



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
HELD AT 32 WATERLOO STREET
ON 6TH MAY 2026

Meeting Commenced: 11am
Meeting Concluded: 12.15pm

PRESENT: Councillors Timothy Taylor(C), Mark Canniford, Peter Crew, Jemma Coles, Alan Peak
John Standfield.

In Attendance: Sarah Pearse -CEO/Town Clerk ,Fay Powell-Deputy Town Clerk, Helen Morton
Director of Finance & Resources-RFO and Rebecca Saunders-Civic Officer and PA to the CEO/Town
Clerk.

1.	To receive Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ciaran Cronnelly ,Mike Bell and Owen James with no substitutions.
2.	To receive Declarations of Interest Cllr Peter Crew declared a personal link to the employee on item 6 so would leave the room for this item.
3.	To receive and approve the minutes of the previous Personnel Committee meeting held on 11th February 2026 The minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated at the meeting. A member noted that finish time was minuted correctly at top of minutes as 11.55am but incorrectly at the bottom as 12.55. <i>Councillor Gillian Bute joined the meeting 11.02am</i> PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Alan Peak . A vote was taken and accordingly it was carried.

RESOLVED: With the above amendments that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

4. **General Matters**

1. **HR Policies and Procedures Review**

The Director of Finance & Resources reported that these were the latest HR policies to be approved.

- a) Preventing Harassment in the Workplace – *New Policy* Following changes to Employment Rights Act 2025
- b) Leave of Absence Policy – *Updated* following changes to Employment Rights Act 2025
- c) Lone Working Policy - *Updated* following changes to Employment Rights Act 2025
- d) Whistle blowing Policy - *Updated* following changes to Employment Rights Act 2025

Helen Morton advised that guidance had been issued by Worknest of updates that were shown as tracked changes on the reports.

A member raised that employers needed to be proactive with sexual harassment training and requested that be demonstrated in the Preventing Harassment in the Workplace policy.

Helen Morton informed the Committee that this was covered under section 6 of the policy but there would be online training provided for all, including members which should be undertaken every term for all staff, members and volunteers.

A member advised that the Leave of Absence policy should be amended to include all staff including ones on probation and parental leave still states after one years' service but should be effective from first day of employment-To amend.

11.20am Councillor Mark Canniford left the Meeting

A member raised whether the employee or the manager assessed when lone working was safe.

11.21am Councillor Mark Canniford Joined the Meeting

Sarah Pearse advised that the manager and the employee assessed the lone working arrangements and a member of SMT was on call at all times if assistance was required.

A member raised if rather than producing our own policies if using the generic government advised ones and just had our own guidance notes, this would omit having to do regular updates.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mark Canniford

SECONDED BY: Councillor Jemma Coles

A vote was taken and accordingly it was **carried**.

RESOLVED: That with the above amendments

1. **Recommend approval** of the new Preventing Harassment in the Workplace for adoption
2. **Recommend approval** of the new Leave of Absence Policy for adoption
3. **Recommend approval** of the new Lone Working Policy for adoption
4. **Recommend approval** of the new Whistle Blowing Policy for adoption

4.2

The following policies are available for the annual review and noting and can be viewed on the Council website under <https://wsm-tc.gov.uk/your-council/policies/>. None of the policies have any legislative or current amendments from that previously adopted:

Absence Review and Procedure Policy

Appraisal Policy

Capability Policy and Procedure

Disciplinary and Grievance Policy

Probation Policy and Procedure

Flexible Working Request Policy

A member raised if the Disciplinary and Grievance policy should include some guidance on sexual harassment protective disclosures and the flexible working policy would need checking to make sure they were compliant with the changes which came into effect from April 2026.

Helen Morton advised that she would check all of the above policies and review and amend against the Employment Rights Act 2025 in readiness for final approval at Full Town Council in June 2026.

RESOLVED: Noted but check above queries.

5. **Job Descriptions for Approval following Evaluation**

Helen Morton reported that in October 2025 a proposal had been put forward to this committee for the creation of an internal Cleaning team for the Museum, 32 Waterloo Street and the Old Town Quarry from 1st April 2026 as the current cleaning contract had been challenging with the standard of cleaning not at an acceptable level. This was approved and the process for drafting of job descriptions followed.

In drafting the job descriptions it was felt that rather than just cleaning the staff could support in other ways and the title of Housekeeper would be more appropriate.

The draft job descriptions for a Housekeeping Supervisor and 2 Housekeepers were sent to CHRGS consultants, who had previously evaluated the job descriptions for all roles in the Council, to align the content with the appropriate NALC pay scale as per the requirements to evaluate all new Job descriptions made by previous resolution. These job descriptions had previously been shared with the committee.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew

SECONDED BY: Councillor John Standfield

A vote was taken and accordingly it was **carried**.

RESOLVED: To approve the evaluated job descriptions to allow recruitment to commence with immediate effect.

6. *To resolve under the public Bodies (Admissions of Meeting) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for the following item by reasons of the confidential nature of the business*

7. **Worknest Staffing Matters update**

11.30am Councillor Peter Crew left the meeting

The CEO/Town Clerk asked the committee members if they were happy for all staff to stay due to the sensitive nature of the agenda item, which they all agreed too.

Sarah Pearse noted that case one on the report had been concluded.

She further acknowledged that Case two was a complex matter involving the welfare of a valued member of staff, and that the outcome of the decision made could negatively affect the individual's wellbeing.

Helen Morton provided an overview of recent events, which originated from an incident in October 2025 involving attendance at work whilst under the influence of alcohol. This resulted in a formal warning being issued in the presence of the member of staff's family and a UNISON representative. The incident subsequently prompted further action, as all parties recognised that there were underlying issues requiring additional intervention and support.

This was acknowledged to be a highly complex case involving a member of staff with 20 years of service. However, it was considered that the individual's support needs had now reached a level beyond that which the council could reasonably accommodate. Over a considerable period, colleagues had provided substantial support to the individual; however, it had become increasingly apparent that those offering assistance were no longer able to fully discharge their own responsibilities due to the significant demands associated with supporting their colleague.

With the support of the UNISON representative avenues to gain external support for the member of staff had been explored such as the Access to Work scheme and an adult social care referral but all of these had long wait times (AWS 16 weeks, adult social care 37 weeks)

so were not suitable. An updated Occupational Health assessment had taken place on 5th May 2026.

Other support and reasonable adjustments previously implemented included time off in January 2026, to attend addiction counselling with We Are With You and reasonable adjustments with modified duties.

A discussion took place regarding the termination of the employee's contract, with guidance from Worknest, in a lawful and appropriate manner. It was considered that there was a duty of care to protect both the individual and their colleagues, and that the situation had developed into health and safety concerns. It was also agreed that all reasonable steps had been taken to support the individual's continued employment.

Other topics covered included

- Garden leave – Helen Morton advised that this was not possible as garden leave relates to actual dismissal
- Suspension if another incident occurred whilst advise on the matter was being sought.
- Continue with the next stage of the disciplinary process in relation to being intoxicated in the workplace.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Tim Taylor
SECONDED BY: Councillor Gillian Bute

A vote was taken and accordingly it was **carried**.

12.05pm Councillor Peter Crew rejoined meeting.

RESOLVED; To bring the situation to a conclusion with options provided by Worknest with a request to focus wording on capability and health and safety with evidence already obtained. Look at suspension if any new incidents occur..

7. **Other Staffing updates**

Sarah Pearse reported that the Deputy Town Clerk had now returned under a phased 6 month return with the CEO/Town Clerk still leading her operational duties to allow her to focus on her team and designated tasks.

The Senior development Officer would be leaving to have her baby in September 2026. As this was a key role and the Deputy Town Clerk was still not fully back it was felt a temporary replacement in the form of a minimum of a 12-month contract would be appropriate. This would allow for an effective handover period hopefully from June 2026.

Members requested a robust interview process to ensure the selection of an applicant who could begin work immediately, thereby maximizing value for money.

The Cemetery Administrator was not expected to return from sick leave in the near future; however, the new Grounds Administrator had settled in well and was beginning to assume some of these responsibilities, with support from the CEO/Town Clerk but some flexibility maybe needed in regards to replacing this position in the long term. Updates will be made when necessary.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew

SECONDED BY: Councillor Alan Peak

A vote was taken and accordingly it was **carried**.

RESOLVED; The Deputy Town Clerks phased return be noted. The minimum 12-month maternity cover be approved and allow flexibility in cover for the Cemetery administrator if needed.

Sickness Absence Statistics

Helen Morton provided an overview of the previously circulated report, noting that, if the few long-term sickness cases were excluded, persistent short-term sickness had shown significant improvement.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 12.15pm

Signed.....Dated.....
Chair of the Personnel Committee



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

Personnel Committee – 8th July 2026

Report of the Democratic Services Manager and Chief Executive Officer / Town Clerk

Personnel Committee Annual Work Programme 2026/27

Purpose of Report

To present for approval the proposed Personnel Committee Annual Work Programme for the 2026/27 municipal year.

2. Background

At its Annual Meeting held on 28 May 2026, the Council approved the Committee structure for the 2026/27 municipal year, including the appointment of Committee Councillors, Chair and Vice-Chair, together with the Committee Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation.

In accordance with its Terms of Reference, the Personnel Committee is responsible for overseeing the Council's responsibilities as an employer and providing strategic oversight of staffing, organisational development and employment matters.

The Annual Work Programme has been prepared to assist the Committee in planning and managing its business throughout the municipal year, ensuring that its delegated responsibilities are considered in a structured, timely and transparent manner.

3. Proposed Annual Work Programme

The proposed Annual Work Programme is attached at **Appendix A**.

The Annual Work Programme has been developed to:

- support delivery of the Committee's delegated responsibilities;
- align with the Council's approved Calendar of Meetings;
- support effective forward planning and monitoring of Committee business;
- assist budget planning for the 2027/28 financial year; and
- ensure that key staffing, employment and governance matters are considered throughout the municipal year.

The programme includes scheduled consideration of staffing establishment, workforce planning, organisational development, employee wellbeing, employment policies, training and development and other matters within the Committee's remit.

The programme is intended to operate as a live document and may be amended by resolution of the Committee throughout the municipal year where operational priorities, legislative changes or matters referred by Full Council require.



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

4. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from approval of the Annual Work Programme.

The programme supports the timely consideration of staffing establishment, salary budgets and workforce planning, which will inform the Council's budget setting process for 2027/28.

Any financial implications arising from individual reports considered during the year will be identified within those reports.

5. Legal and Governance Implications

The proposed Annual Work Programme supports the Committee in discharging its delegated responsibilities in accordance with:

- Committee Terms of Reference;
- Standing Orders;
- Financial Regulations;
- Scheme of Delegation;
- employment legislation; and
- health and safety legislation.

The programme promotes effective governance, accountability, transparency and forward planning throughout the municipal year.

6. Equality Implications

The Annual Work Programme supports the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion through the planned consideration of employment policies, workforce development, employee wellbeing and organisational practices.

7. Recommendation

That the Personnel Committee:

1. **Approves** the Personnel Committee Annual Work Programme for the 2026/27 municipal year, attached at Appendix A.
2. **Authorises** the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to make minor administrative amendments to the Annual Work Programme during the municipal year, provided such amendments do not alter the Committee's delegated responsibilities or decision-making powers.



APPENDIX A

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2026/27

Document Information

Committee	Personnel Committee
Municipal Year	2026/27
Approved by	Personnel Committee
Approval Date	8 July 2026
Review Frequency	At each ordinary meeting
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer / Town Clerk
Document Owner	Democratic Services Manager
Prepared Having Regard To	Committee Terms of Reference, Scheme of Delegation, Calendar of Meetings and annual budget setting cycle

1. Purpose

This Annual Work Programme provides Councillors with a structured framework for planning, scheduling and monitoring the business of the Personnel Committee throughout the municipal year.

It has been prepared having regard to the Committee's Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation and is aligned with the Council's approved Calendar of Meetings.

2. Status of the Annual Work Programme

This Annual Work Programme is intended to be a live governance document.

Whilst it sets out the Committee's anticipated programme of business, it is recognised that staffing matters, legislative changes, operational priorities and matters referred by Full Council may arise throughout the year.

Accordingly, the Committee may resolve to:

- add reports;
- defer reports;
- remove reports;
- amend the timing of reports; or
- receive additional reports where necessary.



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

Minor administrative amendments, including changes to report titles or scheduling, may be made by the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

3. Annual Meeting Programme

Meeting	Primary Focus
8 July 2026	Governance, staffing updates and strategic workforce planning
28 October 2026	Budget planning and organisational development
17 February 2027	Performance monitoring and governance assurance
5 May 2027	Annual review and forward planning

4. Annual Work Programme

Wednesday 8 July 2026

Work Programme Item	TOR Ref.	Frequency
Approve Annual Work Programme	17	Annual
Proposal for Asset Data Intern / Officer	1,14	As Required
Other Staffing Updates / Changes	1,5	As Required
Workforce Planning	1	Annual
Succession Planning for Key Officers	3	Annual
CEO/Town Clerk Appraisal Arrangements	11	Annual
WorkNest Employment Law Update	6	As Required
HR Policy Review	6	As Required
Sickness Absence Monitoring (Quarter 1)	5	Quarterly
Staff Wellbeing Review	5	Quarterly
Health & Safety Staffing Matters	15	Annual
Training & Development Programme	10	Annual

Wednesday 28 October 2026

Work Programme Item	TOR Ref.	Frequency
Salary Budget Review	14	Annual
Organisational Structure Review	1	Annual
Recruitment Planning	4	As Required
Apprenticeship & Training Budget Review	10	Annual
Pension Arrangements Review	9	Annual
Pay Structures & Conditions of Service Review	8	Annual
Job Evaluation Review	7	As Required



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

Work Programme Item	TOR Ref.	Frequency
HR Policy Review	6	As Required
WorkNest Employment Law Update	6	As Required
Staff Wellbeing Review	5	Quarterly
Sickness Absence Monitoring (Quarter 2)	5	Quarterly

Wednesday 17 February 2027

Work Programme Item	TOR Ref.	Frequency
Staffing Performance Monitoring	5	Annual
Sickness Absence Monitoring (Quarter 3)	5	Quarterly
Recruitment Update	4	As Required
Training & Development Review	10	Annual
Succession Planning Review	3	Annual
Staff Wellbeing Review	5	Quarterly
Health & Safety Review	15	Annual
Staffing Budget Monitoring	14	Annual
WorkNest Employment Law Update	6	As Required
Review of Employment Policies	6	Annual

Wednesday 5 May 2027

Work Programme Item	TOR Ref.	Frequency
Annual Staffing Establishment Review	2	Annual
Annual Workforce Planning Review	1	Annual
Annual Organisational Structure Review	1	Annual
Annual Staff Wellbeing Review	5	Annual
Annual Health & Safety Staffing Report	15	Annual
Annual Review of Pay Structures & Conditions of Service	8	Annual
Annual Pension Arrangements Review	9	Annual
Annual HR Policy Review	6	Annual
Review of Committee Effectiveness	17	Annual
Draft Annual Work Programme 2027/28	17	Annual

5. Standing Items (As Required)

Governance

- Matters referred by Full Council.



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

- Urgent staffing matters requiring Committee determination.
- WorkNest Employment Law Updates.
- Employment policy reviews.

Staffing

- Staffing updates / organisational changes.
- Staffing establishment changes.
- Senior Officer recruitment.
- Appointment of recruitment panels.
- Staffing budget implications.

Employment Matters

- Job evaluation matters.
- Pay and conditions of service.
- Pension matters.
- Apprenticeship and training matters.

Employee Relations (*Confidential Session where applicable*)

- Disciplinary matters.
- Grievance matters.
- Long-term sickness absence.
- Occupational Health recommendations.
- Staff wellbeing matters.

6. Review

The Personnel Committee will review this Annual Work Programme at each ordinary meeting to ensure it remains aligned with the Committee's delegated responsibilities and the Council's priorities.

The Committee may amend the Annual Work Programme by resolution during the municipal year to reflect emerging priorities, legislative changes or matters referred by Full Council.

Minor administrative amendments may be made by the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee. Any substantive amendments shall be reported to the Committee for approval.