



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

HUMAN RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held in Committee Room 1,
Council Offices, Stornoway on Thursday 24 April
2025 at 11.30am.

PRESENT

Mr Duncan Macinnes MBE (Chair)
Mr Uisdean Robertson
Mr Kenneth Macleod

Mr Paul Steele
Dr Frances Murray

APOLOGIES

Mr Iain M Macleod

Mr Norman Macdonald

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs Carmen Macdonald
Mr Derek Mackay

Ms Norma Skinner
Mrs Yvonne Maciver

The Chair ruled items 24 to 30 as Urgent to allow the matters to be considered prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Sub-Committee.

MINUTES

Minute of Meeting
of 30 January 2025

1

The Minute of Meeting of 30 January 2025 was **approved**.

Declarations of
Interest

2

Mr Duncan MacInnes wished to record in respect of Items 4 and 24 that a family member worked within the service but was not directly affected by the Report. Mr MacInnes did not consider this to be an interest that needed to be declared in terms of the code of conduct.

Mr Paul Steele wished to record in respect of Items 10 that a family member worked within the service but was not directly affected by the Report. Mr Steele did not consider this to be an interest that needed to be declared in terms of the code of conduct.

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 21 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.

Establishment of
Post – Technical
Scanning/ Clerical
Assistant

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The Chief Officer, Assets and Infrastructure submitted a Report which sought approval to establish the post of Technical Scanning/Clerical Assistant (20 hours) within the Assets and Infrastructure Section. The Report stated that the main duties of the post were to assist and provide scanning and clerical support in the archival scanning of post contract drawings and documentation, including these functions in more recent contract submitted documentation.

It was agreed to approve the establishment of Technical Scanning/Clerical Assistant (Grade A, 20 hours) and that Employee AB be matched to the post.

Corporate IT – Extension of Temporary Posts	4	*	The Chief Officer, Assets and Infrastructure submitted a Report which sought approval to extend the three temporary management appointments within the Corporate IT Section to 30 September 2025. The Report stated that the consultation on the amalgamation of Corporate and Schools IT would be undertaken over the coming weeks, and it was therefore proposed that the temporary appointments detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the Report be extended to 30 September 2025.
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It was agreed to approve that the temporary appointments made to the posts detailed in the Report be extended to 30 September 2025.

Secondment to Children’s Services	5	*	The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report which sought approval for the secondment of Employee CD to a Children’s Services Support Worker on a full-time basis. The Report stated that discussion had taken place with Jennifer Cairns, Rector, Nicolson Institute and Management in Education and permission had been given to this secondment request.
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The Report indicated that in January 2025 the Sub-Committee approved the extension of the Children’s Services Support Worker post to 30 June 2025. It was therefore proposed that from 1 March 2025 Employee CD be seconded to the post from the Nicolson Institute, initially to 30 June 2025 and, if approved by the Sub Committee, to 28 February 2026.

It was agreed to approve:

- (1) the secondment of Employee CD to Children’s Services Support Worker to 30 June 2025; and**
- (2) the extension of Employee CD’s secondment to Children’s Services Support Worker to 28 February 2026**

Request to Extend Children’s Services Support Worker Posts through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF)	6	*	The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report which sought approval for extensions to Children’s Services Support Worker (CSSW) posts following further funding being secured through the Whole Family Wellbeing fund and an extension to an Administrative Assistant post while the substantive post holder is in the CSSW post.
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The Report indicated that the Scottish Government had allocated further Whole Family Wellbeing Funding until 31 March 2026, with a view to support planning partnerships to build local capacity for transformational whole system change and to scale up and drive the delivery of holistic whole family support services.

It was agreed to approve:

- (1) the extension of Children’s Services Support Worker held by Employee EF to 31 March 2026.**
- (2) the extension of Children’s Services Support Worker held by Employee GH to 31 March 2026; and**
- (3) the extension of Employee IJ, Administrative Assistant, increased hours (17.4) to 31 March 2026.**

Extension of Post –
ICT Support Officer
Digital Services

7 * The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report which sought approval to extend the 37-hour post of ICT Support Officer Digital Services for a further 12 months to support the management and the rollout of digital devices to Primary Schools in addition to the continuing task of issuing, maintaining, repairing, and re-issuing of secondary laptops to the new intake in August. This Report also sought to match the currently seconded officer to the post and to continue the backfill arrangements for the substantive post of the seconded member of staff.

It was agreed to approve:

- (1) the extension of the post of ICT Support Officer Digital Services for a further 12 months.**
- (2) the matching of the current seconded postholder into the post; and**
- (3) the continuation of the backfill arrangement for the seconded postholder’s substantive post.**

Establishment of a
Trainee Social
Worker

8 * The Chief Officer, Children’s Services submitted a Report seeking approval to establish a 37-hour, Scottish Local Government Living Wage (SLGLW), Trainee Social Worker post for Uist and Barra within the Children and Families Service. The Report stated that an opportunity had risen to establish a traineeship within the Children and Families Service in order to support the social worker currently covering Uist and Barra whilst also providing resilience to the service at times when the Social Worker was on annual leave, sickness absence or when in Lewis and Harris undertaking child protection investigations as one of the two trained Scottish Child Interview Model Social Workers covering the Outer Hebrides. The Report indicated that the post would be be fixed term for two years such is the length of training required.

It was agreed to establish the post of Trainee Social Worker – Children and Families (SLGLW), 1FTE on a fixed term basis for two years.

Transition of
Service User from
Mainland
Placement

9 * The Operational Manager, Adult Services submitted a Report which sought approval to progress with the proposed transition of a service user from a mainland placement back to his local community, with the recruitment of 3.5 FTE Social Care Worker staff for Ardseileach Residential and Housing Support Service.

It was agreed to homologate the decision to approve the recruitment of 3.5 FTE additional care staff to support the needs of a Service User in the Housing Support Service at Ardseileach, to allow for one-to-one support which is the level of support the Service User had been assessed as requiring.

Workforce
Priorities – Uist
Care Homes

10 * The Chief Officer, Partnership Services and Community Care submitted a Report which sought approval to establish a Peripatetic Administrative Assistant for Trianaid and Taigh a’ Chridhe Uile Naomh Care Homes through the re-design of workforce resources.

It was agreed to:

- (1) disestablish the post of Social Care Worker in Trianaid and establish it as a 19-hour Social Care Assistant post; and**
- (2) establish a 20-hour Peripatetic Administrative Assistant (Grade C) Trianaid and Taigh a’ Chridhe Uile Naomh with the funding to be provided as detailed in section 2.5 of the Report.**

Establishment of Administrative Assistant Post and Increase Hours for Laundry Assistants at Harris House	11	<p>* The Chief Officer, Partnership Services and Community Care submitted a Report which sought approval to re-align financial resources for domestic support within Harris House to establish a 20-hour Administrative Assistant post to address efficient service delivery and to increase the staffing capacity for the laundry by 7 hours per week to address service demand and requirements.</p> <p>The Report stated that recent Care Inspections in the care home service and management review highlighted the necessity for care home managers and senior social care workers to be supported to operate to the full extent of the responsibility associated with their job descriptions and associated grading. The Report indicated that the forthcoming safe staffing legislation also placed additional duties on care home providers and employers and administrative management would be central to having efficient processes in place to address all legislative, regulatory and service requirements. The provision of an Administrative Assistant would enable the Manager and Senior Social Care Workers to focus on these essential duties. The refocusing of management duties would also generate more requirements for administrative support.</p> <p>It was agreed to approve the:</p> <p>(1) establishment of Administrative Assistant (grade C) 20-hour post at Harris House; and</p> <p>(2) extension of the hours of 2 part-time laundry assistant posts at Harris House from 18.5 to 22 hours.</p>
Partnership Service and Community Care Management Structure	12	<p>* The Chief Officer, Partnership Services and Community Care submitted a Report which sought approval to progress the re-structuring of the senior management team following the consolidation of the two Heads of Service and business units into one Departmental Structure. The Report stated that the merger of the Partnership Services and Community care business units was concluded in September 2024. The next phase was to consider a management structure that provided both senior leadership and management capacity for strategic and operational matters.</p> <p>It was agreed to approve, in principle, the staffing structure for Partnership Services and Community Care as detailed at Appendix B of the Report subject to the outcome of the job evaluation exercise and detailed job descriptions for each post being reported back to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee for formal establishment.</p>
Extension of Post – Temporary Cleansing Labourer x2 – Uist	13	<p>* The Head of Municipal Services submitted a Report to extend the available Temporary Cleansing Labourer Posts in Uist until 30 April 2025. The Report stated that the Human Resources Sub-Committee had previously approved the extension to the two temporary Cleansing Labourer Posts, Uist, to the end of December 2024. The Report indicated that in order to ensure that annual leave entitlement was covered, and that sickness absence cover was in place, utilising the existing temporary cleansing labourer posts would allow adequate cover within the section.</p> <p>It was agreed to approve the extension of the two temporary Cleansing Labourer Posts (Uist) until 30 April 2025.</p>
Garage and Stores Administrator – Marybank Depot	14	<p>* The Head of Municipal Services submitted a Report which sought approval to extend the temporary contract of the of Garage and Stores Clerical Assistant Post which was due to end on 30 June 2025 for a further 12 months. The Report stated that a temporary Garage and Stores Clerical Assistant post at 37 hours per week was approved by the Corporate Workforce Panel in March 2024 and since then a large volume of work has been undertaken to assist resolving historic issues in the Marybank Depot vehicle store and</p>

gathering information following the cyber-attack to be reinstated to the Fleet Management System.

The Report indicated that there still remained a significant amount of work to update the fleet management system and staff were also working on a full stocktake which was a lengthy task when working between systems.

It was agreed to approve the extension for the Temporary Garage and Stores Clerical Assistant (Grade C) post until 30 May 2026.

Gaelic
Communities
Officer

- 15 * The Team Leader, Heritage and Culture submitted a Report which sought approval to establish the post of the Gaelic Communities Officer (0.46FTE), Grade I, working in Sgioba na Gàidhlig and as part of the Heritage and Culture Unit, for a three-year period until 28 February 2028, following a successful funding bid to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, and match the current Gaelic Policy Officer to the post. The Report stated that the main role of the Gaelic Communities Officer would be to work with partner and community organisations in the promotion of Gaelic in economic and cultural contexts across the communities of the Isles and to develop the use of Gaelic within the Comhairle and in all services by assisting in the implementation of the Comhairle's Gaelic Language Plan and Gaelic First.

It was agreed to establish the post of the Gaelic Communities Officer (0.46FTE), Grade I, working in Sgioba na Gàidhlig and as part of the Heritage and Culture Unit, for a three-year period until 28 February 2028, following a successful funding bid to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, and match the current Gaelic Policy Officer to the post.

Economic
Development
Service Review

- 16 * The Chief Officer, Economic and Community Regeneration submitted a Report which sought approval to carry out a review of the Comhairle's Economic Development service in line with the Workforce Change Procedure. The Report stated that the Comhairle was being asked at the May series of Committee Meetings to approve a new Economic Regeneration Strategy for the period 2025-35. An associated Action Plan would be put in place to ensure delivery of strategic priorities.

The Report indicated that the Economic and Community Regeneration Service Workforce Plan had highlighted certain areas that were under-resourced against current and emerging priorities and areas of potential future risk, particularly in relation to succession planning.

It was agreed to authorise the Chief Officer, Economic and Community Regeneration to carry out a review of the Comhairle's Economic Development service in line with the Workforce Change Procedure.

Building Standards Technical Support Officer 17 * The Chief Planner submitted a Report which sought approval to extend the two temporary part time posts of Building Standards Technical Support Officer for three months until 30 June 2025 and to establish these posts as permanent from 1 July 2025. The Report stated that the post of Building Standards Technical Support Officer was currently shared between two members of staff, as two part time temporary posts to 31 March 2025.

It was agreed to:

- (1) extend the two temporary part time posts of Building Standards Technical Support Officer for three months until 30 June 2025; and,**
- (2) establish these posts as permanent from 1 July 2025.**

Temporary Staffing Arrangements to Facilitate Rebuild of Finance Systems 18 * The Chief Financial Officer submitted a Report which sought approval for the continuation of temporary staffing arrangements within Payroll and Purchase to Pay, to continue the development of financial systems. The Report stated that the Human Resources Sub-Committee on 30 January 2025, approved the continuation of the HR Associate/Project Officer post until 31 March 2026 and, as the Project Officers were jointly responsible for progressing the work, it was proposed to continue the existing arrangement within Payroll for the same period.

It was agreed to approve:

- (1) the appointment of Employee MN to the post of Project Officer, Grade F, for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026;**
- (2) the appointment of Employee OP to the post of Systems Administrator, Grade E, for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026; and**
- (3) the continuation of increased hours, 22.2 hrs per week to 37 hours per week, for Employee QR, P2P Assistant, until 30 June 2025.**

Community Key Project Support Officer/ UK Shared Prosperity Fund 19 * The Chief Executive submitted a Report which sought approval for continuance of 22.2 hours for the Community Key Project Support Officer on the Communities and Place Intervention strand, funded by the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). It was proposed to continue to offer the hours to the part-time, 0.4FTE, Regeneration Officer (Employee ST).

The Report stated that the Community Key Project Support Officer would ensure crucial elements of pre-capital projects were supported. To date, the Fund had supported development of Urras an Taigh Mor, the Iolaire Centre, Comunn Eachdraidh Uibhist a Tuath and Hebrides People Visitor Centre.

It was agreed to approve the continuation of the part-time post of Community Key Project Officer (22.2 hours per week) within the Community Engagement Unit to 31 March 2026 and that Employee ST be matched to this post.

Economic and Community Regeneration – Workforce Plan 2025-26 20 * This item was withdrawn from the Agenda and would be presented to the June 2025 meeting of the Sub-Committee.

HR Performance Workforce 2025/26	and Plan	21	*	The Chief Executive submitted a Report which sought approval of the Human Resources and Performance Service Workforce Plan for 2025/26. The Report stated that the Comhairle's Corporate Workforce Plan 2023-27 had been in place for several years and the action plan progress update was presented to the Comhairle's Policy and Resources Committee in November 2024 alongside an updated action plan for 2025-26. This work coincided with Audit Scotland's Best Value Thematic Report on Workforce Innovation in the Comhairle.
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The Human Resources and Performance Service Workforce Plan was detailed at Appendix 1 to the Report. The Plan had been considered by Corporate Workforce Panel and set out the identified risks associated with each section within the service and used key workforce planning themes to address these risks. Training requirements within the service were set out alongside key actions required to address areas of risk.

It was agreed to approve the Human Resources and Performance Service Workforce Plan for 2025/26.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Employee Engagement Survey 2024	Results	22		The Chief Executive submitted a Report to inform the Sub-Committee of the 2024 Employee Engagement Survey results. The Report stated that the first corporate wide employee survey was undertaken in 2008 by Ipsos MORI. Approval was granted to undertake the fifth employee engagement survey during 2024. The aim of the survey continued to focus on identifying and exploring employee's experiences of working for the Comhairle in order to find better ways of working and drive service improvements.
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The Report stated that in summary the survey results established that employees had demonstrated resilience and reported increased levels of satisfaction across a range of work-related factors. The Report indicated that further work would be undertaken to analyse the valuable information provided within the survey in more detail. Recommendations would be made and aligned corporately to achieve continuous improvement across the Comhairle.

It was agreed to note the results of the fifth Employee Engagement Survey undertaken in 2024.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

It was agreed that the public, including the press, be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of items 23 to 30 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.

Reports Outstanding		23	*	The Chief Executive submitted details of those Reports Outstanding in relation to decisions that had been made by the Sub-Committee.
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It was agreed to note the Report.

URGENT ITEMS

The Chair ruled items 24 to 30 as Urgent to allow the matters to be considered prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Sub-Committee.

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| Corporate and Schools IT Restructure Update | 24 | * | The Chief Officer, Assets and Infrastructure submitted a Report to provide an update on the Corporate and Schools IT Restructure. The Report stated that in November 2024 it was agreed to consult on a proposal to amalgamate the Corporate and Schools IT Sections. The Report indicated that the consultation process had commenced. Responses to the consultation were to be submitted by 25 April 2025 and a Report would be presented to the Sub-Committee as soon as practical thereafter, |
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It was agreed to note the Report.

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| Accredited Training and Skills | 25 | * | The Chief Executive submitted a Report which sought approval to establish a new post within the Accredited Training and Skills section to support the management of the team and reporting requirements. The Report stated that to ensure that both the strategic and operational aspects of Accredited Training were supported and to address the future skills shortages, it was recommended that an Employability Manager post be established on a full-time permanent basis. The post had been evaluated at Grade I. |
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It was agreed to establish an Employability Manager post on a full time, permanent basis within the Accredited Training Service (Grade I,) and ringfence recruitment to the Accredited Training Team.

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| Gaelic Specific Grant Funded Posts | 26 | * | With reference to item 8 of the Minute of Meeting of 30 January 2025, the Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services submitted a Report to advise the sub-committee about the latest position with the Comhairle's application for Gaelic Specific Grant 25-26 and to seek a related extension to the existing fixed-term posts to 30 June 2025 to permit further time to confirm the outcome of the grant application for 2025-26. |
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It was agreed to:

- (1) note the update in relation to the delay in receipt of the grant application outcome; and**
- (2) approve the extension of the five posts listed at para 2.3 to 30 June 2025 to permit the Comhairle to establish the outcome of the grant application and seek approval of the amendments to staffing that the new workstreams would subsequently require.**

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| Gaelic Evaluation and Information Officer | 27 | * | The Team Leader, Heritage and Culture submitted a Report which sought approval to establish a post of Gaelic Evaluation and Information Officer (Grade F) working to the Heritage and Culture Team, in Sgioba na Gàidhlig, for a one-year period. The Report stated that the Gaelic Evaluation and Information Officer would lead on identifying and quantifying the impact and value of Gaelic in terms of socio-economic development across the Western Isles through ongoing research, and inter-agency collaboration. |
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The Report indicated that the Gaelic Evaluation and Information Officer would also collect and collate data to generate reports and case studies to exemplify findings and to work with, and support, the Comhairle's Communications Team in the dissemination of information and data related to the socio-economic value of Gaelic to the Western Isles.

It was agreed to establish the post of Gaelic Evaluation and Information Officer (Grade F) for a one-year period.

Principal Teacher for Gaelic: Sir E Scott School	28 *	The Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services submitted a Report which sought approval to make the post of Principal Teacher of Gaelic at Sir E Scott school permanent and to permit recruitment to it subsequent to the post becoming vacant. The Report stated that it was sought to make this post permanent to secure the continuing support for Gaelic Medium Education at the school in line with the Gaelic First policy and to create equity for this post with the equivalent one at the Nicolson Institute, which was constituted on an identical basis and was already made permanent.
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It was agreed that a further Report be submitted to the next Meeting providing detailed information on the remit and hours of the post together with a detailed job description.

Establishment of FTE Assistant Cook, Taigh Shiphoint	29 *	The Head of Partnership and Community Services submitted a Report which sought approval to establish a 37-hour Assistant Cook at Taigh Shiphoint and reconfigure kitchen posts and hours to provide a robust and more efficient catering service at the Goathill campus.
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It was agreed to:

- (1) establishment of 1 Assistant Cook at Taigh Shiphoint (37 hours);**
- (2) match Employee UV into the Assistant Cook post;**
- (3) increase the Blar Buidhe Kitchen Asst hours from 33.25 to 37 hours;**
- (4) increase the Blar Buidhe Kitchen Asst hours from 33.25 to 33.50 hours; and**
- (5) release and recruit into the vacant 21-hour Kitchen Assistant post.**

Establishment of Post: Senior Administrative Officer (E-Sgoil)	30 *	The Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services submitted a Report which sought approval to establish a new full-time post of Administrative Assistant (Grade D, 1.0FTE), which would replace the existing role of e-Sgoil Co-ordinator (Grade D, 0.6FTE). The Report stated that the role would have overall responsibility for the e-Sgoil administration function including the day-to-day running of the e-Sgoil office, ensuring the efficient and effective application and delivery of procedures and processes, handling of initial enquiries and support HR and financial related administrative function across the service.
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It was agreed to approve the establishment of the full-time (37hrs) post of Administrative Assistant (e-Sgoil) and the disestablishment of the part-time (22.2hrs) post of e-Sgoil Coordinator.