



MEETING : HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : WEDNESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2025
TIME : 7.00 PM

PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE

This meeting will be live streamed on the Council's Youtube page:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/EastHertsDistrict>

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillor Rachel Carter (Chair)

Councillors M Butcher, M Connolly, T Deffley, D Hollebon, M Swainston and D Willcocks

Substitutes

Conservative Group: Councillor R Buckmaster
Green Group: Councillors J Dunlop and G Hill
Labour Group: Councillor D Jacobs
Liberal Democrat Group: Councillor S Marlow

(Note: Substitution arrangements must be notified by the absent Member to Democratic Services 24 hours before the meeting)

CONTACT OFFICER: MEETINGCONTACT

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- must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
- must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
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AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes - 20 November 2024 (Pages 5 - 12)

To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2024.

3. Chair's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Member's Declaration of Interest.

5. Human Resources Q3 Statistics (Pages 13 - 31)

6. Gender Pay Gap Report 2024 (Pages 32 - 42)

7. Pay Policy Statement 2025/26 (Pages 43 - 56)

8. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2024, AT
7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Rachel Carter (Chair)
Councillors M Butcher, D Hollebon,
M Swainston and D Willcocks

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michele Aves	- Committee Support Officer
Jackie Bruce	- Section 106 Programme Manager
Elly Starling	- Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Alex Wanless	- Service Manager (Human Resources and Organisational Development)

240 APOLOGIES

There was an apology for absence from Councillor Connolly. It was noted that Councillor Dunlop was substituting for Councillor Connolly.

241 MINUTES - 11 SEPTEMBER 2024

It was moved by Councillor Hollebon and seconded by

Councillor Swainston that the minutes of the meetings of the Human Resources Committee held on 11 September 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED. It was noted that Councillors Butcher, Dunlop and Willcocks abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meetings of the Human Resources Committee held on 11 September 2024, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

242 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and asked that the officers present introduced themselves. She said that the Human Resources Quarter Two Statistics Report included the minutes from the Health and Safety Committee, and that the agenda also included the important update to the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

243 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

244 HUMAN RESOURCES - QUARTER 2 STATISTICS

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager introduced the report and apologised for its non-inclusion of sickness data. He explained that the Human Resources reporting tool was down at the time when the report was written, but assured Members that employee's absence could still be logged at this time. He said that there had been no trend changes in sickness absence and that data for both Quarters Two and Three would be included within the next Committee report.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that vacancies had remained static, and at the request of the Chair data pertaining to 'on hold' and

'hard to recruit to' posts would be separated out within the next report. He said that the 'hard to recruit to' posts remained those within the Environmental Health and Planning Departments, which continued to be a national issue. He said that the Local Government Association (LGA) were running a recruitment campaign to encourage career uptake, which would include radio advertisements.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that the council was relaunching its East Herts Together learning and development initiative, alongside its new intranet site and the opportunity for staff to attend mental health training bootcamps. He said that the Personal Development Review (PDR) deadline had been extended to 31 December 2024, to give staff time to have the required conversations, and that all these points had been publicised.

The Chair thanked the Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager for his report.

Councillor Swainston observed from the report that the Communications Department had seen one person leave but had six new appointments. She asked for the reasoning of this.

The Section 106 Programme Manager said that the recruitments within the Communications, Strategy And Policy Service were in respect of the new Corporate Support Hub, which had been created to form a central team responsible for the administrative tasks of the council. She said that this was an ongoing project, and part of the Transformation Programme.

Councillor Dunlop asked if the council would have access to monies from the Government's Planning Skills Delivery Fund to help with recruitment to the Planning Department.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that details of the fund's framework had not yet trickled down to the council, but some monies were

expected.

The Chair said that it was encouraging to see the council's focus on apprenticeships, which were both positive for the community and the council's development. She drew Members attention to the report's appendix which contained the minutes from the Health and Safety Committee, and asked if there were any questions for officers.

Councillor Swainston asked if the broken door mentioned in the Health and Safety Committee minutes had been repaired.

The Section 106 Programme Officer confirmed that the door in question had been repaired immediately after the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee.

The Chair said that for good governance the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee should be seen by Leadership Team.

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development agreed with the Chair and said that the minutes were previously seen by Leadership Team and that this process needed to be restarted.

It was moved by Councillor Hollebon and seconded by Councillor Swainston, that the recommendations, as detailed, be approved. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED -that A) the Management Report for Quarter 2 (July - September 2024) be considered and any comments be provided to the HR Officer / Head of HR and OD regarding the content or formatting of the report.

245 BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY UPDATE

The Human Resources and Organisational Development

Manager introduced the report. He explained that the historical version of the council's Bullying and Harassment Policy was reviewed in October 2024 to include provisions from the Worker Protection Act.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that an amendment to the Equality Act 2010 turned the duty to safeguard against sexual harassment in the workplace into an active provision, expanding the duty to protect against third parties. He gave examples of where this expansion may apply, such as at staff Christmas parties and the use of contractors.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager drew Members attention to the Action Plan detailed within the report, which had been agreed by Leadership Team. He advised the Committee that the historical policy had also been updated with input from Unison, to reflect changes in language and to give further clarification.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that the updated policy contained within the agenda pack showed tracked changes as per requests from Members of the Local Joint Panel. He said that a 'no mark-up' version had also been subsequently circulated to Members for ease of reading.

The Section 106 Programme Manager (who was attending in her capacity as a Unison representative and Chair of the Local Joint Panel) said that going forward a more structured way of reviewing policies had been agreed, allowing officers and Unison representatives to discuss and produce cleaner versions of documents for Members.

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development said that the council had signed up to a Human Resources Policy Programme Forum which allowed authorities from across the region to access each other's policies via a central platform. She

said this was of particular benefit to smaller authorities such as East Herts who did not have a Policy Team or an employment lawyer.

The Chair thanked officers for their detailed work.

Councillor Butcher said that it was very sensible for the council to join the policy forum, which was a practice that many small charities followed. He asked for clarification if the duty to protect staff from harassment against third parties included the public.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that it did include the public, and that measures were taken to create safe environments for all. He gave the examples of the zero tolerance and 'Ask Angela' signage in premises and information printed on BEAM's tickets.

Councillor Butcher said that these measures sounded good, and asked if regular training would be given to BEAM staff, including casual workers.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that it was very important that this was implemented, and that he would engage with the operational team at BEAM. He also welcomed any ideas from Members regarding this matter.

Councillor Dunlop referred to the flow chart on the last page of the updated policy and observed that it had been struck through. He asked if a new chart would be produced, with different advice/flow.

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development said that the flow chart did need to be different, hence the striking through. The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that the flow chart would be revamped.

Councillor Dunlop asked how cultural integration of the

updated policies would be achieved, and asked if there were plans for Leadership Team to assist with this.

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development said that Leadership Team had accepted a People Ambition Strategy, which set out the culture of the organisation – with a workforce which was skilled, resilient, flexible, and engaged. She said that East Herts Together would be used as a vehicle for integration, with easily accessible resources available to employees and information included in staff inductions.

The Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager said that an e-learning module around harassment had been sourced, which would give core information to staff, and which was reportable. He said that further training around the subject would be looked at, but this was budget dependent.

Councillor Swainston asked if the Human Resources Policy Programme Forum was open to Town and Parish Councils.

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development said that currently the forum was only attended by district, county, and unitary councils, but she would check, as a possibility may be that information could be shared with Town and Parish Councils post meetings.

The Chair asked if the council were linked with the Community Safety Partnership, who gave bystander training and initiatives geared towards the nighttime economy such as the 'Ask for Angela' scheme.

The Section 106 Programme Manager said that the council were an active part of the partnership, with the Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Officer attending meetings.

The Chair said it was important that the council took care

of its staff and that they felt safe.

It was moved by Councillor Hollebon and seconded by Councillor Butcher, that the recommendations, as detailed, be approved. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that A) the updated Bullying and Harassment Policy be approved; and

B) the action plan be approved.

246 URGENT BUSINESS

There were no urgent items.

The meeting closed at 7.37 pm

Chairman
Date

East Herts Council Report

Human Resources Committee

Date of meeting: Wednesday 5 February 2025

Report by: Emily Cordwell, HR Officer

Report title: HR Q3 Statistics

Ward(s) affected:

Not Applicable

Summary – For members to consider the Human Resources Management Report for Quarter 3, which covers October – December 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HR Committee

- a) To consider the Human Resources Management Report for Quarter 3 (October – December 2024) and provide any comments to the HR Officer / Head of HR and OD regarding the content or formatting of the report.

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 Members are invited to consider the Human Resources (HR) Management Report for Quarter 3 (October – December 2024)

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Quarterly report on key HR metrics

3.0 Reason(s)

- 3.1 For members to consider the quarterly statistics on:
 - Sickness
 - Vacancies
 - Recruitment and Retention
 - Learning and Development
 - Health and Safety

4.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

As covered by the report, the measures or controls put in place will impact positively on community safety.

Data Protection

All data is secured in accordance with the Council's GDPR guidelines and disposed of in a correct and secure manner.

Equalities

The data shows that East Herts Council employs a diverse workforce with some areas of overrepresentation.

Environmental Sustainability

No – Not directly linked.

Financial

No direct financial impacts. The report covers absence, which will cause the council to lose work hours.

Health and Safety

Yes – As described in the report.

Human Resources

Yes – As considered in the report.

Human Rights

The report does not directly impact Human Rights other than assuring that human rights are considered in the Council's operation. The data in the report can be used to review and highlight any potential issues.

Legal

Health and Safety practice, reporting and monitoring in place to comply with legal requirements.

Specific Wards

No

Contact Member

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HR Committee Report for Q3 2024/25

Note: As of 31 December 2024, East Herts Council employed 296.33 fte and had a headcount of 328.

1.0 Sickness Absence

Sickness absence stats for quarter 2 were not available last quarter, they are included below.

At the end of Quarter 2, the total number of sickness days taken was 804.66 full time equivalent (FTE) days. Of these, 320.21 FTE days (40%) were due to short term sickness and 484.45 FTE days (60%) were due to long term sickness. The percentage of time lost due to short term sickness is 5.1% and the percentage of time lost due to long term sickness is 7.8% which equates to a total percentage lost time of 12.9%.

At the end of Quarter 2, the number of FTE days absent per FTE was an average of 4.86 days.

At the end of Quarter 3, the total number of sickness days taken was 650.83 full time equivalent (FTE) days. Of these, 256.14 FTE days (39%) were due to short term sickness and 394.69 FTE days (61%) were due to long term sickness. The percentage of time lost due to short term sickness is 4.1% and the percentage of time lost due to long term sickness is 3.4% which equates to a total percentage lost time of 10.5%.

At the end of Quarter 3, the number of FTE days absent per FTE was an average of 6.93 days.

Short term sickness

Absences of less than four weeks are considered to be short term sickness absence.

72 employees (22% of the total headcount) had short term sickness absence during Q2 totalling 320.21 FTE days.

At the end of Q2, the number of short-term FTE days absent per FTE was an average of 1.52 days.

84 employees (26% of the total headcount) had short term sickness absence during Q3 totalling 256.14 FTE days.

At the end of Q3, the number of short-term FTE days absent per FTE was an average of 2.35 days.

Short term absences that meet out trigger points are handled through our Absence Management Policy processes.

Long term sickness

Absences in excess of 4 weeks / 28 consecutive calendar days are considered to be long term sickness absence.

15 employees (5% of the total headcount) had long term sickness absence during Q2 totalling 484.45 FTE days.

11 employees (3% of the total headcount) had long term sickness absence during Q3 totalling 394.69 FTE days.

At the end of Q2, the number of long-term FTE days absent per FTE was 3.34 days. At the end of Q3, the number of long-term FTE days absent per FTE was 4,58 days.

All long-term absence is being managed with HR staff supporting the employee and manager to help get the member of staff back to work. We use our Occupational Health Service and Employee Assistance Programme to support this process, they provide helpful guidance and recommendations to help us accommodate return to work for the member of staff.

2.0 Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment

Our biggest recruitment challenge this quarter were qualified accountants and Environmental Health Officers. East Herts geographical position does mean that qualified staff have a large number of employment options within easy reach and the new standard blended working offer means that their options are now even bigger.

We have a Market Forces Supplement that is applied to hard to fill roles in Planning and Legal services, this is reviewed annually to ensure it is still relevant. We also have an agreement with LinkedIn to market our top 5 roles.

We are about to launch a new applicant tracking system which will improve our candidate journey from application to onboarding.

We continually review our offers against the market and adapt what we can given our financial constraints.

Recruitment to posts in other service areas is generally more straightforward and successful first time.

All recruitment requests must be accompanied by a business case and signed off by a panel consisting of Chief Executive, Head of HR and Section 151 officer. This ensures that we challenge ourselves to consider if we need to replace roles like for like, should we use the opportunity to reshape roles, do we really need the role etc.

There have been 23 new starters in quarter 3:

- 8 in BEAM
- 1 in Operations
- 2 in Communications, Strategy and Policy
- 3 in Housing and Health
- 1 in Legal and Democratic services
- 5 in Planning
- 3 in Revenue and Benefits

Vacancies

As of 31 December 2024, we had 44 posts unfilled for a variety of reasons. This represents 13.4% of posts.

These are the main reasons posts are vacant:

- Being held for budget savings
- Being held as a service review pending
- Being held as part of the decision- making accountability review (DMA)
- To be deleted following service review
- In the process of being recruited to
- Recruitment successful, job offer out but new member of staff has not yet started.

It takes almost twice as long to recruit to a post as it takes for someone to resign and work their notice which often account for the high vacancy number. Business critical posts get covered by agency / interim staff or through acting up arrangements that also offer staff development opportunities.

Retention – Turnover

There were 10 leavers in Q3 giving a turnover rate for the quarter of 3.1%. The projected turnover rate for the annual period 2024/25 is 15.6%. This is higher than our target of 14% but the percentage has reduced from the previous quarter. This turnover rate is not unusual in local government, the national average across all sectors is about 15% with a lot of councils reporting rates of over 20%.

Reasons for leaving in Q3 included: To achieve promotion, retirement, changes in career, and for personal reasons.

The leavers were in the following teams:

- 1 in Operations
- 3 in Housing and Health
- 2 in Revenue and Benefits
- 1 in Communications, Strategy and Policy
- 1 in Strategic finance and property
- 1 in Legal and Democratic services
- 1 in Planning

Recruitment and retention related activity planned for Q4

- We will be reviewing our Market Forces Supplement taking into account salary survey data, information from relevant professional organisations and the implications of any national pay award.
- We will be reviewing our employment offering, looking at contributions towards professional fees to attract and retain talent.

3.0 Learning and Development

The learning needed in our organisation is delivered by e-learning, one to one training or group-based learning remotely or in person.

HR is responsible for the corporate training budget, including professional training. We use training identified through annual employee reviews to scope the annual training plan. We are utilising the apprenticeship levy, with 4 officers currently completing a level 7 qualification and 1 officer completing a level 3 qualification.

The annual mandatory e-learning training programme has continued for employees to complete in line with their performance review. These courses include Data Protection, Health and Safety, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Safeguarding. A mandatory course on preventing sexual harassment has now been added to ensure compliance with the new statutory requirements and increase the safety of all of our staff at work.

In addition to our mandatory programmes there are many other programmes that our staff can access to increase their knowledge and skills.

A reminder of the importance to undertake meaningful PDRs will be sent out to encourage completion and give an opportunity for staff who have completed already to update progress toward their goals.

Leading a Mentally Healthy Workplace Skills Bootcamp has been started for the H&S Advisor to lead the Mental Health provision supported by Unison and East Herts Together members. This is a targeted, high-impact programme delivered over 12-14 weeks. It is specifically designed to address the mental health needs and leadership challenges faced by organisations in Hertfordshire. It can benefit employees who aspire to progress and take on a leadership role in managing mental health within their organisation.

A management development carousel has commenced which consists of a series of training sessions, allowing managers to book on topics they'd like a boost on or to learn more about. This will continue in to Quarter 4 and Quarter 1.

Learning and Development planned for the next quarter:

- Learning and Development cycle is being produced to allow a systematic, strategic approach to our training budget, succession planning and skills gap analysis. The first draft is currently with the Be Agile working group for feedback before coming to LT. This will utilise apprenticeships for management development and a wider-reaching training offer to upskill and develop our managers. Apprenticeships at all levels will be encouraged.
- We will also be trialling a 2 day Managers Essentials Bootcamp for new / relatively new Team Managers.
- Start to develop a simple train the trainer workshop for subject matter experts to enable them to develop their colleagues.
- We will also continue to review our staffing policies to ensure they are legally compliant and balanced in their approach and support ER processes; this is business as usual.
- We having training arranged in quarter 4 for a Mental Health First Aid refresher to those who wish to continue in their MHFA role.

4.0 Health and Safety

Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses

Background Information

Accidents are classified into two categories:

Non-Reportable Accidents

These are minor accidents such as cuts, minor contact injuries e.g., walking into the corner of a desk etc, slips, trips. Staff are encouraged to report these and can using the online self-service portal MyView or completing an accident report from the accident report pad. These are designated form BI510 accidents.

East Herts Council operates predominately back-office functions in a low-risk environment, the determination of low risk is based on the Health and Safety Executives definition, therefore, a high rate of accidents is not expected to occur.

Reportable Accidents

The **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013**, often known by the acronym **RIDDOR**, is a 2013 statutory instrument of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. It regulates the statutory obligation to report deaths, injuries, diseases and "dangerous occurrences".

Types of incidents that are reportable under RIDDOR?

- accidents resulting in the death of any person.
- accidents resulting in an absence from work over 7 days (excluding the day of the accident) e.g., degloving injury.
- Any injury from work in an enclosed space leading to hypothermia or heat-induced illness or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.
- non-fatal accidents requiring hospital treatment to non-workers. E.g., anyone not employed by the council.
- dangerous occurrences e.g., collapse, overturning or failure of any load-creating part of lifting equipment, failure of any closed vessel or associated pipework forming part of pressure systems, collapse of scaffold this is not a definitive list.
- Reportable diseases under RIDDOR are listed in regulations 8 and 9 of the regulations. Types of occupational diseases include occupational dermatitis, hand-arm vibration syndrome, occupational cancer etc.
- Carpal tunnel syndrome from using percussive or vibrating tools.
- Occupational dermatitis from exposure to unknown skin sensitisers or irritants
- Hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) from regular use of percussive or vibrating tools or materials

Any reportable accident, incident or near miss arising from construction work e.g., building sites, new builds, demolition work or developments fall under the purview of the Health and Safety Executive.

	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Target 24/25
H&S Employee Work Related Accidents (Not reportable to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013)	2	3	3
H&S Employee Work Related Accidents (Reportable to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013)	0	0	0
H&S Employee Work Related Incidents and Near Misses (No.)	0	4	0

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Contract Management and Responsibility

The Council have outsourced a number of high-level services from waste collection and recycling, street cleansing, grounds maintenance and leisure services and employs contractors for capital projects.

However, health and safety responsibilities cannot be passed from one party to another by a contract. If something goes wrong the Council can and will be held accountable by the HSE and the Courts.

The Council therefore ensures that contractors have appropriate health and safety policies in place, monitor contractor performance and safety standards. In order to ensure that services are delivered safely the officers with contract oversight:

- Convene meetings to review performance.
- Monitor complaints received and undertake investigations.
- Undertake onsite inspections and reviews.

Heads of Service with responsibility for these functions are responsible for ensuring that effective management controls are implemented.

Minutes of Safety Committee
Wednesday 06th November 2024,
Meeting Room Beane / Microsoft Teams

Present: Peter Dickinson (PD), Jackie Bruce (JB), Steven Linnett (SL), Paul Thomas-Jones (P T-J), Chloe Hipwood-Norton (C H-N), John Earley (JE), Dominique Kingsbury (DK), Benjamin Wood (BW), Ian Sharratt (IS), Emily Tickridge (ET), Geoff Hayden (GH)

Apologies: Rowan Perrin (RP) Ezra O'Neill (E O'N)

Announcements:

PD informed the Committee that this will be SL's last attendance as the chair. PD would be assuming the chair of the Committee.

PD expressed his thanks to SL for the positive support and contribution to promoting health and safety.

BW thanked SL for provision of new office chairs which will be a legacy to his support and commitment.

PD advised that BEAM have been invited to attend meetings of Committee and that he now has a monthly meeting with the team.

E O'N is the new UNISON Branch Health and Safety Officer, PD said he looks forward to carrying on the successful working relationship with UNISON.

1.0 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 07th August 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

Action: None

2.0 Matters Arising from the minutes.

The Committee noted the following actions:

Action: Door access to Housing and Health / Planning, Ground Floor, West. The door can now be secured but the closer assembly still need raising to prevent contact injuries.

H&H Lab door – This is still outstanding but can't be resolved easily, one solution is being considered but this is not ideal. H&H will monitor the situation.

Action: Air quality – Housing & Health / Planning Ground Floor, West.

Several options have been considered to resolve this issue, proposals included installing air service heat pumps (which is costly), utilising air conditioning units salvaged from Charringtons House, installing Expelair vents tied into the mains lighting and linked to identical units on the ground floor east where Revenues and Benefits are currently located.

GH has sought quotes for works.

The main issue is a lack of cross room ventilation with a reluctance to open windows to allow fresh air to circulate. It was argued that the central seating pods obstruct free flowing air, negating any circulation. CO2 levels are consistently high due to the lack of fresh air and reluctance to opening the windows.

GH further advised Committee that when the ground floor was refurbished the passive air vents were opened and sealed to eliminate draughts, one option is to remove the infill allowing air to stream through the vents and returning the air and temperature levels to those experienced on the first and second floors and providing oil filled portable radiators.

A draft proposal and timetable for action is recommended by Committee to be referred to the Head of Housing and Health, interim Head of Property and Facilities Management.

Action: colleagues are complaining about the reduction of natural light due to considerable growth of the shrubs and trees on the area outside, due to the design of the building this wing sits lower down and is therefore overshadowed.

PD advised Committee that he has spoken to Operations and can inform members of the following:

A request has been submitted for an assessment of the beech and cedar trees to determine the structural integrity of the braces and branches.

The grounds maintenance contractor has been asked to undertake work to sympathetically manage and reduce any obstructive foliage and undergrowth.

3.0 Office Housekeeping update – Transformation

Second floor, East wing is virtually clear, remaining furniture to be assessed for suitability and redeployment with some items being taken to Buntingford Depot for reuse.

Phase 2 of the transformation will be dependent on who takes occupancy of the second floor east.

UNISON requested that (GH) allows for space to accommodate the need to have a room in which to hold confidential talks as required. In accordance with Section 4A para2 Without prejudice to regulations 5 and 6 of these Regulations, every employer shall provide such facilities and assistance as safety representatives may reasonably require for the purpose of carrying out their functions under section 2(4) of the 1974 Act and under these Regulations.

Action: None - Standing Item

4.0 Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses

There were 4 non reportable, minor accidents reported between 05 August and 31 October 2024, none were related to any system or procedural failure and no further action was required.

1 Incident was reported in October.

Action: None

5.0 Regulatory and Legislative changes (Verbal report)

There have been no regulatory or legislative changes.

Action: None

6.0 Health and Safety Inspections and Contract Compliance

6.1 Shared Waste Service – Buntingford Depot

C H-N reported the following issues at Buntingford Depot:

- Cleaning on site is still poor and it has been observed that the cleaner hasn't entered the building. Standards remain very poor.
- The water cooler on the ground floor refreshment area leaked saturating the carpet which is leading to unpleasant mould smell.
- The site and buildings require an extensive deep clean prior to Veolias occupation to clear a build-up of cobwebs/rubbish/dust and clutter etc.
- North Herts IT are going to fix the TV in the meeting room to the wall and dispose of the defective stand.
- C H-N asked if it could be confirmed if there are heat/smoke detectors concealed by the ceiling panels in the first-floor kitchen. GH to verify and advise C H-N

C H-N briefed the Committee on the rising number of fire outbreaks at waste transfer stations and in waste collection vehicles caused by the ignition of batteries and NOX canisters in waste, this poses an ongoing risk across the waste collection and recycling sector. There are fire detectors and monitors in the tipping hall at Buntingford and CCTV monitoring coverage across the site. Using both Councils media platforms to promote

understanding and guidance on the disposal of such items was proposed.

GH advised that the current cleaning contractor is due to be replaced. Once this has taken place appropriate steps can be taken to address the long-term position of the standards of cleaning.

GH has also offered to provide furniture items for the office and meeting room on the first floor.

Action: (JE), (GH) to update C H-N on the following:

- Heat / Smoke detection in the first-floor kitchen

GH advised he would ask the fire safety contractor to inspect and report back.

6.2 Parks, Open Spaces and Play Areas

(IS) Nothing to report in respect to any safety issues across parks, open spaces and play areas.

Action: (JB) to seek clarification on the situation regarding S106 issues. **UPDATE:** (JB) Reported that this has now been resolved.

6.3 Parking Services

(DK) reported that antisocial behaviour remains an issue at Northgate End MSCP and Jackson Square MSCP where fireworks were discharged.

DK has spoken to APCOA in regard to proposals to relocate them to Wallfields. APCOA to provide GH with requirements and specifications. DK advised that APCOA will require 6 weeks' notice before leaving Buntingford Depot.

Action: Urgent DK to liaise with GH and APCOA on requirements and specifications for Wallfields and to arrange a site visit so APCOA can see the office and the arrangements.

7.0 Capital Project updates/EHC Contracts - Health & Safety Compliance and Management

Swimming Pools and Gyms – Sport and Leisure Management (SLM)

(ET) advised that there were no health and safety related issues or concerns to report.

Action: None

BEAM Hertford

BEAM is now open and operating well.

PD and GH have assisted with the deployment of signage and addressing desking and chair issues.

GH advised that the provision of IT hardware is with BEAMS IT service provider and not East Herts Shared IT service.

Action: None

Old River Lane, Bishop's Stortford

(BW) updated Committee of the following:

- Development Agreement has been signed with City Heart.
- BW now has delegated authority for all matters relating to Charringtons House and adjacent car parks.

Glendale – Grounds Maintenance

Glendale have expressed concerns about the proposed site at Amwell End. GH has been carrying out work on site, Glendale have advised Property of their specific concerns and have asked if there are any alternative sites available.

Action: GH to discuss with Head of Operations

Contract Compliance

In order to support Contract Managers a new inspection form is being developed utilising MS Forms the aim is to improve communication between teams, provide an effective tool to record

issues of concern and keep a tracked record and audit of action carried out.

In regard to car park inspections an issue of concern e.g., deep holes, surface degradation or root intrusion that is encroaching on a public access or parking space should be managed at the time of inspection by closing the parking space or walkway using appropriate measures e.g., cones, hazard / barrier tape. A photo should be taken of any mitigating controls and the time and date that action was taken, the fault/defect is reported to the appropriate team, and they must undertake work to correct the issue and then advise the reporting officer, in some cases a more specialist inspection may be required especially if there are structural defects, so it is important that intermediate action is taken before there is an accident and injury. Compliance across the Councils high risk services is carried out thoroughly but there are areas of weakness which the reporting tool aims to help with.

If, due to reasons of preservation or protection orders it is not possible to address the issue without the threat of damaging a tree root etc then consideration must be considered for closing off the section permanently. The Council may wish to explore options of alternative materials for car park surfaces that allow for undulations, but any major capital projects are subject to scrutiny and financial impact assessments to determine viability.

If the only option is to take a parking bay or footpath out of use on a permanent basis the reasons for doing so must be detailed and documented to support this decision.

Action: DK and GH to meet and discuss the best approach to addressing the concerns raised in respect to faults and defects within the Councils Car parks and multi storey car parks.

8.0 Property – Premise's Maintenance and Repairs

Ground floor automatic door closer assembly to be raised.

Action: GH / JE to arrange for adjustment to be carried out.

9.0 Facilities Management

No health and safety issues reported in respect to Facilities Management.

Action: None

10.0 List of Issues

10.1 Employee side (UNISON)

UNISON welcomed the decision of Leadership Team to commission an access audit.

Action: None

10.2. Management side

Leadership Team have approved the request to commission an Access Audit of Wallfields. An Access Audit is also known as an Equality Act Audit or Disabled Access Audit (DDA audit involves conducting a comprehensive inspection and assessment of the building assessing the current level of accessibility and ease of entry, navigation, usability, and ease of exit of premises by people with different impairments and levels of disability.

These Audits help employers by highlighting non-compliance issues and to understand how to adapt a building to meet the access needs of disabled people, and so to fulfil their duties and obligations under the Equality Act legislation.

The purpose of the audit will be to test the accessibility of Wallfields working environment against best-practice standards to benchmark its accessibility for disabled people, it will also provide a framework for Leadership Team on the future options of the Councils base of operations in terms of accommodation in order to avoid acquiring a building which may have the very obstacles the audit seeks to highlight.

Action: Commission an accessibility audit service.

11.0 Health and Safety Training

PD has advised that the following training has been arranged:

- Online Personal Safety and Lone Working Courses booked for the 21st, 28th, 29th November and 04th December 24
- Evacuation Chair 'Train the Trainer'. 06 December 24

A proposal has been submitted to ask for volunteers to be trained as DSE and Workstation Assessor Champions, each team would have a dedicated support assessor who would be supported by the H&S Officer.

Action:

PD to source options for DSE and Workstation Assessor training and will provide an update at next committee meeting.

12.0 AOB

Health and Safety Policy Review

PD advised Safety Committee that a Policy review work plan is being drawn up and that members of the Committee and UNISON will be invited to participate in the review of the policies.

This work also ties in with a review of the Human Resources Policies that UNISON are supporting.

Reaffirmation

UNISON East Herts Branch reaffirmed the request for the Council to establish a Safety Committee in accordance with the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.

Safety Committee recognise and acknowledge the reaffirmation.

Meeting ended: 11.45 am.

Date of Next Meeting: 05 February 2025

Time: 10.00am

Location: Beane Room, Rivers Suite

Teams: Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device.

Meeting ID: **334 740 738 70**

Passcode: **DTGQLU**

Agenda Item 6

East Herts Council Report

Human Resources Committee

Date of meeting: 5th February 2025

Report by: Joseph Dumont – Executive Member for Corporate Services

Report title: Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

Ward(s) affected:

Summary – This report sets out the outcome of the Gender Pay Gap report 2024, reports progress on last year's action plan and outlines new actions for this year.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Human Resources Committee:

- a) To note the Gender Pay Gap Report 2024
- b) To consider the action plan 25/26, adding further suggestions where appropriate

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 The Committee is invited to note the significant reductions in both the mean and median gender pay gaps for 2024 and to acknowledge the efforts that contributed to this progress.

1.2 The Committee is encouraged to provide feedback and additional recommendations on the proposed actions to further reduce the gender pay gap in the upcoming years.

2.0 Background

2.1 Both the mean and median gender pay gaps at the council have reduced this year which is positive news. The mean gender pay gap has dropped by 3 percentage points and the median gender pay gap reduced by 10 percentage points, when compared to 2023.

2.2 Please see the attached report for full details and the action plan for 25/26.

3.0 Reason(s)

3.1 The Council is committed to promoting equity and addressing its gender pay gap as part of its broader equality and diversity strategy.

3.2 Reducing the gender pay gap contributes to the Council's reputation as an inclusive employer and helps attract and retain a diverse workforce.

4.0 Options

4.1 The Committee to note the progress made and adopt the proposed actions for 2025/26.

4.2 The Committee to propose additional measures or amendments to the action plan to accelerate the reduction of the gender pay gap.

5.0 Risks

5.1 Failure to address the gender pay gap could harm the Council's reputation as an equitable employer and reduce staff morale and retention.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1

Community Safety

No impact.

Data Protection

Yes, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations when implementing changes such as blind CVs in the ATS.

Equalities

Yes, significant impact on gender equity and broader diversity considerations.

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No direct financial impact identified.

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

Yes, critical to embedding actions to reduce the gender pay gap and promoting inclusivity across the workforce.

Human Rights

Yes, directly linked to equity and fairness in employment practices.

Legal

No direct legal implications identified.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

Contact Member

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East Herts Council - Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

Published February 2025



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Introduction

In 2017 the government introduced legislation that made it statutory for organisations with 250 or more employees to report on their gender pay gap by 30 March 2018 and annually thereafter. East Herts Council published its first gender pay gap report in March 2018.

The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

The data the Council is required to provide includes mean and median pay gaps; mean and median bonus gaps; the proportion of male and female employees who received bonuses; and the proportion of male and female employees in each pay quartile.

The gender pay gap is different from equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman.

This is East Herts Council's report for the required snapshot date of 31 March 2024.

The figures set out in this report have been calculated using the standard methodologies used in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Review of action plan

We said we would:

- Continue to ensure that all staff complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning training programme. Offer further equalities-based training as identified by annual training needs analysis undertaken by the HR and OD Service Manager

Our progress:

- 82% of staff completed the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning training programme in 2024. The deadline for the PDR review has been extended to 2024/2025 due to changes in the process and leadership. The TNA will be reviewed once it is completed. The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act 2023, implemented in October 2024, focuses on active measures to prevent sexual harassment. Additionally, a new mandatory e-learning will be introduced starting in December 2024. Further training to enhance equality awareness is being commissioned for all staff in the council.

We said we would:

- The question of blind CVs will be explored as we reprocure the ATS through our procurement framework.

Our progress:

- We have procured a new Applicant Tracking System (ATS) from a company called Tribepad. The system is due to go live very shortly but the name blinding of CVs needs to be tested to ensure we are satisfied no data is lost as a result of the parsing technology before we can switch this function on. This will be in Phase 2 of the implementation and should be completed by April 2025.

We said we would:

- Each interview panel chair to continue to give consideration to the diversity of the interview panel and where possible try to ensure the panel is diverse. Where this is not possible try to ensure that other elements of the panel show staff diversity, for example ‘meet the team’ sessions to demonstrate the diversity at East Herts and to appear as welcoming as possible to applicants of all backgrounds.

Our progress:

- The HR team have been encouraging managers to try to ensure that interview panels are as diverse as possible and some ‘meet the team’ sessions have taken place. Ultimately some teams are limited in terms of how diverse they are so it is not always possible to demonstrate a full range of diversity in every recruitment process.

Gender Pay Gap Analysis

Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap Figures

Table 1.0 shows that the Council’s mean gender pay gap is 13% and the median gender pay gap is 9%. Table 2.0 shows that there is no bonus pay gap as the Council does not make bonus payments.

Table 1.0 Gender pay gap

	Gender pay gap 2024	Gender pay gap 2023	+/- percentage points
Mean (Average)	13%	16%	-3%
Median (Middle)	9%	19%	-10%

The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men’s and women’s average earnings across an organisation. It is expressed as a percentage of men’s earnings.

Table 2.0 Gender bonus gap

	Gender bonus gap 2021	Gender bonus gap 2020
Mean (Average)	0%	0%
Median (Middle)	0%	0%

Table 3.0 Proportion of employees receiving a bonus

Proportion of employees receiving a bonus	
Men	0%
Women	0%

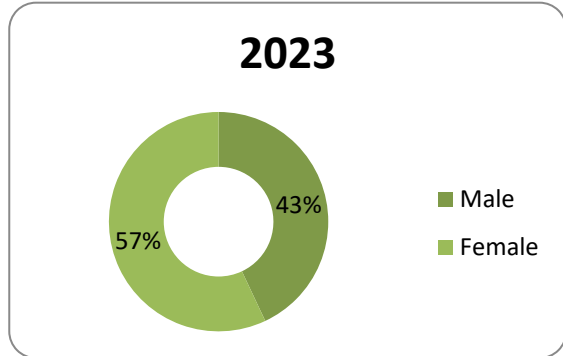
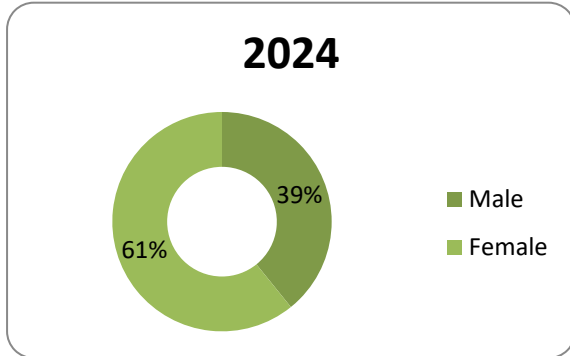
Both the mean and median gender pay gaps at the council have reduced this year. The mean gender pay gap has dropped by 3 percentage points and the median gender pay gap reduced by 10 percentage points, when compared to 2023. The Council’s overall headcount has reduced by 1 since 31 March 2023 (from 298 headcount last year to 297 this year). The number of male employees has increased by 10 (83 to 93) and the number of female employees has reduced by 11 (215 to 204). The distribution of males and females across the pay grades has also changed slightly; there are 3 less males and 2 more females in Q1, 9 more males in Q2 and 9 less female, 3 more males in Q3 and 4 less female, and 1 more male in Q4. Having more males in the lower quartiles and having 2 more females in Q1 has had the effect of reducing the mean pay gap.

The median figure represents the ‘typical’ man or woman (i.e. the man/woman in the middle of the male/female pay range) and the gap is due to the greater proportion of men in the upper pay quartiles compared with lower pay quartiles, and a greater proportion of women in the lower pay quartiles compared with the upper pay quartiles. This year the gap has reduced because there are more men in the lower pay quartiles and more female in the higher quartiles than last year. This means the middle value for males has moved down and the middle value for females has moved up, thus reducing the gap.

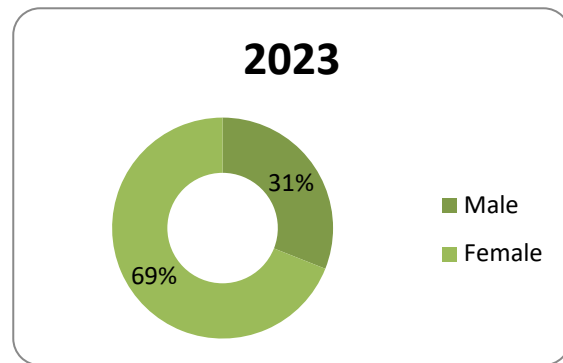
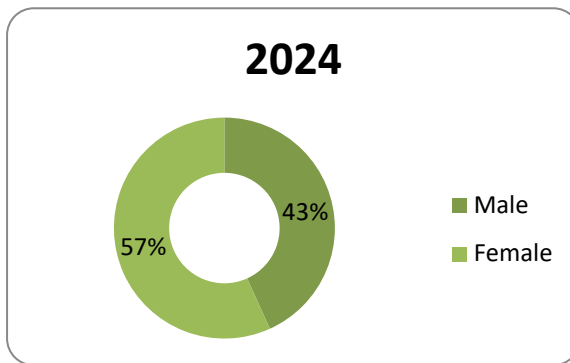
The Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees. We have a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex (or any other protected characteristic). As such, we have a pay and grading structure agreed with Unison; have a published pay policy statement and evaluate all jobs using the HAY job evaluation method. The Council is confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work.

Pay quartiles

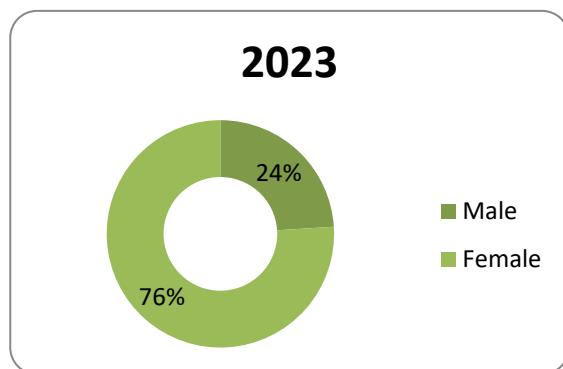
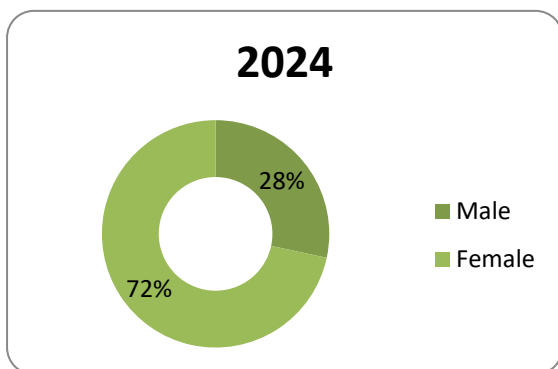
Quartile 1 (upper quartile)



Quartile 2 (upper middle quartile)



Quartile 3 (lower middle quartile)



Quartile 4 (lower quartile)

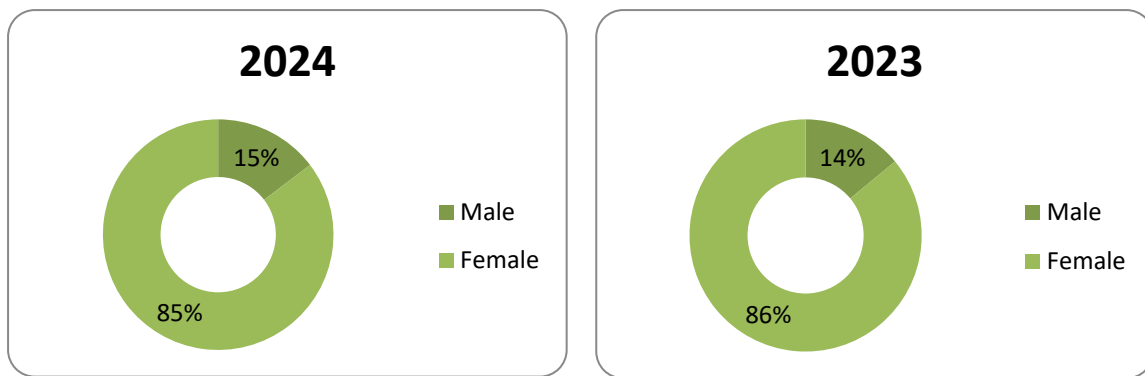


Figure 1.0 Pay quartiles by gender

Figure 1.0 above depicts pay quartiles by gender. This shows the Council’s workforce divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rates, with Q1 including the highest-paid 25% of employees (the upper quartile) and Q4 covering the lowest-paid 25% (the lower quartile). In order for there to be no gender pay gap, there would need to be an equal ratio of men to women in each quartile.

The data shows that for Q1 the percentages of females has increased by 4 percentage points. For Q2 the percentage of males has increased by 12 percentage points. In Q3 the percentage of males has increased by 4 percentage points and in Q4 the percentage of males has increased by 1 percentage point.

As discussed above, the gender pay gap has reduced this year because there are more men in Q2 - 4 and more females in Q1 than last year. In order to reduce the gender pay gap further there would need to be further increases in the proportion of men in Q3 and Q4. The types of roles typically found in the Council in these quartiles tend to be customer facing or administrative in nature and currently are occupied predominately by women. The Council has outsourced services such as IT, Waste and Grounds Maintenance which are predominately male dominated areas of work. If these services remained in-house the proportion of male and female employees in the lower pay quartiles would be much more even

EHC has a good balance of male and females in senior positions compared to a lot of other organisations and are ambitious to do better across the board. We must be mindful of external factors that can impact this though and remain realistic about what we can achieve.

The Council is in an unusual position in that the gender pay gap is not due to fewer women working in more senior roles than men but because at the lower grades there is a much higher percentage of women than men. The Council remains committed to trying to reduce the gap but this is an ongoing challenge due to the gender dominance in certain occupation groups, as mentioned previously as well as the difficulty of trying to attract men into lower paid jobs to create more balance. The council will continue to promote diversity and continue to support flexible working in line with business needs, including ‘blended working’ which allows most staff to work 50% from home as well as continuing to support flexible working requests which can support caring

responsibilities which makes opportunities more attractive to women, but as stated the main issue is attracting men into our lower quartiles.

We have already taken forward several actions since the Council's first gender pay gap report in 2017 and will continue to build on these. Rather than create new actions, the actions below have been taken from the general equalities action plan (published in August 2024) which already considered gender-based equality actions for the Council:

- Continue to ensure that all staff complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning training programme. Offer further equalities-based training as identified by annual training needs analysis.
- To work with the new ATS provider regarding the reporting options with the aim of getting equalities data at the shortlisting stage.
- Continue to promote equalities-based events such as International Women's Day.
- The HR & OD Service manager is developing a strategy to further leverage our apprenticeship levy pot to grow our own approach with professional training and the development of officers into specialists or aspirant leaders. This will address both skills gaps and some equity gaps in the workforce.

Statement

I, Helen Standen, Chief Executive of East Herts Council, confirm that the information in this statement is accurate.

Signed

Date:

East Herts Council Report

Human Resources Committee

Date of Meeting: 05 February 2025
Report by: HR and Organisational Development Service
Manager
Report title: Pay Policy Statement 2025/26
Ward(s) affected: N/A

Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Council:

- a) That the Pay Policy Statement 2025/26 be approved.

1.0 Proposal

- 1.1 The Pay Policy Statement 2025/26 has been recommended for comment at the Human Resources Committee by the HR and OD Service Manager. It is to be approved by Council on 26 February 2025. Members are invited to comment on the Pay Policy Statement 2025/26.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 A pay policy statement is required to be produced annually under sections 38 of the Localism Act. Regard is to be had to guidance section 40 from the Secretary of State in producing this statement.
- 2.2 A pay policy statement for a financial year must set out the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to:
- the remuneration of chief officers
 - the remuneration of the lowest paid employees
 - the relationship between chief officers remuneration and that of other officers
- 2.3 "Remuneration" for the purposes of this statement includes three elements:
- basic salary
 - pension

- all other allowances arising from employment

- 2.4 The objectives of the report are to:
- a) ensure a capable and high performing workforce;
 - b) ensure simplicity, clarity and fairness between employees and between the council and the community;
 - c) differentiate between remuneration and other employee related expenses.

3.0 Report

- 3.1 The Pay Policy Statement 2025/26 can be found at Appendix A.
- 3.2 The Pay Policy Statement framework for East Herts Council has not yet been updated in line with the pay award for 25/26 in terms of reference to salary scales, salary levels and multipliers (as this has not yet been negotiated and agreed).
- 3.3 No significant changes to the overall framework it supports have been made.

4.0 Options

N/A - publishing the Pay Policy Statement on an annual basis is a statutory requirement. The statement will be published on the Council Website once it is approved and will be formatted into an accessible document before publication.

5.0 Risks

N/A

6.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

Yes – The Pay Policy Statement has been shared with the Head of Strategic Finance and Property and budgets set have been based on the pay changes agreed.

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

Yes – Policy Statement produced by Head of HR&OD

Human Rights

No

Legal

Yes – Head of Legal and Democratic Service has confirmed that statutory requirements have been met.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 Appendix A – Pay Policy Statement 2025/26

Contact Officer

Alex Wanless – HR & OD Service Manager
alex.wanless@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author

As above

Executive Member for Corporate Services

Cllr Joseph Dumont - Portfolio Holder for HR &
OD

Joseph.Dumont@eastherts.gov.uk

Pay Policy Statement 2024/2025

February 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A pay policy statement is required to be produced annually under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. Guidance from the Secretary of State has been considered when producing this statement.
- 1.2 Any decision under powers delegated in the council's Constitution with regard to remuneration from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 will be bound by and must comply with this statement.
- 1.3 This statement supports the requirements under the Local Government Transparency Code to publish data on Senior Salaries and Pay Multiple.
- 1.4 The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development (Role under review, Chief Executive to be consulted) must be consulted prior to any decision impacting remuneration to ensure compliance with this pay policy statement.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This statement sets out the council's policy with regards to:

- the remuneration of Chief Officers
- the remuneration of the lowest paid employees
- the relationship between Chief Officers' remuneration and that of other officers

"Remuneration" for the purposes of this statement includes three elements:

- basic salary
- pension
- all other allowances arising from employment

2.2 The council's constitution regards the following as its "Chief Officers"

Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive

2.3 The council, also has Statutory officer roles (Head of Paid Service; S151 Officer; Monitoring Officer, Data Protection Officer)

2.3 There is a statutory requirement that for the purposes of producing this statement the following posts (Leadership Team) be covered by the policy statement as well as the above posts and statutory roles.

Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy
Head of Housing and Health
Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development (Role under review)
Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)
Head of Operations

Head of Planning and Building Control
Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service (Role under review)
Head of Strategic Finance and Property (S151 Officer)

In this policy statement the term “Chief Officers” refers to the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive roles in that where there are any differences in terms of the policy it is between this group and all other employees.

- 2.4 This policy statement applies to all Council employees, but not to other workers such as casuals, agency workers, etc.
- 2.5 This pay statement does not include the Returning Officer payment. The fees payable to the Returning Officer are set by statute for national elections and are paid by central government. Fees are, also, payable to the Councils’ Returning Officer for local elections. These fees are payable as required and can be made to any senior officer appointed to fulfil the statutory duties of this role. The Returning Officer is an officer of the Council who is appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. Whilst appointed by the Council, the role of the Returning Officer is one which involves and incurs personal responsibility and accountability and is statutorily separate from his/her duties as an employee of the Council. As Returning Officer, he/she is paid a separate fee, which includes expenses, for each election for which he/she is responsible. Regulations govern which elections the fee is pensionable and, if opted in, a separate pension will accrue in the Local Government Pension Scheme for each election type.

3.0 Objectives

- 3.1 East Herts Council recognises the importance of having a clear written policy statement on pay in order to ensure that employees are fairly rewarded and there is proper public accountability.
- 3.2 In respect of Chief Officers and all other employees the council’s policy is to set remuneration sufficient to attract and retain adequately experienced, trained and qualified individuals to deliver the council’s priorities.
- 3.3 The council aims to be transparent on pay to its employees, prospective employees and the wider community and uses and maintains an effective job evaluation system and procedures to provide equity and consistency in pay, whilst adhering to the basic principles of the national Local government Single Status pay agreement.

4.0 Remuneration subject to national and local determination

- 4.1 The council is a member of the Local Government Employers’ Association for national collective bargaining in respect of Chief Officers and other employees.
- 4.2 Changes from national negotiations generally take effect from 1 April each year and are retrospective to 1 April if agreements are finalised after 1 April. It is the council’s policy to implement national agreements.
- 4.3 The Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive are under the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers (JNC) conditions of service including pay. All other

employees are under the National Joint Council (NJC) national agreement on pay and conditions of service.

4.4 The national pay award (the NJC national agreement) for 2025-2026 has not yet been considered following delays in previous years. Currently the employers' side are awaiting the Trade Union Claim and regional pay consultation rounds are due to begin in February 2025. This Pay Policy Statement will therefore provide that the National Award will be implemented for both NJC and JNC once agreement is confirmed. East Herts will implement increments for applicable staff from the 1st of April 2025 but the national pay award is not expected (due to the delay in negotiations/agreement) to be implemented in this (April) payroll and will instead be processed as a backdated payment once the award is agreed.

4.5 Previous Awards for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

The 2023/2024 was finally agreed in November 2023 after negotiations and a ballot of its members by unions:

Scale point (SCP) 1 was deleted as it was lower than the National Living Wage

£1925 was added to each SCP from 2 to 43

3.88% was added to SCP 44 to 59

3.5% was added to Chief Officers pay

This ensured that SCP 2 stayed above the National Living Wage and the award favoured the lower paid being the equivalent of a 10% increase on the lowest pay points.

All staff received their increase in pay with backdated salary in December 2023.

The national award for 2024/2025 was also delayed and was not agreed upon until October 2024 and backdated pay was processed in November 2024's payroll with back pay for leavers and other elements in December 2024.

The new pay rates, as in previous years, were a flat sum up to SCP 43 and each increased by £1,290 per annum. All locally determined pay points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer were increased by 2.50 per cent, in accordance with Green Book Part 2 Para 5.41. The Outer Fringe Area allowance increased to £706 per annum.

Pay negotiations for 2025/2026 will start at the end of February 2025 when the unions will present their pay claim to the NJC for the employer side to consider.

5.0 General Pay Policy

5.1 All employees other than Chief Officers have their basic pay determined by a job evaluation scheme to ensure that different jobs which have the same value are paid on the same grade. Grades have between 4-7 spinal column points (increments) within them.

- 5.2 The Chief Executive is paid a fixed spot salary with no set incremental progression. Performance review is facilitated through the East of England Local Government Association .
- 5.3 Heads of Service and the Deputy Chief Executive's progression through the pay range (incremental points) is based on performance (measured through the LT 360° performance review process) rather than by annual time served increments and this can lead to a drop of one increment if poor performance has been established.
- 5.4 The Deputy Chief Executive is paid on incremental scale points between a pay range of £101,640 to £112,414 base pay (as of October 2024), with set incremental progression also based on performance.
- 5.5 These senior staff (Chief Officers and Leadership Team) are not paid additional remuneration in respect of overtime, flexitime, bank holiday working, stand-by payments, emergency call rota, etc., as they are expected to undertake duties outside their contractual hours and working patterns without additional payment.
- 5.6 Basic pay is calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time employees.
- 5.7 All employees (except chief officers) receive local weighting which is called an outer fringe payment which is determined by the NJC, for 2023-2024 this was £689pa for a full-time employee and was raised to £706 as part of the 2024-2025 pay award.

5.8 Setting Salaries

For the posts of

Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive

The council will use robust recruitment processes when making an appointment to these roles, ensuring the best candidate for the role is appointed. In determining the appropriate salary, market testing and bench marking from peer authorities will be considered. Both the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive salaries were benchmarked for 2019-2020 and this has led to a revised spot salary for the Chief Executive from 3 June 2019 in line with market expectations as advised by EELGA and a revised salary range for the Deputy Chief Executive.

5.9 Pay ceilings

For 2025/26 the basic pay ceiling for Chief Executive post will be £133,746 per annum (including an additional payment of £10,000 for Head of Paid Service) plus the percentage or award agreed by the JNC.

The basic pay ceiling (i.e., including additional payments, salary protection and professional fees where appropriate) for Deputy Chief Executive will be £112,414 plus the percentage or award agreed by the JNC.

As noted above national agreed pay settlements from the JNC will be applied to the Chief Officer posts with effect from 1 April 2025 once agreed.

For other posts covered by this statement the basic pay ceiling for grade 13 will be £83,652 plus the percentage or award that will be agreed by the NJC for 25/26 (the outer fringe area allowance is paid in addition to these posts):

Grade 13 Posts:

Head of Legal and Democratic Services*
Head of Strategic Finance and Property*
Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy
Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development(Role under review)
Head of Housing and Health
Head of Operations
Head of Planning and Building Control
Head of Shared Revenue and Benefits Service ** (Role under review)

* Both of these posts are statutory posts designated as the council's Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer respectively (see additional payments below for further details).

** Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service post receives an additional 10% of base salary per annum for shared services role.

Note: The Chief Executive has commissioned a review of Heads of Service and Service Manager Level posts so this may change in year.

5.10 Pay floor

The pay floor is the remuneration of the lowest paid employees. "Lowest paid" is defined as the average pay of employees paid on grade 2. SCP8 in grade 2 are the lowest grades paid by the council. This year the figure is 0.09%(1 part-time employee) of the council's fte employees. Where any employee is less than full time their pay is multiplied up to full time salary and the aggregate full time equivalent pay is determined.

At the time of writing this report this figure is £25,992 per annum (full time).

The council will not pay basic pay less than the amount applicable to the bottom point of the national pay scales as agreed from time to time by the Local Government Employers (apprenticeships are excluded). Employees in this group will be entitled to all other benefits – local weighting/fringe, pension, redundancy as all other employees.

5.11 Pay multiples

The council does not explicitly set the remuneration of any individual or group of posts by reference to a simple multiple of another post or group of posts.

In terms of overall remuneration packages, the council's policy is to differentiate by setting different levels of basic pay to reflect differences in responsibilities. This is done using a job evaluation process that is nationally approved.

The council would not expect the remuneration of its highest paid employee to exceed 10 times that of the lowest group of employees. In the case of East Herts Council, the

pay of the Chief Executive is 5.145 times the value of the lowest paid employee (calculated using salaries as of 1st January 2025 that include the agreed uplifts for 1 April 2024 pay award).

CEO salary plus statutory post holder allowance = £133,3746 divided by average of lowest paid employees: £25,992 = 5.15 This is a reduction in the 5.29 times in 2024/25.

5.12

Grade	Minimum £	Maximum £	Number of employees in the grade (fte) *
2	£24,404	£25,992	0.27
3	£26,409	£28,163	15.14
4	£28,163	£30,060	31.24
5	£30,060	£33,366	70.55
6	£33,366	£36,124	18.59
7	£36,124	£39,513	49.01
8	£39,513	£42,708	28.18
9	£42,708	£45,718	24.08
10	£47,754	£51,802	19.03
11	£51,802	£57,963	23.68
12	£57,963	£66,782	7
13	£71,961	£83,652	6.61
Deputy Chief Exec	£98,203	£108,612	0
			289.51

5.13 The minimum apprenticeship pay rate is in line with statutory rates and is currently £6.40 for year one, the national living wage rate is paid as appropriate to an individual's age range thereafter (i.e., from year 2).

6.0 **Additional payments and Variations**

6.1 Additional Payments

The council's general policy is not to pay any form of "signing on" fee or incentive payment when recruiting. Exceptions may occasionally be agreed for hard to recruit posts.

The statutory posts designated as the council's S151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and Head of Paid Service will receive a payment of £10,000 per year. No officer will receive more than one additional statutory post payment.

6.2 Acting up and Honorarium payments

The council will ensure that acting up and honorarium payments are paid in a fair and consistent manner across the council.

Acting up payments can be made when an employee undertakes either some or all of the duties of a senior post, for a continuous period of four weeks or more (payment will then be backdated to the beginning of the cover).

Acting up payments do not apply for periods of less than four weeks or when an employee is providing cover for another employee's annual leave

Honorarium payments (Responsibility Allowances) can be made where an employee is required to complete an important project or produce major work output to a high standard that is significantly above and beyond the scope of their normal duties or responsibilities, or for significant additional duties or responsibilities not commensurate with the employee's current job description/grade or for work which is exceptionally onerous (e.g. difficult and/or demanding situations or working to extremely tight timescales).

Where an Honorarium payment is determined to be appropriate for additional work, any additional work time spent on the additional duties/responsibilities for which the honorarium is being awarded should not be accounted for on the flexi-time sheet.

Permanent changes to job roles should be dealt with through the job evaluation process.

The Head of Service in consultation with the Head of HR and OD have the responsibility for implementing and monitoring these arrangements.

6.3 **Professional fees and subscriptions**

The council will meet the cost of a legal practicing certificate for all those employees where it is a requirement of their employment. No other professional fee or subscription is paid although consideration may be given to extending this to support recruitment and retention efforts.

7.0 **Market Supplements**

Market supplements are only paid in exceptional circumstances where several attempts have been made to recruit and usual recruitment processes have not resulted in an appointment. Market rate will be established by reference to soft market testing, external advice and dialogue with peer authorities.

8.0 **Pension**

Pension provision is an important part of the remuneration package.

All employees (except those employees over the age of 75) may join the local government pension scheme. The scheme is a statutory scheme with contributions from the employee and from the employer.

All employees will automatically be enrolled into the LGPS pension scheme unless the contract of employment is less than 3 months' duration, although the employee does have the option to 'opt in'.

For more comprehensive details of the local government pension scheme see: <https://lgpsmember.org>

Neither the scheme nor the council adopt different policies with regard to benefits of employees, the same terms apply to the Chief Officers and other employees (although higher paid staff are required to pay a higher contribution in terms of the percentage of pay deducted as a pension contribution).

East Herts Council as an employer is under a legal duty to prepare and publish a written statement of its policy relating to certain discretionary powers under the Regulations which apply to the Local Government Pension Scheme (“the LGPS”). The scheme provides for the exercise of discretion that allow for retirement benefits to be enhanced. The council will consider each case on its merits but has determined that its usual policy is not to enhance benefits for any of its employees. The Policy on Exercise of Employer Discretions reaffirms this in respect of Chief Officers and other employees.

The pension scheme provides for flexible retirement. In applying the flexible retirement provision no distinction is made between the Chief Officers and other employees. The scheme requires that a minimum permanent reduction in working hours of 25% is made and/or there is a reduction in grade and that any consequential payments to the pension fund are recoverable in three years with the discretion to extend the three years in exceptional circumstances. The council’s Human Resources Committee will consider requests from a Chief Officer and Leadership Team will consider requests from other employees where there is a cost to the council, if there are no costs the Head of Service can approve in consultation with the Head of HR and OD.

9.0 Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement is related to both an individual employee’s spinal column point and length of continuous service in local government.

The council awards five days additional annual leave for employees that reach five years’ local government service.

Spinal Column Point (SCP)	Annual leave entitlement	Annual leave entitlement after 5 years in continuous local government service
4-22	26 days	31 days
23-25	27 days	32 days
26-28	28 days	33 days
29-59	29 days	34 days
Chief Officers	30 days	35 days

Annual leave entitlement is calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time employees.

10.0 Occupational Sick Pay

Entitlement to sick pay is related to continuous service, measured in complete months or years at the start of the period of absence. Any previous absences in the twelve months before the start of any absence are deducted from the entitlement.

Entitlement to sick pay is in accordance with the provisions of the NJC for Local Authorities, as follows:

During 1st Year	1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 months service) 2 months half pay
During 2nd Year	2 months full pay and 2 months half pay
During 3rd Year	4 months full pay and 4 months half pay
During 4th and 5th Year	5 months full pay and 5 months half pay
After 5 Years	6 months full pay and 6 months half pay

11.0 Expenses

- 11.1 The council will meet or reimburse authorised travel, accommodation and subsistence costs for attendance at approved business meetings and training events in accordance with the council's Expenses policy. The council does not regard such costs as remuneration but as non-pay operational costs. This policy is applied consistently to Chief Officers and other employees.
- 11.2 The council pays car mileage in accordance with HMRC approved rates which are the same for Chief Officers and other employees. The current rates are:

Mileage	HMRC Rates
Car* (first 10,000 business miles per annum)	45p per business mile
Car (after 10,000 business miles per annum)	25p per business mile
Motorcycle Rate	24p per business mile
Bicycle Rate	20p per business mile
Passenger Rate (employee/member)	5p per passenger per mile

*Electric and Hybrid car fall under the Car HMRC rate of 45p per business mile.

NB Where the 'free' points at Wallfields are used the rate is reduced to 25p per business mile.

12.0 Redundancy payments and payments on termination

- 12.1 The council has a single redundancy scheme which applies to all employees without differentiation. The council does not provide any further payment to employees leaving the council's employment other than in respect of accrued leave which by agreement is untaken at the date of leaving.
- 12.2 The redundancy payment is based on the length of continuous local government service as set out in the employee contract, the council follows the statutory process in terms of age multipliers and a maximum of 20 years' service, however, no statutory cap is applied to weekly pay and actual weekly pay is used in all cases and the council then further enhances the redundancy payment by applying a multiplier of 2. Details of the full scheme can be found in the council's Redundancy Policy.

13.0 Future appointments

In the event of a vacancy to either a Chief Officer or other employee post the arrangements set out above in regard to pay will apply in respect of permanent appointments.

14.0 Publication and access to information

The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers' is set out in this document and published on the council's website.