Development Strategy, including protected learning time, elearning review and update, Compliance Training Policy, empowering managers through the creation of service training budgets
- Volunteering Policy introduced
- Enabled manager initiative to create a self service area for managers to access help, guidance and templates for HR issues, including the introduction of an AI 'chatbot'
- Values co-created and launched, along with a supporting behavioural framework
- Investors in People Established Silver award
- HR policy review
- Comprehensive workforce metrics created with supporting reports and analysis for leadership
- Delivery of ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management) qualifications at Levels 3 and 5 for managers
- Lancaster People Manager Essentials programme, including manager workshops, manager network, elearning, coaching offer
- Aspiring managers development: District Council Network programme, Tri-Sector Challenge, Lancaster and Morecambe aspiring manager development programme

2.2 It is now necessary to build upon the achievements and progress made, so that a refreshed and forward-looking strategy is in place over the next two years while Lancaster City Council exists in its current format. Attempts have been made to ensure the strategy:

- Responds directly to what staff have told us through surveys and focus groups
- Reflects the expectations set out in the Investors in People Silver assessment
- Meets organisational pressure around skills, performance and wellbeing.
- Aligns people development with the Council's strategic priorities and future workforce demands.

2.3 The staff survey and focus groups conducted last year clearly highlighted areas where improvements are required, including:

- Skills and career development
- Pay and benefits
- Recognition, inclusion, and clarity on how decisions are made

2.4 Investors In People identified the importance of driving improvements through data analysis, developing our approach to talent and succession pathways and the need to develop skills and knowledge in change management.

2.5 The new People Plan aims to meet the needs and expectations as described above.

### **3.0 Development of the new People Plan**

3.1 The People Plan 2026-2028 therefore draws evidence from:

- People Plan 2023-2026 progress
- Annual staff survey results and focus group insights
- Investors in People Silver Review

- Operational insights from across the council, including HR, OD and Leadership Team
- Further consultation will take place and is described below.

- 3.2 The themes identified for the updated People Plan are
- Theme 1: Thriving Through Change – helping, supporting and equipping our people through upcoming transformation projects (LGR)
  - Theme 2: Belonging, Engagement and Wellbeing – creating a workplace where everyone feels safe, included and supported
  - Theme 3: Growing Our Talent – helping our people to develop the skills, knowledge, and competence to perform and progress
  - Theme 4: Decisions Driven By Insight – using high quality data to evidence and inform strategic people management

These themes reflect what people tell us is needed, and the reality of what is upcoming.

#### 4.0 Engagement to Finalise the Plan

- 4.1 Engagement and consultation to finalise the plan will take place with the following groups:
- Trade Unions
  - People Forum
  - Manager Network
  - Other staff networks
  - Leadership Team

#### 3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 The People Plan 2026-2028 has been shaped on the current operational context as well as what colleagues have told us matters most to them: development, wellbeing, and clear leadership. It is an evolution of the current People Plan and aims to provide a realistic and prioritised work plan for Lancaster City Council until 2028, based on the progress already made.

The plan will continue to drive high performance through its people and embeds Our Values.

- 3.2 The Committee is asked to receive the update and are invited to ask questions or provide feedback.

<b>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b> <b>(including Health &amp; Safety, Equality &amp; Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):</b>
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n/a

<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>
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There are no legal implications.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications to the implementation of the strategy, other than usual spend of the corporate training budget.

**OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:**

This is the strategic work plan for the HR and OD team so will involve resource use from across the council.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Draft People Plan 2026-2028

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# Lancaster City Council People Plan 2026 – 2028

## Overview and vision

We know that our people are committed to making a difference for the residents and communities within our district, and we're incredibly proud of what we achieve on a daily basis. We are anchored by our values of Pride, Ownership, Working Together and Ambition, and have a strong sense of belonging as Lancaster City Council.

We would not be as successful a council as we are without our people and their commitment. The whole purpose of this strategy is to support our workforce to thrive. It is therefore a live document that will continuously evolve and must be owned by everyone to ensure its success.

We are aware that change is on the horizon in the near future and we will continue to work together with the passion we all share, delivering our best work, and being ready to shape future council services.

In light of this, our focus over the next two years will be on:

- Supporting people to develop the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to progress and perform well
- Creating a workplace where everyone feels safe, included, valued and supported to be able to work at their best
- Ensuring our work and decisions are driven by evidence and data
- Helping people to feel informed, equipped and supported as the council adapts and changes

We will continue to ensure that Our Values are embedded across each focus area, so that all of our people related policies, development programmes, frameworks and practices clearly reflect and reinforce them.

## Progress since the last strategy

Our People Plan 2023-26 was themed into the following outcome focussed categories following extensive consultation with our people:

- We are an employer of choice
- We are one team
- We are serious about learning and development
- We are future focussed
- We lead with courage and compassion

### Key achievements have included:

- Introduction of a Recruitment Strategy, including empowering managers to manage their own recruitment through a new Applicant Tracking System
- Induction and onboarding overhauled, including the reintroduction of a refreshed corporate induction
- Introduction of a benefits platform, including staff discount schemes and a car scheme to lease electric and plug-in hybrid cars
- Exit interviews redesigned
- Continued commitment to Real Living Wage
- Wellbeing Strategy, including introduction of an employee assistance programme, counselling, team wellbeing plans, wellbeing passports and Mental Health First Aiders
- Employee Engagement Strategy, including staff survey, manager network, employee voice forum, improved internal communications, annual staff event (Connecting Colleagues)
- Inclusion Strategy to support existing active staff networks
- Introduction of a performance conversation framework, including the Annual Conversation
- Learning and Development Strategy, including protected learning time, elearning review and update, Compliance Training Policy, empowering managers through the creation of service training budgets
- Volunteering Policy introduced
- Enabled manager initiative to create a self service area for managers to access help, guidance and templates for HR issues, including the introduction of an AI 'chatbot'
- Values co-created and launched, along with a supporting behavioural framework
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- Comprehensive workforce metrics created with supporting reports and analysis for leadership
- Delivery of ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management) qualifications at Levels 3 and 5 for managers
- Lancaster People Manager Essentials programme, including manager workshops, manager network, elearning, coaching offer
- Aspiring managers development: District Council Network programme, Tri-Sector Challenge, Lancaster and Morecambe aspiring manager development programme

## What has informed the development of this strategy

The only way to develop a strategy that delivers what our people need to perform at their best in delivering our Council Plan is to ask them what they need. This strategy has therefore been informed by the outcomes of the Staff Survey and focus groups that took place in 2025, advice from our work with Investors In People (this also involved engagement with our people), our workforce data, our workforce planning, our staff networks, our People Forum employee voice group, our managers, our Trade Unions and our Leadership Team.

What we know from this work is we have strengths and weaknesses as an organisation. We will aim to build on what we already do well, and improve the areas where people feel they could be better.

Where we are doing well:

- People feeling like they do useful work
- People having autonomy in how they deliver their work
- Team spirit: support from colleagues

Where we need to improve:

- Supporting people to develop their skills and advance their careers
- Pay and benefits
- Creating an environment where people feel that they have a voice

## What are we going to do?

### Theme 1: Thriving Through Change

- Helping our people to feel informed, equipped and supported as the organisation adapts and changes

#### What this is about

Change is a constant in the modern world, and it is no different at Lancaster City Council. Whether it is adapting to the changing needs of our communities, introducing new technologies to support our work, or transforming our entire organisation, we aim to enable our people to get to where we want to be with compassion, purpose and clarity.

#### What we will do

- Ensure we are change ready
- Support our managers to understand how to lead through change
- Provide our people with the understanding of how to be resilient through change
- Support the Local Government Reorganisation preparatory work, including ensuring that all workforce information such as job descriptions and data are up to date
- Workforce planning to fully understand our current workforce, including identifying business critical roles and single points of failure
- Transition planning, including supporting the development of a culture that reflects our values in a future new council
- Working in partnership with colleagues in neighbouring local authorities to support the transition to a new authority
- Ensure legislative changes from the amended Employment Rights Act are embedded

#### What our people will be saying

- I am well supported by my line manager
- I have everything I need to do my job well
- I am clear of what is expected of me in my role
- I can contribute to improvements in my work area
- I feel that the leadership team set clear vision and direction
- I feel the Council supports my wellbeing

#### Success indicators

- Staff survey improvements on themes relating to leadership and vision
- Number of change related concerns raised
- Evaluation of development programmes
- Completion of workforce plans
- Positive Investors In People feedback and reassessment

## Theme 2: Belonging, Engagement and Wellbeing

- Creating a workplace where everyone feels safe, included, valued and supported to be able to work at their best

### What this is about

We aim to create an environment where our people feel involved in, connected to, and supported in their work. Where people feel purposeful about the work they do and they feel they have a voice, alongside having positive work experiences, we deliver our best work for our communities.

### What we will do

- Refresh our Wellbeing Strategy
- Relaunch our employee voice forum (formerly Staff Ambassadors, now People Forum)
- Continue to deliver our Employee Engagement Strategy
- Update and relaunch our Wellbeing Passport
- Continue to support our staff networks
- Deliver our Inclusion Strategy

### What our people will be saying

- I feel a sense of belonging at the council
- I feel that I have a voice in the organisation
- I feel the Council supports my wellbeing
- I feel that our values guide the way we work
- My manager recognises when I have done a good job

### Success indicators

- Staff survey improvements on themes relating to belonging, wellbeing support and recognition
- Reduction in absence related to stress
- Participation in wellbeing initiatives and uptake of support resources
- Investors in People reassessment progress
- Diversity metrics
- Engagement metrics

### Theme 3: Growing Our Talent

- Supporting people to develop the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to progress and perform well

#### What this is about

Our people have identified skills and career development as a key area that needs to be improved. We aim to develop our learning offer and support so that people feel they are being invested in to do their jobs well both now and in the future, particularly in the context of Local Government Reorganisation. This includes supporting our people to understand and develop transferable skills.

#### What we will do

- Support our people to be ready to perform well in a newly formed authority
- Succession planning
- Career conversations to be introduced
- Further development of Lancaster People Manager Essentials workshops
- Upgrade of our existing learning management system for intelligent skills development
- Team/service development discussions as part of the Annual Conversation cycle to develop skills and knowledge
- Continue to work with local education providers to grow early-career talent pipelines
- Digital skills development

#### What our people will be saying

- I am well supported by my line manager
- I have everything I need to do my job well
- My job offers good opportunities for skills development
- My job offers good prospects for career advancement

#### Success indicators

- Investors in People reassessment progress
- Staff survey improvements on themes relating to skills and development
- Evaluation of development programmes
- Learning management system metrics – update of development activities, including apprenticeship courses
- Succession plans in place
- Career Conversation participation rates
- Annual Conversation participation rates

## Theme 4: Decisions Driven By Insight

- Using high quality data and evidence to inform strategic people management such as workforce planning and succession planning, improving the experience of working at Lancaster City Council

### What this is about

We aim to make a real difference to our people delivering services to our communities, and will determine and prioritise what we do by using real evidence and data, including workforce data, and insights from our people through the use of surveys, staff networks and other forums.

### What we will do

- Further development of our data dashboards to inform workforce decisions and risks
- Understand and use the data from our new Applicant Tracking System to enable intelligent recruitment
- Understand and use the data from our new Learning Management System to track compliance and understand learning and development needs
- Strengthen feedback loops so our people can see “you said, we did”
- Improve data and IT literacy for evidence based decision making

### What our people will be saying

- I believe that the leadership team set clear vision and direction
- I do useful work for the council
- I have everything I need to do my job well

### Success indicators

- Investors in People reassessment progress
- Staff survey improvements across all themes
- Data/IT literacy development programme uptake and evaluation
- Improved key people management metrics, eg time to hire
- Evidence based recommendations visibly shaping HR and organisational decisions

**PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Inclusive Recruitment**

**Report of the OD Manager and Senior HR Business Partner**

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide members of the People and Organisational Development Committee with details of an amendment to a report presented in November 2025 setting out on-going work to ensure that Lancaster City Council’s recruitment processes are inclusive and effective

This report is public

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1. At the People and Organisational Development Committee on 20 November 2025, a report was presented to describe the inclusive recruitment practices at Lancaster City Council.
- 1.2 Since that meeting, a new Applicant Tracking System (ATS) has been introduced, which is the system used to advertise jobs, for job applications to be made, for the selection process, and for the onboarding of successful candidates.
- 1.3 As a result of the new system, a change has been made to the report that was presented to the committee in November 2025.

**2.0 Change to the report presented in November 2025**

- 2.1 As a result of the new system, it is now not possible to receive anonymous applications. Recruiting managers are now able to view names of candidates and dates of job and educational history.
- 2.2 The change has come about as a result of making the application process simpler for candidates, who are now able to upload a CV to automatically populate some of the fields required on the application form. It is not possible for the system to hide names and dates submitted by candidates via CV.
- 2.3 The report that was presented in November 2025 is included with the particular reference to anonymised applications highlighted and crossed through.

**3.0 Conclusion**

- 3.1 Lancaster City Council remains committed to inclusive recruitment, through delivery of the Recruitment Strategy and Workforce Inclusion strategy within the over-arching People Plan. In addition the People team works closely with service areas to ensure

inclusive and effective recruitment practices to ensure that the Council is well-resourced to deliver for our residents.

4.0 **Recommendations**

4.1 This report is for noting but feedback is welcome.

<p><b>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>                  (including Health &amp; Safety, Equality &amp; Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):</p> <p>n/a</p>	
<p><b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>Update only</p>	
<p><b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
<p><b>OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
<p><b>SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS</b></p> <p>The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments</p>	
<p><b>MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS</b></p> <p>The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments</p>	
<p><b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b></p> <p>none</p>	<p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Dawn Bradley  <b>Telephone:</b> 01524 582230  <b>E-mail:</b> dbradley@lancaster.gov.uk</p>

## Inclusive Recruitment Report October 2025 – UPDATED MARCH 2026

### Introduction

Inclusive recruitment is concerned with the way an organisation designs its recruitment processes to ensure fairness and remove bias at every stage, from job design and advertising, to selection and onboarding. It ensures that the most suitable for the role is appointed, regardless of background or identity. By creating fair and transparent processes, a diverse range of talent is recruited and outcomes are improved for residents and businesses.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has conducted research that just 28% of employers train all interviewers on legal obligations and objective interview practice.

### Legal background

Uk legislation requires that employers do not discriminate against someone with a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) in the Equality Act 2010.

Lancaster City Council commits to going beyond the legislation to build an inclusive workplace where people feel able to thrive, and that they belong without needing to mask their identities.

### Stages of inclusive recruitment, including the actions being taken and future plans

The following stages are set out by the CIPD and have been used as a basis to describe the work that is currently taking place and plans for the future.

Stage	What we're doing	Future plans
Role design and job adverts	Clear templates and guidance provided, checked by HR.  Roles job evaluated.  Flexible/hybrid working offered by default (managers	Role profiles due to be launched in the new year, using Co-Pilot to transform traditional job descriptions to outcome focussed and strategic documents with plain English behaviours and competencies.

	<p>need to state if not applicable).</p> <p>Salaries clear in job adverts, starting salaries at the bottom of the grade.</p> <p>Organisational accreditations such as Disability Confident are clearly advertised.</p>	<p>Minimal use of essential requirements in person specifications – only used if absolutely necessary.</p> <p>Adverts will also be produced via Co-Pilot to ensure consistency.</p>
<p>Attracting diverse candidates</p>	<p>Marginalised groups are targeted during the advertising phase, using specific websites such as the Armed Forces site, where they are more likely to be seen.</p> <p>Applicants are invited to tell us about any reasonable adjustments required.</p> <p>Expectations are made clear in terms of how to apply, job details, benefits, the timelines for closing dates and interviews.</p> <p>Outreach work continues: jobs fairs, hosting school events, etc</p>	<p>Introduction of a new Application Tracking System (ATS) is underway – this will include tools to assess gender bias in advert wording, as well as how easy it is to read.</p>
<p>Application process</p>	<p>Applications are web based so that applicants can use computer based accessibility tools.</p> <p><del>Applications are anonymised and no sensitive data is shared with recruiting managers, including name, age, dates of</del></p>	<p>Creation of bespoke application processes dependent on manager preference</p>

	<p>employment/education, equality data.</p>	
<p>Selection process</p>	<p>Limited automatic sifting – only those who do not have the right to work in the UK are excluded from the selection process.</p> <p>Guaranteed interview scheme for those with a disability and armed forces veterans.</p> <p>Structured interviews based on the knowledge, skills and experience required – each applicant is asked the same questions and scores are allocated by a panel of interviewers. Values based questions are included, with example questions available to recruiting managers.</p> <p>Training is provided to interviewers.</p> <p>The interview panel all shortlist the candidates to interview, put the questions together as a group and agree scoring criteria (applied independently before discussing as a group).</p> <p>Use of skills based assessments is encouraged, such as situational judgement tests, work sample tasks, simulation exercises.</p> <p>Documents are checked to ensure processes are</p>	<p>Development of training for managers</p> <p>Use of updated ATS to allow applicants to choose interview slots that suit them.</p> <p>Managers take more control of the recruitment process to reduce time to recruit by increased access to the ATS which has improved means to shortlist candidates.</p> <p>Development of guidance and training to support the creation of role based selection techniques (skills based assessments)</p> <p>Use the ATS to collect feedback from all candidates to improve processes.</p>

	<p>adhered to (shortlisting matrices, etc)</p> <p>HR support for managers to offer reasonable adjustments such as providing questions in advance.</p> <p>Accessibility information provided at interview invite stage.</p> <p>Pre-employment checks do not include health questions (ie making a job offer subject to health conditions) but occupational health support is sought when appropriate</p>	
<p>Monitoring and measuring</p>	<p>Data developed to assess where successful recruits apply from (this needs to be improved however)</p>	<p>Data gathered through new ATS to inform success of recruitment.</p> <p>Inclusion efforts to be identified and evaluated</p>

**Beyond recruitment**

New starters are welcomed into the council using a refreshed induction and onboarding programme, with a standard induction list for managers to use, training that is tracked using a Learning Management System, a corporate induction where new starters are invited to meet one another and find out about the council as a whole, and through the use of Wellbeing Passport, a tool to support managers and new starter to get to know each other so that they can bring their whole self to work and be productive as soon as is reasonable. This is all supported by the Probation Policy, followed by the Annual Conversation process.

**PEOPLE AND OD COMMITTEE****Pay Policy Statement 2026/2027  
Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March****Report of the Chief Officer – People and Policy****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To ask that People and OD Committee consider and recommend to Full Council the Pay Policy Statement for 2026-2027 as required by the Localism Act 2011

**This report is public**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) **To consider and recommend to Full Council, on 25th March 2026, the Pay Policy Statement 2026-2027**

**1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 places a requirement on local authorities to publish a Pay Policy Statement by the 31st March each year. This includes the remuneration of its Chief Officers. This Statement must be approved by resolution of Council, and this function may not be delegated.

1.2 The Statement sets out the Council's arrangements relating to:

- the remuneration of its Chief Officers;
- the remuneration of its lowest-paid employees, and
- the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not Chief Officers.

1.3 The Pay Policy Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and having regard to the guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) under Section 40 of the Act.

**2.0 Proposal Details**

2.1 During the course of the year, if the Authority makes any determination relating to the remuneration or any other terms and conditions of a Chief Officer, it must comply with its Pay Policy Statement

2.2 Salary ranges are in-line with the most recent pay award. A further pay award is due wef 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

2.3 As per section 3.2 of the Pay Policy statement, the Monitoring Officer function attached to the Chief Officer – Governance post, and the Section 151 Officer role attached to

the Chief Officer – Resources posts, and their deputies, are paid an allowance for this responsibility.

- 2.4 It is noted that this allowance increased from £6,000 to £9,000 per annum from 2022/2023 but there has not been an increase since. Benchmarking suggests some other local authorities increase similar allowances in-line with the pay claims. For previous years this amounts to:

23/24	3.5% (£9,315)
24/25	2.5% (£9,548)
25/26	3.2% (£9,853)
26/27	tbc

- 2.5 It is proposed to increase the above allowances, and to include relevant back pay with immediate effect. Further increases will be in line with future national pay awards, subject to People and OD agreement.

- 2.6 Likewise it is proposed to uplift the Deputies payment using the same rationale.

**3.0 Conclusion**

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider and recommend the 2026-2027 Pay Policy to Full Council.

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):**

No notable impact.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council has a statutory obligation, pursuant to s38 of the Localism Act 2011 to approve annually a Pay Policy Statement

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Should Members agree to increasing the statutory officer allowances then there will be a financial cost due to backpay and future arrangements. However, these are considered nominal amounts and can be managed from within existing budgets.

**OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces**

There are no resource implications arising from this report

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

2026-2027 Pay Policy  
JNC Conditions of Service Handbook

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## Lancaster City Council Pay Policy Statement 2026 - 2027

### 1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011, this Pay Policy statement has been produced to reflect the Council's approach to pay policy for the year 2026/2027.
- 1.2 This statement sets out the Council's policies in relation to the remuneration of our Chief Officers and all other employees. It also clarifies the relationship between Chief Officer remuneration and the remuneration of our lowest paid employees.
- 1.3 The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate transparency with regards to setting the pay of Council employees.

### 2. Setting Terms and Conditions

- 2.1 The Council's Chief Officers, including the Chief Executive, are employed under the nationally agreed Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) terms and conditions. All other employees are employed under the nationally agreed National Joint Council (NJC) terms and conditions.
- 2.2 Pay increases relating to cost of living are agreed nationally by the NJC and JNC negotiating bodies.

### 3. Definitions of Chief Officers within Lancaster City Council

- 3.1 Chief Officers (in senior positions) within this Council are currently defined as the Chief Executive, and:
  - Chief Officer – Resources (S151)
  - Chief Officer – Governance (Monitoring Officer)
  - Chief Officer – People and Policy
  - Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change
  - Chief Officer – Sustainable Growth
  - Chief Officer – Environment and Place
  - Chief Officer – Housing and Property
- 3.2 The Monitoring Officer function attached to the Chief Officer – Governance post, and the Section 151 Officer role attached to the Chief Officer – Resources posts are paid an allowance for this responsibility.

An allowance of £9,000 (per annum) is made for the Monitoring Officer and 151 Officer functions. An allowance of £6,000 per annum is divided up and awarded pro rata to Deputies carrying out these statutory functions (e.g. 1 Deputy for each role would attract £6,000, 2 Deputies £3,000).

### 4. Remuneration of the Chief Executive

- 4.1 The post of Chief Executive (which also acts as Head of Paid Service) is paid on a fixed salary of £135,456. There has not been an agreement of pay award for 2026/2027, therefore the salary will remain the same as 2025/2026, pending any national pay award agreement.

## 5. Remuneration of other Chief Officers

- 5.1 Chief Officers are paid within a band which starts from £77,809 up to a maximum of £85,379. There has not been an agreement of pay award for 2026/2027, therefore the salary will remain the same as 2025/2026, pending any national pay award agreement.

Statutory Chief Officers are remunerated in accordance with their technical expertise and background.

## 6. Policy on Other Aspects of Chief Officer Remuneration

- 6.1 Aside from 'pay' there are other aspects of Chief Officer remuneration which are outlined below:

6.1.1 **Travel and other expenses:** reimbursed through normal Council policies and procedures in the same way for all staff.

6.1.2 **Bonuses:** The terms of employment do not provide for the payment of any bonuses.

6.1.3 **Honoraria:** through normal Council policies and procedures in the same way for all staff.

6.1.4 **Severance arrangements (for Chief Officers ceasing to hold office):**

The Council's normal policies in relation to redundancy and early retirement apply to these posts, in line with relevant regulations.

Any payments falling outside the provisions above or the relevant periods of notice within the contract of employment shall be subject to formal decision made by People and OD Committee, as per the constitution.

- 6.2 There are no provisions for any other increases or additions to Chief Officer remuneration, other than as outlined in this policy.

## 7. Returning Officer Fees

- 7.1 Fees for Returning Officers and other electoral duties are identified and paid separately for local government elections, elections to the UK Parliament and other electoral processes such as referenda. As these relate to performance and delivery of specific election duties as and when they arise, they are distinct from the process for the determination of pay for Chief Officers.

## 8 Other Chief Officer Conditions of Service

- 8.1 The other terms and conditions of service are set out in the relevant conditions of service handbooks, as follows:

**Chief Executive:** The Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives – Conditions of Service

**All other Chief Officers:** The Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers in Local Authorities – Conditions of Service

## 9. Pension Contributions

- 9.1 For all employees, including Chief Officers, where employees have exercised their right to be a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Council will

make contributions to the Pension Fund in line with the Employer contribution rates determined by the Actuary.

## **10. Recruitment of Chief Officers**

- 10.1 The Council's policy and procedures in relation to the recruitment of Chief Officers is set out within the Council's Constitution.
- 10.2 When recruiting for all posts, the Council will take full and proper account of all provisions of employment legislation and its own agreed policies.
- 10.3 The remuneration offered to any newly appointed Chief Officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment. New appointments for staff up to and including Chief Officers are normally made at the minimum of the grade for the post, although this can be varied if necessary, to ensure the best candidate can be appointed.
- 10.4 Where the Council is unable to recruit Chief Officers, or there is a need for interim support to provide cover for a substantive Chief Officer post, the Council will, where necessary, consider engaging individuals under a 'contract for service' (rather than them being direct employees of the Council). These will be sourced through a relevant recruitment process, under relevant Officer delegations, ensuring the Council is able to demonstrate the maximum value for money from securing the service.

## **11. Approval of Salary Packages in Excess of £100K**

- 11.1 Before any offer of appointment is made, the Council will ensure that salary packages in excess of £100,000 will be considered by full Council. This salary package will be defined as base salary, bonuses, fees, routinely payable allowances and any benefits in kind which are due under the contract.

## **12. Re- Employment of Former Chief Officers**

- 12.1 It is the Council's policy not to re-employ any Chief Officer who was previously made redundant from the authority / received any other severance payment, or later engage them under a contract for service or interim contract except under exceptional circumstances

## **13. Publication and Access to Information regarding Chief Officer Remuneration**

- 13.1 Upon approval by Council, the Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's website. In addition, relevant information will be reported in the Council's annual Statement of Accounts.

## **14. Payment of Lower Paid Employees within the Council**

- 14.1 The Council uses the NJC negotiated pay spine (i.e. a nationally agreed and defined list of salary points) as the basis for its local pay structure, which determines the salaries for most of its workforce. The Council uses the NJC payspine SCP 3 - 47.
- 14.2 The Council operates a Job Evaluation Scheme to determine the pay grade for posts and uses the Willis Towers Watson Global Grading Scheme. Job evaluation is carried out by the HR team and recognised Trade Unions are given the opportunity to review the scoring.
- 14.3 The Council ensures that all staff (aside from Apprentices) are paid at least the 'Real Living Wage' rate. The lowest pay rate within the pay structure is Spinal Column

Point (SCP) 3, which is uplifted to ensure the Council pays the Living Wage on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year.

- 14.4 The Council employs Apprentices who are not considered within the definition of 'lowest paid employees'. They are paid under the separate Apprentice Pay Rates, the highest of which equates to the real Living Wage rate.
- 14.5 The Hutton Report recommends the use of Chief Executive pay compared to median earnings as a relevant measure of the relationship between pay rates across the workforce and the data transparency code recommends the publication of the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median average salary of the whole of the authority's workforce.

As of 1 February 2026, the Council employed 668 full time-equivalents in post and therefore the median average salary has been calculated as the 334th occurrence which for 2025/26 equates to £31,022 per annum. The lowest earnings is currently £24,796 per annum. For 2026/27, both amounts are pay award pending.

- As of 1 February 2026, the pay levels within the Council define the multiple between the median (average) full time equivalent earnings and the Chief Executive as 1:4.37. Put simpler, the Chief Executive pay is equal to 4.37 median salary amounts
- As of 1 February 2026, the pay levels within the Council define the multiple between the lowest earnings and the Chief Executive as 1:5.46. Put simpler, the Chief Executive pay is equal to 5.46 lowest salary amounts
- The ratio is significantly below the ceiling ratio of 1:20 for the public sector recommended by The Hutton Review in order to support fair and equal pay.

As part of its overall and ongoing monitoring of alignment with external pay markets, both within and outside the sector, the Council will use available benchmark information as appropriate.

## **15. Pension Contributions**

- 15.1 Where employees have exercised their right to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Council agrees to contribute to the Scheme at rates set by Actuaries.

## **16. Payments on Termination**

- 16.1 The Council's approach to statutory and discretionary payments on termination of employment of Chief Officers, prior to retirement, is set out within its policy statement and in accordance with:
- Local Government (Early Termination of Employment Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006.
  - Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007.
  - Local Government Pension Scheme (Admin) Regulations 2008 (regulation 66).
  - The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013.
  - The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014.

## **17. Changes to Pay Policy**

- 17.1 Should any amendments be required to this policy during the year, then matters will be reported to the People and OD Committee for consideration, for subsequent referral to Council.

## **18. Accountability and Decision Making**

- 18.1 In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, People and OD Committee are responsible for decision making in relation to policies for recruitment, pay, terms and conditions and severance arrangements in relation to employees of the Council.

**JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE**  
*for*  
**LOCAL AUTHORITY CHIEF OFFICERS**

**CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**  
**HANDBOOK**

**UPDATED 8 August 2017**

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The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers of Local Authorities is the national negotiating body for the pay and conditions of service of chief officers in England and Wales.

The Authorities' Side consists of elected members nominated by the Local Government Association and the Welsh Local Government Association. The Staff Side consists representatives of GMB and UNISON.

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**NB:** All hyperlinks and email addresses contained in this Agreement are correct at the time of publication. Please notify the Joint Secretaries of any discrepancies by emailing them at the addresses shown on the cover page.

**PART 1 - CONSTITUTION**

**TITLE**

- 1 The Committee shall be known as the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”).

**SCOPE**

- 2 The Committee shall have within their scope any officer of a local authority in England and Wales who
  - a is a chief officer designated by the employing authority as the administrative and executive head
    - either i* of a separate department
    - or ii* of a particular function or servicewhich in either case is regarded by the authority as important in relation to the total activities of the authority;  
or
  - b is designated by the authority as a recognised deputy to any chief officer covered by (a) above including an officer of deputy status but whose post may carry a different title.

**MEMBERSHIP**

- 3 The Committee shall consist of 36 members, appointed as follows:-

Representing local authorities:

Local Government Association	9
Welsh Local Government Association	1

Representing officers:

GMB	23
Unison	3

- 4 If any of the organisations named in paragraph 3 hereof fail to appoint the number of representatives provided for by the Constitution, such failure to appoint shall not vitiate the decisions of the Committee always providing the quorum referred to in paragraph 13 is met. In the event of any member of the Committee or any sub-committee thereof being unable to attend any meeting of the Committee or of the sub-

committee, as the case may be, the organisation represented by such member shall be entitled to appoint another representative to attend and vote in his/her place.

- 5 A member of the Committee shall automatically retire on ceasing to be a member of the organisation which he/she represents.
- 6 On the occurrence of a casual vacancy, a new member shall be appointed by the organisation in whose representation the vacancy occurs and shall sit until the end of the period for which his/her predecessor was appointed.

## **FUNCTIONS**

- 7 The functions of the Committee shall be to secure the largest possible measure of joint action in respect of the salaries and service conditions of officers within the scope of the Committee; and to seek to resolve any differences between a local authority and its officers which may be referred to the Committee, in accordance with procedures to be determined by the committee from time to time.

## **PROCEDURE**

- 8 **Sub-Committees** The Committee may appoint from their own members such sub-committees as they may consider necessary and with such authorities as they may from time to time determine. The reports of all sub-committees shall be submitted to the full Committee.
- 9 **Chair and Vice-Chair** The Committee shall appoint annually a Chair and Vice-Chair. When the Chair is a member of the Authorities' Side, the Vice-Chair shall be appointed from the Officers' Side and vice versa. The Chair shall be held in alternate years by a member of the Authorities' Side and a member of the Officers' Side. The Chair, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair, shall preside at all meetings of the Committee. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair at any meeting, a chair shall be elected to preside. In no case shall a Chair have a second or casting vote.
- 10 **Officers** The Committee shall appoint joint secretaries and a treasurer.
- 11 **Meetings** Meetings of the Committee shall be held as often as may be necessary, and the Chair shall call a special meeting if so requested by one-third of either side of the Committee. The notice summoning any special meeting shall state the nature of the business proposed to be transacted thereat, and no other matters shall be discussed. A special meeting shall take place within fourteen days after the request has been received.

- 12 **Voting** Voting in the Committee and in sub-committees shall be by show of hands or otherwise as the Committee or sub-committee, as the case may be, shall determine. No resolution shall be regarded as carried unless it has been approved by a majority of the members entitled to vote present on each side of the Committee or sub-committee, as the case may be.
- 13 **Quorum** The quorum of the Committee shall be 10, consisting of 4 representatives of local authorities and 6 of the officers. In the absence of a quorum the Chair shall vacate the chair, and the business then under consideration shall be the first business to be discussed either at the next ordinary meeting or at a further special meeting to be held within fourteen days after the date fixed for the first special meeting, as the case may be. The quorum of a sub-committee shall, subject to any directions given by the Committee, be determined by the sub-committee.
- 14 **Notices of meetings** All notices of meetings of the Committee and of any sub-committee thereof shall be sent to the respective members at least seven clear days before the date of the meeting.

## **FINANCE**

- 15 The expenses of the Committee, excluding any necessary travelling or subsistence expenses incurred by the members, shall be shared equally by the two sides.

## **ARBITRATION**

- 16 In the event of a dispute over terms and conditions of employment arising between the two sides of the Committee on any matter of general application to staff or of application to particular classes of staff, the dispute shall, at the request of either side, be reported to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service by the Joint Secretaries with a request that the matter be referred for settlement by arbitration. The arbitration award shall be accepted by the two sides, and shall be treated as though it were an agreement between the two sides.

## **AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION**

- 17 Alterations in the Constitution of the Committee shall be made as follows:
  - a in paragraph 3 of this Constitution any change to the organisations represented on each Side, shall be a matter for each Side to determine.
  - b all other clauses can only be changed with the assent of both Sides.

## **PART 2 – CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

### **1. APPLICATION OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS GENERALLY**

A chief officer shall enjoy terms and conditions in other respects not less favourable than those accorded to other employees of the local authority. Where terms and conditions are not specified locally, 'Green Book' provisions shall apply. Such terms and conditions may include:

- Adoption Scheme
- Car Allowances
- Continuous Service
- Grievance
- Health, Safety & Welfare
- Maternity / Paternity Scheme
- Reimbursement of Expenditure
- Sickness Scheme
- Training & Development

### **2. QUESTIONS OF INTERPRETATION**

Any questions concerning the interpretation of the paragraphs of this booklet shall be referred to the Joint Secretaries who if necessary, may agree to refer it to the Joint Negotiating Committee for determination.

### **3. PERIODS OF NOTICE TO TERMINATE EMPLOYMENT**

The period of notice on either side will normally be three months, but this can be changed by mutual agreement.

### **4. ANNUAL LEAVE**

The chief officer shall be entitled to a minimum of 30 days' annual leave (in addition to statutory and other public holidays but inclusive of any long service leave, extra statutory and local holidays). In exceptional circumstances and by mutual agreement annual leave may be carried forward to the next leave year.

### **5. HONORARIUM PAYMENTS**

A local authority may consider granting an honorarium (of an amount dependent upon the circumstances of each case) to an officer within purview of this Committee who performs duties outside the scope of his/her post over an extended period.

### **6. RELOCATION EXPENSES**

In the case of officers being relocated it is the practice of some authorities to contribute towards the approved costs of removal

expenses and of other incidental expenses reasonably attributable to the removal; it would be in the best interests of local government and facilitate movement of officers if this practice were more widely followed.

## **7. SETTING REMUNERATION LEVELS**

- 7.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce and publish a pay policy statement. According to the Act and statutory guidance published in 2012 and 2013, the statement should include the local authority's policy on specific aspects of chief officers' remuneration: remuneration on recruitment, increases and additions to remuneration, use of performance-related pay and bonuses, termination payments, and transparency arrangements. It should also set out the approach to be adopted towards pay dispersion, (i.e. differentials). In addition, the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 requires local authorities to publish the differential between the taxable benefits of senior managers and the median taxable earnings figure for the local authority's whole workforce, and details of senior employee salaries (above £50,000), names (with the option for individuals to refuse to consent for their name to be published), job descriptions, responsibilities, budgets and numbers of staff.
- 7.2 In this context it is essential for good governance that local authorities can demonstrate that decisions on pay and reward packages for chief officers have been made in an open and accountable way.
- 7.3 One option is for a local authority to establish a remuneration committee. The establishment of a remuneration committee is of course optional and different models may well suit individual authorities. What is clear though is that more than lip service must be paid to the notion of providing a verifiable and accountable process for recommending the remuneration level of the most highly-paid officials.
- 7.4 The issues that local authorities will need to consider if they set up such a committee are set out at **Appendix 3** of the JNC Conditions of Service Handbook for local authority Chief Executives.

## **8. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

- 8.1 Chief officers' responsibilities and accountabilities should be set out in writing at the appointment stage. Where this has not been done at the appointment stage it should be agreed with the individual officer concerned prior to the implementation of the performance appraisal scheme. Subsequently, there should be an annual process of performance appraisal linked to those responsibilities and accountabilities.
- 8.2 The performance appraisal process is separate from any scheme relating to either pay or performance related pay.

- 8.3 The performance appraisal process should involve the setting of both general and specific objectives for the year ahead and the review of performance in achieving previously set objectives. The focus of the process should be on clarifying what the chief officer will be expected to achieve and on identifying any continuing personal development needs to maintain a high level of performance.
- 8.4 The authority will provide training for all parties involved in the process, including elected members if involved.
- 8.5 The setting of objectives should be by consensus between the chief officer and his/her line manager, and/or the chief executive, and if desired an appropriate elected member. The result of the performance appraisal process will be to identify agreed objectives that are relevant and challenging but achievable and realistic in the light of available resources and time. (Joint Secretaries guidance on appraisal of chief officers is set out in full at **Annex 1**)

## **9. RESTRICTIONS ON RE-EMPLOYMENT**

- 9.1 After termination of the chief officer's employment he/she:
  - a will not divulge any information to any third party which is confidential to the authority.
  - b will not, without the consent of the authority, which will not unreasonably be withheld, within a period of 12 months take up employment with or provide services for reward to any body:
    - i if during the chief officer's last two years of employment with the authority the officer has been directly involved in transactions with that body for which the offer of employment or provision of services could reasonably be regarded as a reward
    - ii which is likely to benefit from commercially sensitive information which is known to the chief officer by virtue of his/her past employment by the authority.
- 9.2 These provisions would not apply if the termination of employment with the local authority arose as the result of redundancy or the externalisation of work and consequent transfer to a new employer.

## **10. SALARY**

The salary paid to a chief officer will be that determined by the employing local authority. Salaries shall be deemed to be inclusive, and all other fees and emoluments, unless they are covered by **Paragraph 11** or the authority expressly agrees that they shall be

retained by the officer, shall be paid by the officer into the local authority's accounts.

**11. RETURNING OFFICER FEES**

The chief officer shall be entitled to receive and retain the personal fees arising from such of the duties of returning officer, acting returning officer, deputy returning officer or deputy acting returning officer and similar positions as he or she performs subject to the payment of pension contributions thereon, where appropriate, unless a specific term has been included in the chief officer's contract referring to alternative arrangements.

**12. OFFICIAL CONDUCT**

12.1 The public is entitled to demand of a local government officer conduct of the highest standard.

12.2 An officer's off-duty hours are his/her personal concern but he/she should not subordinate his/her duty to his/her private interests nor put himself/herself in a position where his/her duty and his/her private interests conflict, or where public confidence in the conduct of the authority's business would be weakened.

12.3 Officers within purview of this Committee shall devote their whole-time service to the work of the local authority and shall not engage in any other business or take up any other additional appointment without the express consent of the local authority.

12.4 An officer shall not be required to advise any political group of the local authority, either as to the work of the group or as to the work of the local authority, neither shall he/she be required to attend any meetings of any political group. This shall be without prejudice to any arrangements to the contrary which may be made in agreement with any officer and which includes adequate safeguards to preserve the political neutrality of the officer in relation to the affairs of the local authority.

12.5 No officer shall communicate to the public the proceedings of any committee meeting nor the contents of any document relating to the authority which in either case is regarded by the authority as confidential unless required by law or expressly authorised to do so.

12.6 If it comes to the knowledge of an officer that a contract in which he/she has any pecuniary interest, whether direct or indirect (not being a contract to which he/she is himself/herself a party), has been or is proposed to be, entered into by the authority, he/she shall, as soon as practicable, given notice in writing to the chief executive of the authority of the fact that he/she is interested therein. (Attention is

drawn to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 Section117).

- 12.7 Information concerning an officer's private affairs shall not be supplied to any person unless the consent of such officer is first obtained.

## **PART 3 - DISCIPLINE, CAPABILITY AND REDUNDANCY**

### **1. SPECIFIC STATUTORY OFFICERS**

- 1.1 Where disciplinary action against the Monitoring Officer or s151 Officer or, in Wales, the Head of Democratic Services is contemplated, the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015) in England, and the Local Authorities Standing Orders (Wales) Regulations 2006 in Wales, provide a degree of protection for these officers against unwarranted political interference in their statutory role within local authorities.
- 1.2 **(England)** Paragraph 13 and 13A and Appendix 5A of the Conditions of Service Handbook of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives, which give effect to these statutory requirements, can be used as a reference guide in circumstances where disciplinary action against the Monitoring Officer or s151 Officer is contemplated.
- 1.3 **(Wales)** Paragraph 13 and 13B and Appendix 5B of the Conditions of Service Handbook of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives, which give effect to these statutory requirements, can be used as a reference guide in circumstances where disciplinary action against the Head of Democratic Services is contemplated.

### **2. CHIEF OFFICERS OTHER THAN SPECIFIC STATUTORY OFFICERS**

- 2.1 The size and structure of local authorities varies greatly and it is therefore difficult to set out single disciplinary and capability procedures which would fit all authorities. However, authorities will have local procedures to deal with such issues.
- 2.2 In general, informal conciliation is to be preferred to formal disciplinary and capability procedures if it can bring about a mutually agreed solution to the problems that have arisen. Such solutions should make it clear what specific changes in behaviour and/or performance are expected and within what timescales. However, provision is required to undertake more formal action where necessary.
- 2.3 The principles of natural justice and good management practice must govern the conduct of any proceedings against a chief officer on the grounds of either alleged misconduct (i.e. 'discipline') or an alleged inability to carry out their role (i.e. 'capability'). Authorities should have full regard to the principles and standards set out in the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary Procedures.

- 2.4 A particular consideration for Chief Officers is that the procedures must take account of an officer's position in the hierarchy when determining who conducts investigations, undertakes disciplinary/capability hearings taking any appropriate action and who hears appeals. Depending on the structure of the authority and the circumstances of the case these functions should normally be undertaken by officers as appropriate but in some cases may require a committee of members to be involved in hearings or appeals.
- 2.5 Where the chief officer's continuing presence at work compromises an investigation or impairs the efficient exercise of the local authority's functions, the chief officer may (subject to whatever consultation or approval may be required under the authority's standing orders) be suspended from duty. The Council, or appropriate committee or senior officer, acting under delegated powers, may carry out such suspension on full pay. Written notice stating the reasons for any such suspension shall be given at the earliest opportunity possible.
- 2.6 Suspension protocols regarding communication and matters such as annual leave and sickness should be agreed. The necessity for the chief officer to remain suspended should be reviewed at regular intervals and where possible lengthy periods of suspension should be avoided.
- 2.7 In England, where an authority operates a mayor or leader cabinet executive system and as a result of disciplinary proceedings there is a recommendation to dismiss, they should check whether the executive objections procedure set out in schedule 1, part I, paragraph 6 and part II, paragraph 6 of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 applies, and if so ensure it is followed before the chief officer is dismissed.
- 2.8 Where the chief officer in question is a Director of Public Health in England then the authority should ensure that it complies with section 73A of the National Health Act 2006, which provides that before terminating the appointment of its Director of Public Health, a local authority must consult the Secretary of State for Health. Further information on this is available in the Department of Health's guidance, [Directors of Public Health in Local Government: Roles, responsibilities and context](#).
- 2.9 The Joint Secretaries (or their representatives) are available to act in an impartial conciliation role, whether formal or informal if required to do so by the local parties.

### **3. REDUNDANCY**

- 3.1 Employing authorities should consult with any chief officer affected at the earliest possible stage when there is a suggestion that the chief officer's post might be abolished or proposed for abolition.

- 3.2 If after such consultation a proposal is formulated to abolish the chief officer's post, and that is part of a proposal to dismiss 20 or more employees from one establishment within 90 days the procedure of Section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, requiring consultation with trade unions, should be followed, the required statutory information being sent to the chief officer and to each independent trade union recognised by the employers for collective bargaining purposes for the chief officer. Where the provisions of the Act do not apply in any event a period of not less than twenty-eight days should be allowed for the individual consultation process. The chief officer and a trade union representative should also be afforded an opportunity of making oral representations to the Committee or Council meeting concerned before a final decision is made.
- 3.3 If following such consultations the authority decide that the post must nevertheless be abolished, the officer should be offered any suitable alternative employment that may be available or which may become available in consequence of the re-organisation giving rise to the abolition of the chief officer's post.
- 3.4 The authority should also bear in mind the possible application of discretionary powers of premature retirement, and permissible enhancement of benefits or redundancy payments, and the possibilities of providing an alternative post or of extending the period of notice to assist the chief officer in finding other employment.
- 3.5 Where the chief officer in question is a Director of Public Health in England then the authority should ensure that it complies with section 73A of the National Health Act 2006, which provides that before terminating the appointment of its Director of Public Health, a local authority must consult the Secretary of State for Health. Further information on this is available in the Department of Health's guidance, [Directors of Public Health in Local Government: Roles, responsibilities and context](#).

## **JOINT GUIDANCE ON APPRAISAL OF THE CHIEF OFFICER**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This guidance is intended for use by senior officers, elected members and the chief executive when agreeing a process for appraising the performance of the chief officer. The focus of this process should be on clarifying what the chief officer is expected to achieve and on identifying any continuing developmental needs which, if met, would maintain a high level of performance. The process of setting objectives should be by agreement and the result should be to identify objectives which are relevant and challenging but achievable.
- 1.2 The process should not become complex. At all times it needs to focus clearly on a few basic issues: what the chief officer's job is; what has been done well; what could have been done better; the major issues over the next year; and what developmental needs the process clearly identifies.

### **2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPRAISAL**

- 2.1 The responsibility for appraising a chief officer lies primarily with their line manager and/or chief executive. It is a contractual obligation on the part of both the chief officer and the employing local authority to engage in a regular process of appraisal.
- 2.2 It will be for local decision in the light of local circumstances whether the appraisal should include any input from elected members representing all political groups or by a senior representative or representatives of the controlling group. Whichever approach is adopted, those conducting the appraisal need to bear in mind at all times that the chief officer is employed by the local authority as a whole, not by the controlling group, and is therefore required to serve all of the local authority.

### **3. AIMS OF APPRAISAL**

- To identify and clarify the key objectives, priorities and targets of the local authority and appropriate timescales for their achievement over the next (e.g. twelve) months
- Agree what the chief officer should personally achieve over the next (e.g. twelve) months and identify required standards of performance, in order to help deliver the local authority's key objectives, priorities and targets. Wherever possible standards of performance should be expressed in ways which can be monitored objectively

- Discuss positive achievements over the past (e.g. twelve) months and identify reasons for good performance
- Discuss instances over the past (e.g. twelve) months where targets have not been met, identifying the factors preventing the achievements of agreed goals
- Discuss developmental requirements. The chief officer will have strengths and weaknesses and the parties should identify the professional development necessary to equip the chief officer with the requisite skills to meet the local authority's objectives. The parties should be proactive and anticipate future developmental needs in the context of the local authority's changing priorities. This discussion could lead to the design of a formal programme of continuous professional development (CPD). Equally this discussion may lead to agreement on changes to the working relationship between the chief officer and the chief executive. It should not be assumed that it is only the chief officer who may need to adjust his / her approach to the working relationship

3.1 Appraisal should be set in the context of the local authority's objectives, priorities and targets, generally expressed in corporate plans. Appraisal targets when taken as a whole should be related to agreed targets for the local authority as a whole.

#### 4. THE APPRAISAL CYCLE

Appraisal should take place on a predetermined date, **at least annually**, backed up by regular monitoring meetings at which targets can be reviewed for continuing relevance. A formal system of appraisal should not prevent the continuous review of progress and performance.

#### 5. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE APPRAISAL PROCESS

- Continuous two-way monitoring of performance against objectives
- Preparation for an appraisal interview
- An appraisal interview where recent and current performance, future objectives and development needs are discussed
- Agreement on action required from either party to ensure required performance is achievable
- A continuing process of informal discussion regarding performance

## **6. THE APPRAISAL INTERVIEW AND AFTERWARDS**

- Both parties should be well informed and prepared for the interview
- The process should be two-way
- The interview should be free from interruptions, and notes should be taken when necessary
- The parties should concentrate as far as possible on established facts rather than unsubstantiated opinions
- Targets which are realistic and capable of being monitored should be agreed
- Any agreed personal development plans should be implemented within the agreed timescale
- The chief officer should be given a reasonable opportunity to correct any shortfalls in performance
- A date for the next review should be agreed

## **7. OTHER MATTERS**

The detailed content of appraisal interviews should normally be treated as confidential to the participants, unless both parties agree that it would be helpful for the targets agreed for the ensuing period to be shared more widely. However, it may be useful to report to an appropriate committee meeting that an appraisal interview has taken place.