

Minutes of the meeting of Employment Panel held at Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Wednesday 22 October 2025 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor Jonathan Lester (chairperson)
Councillor Diana Toynbee (vice-chairperson)

Councillors: Terry James, Liz Harvey and Pete Stoddart

Officers: Democratic Services Officer and Director of HR and OD

29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Clare Davies and Paul Walker.

30. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

There were no named substitutes.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

32. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions received from members of the public.

33. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions received from Councillors.

34. RECRUITMENT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Director of HR & OD introduced the report; the following principal points were noted:

- The council's current chief executive would be leaving at the end of March 2026.
- The chief executive is an important role in the council as is also the designated head of paid service which is a statutory role.
- The process for recruiting a new chief executive is set out in the council's constitution and employment panel is responsible for carrying out the selection for a new chief executive and proposing their preferred candidate to council. The report set out a proposed time line and process for fulfilling that responsibility.

Following panel discussion, the following points were noted.

1. There had been no substantive changes made to the role profile since the position was last advertised.
2. The panel were in agreement that the post was necessary and that a fundamental change to the leadership model in Herefordshire could be destabilising at a time when effective and consistent leadership was critical.

3. Consideration had been given to the timetable with the budget setting being a major factor.
4. The director explained the two-stage selection process and highlighted that all members would be given the opportunity to meet the candidates during stage two of the process, a factor that did not occur and was highlighted at full council in the previous appointment to the post.
5. The panel were in agreement with the current remuneration.
6. The following aspects to be inserted in to the role profile.
 - I. the council's ambitions regarding environmental aspects for example flooding changes in agricultural practises, river health, climate change and net zero.
 - II. vision of the council.
 - III. leading on the child friendly Herefordshire work.
 - IV. performance based culture.
 - V. focusing on the specific needs of a rural council.
 - VI. transformation and digitalisation.
 - VII. ensuring the direction of Herefordshire Council as an organisation is sustainable for the long term.

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) the recruitment for the post of Chief Executive is initiated in line with the estimated timescales set out in the report;**
- b) subject to the agreed amendments Employment Panel approves the role profile in appendix A and**
- c) agrees the remuneration for the post of Chief Executive.**

The meeting ended at 10.25 am

Chairperson