



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

HUMAN RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held in Committee Room 1,
Council Offices, Stornoway and through
Microsoft Teams on Monday 23 September 2024
at 10.30am.

PRESENT

Mr Duncan Macinnes MBE (Chair)
Mr Uisdean Roberson
Mr Paul Steele
Mr Iain M Macleod

Mr Kenneth Macleod
Dr Frances Murray
Mr Norman Macdonald

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Norma Skinner
Mrs Carmen Macdonald

Mr Derek Mackay

MINUTES

Minute of Meeting of 17 June 2024

1

The Minute of Meeting of 17 June 2024 was **approved**.

Declarations of Interest

2

Mr Duncan MacInnes MBE declared an interest in item 10 as his son works in Schools IT Team and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

ESTABLISHMENT OF POST/ CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

It was agreed that the public, including the press, be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of items 3 to 17 and 19 on the grounds that exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 namely information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee, or a particular officer holder or former officer holder, or applicant to become an office holder under, the Comhairle would be disclosed.

Extension of Contract: Empty Homes Officer

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* With reference to item 10 of the Minute of Meeting of 13 September 2023 the Chief Planning Officer submitted a Report seeking approval for a one year extension to the Empty Homes Officer post until October 2025. The Report stated that the Comhairle's Empty Homes project had proved to be highly successful since the Empty Homes Officer (EHO) took up post in October 2018. To date 280 long term empty properties have had, or are in the process of having, action taken to bring them back into meaningful use. The Report highlighted that the Empty Homes Officer's appointment has had a significantly positive impact on the local housing market and had contributed towards the aims and objectives of the Comhairle's Local Housing Strategy.

It was agreed to extend the contract of the Empty Homes Officer (Grade F), currently held by Employee AB, to 30 November 2024 and that, subject to approval of ACTISH budget allocation, further extended to October 2025.

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ASN Transport – Contract Extension 4 * The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking approval for the establishment of the post of ASN Driver, 20 hours and for the contract extension to the following posts:

ASN Driver – 20 hours – Grade B
ASN Escort – 10 hours – Grade C

The Report indicated that a further review of ASN Transport requirements would be undertaken in May 2025 in preparation for the 2025 – 2026 school year

It was agreed to:

- (a) establish the post of ASN Driver, 20 hours, Grade B, on a fixed term basis until 14 August 2025 and that Employee CD is matched to the post; and**
- (b) extend the posts of ASN Driver, 20 hours, Grade B, held by Employee EF and ASN Escort, 10 hours, Grade C held by Employee GH until 14 August 2025.**

Contract Extension: Multimedia Applications Developer 5 * The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking to obtain approval to extend the temporary post of Multimedia Applications Developer until 31 March 2025. The Report indicated that the post holder commenced work with the Multimedia Unit in July 2021 on a one-year fixed term contract as a Multimedia Applications Developer (Temp). This was further extended in 2022 and again in 2023. The current contract was extended to 30 September 2024 following CWP approval in June 2024. The Report highlighted that the post of Multimedia Applications Developer had proved to be a valuable asset to the team and was heavily involved in the highly successful Dileab project.

It was agreed to approve the extension of the post of Multimedia Applications Developer, Grade F, held by Employee IJ, to 30 November 2024.

Request for Extension of Fixed Term Contract: Gaelic Support Officer 6 * With reference to item 11 of the Minute of Meeting of 17 June 2024, the Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking approval of the extension of the post of Gaelic Support Officer (0.2 FTE) on a fixed term basis to 31 March 2025. The Report stated that over the last 5 years, the growth of e-Sgoil had resulted in ever-increasing demands on the small team supporting the service.

The Report indicated that progress had taken place within the small Gaelic team since the postholder commenced work. It also clearly highlighted the Comhairle’s commitment to the fulfilment of the aspirations of the Faster Rate of Progress for Gaelic agenda. It was believed that extending the post to March 2025 would give the authority and the wider Gaelic community the opportunity to further develop. The post would be fully funded through the Gaelic Specific Grant budget 2024/25.

It was agreed to approve that the post of Gaelic Support Officer, held by Employee KL, be extended to 30 November 2024. This is an additionality of 0.2 to his current post within the Chief Executives Department of 0.8FTE.

Sports Facilities Services Manager – Contract Amendment 7 * The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking approval for a contract extension to the Sports Facilities Services Manager post. The Report stated that Employee MN was currently matched into the post of Sports Facilities Service Manager whilst retaining his management responsibilities for Sports Development pending the completion of a review of the Sport and Health Management structure. This temporary contract was in place up to 30 September 2024.

The Report indicated that the review was nearing completion with new posts progressing through the job evaluation process. As the review may not be completed prior to the deadline for the next Human Resources Sub-Committee it was proposed that the Sports Facilities Service Manager post be extended to 31 December 2024 to allow for consideration of the review by the Sub-Committee.

It was agreed that the post of Sports Facilities Services Manager, 37 hours per week, Grade J, held by Employee MN, be extended to 31 December 2024.

Adult Literacy and Numeracy Worker – Additional Hours 8 * The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking approval for an increase in the hours of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Support Worker post from 4 hours per week to 33 hours per week and match the Apprentice Adult Literacy and Numeracy Worker into this post following successful completion of her apprenticeship programme.

It was agreed that Employee OP be matched into the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Support Worker post and that the hours of the post be increased from 4 hours per week to 33 hours per week.

Children’s Services Support Worker – Extension of Post 9 * The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking approval for an extension of the of Children’s Services Support Worker (prevention of reception into care) for 6 months, August 2024 to 28 February 2025. The Report indicated that the post would continue to support the Children’s Services Partnership Whole Family Wellbeing Fund plan.

The Report stated that as a Corporate Parent, it was critical that we provide the right kind of support to enable families to thrive so that, ultimately, fewer children and young people are received into care. It was highlighted that extending the post would assist Children’s Services in their ambition to reduce the number of children requiring to be cared for away from their family.

It was agreed to approve the extension of the Children’s Services Support Worker, held by Employee QR, until 28 February 2025.

Mr Duncan MacInnes declared an interest in the following item as his son works in Schools IT Team and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

The Convener chaired the meeting for the following item.

MIS Assistant – Schools IT Team 10 * The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking to establish a post of MIS Assistant and to disestablish the post of ICT Support Officer post in the Schools IT Team. The Report stated that there was a requirement for an additional member of staff in the Management Information Systems (MIS) Team at Matheson Hall due to increasing demand for information processing within and between schools, the Department and Scottish Government. The Report indicated that the ICT Support Officer, Grade F, in the Schools IT Team be disestablished following the internal promotion of the postholder and a new post of MIS Assistant, Grade G, be established in the MIS Team.

It was agreed to:

- (a) approve the disestablishment of the ICT Support Officer, Grade F, in the Schools IT Team; and**
- (b) approve the establishment of an MIS Assistant post, Grade G, in the Education MIS Team.**

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MCR Pathways 11 * The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking approval for the establishment of a 37 hours per week, fixed term, MCR (Motivation, Commitment and Resilience) Pathways Coordinator post at the Nicolson Institute. The Report stated that MCR Pathways was a national programme aimed at eliminating the education, job choices and life chances gaps which exist between young people who were care-experienced or vulnerable and those who did not face these challenges. The Report indicated that through the programme Mentors are recruited and carefully matched with young people based on their likes, personality and life-experiences. The programme builds the resilience and self-esteem of young people and helps to reduce the attainment gap.

It was agreed to approve the establishment of a 37 hour per week MCR Pathways Coordinator post at Grade F, year-round on a fixed term basis up to 31 March 2026 and that the post be advertised internally in the first instance.

Payment of 12 * The Chief Financial Officer submitted a Report for the Sub-Committee to consider the payment of an honorarium to two members of staff who led on the rebuild of the Cyber-Attack Finance Systems Rebuild

It was agreed to approve the payment of an honorarium of £1,500 to Employee ST, Accounting Technician, and Employee UV, Systems Administration Supervisor, in recognition of the additional work and responsibilities associated with system rebuild.

Temporary 13 * The Chief Financial Officer submitted a Report seeking approval for the extension of a Appointment – Digitalisation and Customer – Project Manager

It was agreed to approve the appointment of Employee WX to the post of Digitalisation and Customer Project Manager for a period of 1 year, ending 30 June 2025.

Extension of Post: 14 * The Head of Municipal Services submitted a Report seeking approval to extend the Temporary Cleansing Labourer x2 - Uist

The Report indicated that with an ongoing amount of repair works needed in Comhairle owned cemeteries (fencing, walling etc) and stock proofing to preserve lairs it was beneficial to have additional staff to carry these works out in a timely manner as well as carrying out statutory duties such as waste collections. It was further highlighted that in order to ensure that annual leave entitlement was used up for staff to only carry forward a maximum of 5 days into 2025 and that upcoming sickness absence cover was in place the existing temporary cleansing labourer posts would allow adequate cover within the section.

It was agreed to approve the extension of the 2 current Temporary Cleansing Labourers, Grade D, until 31 December 2024

Gaelic Policy Officer 15 * With reference to item 16 of the Minute of Meeting of 17 June 2024, the Team Leader Heritage and Culture submitted a Report seeking approval to extend the post of the Gaelic Policy Officer (0.4 FTE), working in Sgioba na Gàidhlig and as part of the Heritage and Culture Unit to 30 November 2024. The Report stated that the Gaelic Policy Officer was responsible for the development of policies and strategies for the Comhairle, with particular emphasis on learning and culture. The Report indicated that the Gaelic Policy Officer provides much needed resilience to Sgioba na Gàidhlig and plays a vital part in the Comhairle's attempts to promote the language and adhere to the Gaelic Plan.

It was agreed to extend the post of Gaelic Policy Officer to 30 November 2024.

Resettlement Posts 16 * The Chief Executive and Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services submitted a Joint Report seeking approval for a one-year extension for two Resettlement post contracts. The Report stated that the Comhairle was actively involved in the UK Resettlement and Homes for Ukraine Schemes. The Resettlement Support Worker and ESOL Tutor were directly employed by the Schemes to ensure arrivals to the Outer Hebrides were supported with integration and learning or improving English language skills.

It was agreed to:

- (a) approve the extension of the post of Resettlement Support Worker (Grade F 1FTE) until 31 December 2025; and**
- (b) approve the extension of the Post of ESOL Tutor (Grade F 1FTE) until 31 December 2025.**

Extension of Post – Training Officer 17 * The Chief Executive submitted a Report seeking approval to extend the 37-hour post funded by the People and Skills strand of the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) within the Accredited Training Section of the Chief Executive Department.

The Report stated that The People and Skills intervention was aimed at those living in poverty to boost productivity, improve pay and career opportunities with a view to make better their living standards and increase individuals' life chances. The Report highlighted that the fund had been designed to offer wrap around support to the No-One Left Behind (NOLB) programme and address localised skills development programmes and barrier removal for those entering employment and training opportunities.

It was agreed to extend the 37-hour Training Officer Post funded by The People and Skills strand of The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund, currently held by Employee YZ, to 31 March 2025.

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Employee Engagement Survey Questions 2024 18 The Chief Executive submitted a Report seeking approval in principle of the questions to be included in the 2024 Employee Engagement Survey. The Report stated that approval had been granted by Corporate Management Team to undertake the fifth employee engagement survey during 2024 and that consultation had been undertaken with Trade Union representatives. The Report indicated that the aim of the survey continued to focus on identifying and exploring employee's experiences of working for the Comhairle in order to find ways in which managers could establish better ways of working and therefore drive service improvements.

The Report further stated that the additional theme of sickness absence had been included in this year's survey. Work had also been undertaken with the Health and Safety Team and Organisational Development Team to integrate stress indicator questions, in line with HSE requirements. In line with previous years the survey would be electronic

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with paper questionnaires available on request. It was indicated that initial survey results would be drawn together in December 2024 and published in early 2025.

It is recommended that the Human Resources Sub Committee approve, in principle, the questions to be included in the fifth Employee Engagement Survey.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Reports
Outstanding

19 * The Chief Executive submitted details of those Reports Outstanding in relation to decisions that had been made by the Sub-Committee.

It was agreed to note the Report.