

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES – 20 NOVEMBER 2025

**Present:** Councillor Emberson (Chair);  
Councillors Ennis, Keane, Mpofo-Coles and Terry.

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

### 6. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 7. PAY GAP REPORTS FOR 2025 AND WORKFORCE PROFILE REPORT FOR 2024-25

The Committee considered a report that presented the Council's Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap reports for 2025. A copy of the Gender Pay Gap Report was attached to the report at Appendix 1, a copy of the Ethnicity Pay Gap Report was attached at Appendix 2, a copy of the Disability Pay Gap Report was attached at Appendix 3 and a copy of the Workforce Profile 2024-25 was attached to the report at Appendix 4.

The report stated that the gender pay gap was -0.33% and the median was 0.00%, this compared to the previous year's figure of 1.57% mean and 0.00% median. The mean ethnicity pay gap for 2024 was 2.85% and -0.27% median, compared to the previous year when they had been 4.17% and -0.68% median. The mean disability pay gap was 2.98% and the median was 2.13% compared to the previous year when they had been 2.05% mean and 0.00% median.

The report also presented the Workforce Profile for 2024/25 which 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 2024/25 and compared it to the previous three financial years where relevant.

Overall, the Council continued to demonstrate strong performance in workplace equality, with the gender pay gap indicating near parity in average earnings between men and women. Ethnicity and disability pay gaps remained modest, with targeted actions underway to address disparities and improve representation at senior levels.

It was noted at the meeting that the next set of pay gap reports and Workforce Profile would include the Directorate of Children's Services, which had transferred from Brighter Futures for Children to the Council on 1 October 2025. The effect of this on the statistics in the reports would need to be made clear.

**Resolved:** That the Gender Pay Gap Report, the Ethnicity Pay Gap Report, the Disability Pay Gap Report and the Workforce Profile 2024-25, as attached to the report at Appendices 1, 2,3 and 4, be noted.

### 8. UPDATE ON RBC'S INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY AND PLAN

The Committee considered a report that provided the annual update, year 2 progress, on delivery of the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy. The following appendices were attached to the report:

Appendix 1 Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024-2026;

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Appendix 2	Anti-Racism Statement and Actions for 2025;
Appendix 3	Inclusion and Diversity Year two Plan Update;
Appendix 4	Inclusion and Diversity Year three Delivery Plan Proposal.

The report stated that most of the people who worked for the Council lived locally with approximately half of the workforce (54%) living in the Borough and a further 33% had an RG postcode (87%). The aim was for the Council to have a workforce that reflected and understood the communities it served and to be seen as an employer of choice within the Council's communities and one that valued inclusion and diversity and the different perspectives they brought. Progress had been made since the launch of the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy including the following:

- A steady increase in the ethnic diversity of staff and the development of a more representative leadership team;
- Launch of the "Reverse Mentoring for Inclusion" pilot programme;
- Publication of Pay Gap Reports and Action Plans (see Minute 7 above);
- Production of an Anti-Racism Statement and Action Plan for 2025;
- Launch of an Inclusive Recruitment workshop;
- Updating the Council's four core HR Policies: Bullying and Harassment, Disciplinary, Grievance and Managing Poor Performance, to ensure that they continued to reflect best practice.

The report explained that progress was shared with all staff through a supporting comms campaign and members of the Corporate Management Team Chaired, on a rotation basis, a quarterly meeting with Chairs of the Staff Networks as part of the governance of the Strategy. Meetings had been held with Councillors over the previous 18 months about the Council's strategy for inclusion and diversity for its workforce and a keen interest had been shown in the Anti-Racism Statement. The statement related to the Council's workforce however, Councillors were also being engaged in working towards a broader Boroughwide public statement. Progress had also been made with the agreed milestones for the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy and this was set out in a table in the report.

The priorities for the third year of the Plan, starting in January 2026, listed areas that needed to be addressed that were felt to still require attention to ensure the delivery of the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy and included the following:

- A communications campaign for the Anti Racism statement and continuing to progress the agreed actions;
- Developing and rolling out a series of Inclusion and Diversity workshops;
- Support for Progression;
- Continued delivery of Inclusive Leadership workshop;
- Policy Review;
- Disability Inclusion.

The report explained that Staff Networks, organisational leaders and Team Reading Stakeholders had been asked to comment on any further priority areas that would support achievement of the Council's ambition for Inclusion and Diversity during year three of the Strategy. To date feedback had included a focus on Disability Inclusion (invisible disabilities such as neurodiversity, epilepsy, narcolepsy), Carers (unpaid or family carers) and Menopause. These would be considered as part of the year three delivery.

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**Resolved:** That the progress that had been made in relation to the delivery of the Council's Inclusion and Diversity Strategy be noted.

### **9. REDUNDANCY AND SPECIAL SEVERANCE PAYMENT COSTS – 1 APRIL 2025 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

The Committee considered a report that provided a summary of Special Severance Payments that had been made between 1 April 2025 and 30 September 2025. The report did not include termination costs for schools-based staff and stated that there had been no early retirements on the grounds of efficiency and no redundancies during the period.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

### **10. PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING OFFICER, RETURNING OFFICER AND ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER STATUTORY ROLES**

The Committee considered a report that outlined proposed arrangements to follow the upcoming departure of the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services in December 2025. The post currently incorporated three statutory officer roles of Monitoring Officer, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.

The report explained that the Council had been advised that there was a challenging market for the recruitment of Monitoring Officers. To safeguard against this and to ensure continuity of cover, it was proposed to make an interim appointment for the role of Assistant Director and Monitoring Officer. Recruitment for a permanent replacement would then begin in early 2026. However, with elections scheduled for May 2026, it was considered that it would not be appropriate for these to be managed by an interim officer, and the report therefore proposed that the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer roles be allocated to the Executive Director of Resources. The appointments would need to be formally approved at a meeting of Council. The report also noted that the Council could revisit the permanent arrangements for elections should it wish to, once it had been able to recruit to the substantive Monitoring Officer position.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the proposed interim arrangements and recruitment process for the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer be noted;**
- (2) That the appointment of the Executive Director of Resources as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer be recommended to Council.**

### **11 HEAD OF PAID SERVICE – CONFIRMATION OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS**

The Committee considered a report that provided an update in respect of the arrangements for the performance review and target setting processes for the Head of Paid Service as required in the Council's Constitution. An extract from the Council's Constitution that set out the Personnel Committee's Terms of Reference was attached to the report at Appendix A.

The report stated that the Leader of the Council was responsible for setting performance targets for the Head of Paid Service each year. These performance targets were regularly

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reviewed, and the Leader held regular performance discussions with the Head of Paid Service to actively manage on going performance. If any development was required, this would also be discussed as part of these ongoing discussions.

**Resolved: That the performance review arrangements for the Head of Paid Service be noted.**

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 6.57 pm).