

To: Councillor Emberson (Chair)
Councillors Terry, Ennis, Keane and Mpofu-
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9 July 2025

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NOTICE OF MEETING - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE 17 JULY 2025

A meeting of the Personnel Committee will be held on Thursday, 17 July 2025 at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, Reading. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

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1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST		
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Agenda Item 2

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES – 13 MARCH 2025

Present: Councillor Emberson (Chair);
Councillors Ennis, Mpofu-Coles, Terry and Williams.

Also Present: Kathryn Cook, Kieran McGee, Alison McNamara and Miriam Palfrey.

20. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22. PAY GAP REPORTS FOR 2024 AND WORKFORCE PROFILE REPORT FOR 2023-24

The Committee considered a report that presented the Council's Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Reports for 2024, all of which were appended to the report along with the Workforce Profile 2023-24.

The report stated that the mean gender pay gap was 1.57% and the median was 0%, compared to 0.82% and 0% in the previous year. The mean ethnicity pay gap for 2024 was 4.17% and 0.68% median, compared to 2.45% and minus 0.4% median in the previous year.

In addition to voluntarily publishing ethnicity pay gap information for the first time the Council was also voluntarily publishing disability pay gap information. The mean disability pay gap was 2.05% and the median 0%.

The Workforce Profile for 2023/24 provided a summary of equalities monitoring data and trends over time. It covered data on the protected characteristics of the current workforce and job applicants in 2023/24 and compared it to the previous three financial years where relevant.

The report stated that taking positive action on workplace equality could have significant benefits for an organisation's reputation, culture and people. The Ethnicity, Disability and Gender Pay Gap Reports were a fundamental step on the Council's journey to improving workplace equality and would help to create a baseline to track progress and drive continual improvement.

Resolved: That the Gender Pay Gap, Ethnicity Pay Gap and Disability Pay Gap Reports and the Workforce Profile 2023-24, in the appendices attached to the report, be noted.

23. INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY UPDATE (2024-26)

The Committee considered a report that provided a summary of the progress to date and outlined agreed actions for delivery of the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in year 2 (2025). A table setting out the year one actions status was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and the year two Action Plan was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

The report stated that the first year of the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy had seen the completion of the vast majority of the actions that had been proposed and the key themes for the second year were as follows:

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES – 13 MARCH 2025

- Celebrating difference;
- Reviewing data and improving it where required;
- Supporting Progression;
- Allyship;
- Reviewing Policies;
- Reviewing the Council's ambition statement;
- Reverse mentoring pilot;
- Recruitment;
- Disability confident;
- Staff Network support;
- Communications and engagement.

The report explained that a key action in year 2 of the delivery plan was to deliver a reverse mentoring pilot for the Senior Leadership Group. Reverse mentoring (also called reciprocal mentoring) was when a senior or more experienced employee was mentored by a more junior colleague. In most cases the junior colleague came from a group who were either not represented or were underrepresented at leadership level such as a different ethnicity, from different socio-economic backgrounds, a different generation, sexuality or gender and it was an effective way to build genuine awareness of the barriers that were faced by diverse groups of employees. The process recognised that there were skill gaps and opportunities to learn on both sides of a mentoring relationship and flipping the format on its head could be very beneficial for both parties. A pilot programme was being developed that would consist of a small group of senior leaders who wished to develop their understanding of the lived experience of employees from ethnically diverse backgrounds and employees with a disability, including a hidden disability. These two areas aligned with the work on ethnicity and disability, both of which were priorities for the Council. The pilot was being developed ahead of its launch in March 2025, the work would include the following:

- Establishing success criteria for the pilot;
- Developing reciprocal mentoring 'ground rules', protocols and advice for participants;
- Developing outline structures for reciprocal mentoring sessions;
- Establishing confidentiality protocols.

Resolved:

- (1) That the progress made in year one of the Inclusion and Diversity Plan be noted;**
- (2) That the areas of focus for the 2025 Action Plan be noted.**

24. REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

The Committee considered a report presenting one new Employment Policy which had been reviewed jointly and agreed with the Joint Trade Unions. The following documents were attached to the report:

Appendix A	Fostering Friendly Policy
Appendix B	Equality Impact Assessment

The report explained that the Fostering Friendly Policy had originally been developed by Brighter Futures for Children (BFFC) and following discussion with the Corporate

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES – 13 MARCH 2025

Management Team it had been agreed that the Council should adopt the same Policy. The Council understood that foster carers who did other work in addition to fostering needed some flexibility in their working arrangements in order to meet the needs of their fostered child and the Council was committed to support any staff member who was a foster carer or an approved kinship carer. The Policy had been written with the following principles in mind:

1. It must reflect current employment law and the ACAS Codes of Practice and/or guidance where relevant;
2. It must be easy to understand and written in plain English;
3. It should be concise. Any information which was not germane to the operation of the policy had been removed;
4. There should be a consistency of approach across related policies;
5. It should use gender neutral language.

The report included a table that set out in summary terms for the revised policy the issues which had been addressed together with any additional key changes that had been agreed with the Joint Trade Unions. Once the policy review had been completed hyperlinks would be added to the policy where they were cross-referenced with other Policies.

Resolved: That the following new HR Policy, as set out in in Appendix A attached to the report, be approved:

- **Fostering Friendly Policy.**

25. RBC STAFF SURVEY ACTION PLAN UPDATE AND BFFC STAFF SURVEY OUTCOMES

Further to Minute 17 of the previous meeting, the Committee considered a report that provided an update on the actions that had been taken to address the issues that had been identified in the 2024 Staff Survey and shared the headline results from the Brighter Futures for Children (BFFC) Staff Survey. The Corporate Staff Survey Action Plan together with an update on progress to date was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report reminded the Committee that overall the results from the Staff Survey had remained positive with scores being broadly similar to, or showing a modest improvement on the previous survey. Very high positive scores (85% plus) had related to the following:

- Enjoying my job;
- Making a valuable contribution;
- Being clear about what was expected of me and how this supported the Council;
- Manager support and flexible working;
- My Team working together;
- Managers being approachable and supportive and displaying Team Reading values;
- Understanding Team Reading values;
- The Council valuing a diverse workforce and opportunities to contribute ideas.

There were, however, a number of areas of concern including a modest increase in the number of staff saying that they had witnessed or experienced bullying and harassment. The Corporate Management Team and Directorate Management Team had been considering the scores for the Council as a whole and for individual Assistant Director areas

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES – 13 MARCH 2025

and had agreed where focused activity should be taken. Three areas had been identified for action at a corporate level: Bullying and Harassment, Leadership and Aligning What We Do. Analysis by Assistant Director level had suggested that there were significant differences between teams in respect of some questions with some teams scoring significantly better than others when responses to individual questions were compared and Directorate Management Team plans had reflected these different areas for action.

In BFfC the Staff Survey had run between 18 November and 18 December 2024 and had been a replica of the Council Survey to allow comparisons to be made. 204 (37%) employees had taken part and overall, like the Council, the responses had been positive and had compared well with the Council's overall scores. Additionally, BFfC had reviewed how the company's results compared with the Council's Adult Social Care Teams, the nearest comparable staff group, and again, overall, BFfC had performed well against the Council comparator team for the vast majority of indicators. BFfC had scored significantly better than equivalent Council teams in relation to pay, a similar percentage to Adult Social Care colleagues believed they felt respected, appreciated and valued at work and a lower percentage overall had witnessed or experienced bullying or harassment at work. Similar to the Council, there were differences between scores for different teams, for example, in relation to issues like access to support, confidence in line manager leadership skills and rewards and benefits. Scores for the questions "I have the same opportunities to progress" had also shown significant variation between teams. Actions to address issues that had been identified would be drafted and agreed by BFfC's Senior Leadership Team by mid-April 2025.

The Committee discussed the timing of the 2025 Staff Surveys and felt that holding them at the usual times of year would mean that many of the agreed actions would not have had time to fully take effect. The Committee suggested that delaying the surveys until Spring 2026 would allow time for this, and produce more meaningful responses. Surveys could then be held annually again from 2027.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Staff Survey Action Plans for the Council and the headline outcome for the BFfC staff survey be noted.**
- (2) That consideration be given to moving the 2025 Council and Brighter Futures for Children surveys to Spring 2026.**

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 7.19pm).

Agenda Item 3

Personnel Committee (appointments) minutes – 31 March 2025

Present: Councillor Terry (Chair)
Cllrs Ennis and Leng

Also present: Jackie Yates (Chief Executive)

1. Exclusion of the press and public

Resolved -

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended), the press and public be excluded for consideration of the following item as there was likely to be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to that Act.

2. Appointment of the Executive Director DEGNs

The Committee carried out an interview process for the post of Executive Director DEGNs.

Resolved-

That, subject to the acceptance of a formal offer, Emma Gee be appointed as the Executive Director of DEGNs.

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Personnel Committee (appointments) minutes – 3 April 2025

Present: Councillor Terry (Chair)
Councillors Emberson and Leng

Also present: Jackie Yates (Chief Executive)

1. Exclusion of the press and public

Resolved -

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended), the press and public be excluded for consideration of the following item as there was likely to be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to that Act.

2. Appointment of the Executive Director Resources

The Committee carried out an interview process for the post of Executive Director Resources.

Resolved-

That, subject to the acceptance of a formal offer, Louise Duffield be appointed as the Executive Director of Resources.

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Personnel Committee

17 July 2025



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Title	RBC Part Time Workforce Analysis
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Request from Personnel Committee – November 2024
Report author	Kathryn Cook – Assistant Director HR&OD
Lead Councillor	Councillor Ellie Emberson
Council priority	Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
Recommendations	1. That Personnel Committee notes the analysis of RBCs part time workforce

1. Executive Summary

- At its meeting on 13 March 2025, Personnel Committee requested an analysis of RBCs part time workforce and for a report to be brought back to Personnel Committee at its meeting on 17th July 2025.

2. Policy Context

- RBC has a workforce of over 1800 staff (excluding schools and BFFC) and is an important employer in the town. Overall, 85% of RBC employees live in an RG postcode. More employees at RG5 or below (94%) leave in an RG postcode than those on higher grades (70%). For part time staff, 92% live in an RG postcode. 96% of staff who are part time and RG5 or under live in an RG postcode.
- As an employer it is important that we aspire to good employment practices and that we understand not only the composition of our workforce but that actively use our analyses to inform all aspects of the employee lifecycle, particularly where these relate to 'protected characteristics'.
- The analysis in the report looks at our part time workforce with the intention of providing the Committee with the greater insight requested, including through the lens of Inclusion and Diversity.
- Please note that the definition of 'part time' work incorporates all work that is less than 'full time' ie fewer than 37 hours a week – there is a considerable variation in hours worked by part time employees of the Council.

3. Analysis of RBCs Part Time Workforce

3.1 Headline summary:

- Gender Disparity** – A significantly higher proportion of women work part-time compared to men (88% vs. 12%), reflecting national trends.

- **Job Grade Distribution** – Part-time employees are more likely to be in lower-graded roles, with 76% in RG5 or lower, compared to 57% of full-time employees.
- **Length of Service** – Part-time employees tend to have longer tenure at the council, with 52% having worked for over 10 years, compared to 35% of full-time staff.
- **Age Variations** – The proportion of full-time vs. part-time employees is relatively even across most age groups, except for employees aged 60+ and those under 29, who show a stronger preference for part-time work.
- **Minimal Ethnic Disparity** – The likelihood of working part-time does not appear to vary significantly by ethnic group.
- **Disability Representation** – Employees who have declared a disability work part-time at a similar rate to those who haven't, indicating no substantial difference in employment patterns related to disability.

These trends suggest that part-time employment is influenced most strongly by gender, job type, and career stage rather than ethnicity or disability status.

3.2 Nationally the latest [UK Labour Market Statistics](#) show that approximately 24% of people are employed on a part time basis. Many employees opt for part-time jobs for personal and professional reasons. One common factor is flexibility, part-time roles allow individuals to balance work with other commitments such as education, caregiving, or personal interests. It can be particularly beneficial for parents managing childcare responsibilities, students seeking to fund their studies, or retirees who still wish to remain active in the workforce without the demands of full-time employment.

3.3 Economic considerations can also play a role. In uncertain job markets, part-time work can provide an income source while allowing individuals to explore multiple opportunities, freelance, or run a personal business. Moreover, organisations can benefit from hiring part-time staff by managing costs and staffing needs efficiently, creating a mutually beneficial arrangement.

3.4 The proportion of council employees working part time is broadly in line with the national picture and has been consistent over the last three years.

Year	Part time Employees
2023	23%
2024	22%
2025	22%

3.5 Both nationally and within the council's workforce more women work part time than men, 71% nationally and 88% at the council. Research from the [TUC](#) shows that women are three times as likely to work part time than men.

3.6 By policy the council is committed to the promotion of flexible working practices in order to realise accommodation efficiencies and to enable employees to balance their home and working lives.

3.7 The table below shows distribution of the part time workforce by service area.

Directorate	Service Area	Full time	Part time
DCASC	Safeguarding, Quality and Practice	47%	53%
DEGNS	Culture	50%	50%
DCASC	Business Support	55%	45%
DEGNS	Infrastructure, Economy and Capital Projects	60%	40%
DEGNS	REDA	63%	38%
DEGNS	Property & Asset Management	72%	28%
DoR	Policy, Change & Customer Services	73%	27%
DoR	Public Health and Wellbeing	76%	24%

DCASC	Operations	79%	21%
Dor	Human Resources & Organisational Development	82%	18%
DEGNS	Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services	83%	17%
DCASC	Commissioning, Transformation and Performance	84%	16%
DoR	Legal and Democratic Services	85%	15%
DoR	Finance	86%	14%
DoR	Communications	88%	13%
DCASC	Housing and Communities	89%	11%
DoR	Digital, Technology and Change	95%	5%
DEGNS	Environmental & Commercial Services	97%	3%

The top ten job roles with the highest number of part time employees are:

Job Role	Employees
Intermediate Care Assistant	40
Library Assistant	22
Cleaning Operative	17
Independent Living Assistant	9
Customer Fulfilment Advisor	8
Social Care Co-ordinator	7
Business Support Officer	7
Support Worker	6
Senior Occupational Therapist	6
Customer Fulfilment Centre Advisor	6

3.8 The table below shows distribution by ethnic group. In broad terms proportions are comparable between each group

Status	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Mixed	Not Known	Other Ethnic Groups	White	Overall
Full time	80%	80%	74%	83%	70%	77%	78%
Part time	20%	20%	26%	17%	30%	23%	22%

3.9 The table below shows distribution by whether the employee has disclosed that they consider themselves to have a disability. The same percentage of those who have declared a disability work part time as those that haven't.

Status	Yes	No	Not Known	Grand Total
Full time	76%	76%	83%	78%
Part time	24%	24%	17%	22%

3.10 The table below shows distribution by sex. Considerably more females work part time than men.

Status	Female	Male
Full time	61%	39%
Part time	88%	12%

3.11 The table below shows distribution by grade, please note that for simplicity the data reflects NJC and JNC contracts only, which account for the majority of employees. Higher proportions of part time employees are found in the lower grades.

Grade	Full time	Part time	Overall
RG2	2%	7%	3%

RG3	6%	22%	10%
RG4	27%	35%	29%
RG5	22%	12%	20%
RG6	11%	6%	10%
RG7	12%	9%	12%
RG8	8%	4%	7%
RG9	6%	3%	5%
RG10	2%	0%	2%
RSMD	1%	0%	1%
RSMC	1%	0%	1%
RSMB	0%	0%	0%
RSMA	1%	1%	1%
CDIR	0%	0%	0%

3.12 The table below shows distribution by length of service. Part time employees tend to have worked at the Council for longer.

Status	Full time	Part time	Overall
0-4 years	47%	30%	44%
5-9 Years	17%	17%	17%
10-14 Years	7%	11%	8%
15-19 Years	9%	14%	10%
20-30 Years	14%	21%	16%
31 Years+	5%	7%	5%

3.13 The table below shows distribution by age. Proportions of full or part time employees in most age ranges are broadly equal, with the exception those employees aged 60+ or those aged 29 or under.

Status	Full time	Part time	Overall
16-19	0%	0%	0%
20-24	3%	2%	3%
25-29	9%	4%	8%
30-34	12%	8%	11%
35-39	12%	13%	12%
40-44	14%	13%	13%
45-49	12%	12%	12%
50-54	13%	11%	12%
55-59	14%	13%	14%
60-64	10%	14%	11%
65+	3%	9%	4%

4 Summary

4.2 The Council's part-time workforce reflects both national employment trends and internal organisational priorities, with a steady proportion of employees choosing reduced hours over the past three years.

4.3 While flexibility remains a key driver for part-time work, particularly among women, the data highlights broader patterns regarding role distribution, length of service, and pay grades. The findings reinforce the importance of maintaining inclusive and adaptable employment policies that support staff in balancing work with personal responsibilities.

5 Contribution to Strategic Aims

5.1 Our staff are responsible for delivering high quality services to residents and it is important that every member of staff, including part time employees, feels able to

deliver their best work – offering flexible working opportunities, including options to work part time are important aspects of this. It is an important aspect of the ‘Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future’ theme within the Corporate Plan. Being able to align hours worked with business needs is also part of this strategic aim.

6 Environmental and Climate Implications

6.1 Not applicable.

7 Community Engagement

7.1 Not applicable.

8 Equality Implications

None

9 Other Relevant Considerations

9.1 None.

10 Legal Implications

10.1 None.

11 Financial Implications

11.1 Not applicable

12 Timetable for Implementation

12.1 Not applicable.

13 Background Papers

13.1 There are none.

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Personnel Committee

17 July 2025



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Title	Review of Council's Core Employment Policies
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Kathryn Cook – Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Lead Councillor	Cllr Ellie Emberson – Lead Councillor for Corporate Services and Resources
Corporate priority	Not applicable, but still requires a decision
Recommendations	<p>That Personnel Committee approves to delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Lead Councillor for Corporate Services and Resources, responsibility for agreeing the following revised policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bullying and Harassment Policy 2) Grievance Policy 3) Managing Poor Performance Policy 4) Disciplinary Policy

1. Executive Summary

1.1. The Council's employment policies are regularly reviewed, and this includes identifying where new policies are needed. Four of the 'core' HR Policies (Bullying and Harassment, Grievance, Managing Poor Performance and the Disciplinary policy) have been under review to ensure that they are fit for purpose and align with current ACAS guidance.

2. Policy Context

2.1 Good employment policies should support a culture based on trust, fairness, and inclusion. They can also speed the decision-making process by ensuring that clear guidance is readily available to cover a range of employment issues. Further, they can assist in avoiding employment tribunal claims by providing guidance for managers that reflects accurately current employment law and good practice. It is therefore important that employment policies are clear, easy to understand and through regular review remain current.

2.2 ACAS Codes of Practice give authoritative advice in key areas of employment practice. A failure to follow the Code does not make a person or organisation liable to proceedings. However, employment tribunals will take the Code into account when considering relevant cases. Tribunals will also be able to adjust any awards made in relevant cases by up to 25% for unreasonable failure to comply with any provision of the Code (by an employer or an employee).

2.3 RBCs core HR policies are regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect changes to legislation and to case law - required changes are discussed with the trades unions and agreed by Personnel Committee. This process is embedded and effective in relation to changes required to individual policies but can fail to address issues to do with the efficiency of application of policies and circumstances where multiple policies are in operation simultaneously eg where Grievance and Bullying and Harassment policies are involved at the same time. Attitudes to risk need regular reviewing to ensure they are appropriate and protect the interests of the Council and the individual.

3. Approach to the review of Core HR Policies

3.1 A range of stakeholders and the trades unions have been asked for their input into the four policies under consideration and extensive input has been received from our in house Employment Lawyer. Each policy has been discussed and improvements suggested. These improvements were collated and tested back with participants. It was clear very early on that there was a lot of agreement amongst stakeholders about where improvements should be made. Many of the proposed improvements applied to all policies and their application as opposed to a single policy – where there were suggestions about specific changes that need to be made to individual policies, these were also captured.

3.2 Final changes are now being incorporated into the four Policies under consideration and have been shared with the trade unions. We believe that the revisions proposed will improve the application of each Policy and that there will be benefits in introducing them as soon as possible. For this reason (and given that the next Personnel Committee is not scheduled to take place until November), Personnel Committee is asked exceptionally to agree that the decision to approve the changes to the four core HR Policies is delegated to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Chair of Personnel Committee (the Lead Councillor for Corporate Services and Resources) and the Leader.

3. Contribution to Strategic Aims

The new and revised HR policies help to ensure that the Council can meet its Corporate Plan priority, specifically ensuring that the Council is fit for the future.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

There are no environmental or climate change implications

6. Community Engagement

Not applicable.

7. Equality Implication

Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) will be carried out prior to approval.

8. Legal Implications

Certain employment policies and procedures are specifically needed to comply with legal requirements, for example, a written health and safety policy. Even where a policy or procedure is not specifically required by law, employers often find it helpful to have a policy in place to provide clear guidance that reflects the legal framework for handling the issue in question and it also helps employees to be clear about the organisation's stance on a particular subject. The proposed policies presented in this review reflect current employment law and ACAS Codes of Practice and/or guidance where relevant.

9. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

10. Background Papers

There are none.

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Personnel Committee

01 January 2025



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Title	Implications of BFFC TUPE on RBC HR Policies
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Darren Carter
Report author	Kathryn Cook
Lead Councillor	Councillor Ellie Emberson
Council priority	Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> That the implications of the TUPE of BFFC back to RBC on 1 October in respect of HR Policies be noted.

1. Executive Summary

- Children's Services in Reading have been delivered by Brighter Futures for Children Limited ('BFFC') since 1 December 2018. On 28 January 2025, Council decided to bring Children's Services back in-house by autumn 2025. The transition date for staff and services has been set as 1 October 2025. BFFC staff will transfer from BFFC to RBC via TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)).
- A TUPE consultation was run for all RBC and BFFC staff between 5 June 2025 and 7 July 2025. The high-level proposal for the transition of policies was included within the BFFC consultation document, stating that RBC corporate and HR policies, would, by default, replace BFFC policies.

2. Policy Context

- Good employment policies should support a culture based on trust, fairness, and inclusion. They can also speed the decision-making process by ensuring that clear guidance is readily available to cover a range of employment issues. Further, they can assist in avoiding employment tribunal claims by providing guidance for managers that reflects accurately current employment law and good practice. It is therefore important that employment policies are clear, easy to understand and through regular review remain current.
- On 28 January 2025, Council decided to bring delivery of Children's services back-in house by autumn 2025. The transition of policies is part of this wider transition programme.
- Formal consultation is legally required as part of TUPE. The high-level proposal for policy transition was set out in the BFFC TUPE consultation document. The detail for the proposal has been worked through, leading to the below planned changes to policies. This detail, specifically any differences in policies for staff, will be communicated to BFFC staff as part of the consultation outcome, transition preparation, and RBC induction.

2.4. The proposals for policy transition were approved in June 2025 by the BFfC Contract Transition programme board. The board has Executive Director representation from both RBC and BFfC.

3. The Proposal

3.1. To facilitate the TUPE of BFfC staff to RBC, all policies needed to be reviewed and matched, and any gaps addressed. All BFfC and RBC policies have been matched and compared to ensure that at transition staff can be informed of any differences, and any gaps in provision of policies can be addressed. Since the creation of the Company, unless otherwise required, BFfC have mirrored RBCs HR Policies and therefore there were very few meaningful differences found between BFfC and RBC HR & Corporate policies.

3.2. Personnel Committee is asked to note the following outcomes of the review of HR Policies:

3.2.1. All current BFfC HR Policies will be replaced by the equivalent RBC policy, except where there is a contractual element, e.g. annual leave, which will be protected and remain for BFfC staff after TUPE as required by law.

3.2.2. Where there is no equivalent RBC HR Policy, the BFfC policy will either cease, or consideration will be given to it being adopted by RBC. It is anticipated that RBC will adopt or update the following policies:

RBC Fostering Friendly Policy (adopted from BFfC by RBC following Personnel Committee on 13 March 2025). This will be adapted slightly to clarify the Child Placement leave entitlements upon the placement of a new foster child.

BFfC Reimbursement of Statutory Fees. This policy will continue to apply to BFfC staff and RBC will look to review the equivalent policy for RBC staff.

3.2.3. Personnel Committee will wish to note that some RBC HR policies give BFfC new entitlements and/or requirements they did not previously have, e.g. Buying Annual Leave Policy, Volunteering Policy, Working Abroad Policy, Transgender Policy, Workload Policy. BFfC staff will be able to take advantage of these Policies from the date of transfer.

3.3. All of the above implications and changes will be communicated to staff as part of the transition communications and induction plan. The intranet will also be updated to reflect any changes to policies.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

4.1. The changes to HR policies are part of the BFfC Contract Transition Programme. Both of these will help to ensure that the Council can meet its Corporate Plan priority, specifically ensuring that the Council is fit for the future.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

5.1. There are no environmental or climate implications from this report.

6. Community Engagement

6.1. The Joint Trade Unions were consulted on the drafting of the BFfC TUPE consultation document. An extract from the document is below:

“4.2.6. Policies

4.2.6.1. BFfC Corporate policies will be replaced by the equivalent RBC policy (training /comms will be provided on any differences).

4.2.6.2. BFFC HR policies will be replaced by the equivalent RBC policy save where there is a contractual element i.e. sick pay, annual leave entitlement, this will be protected and remain.

4.2.6.3. BFFC Operational policies will be replaced by the equivalent RBC policy (training/comms will be provided on any differences) however where there is not an equivalent RBC policy, the BFFC policy will be reviewed and may be adopted by RBC (following the usual RBC process) and rebranded to RBC in due course.”

6.2. All BFFC staff were invited to respond to TUPE consultation between 5 June 2025 and 7 July 2025. As of 2 July, no queries had been raised with regards to the policy proposals.

7. Equality Implications

7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is not relevant to this report.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

8.1. None

9. Legal Implications

9.1. We have sought advice from Legal Services who have advised that there are no legal considerations to be taken into account with these changes. Changes to policies are not contractual, but as part of TUPE staff must, and will, be informed of any changes.

10. Financial Implications

10.1 No significant financial implications are anticipated

11. Timetable for Implementation

BFFC Programme Board review & agree policy transition actions June 2025

Personnel Committee to note the proposed changes to HR Policies 17 July 2025

BFFC TUPE to RBC 1 October 2025

12. Background Papers

12.1. There are none.

Appendices

None

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