

REPORT TO CUSTOMER FOCUS / STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 13 November 2025

Report of: Jo Yelland, Strategic Director, People and Communities

Title: People Activity Across the Council : Human Resources Operations

Is this a Key Decision?

Scrutiny is a non-decision-making committee

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Not Applicable

1. What is the report about?

This report provides a comparative overview of HR operations at Exeter City Council before and after the independent HR review conducted in March 2024. It outlines the structural, procedural, and cultural changes implemented to improve HR effectiveness, workforce planning, employee relations, and service delivery. It also highlights ongoing challenges and future priorities.

2. Recommendations:

That the committee notes the contents of the report and the considerable progress made in delivering the HR Improvement Plan.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

To provide assurance to the committee that the HR function has undergone significant transformation, with clear progress against the recommendations of the independent review and a strategic plan in place to continue improvements.

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

- Investment in HR systems (e.g. iTrent, BI Dashboard(s), SharePoint People Hub)
- Commissioning of leadership development programmes
- Procurement of a new Occupational Health provider
- Recruitment of senior Health & Safety role
- Staff time and project management resources to deliver the HR Improvement Plan

5. What are the legal aspects?

All HR policies and practices are being reviewed to ensure legal compliance. A full tender exercise is underway for Occupational Health services to ensure contractual and regulatory alignment.

6. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

The report is for information only

7. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations. However, digital transformation initiatives (e.g. automation, SharePoint, BI dashboards) may reduce paper use and travel requirements.

8. Report details:

See full report attached: Human Resources Operations at Exeter City Council – Pre and Post HR Review Assessment

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

Contributes to Corporate Priority: Leading a Well-Run Council:

Supports strategic workforce planning

- Enhances employee experience and wellbeing
- Promotes inclusive and effective leadership
- Aligns HR operations with organisational priorities
- Strengthens data-driven decision-making

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

- Risk of implementation delays mitigated through project governance and timelines
- Risk of non-compliance addressed through policy reviews and legal oversight
- Risk of poor engagement mitigated through staff surveys and communication plans

11. Are there any other options?

The Council could have chosen to maintain the status quo, but this would not have addressed the issues identified in the independent review or supported strategic transformation.

Director: Jo Yelland

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

HR Improvement Plan
EDI Project Plan
ECC BI Dashboard Data
Staff Survey Results

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