

**Medway Council**  
**Meeting of Employment Matters Committee**  
**Thursday, 3 July 2025**  
**7.00pm to 8.00pm**

**Record of the meeting**

**Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee**

**Present:** Councillors: Mark Prenter (Chairperson), Cook (Vice-Chairperson), Fearn, Hackwell BEM and Hamilton

**Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Shokar

**In Attendance:** Samantha Beck-Farley, Chief Organisational Culture Officer  
Selina Bullivant, Learning & Development Manager  
Vanessa Etheridge, Democratic Services Officer

**135 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peake and Sands.

**136 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 1 May 2025 was agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

The record of the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee held on 1 May 2025, was noted by the Committee.

**137 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances**

There were none.

**138 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests**

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

Councillor Cook disclosed that she was a member of the NAHT trade union.

Councillor Mark Prenter disclosed that he was a member of the ASLEF trade union.

**139 Organisational Change**

**Discussion**

The Chief Organisational Culture Officer introduced the report which detailed new reorganisations of services and transfers under the TUPE regulations for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025 and updates on on-going reviews that have previously been reported at Employment Matters Committee but not concluded.

**Fostering** The deletion of vacant roles in the fostering team was queried and assurance sought that capacity was not adversely affected. It was also queried whether staff were signposted to Trade Unions (Tus) for help and support and whether Tus were actively engaged in the consultation process. In response, the Chief Organisational Culture Officer confirmed the changes were part of a broader restructure to meet long-term service needs. She also confirmed that the TUs were involved in the consultation period and invited to the initial meeting, and staff were signposted to the various points of advice and support on offer in the letters which were sent out which included Trade Unions.

**Public Health Intelligence** In response to a query, it was confirmed that despite the outcome of the consultation being extended due to the volume of responses, there was no reason to believe this had had a negative effect and no concerns had been raised.

**ICT** In responses to queries, the Chief Organisational Culture Officer advised that under council policy, if a job changed by more than 30%, the postholder was considered to be at risk. This was because the revised role may no longer align with the individual's current responsibilities. However, affected staff were supported through the process and could be eligible to apply for alternative roles at their existing salary level, where available. In this instance, although staff were formally placed at risk, there were roles available within the new structure that individuals could be matched to.

The MedPay implementation had been paused within the ICT team to allow for a reorganisation, after which MedPay was applied. Due to the overlap of these processes, the officer was unable to confirm whether any roles were regraded but agreed to follow up with this detail.

Additionally, a joint initiative with ICT was underway to identify the digital skills required in the future which would ensure job profiles remained flexible and responsive to evolving needs, whilst also identifying any training requirements.

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**Parking & Transport** The Chief Organisational Culture Officer confirmed that if offers of suitable employments were declined then resignation was the normal course of action as redundancy was not an option due to alternative suitable employment. No alternative offers would change terms and condition and put an individual at detriment.

**Short Breaks & Assisted Living** In response to a query raised as to why the Operational Manager post would be advertised internally across Medway Council and the three Support Worker posts would be advertised externally, the Chief Organisational Culture Officer advised that posts were advertised internally where usually where there was succession in place. She undertook to check whether that was the case in this instance.

Members noted the Joint Consultative Committee comments from the earlier meeting.

### **Decision:**

The Employment Matters Committee noted the present position and the support arrangements for staff.

## **140 Early Retirement and Redundancy Payments**

### **Discussion**

The Chief Organisational Culture Officer introduced the report which presented the Committee with a report of all decisions taken in relation to early retirements and severance payments for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025.

It was queried whether it would be possible in future reports to show savings made, and the Chief Organisational Culture Officer undertook to see if this was possible whether in future reports or by other means.

Members noted the Joint Consultative Committee comments from the earlier meeting.

### **Decision:**

The Employment Matters Committee noted the report.

## **141 Learning and Development Strategy 2025 - 2028**

### **Discussion**

The Chief Organisational Culture Officer introduced the report which presented the proposed Learning and Development Strategy for 2025-2028. The strategy was designed to complement the Workforce Strategy, Recruitment Strategy, the One Medway Council Plan and the Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan.

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**Budget and prioritisation** It was noted that a survey of training required had been out to service managers and was now being critically challenged as to need as all requests could not be met within the current budget, and whether an apprenticeship approach could be used, noting that the level 7 apprenticeship level would come to an end in January. The Chief Organisational Culture Officer advised that there could be training required in the future not accounted for which was being looked at along with identifying pressures and looking at long term need.

Apprenticeship qualifications did not always align with need which could be frustrating. The Learning and Development Manager gave a breakdown of the use of the funds used via the Apprenticeship levy.

The Committee took the opportunity to express thanks and celebrate the work of the Apprentice Academy Consultant and team.

**Measuring outcomes** In response to a query as to how the outcomes and effectiveness of non-mandatory training could be measured, the Chief Organisational Culture Officer advised that all external courses were evaluated. In addition to this, matters such as wellbeing could be measured by baselines around mental health concerns. An undertaking had been given to CMT to prove value for money.

**Staff Induction** A concern was raised concern about the volume of mandatory training undertaken during onboarding, in response the Chief Organisational Culture Officer explained that it did not all need doing at once, that the induction programme had been improved and that there was ongoing work into turning some course content into bitesize videos.

**Policy review** In response to a query it was noted that the policy should reference an annual review within the governance part of the strategy.

Members noted the Joint Consultative Committee comments from the earlier Meeting, in particular the suggestion to investigate the union learning initiative.

### **Decision:**

- a) The Employment Matters Committee noted the Council's Learning and Development Strategy as set out at Appendix 1, to the report.
- b) The Employment Matters Committee noted the proposed key actions in the Learning and Development Strategy and timescales for delivery in each case.
- c) The Employment Matters Committee noted that reference to an annual review would be added to the Strategy document.
- d) The Employment Matters Committee requested that officers investigate the union learning initiative for training provision.

**142 MedPay Review Update**

**Discussion**

The Chief Organisational Culture Officer introduced the report which updated the Committee on the progress of the MedPay Review, with a specific focus on the period between February 2024 and June 2025.

It was queried whether there were any further concerns arising from the delay in finishing the MedPay review and the disbanding of the project team, whether the allocated budget was sufficient, and whether there had been any feedback on the recommendation made by the Committee at the last meeting concerning the 'Medpay Review: Outline of the approach to senior officer progression of pay' report going to Council on 17 July 2025.

In response the Chief Organisational Culture Officer advised that the team were working hard to meet the deadline and service managers were responding really well. She gave assurances that despite the speed of work they would not compromise on quality. There were currently about three or four teams that had been flagged as at risk of not being completed, and that was largely down to capacity. CMT were aware. The only other variable was Children's Services, where progress had been paused following Ofsted advice. However, Children's Services had career pathways in place already and so most of the work would be on alignment with these. She confirmed that the budget would be carefully monitored and had proven sufficient so far. In response to a concern about evaluation of casual posts, not all of these would require re-evaluation.

With regard to senior pay, the report to Council would expand on details and any risks. Whatever decision was finally made would need to be implemented quickly.

Members noted the Joint Consultative Committee comments from the earlier meeting.

**Decision:**

The Employment Matters Committee noted the report.

**Chairperson**

**Date:**

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