



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **PERSONNEL BOARD** will be held  
Virtually on **TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.30 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage', written in a cursive style.

Susan Parsonage  
Chief Executive  
Published on 1 February 2021

**Note:** The Council has made arrangements under the Coronavirus Act 2020 to hold the meeting virtually via Team Meetings, the meeting can be watched live at the following link: <https://youtu.be/REtWnSMs8Ow>



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Our Vision

***A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business***

### Enriching Lives

- Champion outstanding education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background.
- Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to complement an active lifestyle.
- Engage and involve our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity which people feel part of.
- Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.

### Safe, Strong, Communities

- Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people.
- Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to prevent the need for long term care.
- Nurture communities and help them to thrive.
- Ensure our borough and communities remain safe for all.

### A Clean and Green Borough

- Do all we can to become carbon neutral and sustainable for the future.
- Protect our borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas.
- Reduce our waste, improve biodiversity and increase recycling.
- Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.

### Right Homes, Right Places

- Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future.
- Build our fair share of housing with the right infrastructure to support and enable our borough to grow.
- Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment.
- Help with your housing needs and support people to live independently in their own homes.

### Keeping the Borough Moving

- Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways.
- Tackle traffic congestion, minimise delays and disruptions.
- Enable safe and sustainable travel around the borough with good transport infrastructure.
- Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners to offer affordable, accessible public transport with good network links.

### Changing the Way We Work for You

- Be relentlessly customer focussed.
- Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around you.
- Communicate better with you, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough.
- Drive innovative digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE PERSONNEL BOARD

### Councillors

John Halsall (Chairman)  
Lindsay Ferris  
Simon Weeks

John Kaiser (Vice-Chairman)  
Pauline Helliar-Symons

Carl Doran  
Clive Jones

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
27.		<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence	
28.		<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 November 2020.	5 - 6
29.		<b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest	
30.		<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions  A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.  The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee.  Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a>	
31.		<b>MEMBER QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any member questions	
32.	None Specific	<b>EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC</b> That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) as appropriate.	
33.	None Specific	<b>AGENCY WORKER USAGE - QUARTER 3</b> To receive the Agency Worker Usage – Quarter 3 report.	7 - 12

**Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent**

A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
PERSONNEL BOARD  
HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2020 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.30 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: John Halsall (Chairman), John Kaiser (Vice-Chairman), Carl Doran, Lindsay Ferris, Pauline Helliar-Symons, Clive Jones and Simon Weeks

**Officers Present**

Madeleine Shopland, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist  
Susan Parsonage, Chief Executive  
Sarah Swindley, Lead Specialist HR

**16. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

**17. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 22 September 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and will be signed by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.

**18. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**19. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

**20. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions.

**21. ANNUAL EQUALITY WORKFORCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Board considered the Annual Equality Workforce Monitoring Report.

During the discussion of this item, the following points were made:

- The annual report provided information on employees obtained from the Council's monitoring processes and procedures, which allowed the Council to meet the reporting requirements outlined in the Equality Act 2010. The report had been produced by the Employment Equalities Working Group and took account of both the Employment Tribunal Findings and the Tackling Racism at Work feedback.
- Whilst the report was usually presented in July to the Personnel Board, it had been delayed because of Covid 19 and also to take account of learning from Black Lives Matter.
- Councillor Weeks noted that 30% of staff had not declared whether they had a disability or not. He commented that it was difficult for managers to support staff appropriately if they did not know that they had a disability, as some disabilities were hidden. He questioned whether it should be a requirement of recruitment for the candidate to declare if they had a disability or not. Sarah Swindley commented that candidates were asked whether they required reasonable adjustments for the interview process.
- Councillor Ferris felt that the percentage of staff not declaring if they had a disability or not, was high, and questioned whether there were any links with the two cases against the Council. Sarah Swindley indicated that there were no links between the

two cases and that the percentage of staff declaring if they had a disability or not had increased year on year, albeit very slightly.

- The Council wanted to improve on the number of staff entering their data into the Business World On System, and there was a real push to increase this.
- Councillor Doran noted that there has been a significant increase in formal staff proceedings involving staff from ethnic minorities. He asked what measures were being put in place to address this. Sarah Swindley indicated that a thematic review of grievances had been carried out and that it had been found that they were across different directorates and for different reasons. Discussions with UNISON were actively taking place and there was no hint of systemic racism.
- Councillor Helliard Symons expressed concern regarding the number of leavers up to the age of 39. Sarah Swindley commented that there were more starters than leavers in that age group, and that there were many reasons why people left the organisation, such as career expansion.
- Councillor Helliard Symons asked whether exit interviews were conducted and was informed that there was a self-service toolkit that managers could use to undertake exit interviews. Alternatively, staff could undertake an exit interview survey online, which was sent to HR.

**RESOLVED:** That the 2020 - 2021 Annual Equality Workforce Monitoring Report be approved.

## **22. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) as appropriate.

## **23. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING**

At this point in the meeting, 7.15pm, the meeting was adjourned.

## **24. CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING**

At 8pm, the meeting reconvened.

## **25. DIRECTOR PLACE AND GROWTH**

The Board considered a report regarding the Director Place and Growth.

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendation contained within the report be agreed subject to the amendment discussed at the meeting.

## **26. DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES, INSIGHT AND CHANGE**

The Board considered a report regarding the Director Communities, Insight and Change.

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendation contained within the report be agreed subject to the amendment discussed at the meeting.

## **27. AGENCY WORKER USAGE - QUARTER 2**

The Board received the Agency Worker Usage – Quarter 2 report.

**RESOLVED:** That the Agency Worker Usage – Quarter 2 report be noted.

# Agenda Item 33.

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Agency Worker Usage - Quarter 3</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Personnel Board on 9 February 2021
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Director, Communities, Insight and Change - Keeley Clements

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

To ensure that Council Tax payers money is being used to provide safe and effective services

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Personnel Board note the current Agency Worker usage.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) has asked that the Head of Human Resources provide a quarterly report to Personnel Board with regard to the use of long term high cost agency workers to ensure there is a robustness in officer decision making and effective use of council tax payers' money.

## Background

The Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) has asked that the Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development provide a quarterly report to Personnel Board with regards to the use of long term high cost agency workers to ensure there is a robustness in officer decision making and effective use of council tax payers' money.

## Analysis of Issues

Agency Workers make up 5.0% of our workforce (a reduction of 0.5% on last quarter) and 0.8% of the workforce is made up of Agency Workers who have been in place for more than 6 months and cost more than £100,000 per annum (based on a full time equivalent salaried employee). We have reduced our reliance on high cost agency workers by 40% in the last 12 months'.

Attachment 1 provides details of the workers that are currently within this criteria.

We have continued to reduce our reliance on agency workers with active recruitment campaigns and converting wherever possible agency workers to permanent/fixed term employees. The total number now stands at 68, a year on year reduction of 12.8% and we continue to focus on this as a priority.

Personnel Board are asked to note this information.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil	n/a	n/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	n/a	n/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	n/a	n/a

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

### Cross-Council Implications

N/A

### Public Sector Equality Duty

No decision – information to note

### Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

Attachment 1 contains information that makes individuals identifiable.

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
Attachment 1 - Agency Worker Usage Quarter 3 – over 6 months and equivalent cost of over £100,000 FTE per annum

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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