

Workforce Review Pathways (Organisation-wide and Service led Work Force Boards)

Revised Arrangements with effect from 1st April 2026 (to be reviewed July 2026)

Purpose

- To ensure that there is a strong One Council approach to governance, oversight and consistent approaches to agreement on all spend in relation to workforce (directly / indirectly employed), as part of the revised MTFP for 2026/27.
- To promote positive ownership of workforce and budget management by all managers across services, enabling responsibility and accountability to be led by Assistant/Service Directors, Directors and Executive Directors whilst ensuring organisation wide visibility.
- To ensure clarity and consistency of approach on areas outside of the Organisation-wide WFB including the Business, Transformation & Change Review Panel (BTCRP) process.
- To ensure there is a clear route for those areas remaining subject to organisation-wide WFB approval until a separate policy is developed for training attendance and travel or award events in line with the People Plan.
- To ensure reapproval of any agency, consultants and/or contractor engagements over 12 weeks.

Workforce Review Pathways

Pathway 1 (default pathway) – The Executive Director or Director, in conjunction with Assistant/Service Directors, will confirm the service level WFB processes to ensure suitable governance and oversight for all workforce matters for their portfolio of services. This will include ensuring accurate completion of the existing WFB form and engagement with HR and Finance BPs prior to decisions being taken on the requests.

Pathway 2 – The Organisation-wide WFB will meet weekly during April to consider requests outlined in pathway 2 and provide capacity to ensure Pathway 1 requests can be reviewed whilst pathway 1 arrangements are confirmed by services.

Pathway 3 – Requests will follow the BTCRP process.

Activity	Pathway 1 – Exec Dir/Director Org-wide WFB Request NOT required if... We expect the majority of workforce matters to be managed through this pathway.	Pathway 2 – Organisation-wide WFB Org-wide WFB Request MUST BE submitted if...	Pathway 3 - BTCRP BTCRP Request MUST BE submitted if...
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The post is a like for like recruitment to a vacancy within an existing budget and/or is within existing projected spend, and approval is given from the relevant budget holder. • The cost of recruitment exceeds the available budget or increases the predicted year end spend but is essential to sustain statutory services (such as maternity cover). Any request to cover a role, such as maternity, should ensure that the correct Post ID being covered is included in the WFB form. This helps to ensure quicker processing through ERP. • The post is automatically exempt (see Exceptions on p7). 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The post could link or mirror a corporate function there will be a requirement to take this through BTCRP to ensure strong alignment and matrix working and agree the best approach BTC to address duplication of roles (notably in communications, procurement, PMO, and administrative functions); and avoid dispersed service led solutions rather than coordinated corporate approaches
Use of agency staff / consultants / contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is via Opus and for a maximum of 12 weeks and within the available budget. • The cost of recruitment exceeds the available budget or increases the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is required to exceed 12 weeks or is for reapproval of repeated requests. • For repeated agency activity for oversight, support and challenge on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTCRP related activity involving agency staffing.

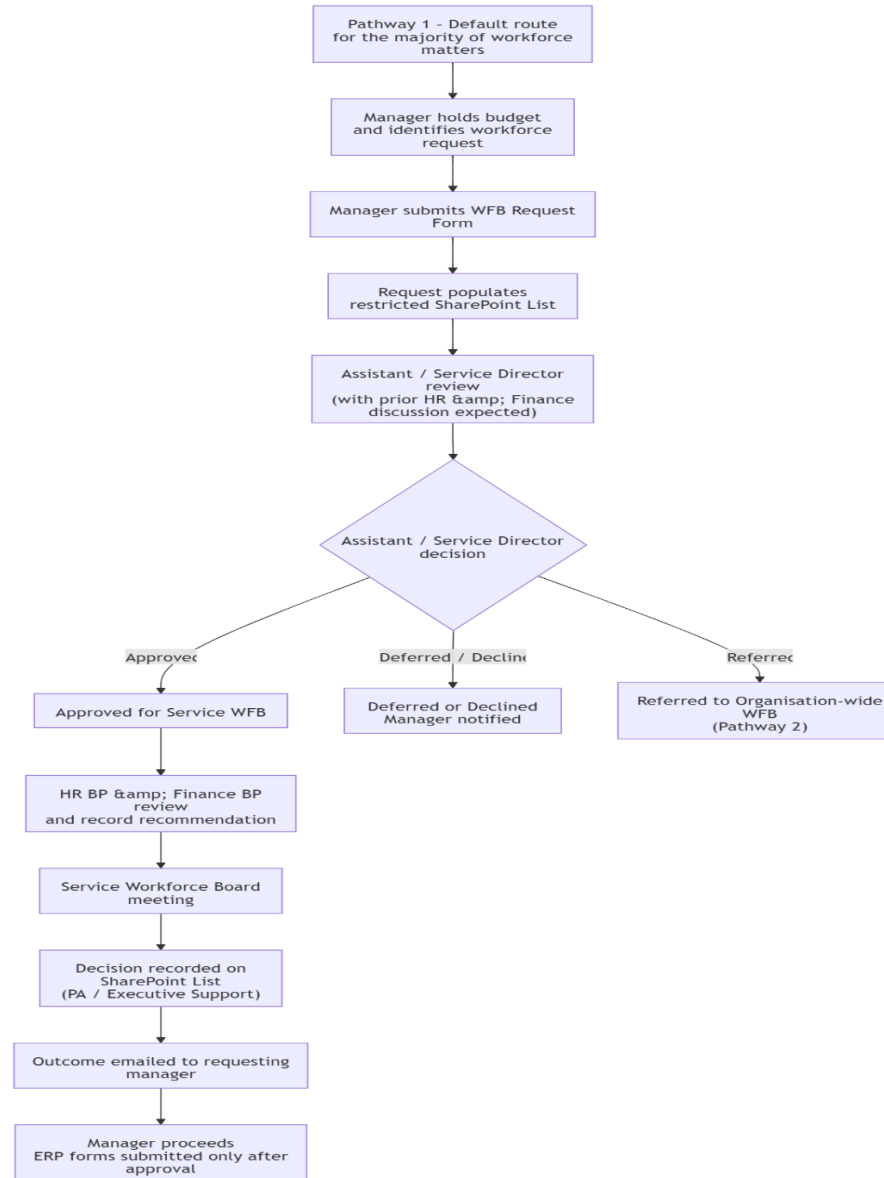
<p>Use of Casual Staff</p>	<p>predicted year end spend but is essential to sustain statutory services (such as maternity cover).</p> <p>Follow manager guidance on agency workers (link below)</p> <p>Temporary agency workers - guidance for staff Shropshire Council Intranet</p>	<p>why agency was being used rather than fixed term or conversion.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job evaluation • Honorarium • Market Supplements • Recruitment and Retention Payments • Accelerated and additional increments, including Long Service • Increasing hours • Overtime and additional hours - unless contractual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost is within the existing budget and existing projected spend. • HR BP and Finance BP have been involved in the development process e.g. business case/market supplements. • The cost of recruitment exceeds the available budget or increases the predicted year end spend but is essential to sustain statutory services (such as maternity cover). • In accordance with relevant policy (Extranet - HRPayroll or HR/Payroll Bot) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note for. Fixed term contracts or long term honoraria (anything over 3 months) – these need to be reviewed to look for fixed term posts at the appropriate grade, not extended honoraria arrangements and should have been discussed with the HR BP prior to WFB requests being submitted and then noted in the WFB request. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTCRP related activity involving these areas for growth/transformation funding or bids should be included in an overall outline business case to BTCRP therefore detail should not be required
<p>Training (Budget relating to employee training and development was centralised for 2023/24 onwards).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money free training/conferences which can be attended on-line (so no travel/accommodation expenses) or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a cost to the training/conference. • NB A new policy will be developed aligned to the people plans for developing and supporting staff to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTCRP related activity involved these for growth/transformation funding or bids should be included in an overall outline business case to BTCRP.

	<p>free training and the employee pays for own travel/accommodation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Training required as part of agreed business case or employee terms and conditions e.g. apprentice, professional training essential to maintain professional registration statutorily required for employee terms and conditions. • The cost is within the existing budget and existing projected spend and/or additional funding available for this explicit purpose. 	<p>ensure consistency and equity in application across the organisation to support workforce planning</p>	
<p>Expenses (accommodation, travel, subsistence, etc)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activity is a related to a mandatory duty and is agreed in advance, including travel outside of Shropshire. • NB: Managers should regularly review the expenses dashboard Expenses Report - Power BI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If related to non-statutory activity. • If the request is for travel outside of Shropshire. 	

The following circumstances DO NOT need to be brought to the Organisation-wide WFB for decision:

- Where a **Full Business Case** ([Restructures](#)) has been approved for a **restructure** which will already include Finance BP and HR BP being aware, all of those activities under the restructure do not need to be brought to WFB e.g. Job evaluation, new posts etc. This process should be used wherever the requests relate to multiple posts to reduce workload on service areas and support service by consolidating a number of HR related activities.
- All Full Business Cases will be noted and recorded in a log held by the BTCRP so we retain organisation-wide awareness.
- **BTCRP Requests Cover the following:**
 - Where requests are **Transformation-funded**, time limited, outcome based requests should go to BTCRP.
 - Where requests are asking to utilise staffing **growth agreed in 26/27 budgets**, the BTCRP process must be followed. BTCRP will need to clearly distinguish whether requests represent **true growth** (new, additional capacity), or **Transformation/reconfiguration** of existing resources.
 - **Grant funding does not automatically exempt posts- bids and funding from grants will need to be discussed through the BTCRP** process to ensure a clear case for applications for and spend of grant funds, in addition to considering the full impact on support services.

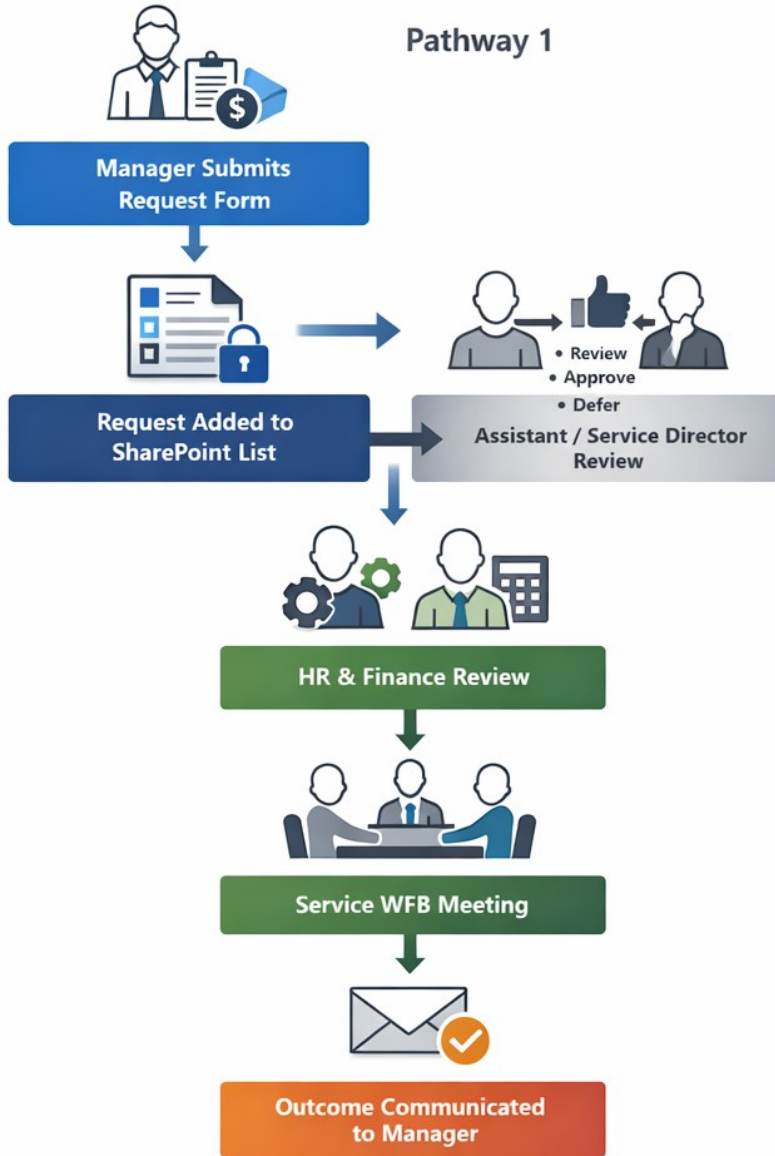
Processes



Pathway 1 (This is the default approach for the majority of workforce matters)

- Pathway 1 requests will be considered in line with the governance arrangements confirmed by the relevant Executive Director/Director. The arrangements for each Executive Director/Director will be published as an appendix to this ToR to support visibility and a One Council approach **but will require a service level WFB to ensure robust review.**
- However, the following processes must be completed for all workforce requests to ensure organisation-wide visibility;
 - All pathway 1 requests must be submitted by the manager who holds the budget funding the request via the WFB form, which will populate a restricted SharePoint List. The relevant Assistant/Service Directors have access to the SharePoint List and they will need to review the request (*Approved for review by Service WFB; Deferred; Declined; Referred to Organisation WFB*) and can liaise with the Manager making the request to discuss any issues identified at this stage. It is expected that service/team managers will have already held conversations about any requests with the relevant Assistant/Service Director and HR/Finance. **NB: Only requests agreed by the Assistant/Service Director and with all completed information in SharePoint before the deadline will be considered.**
 - Where requests are referred to the Organisation WFB by Assistant/Service Directors, these will be considered through Pathway 2 as outlined below.
 - Relevant HR BP and Finance BP to review the request prior to, or during, the service WFB meeting and note their recommendation of whether to approve, decline or defer the request.
 - Decisions will be recorded on the SharePoint List by the Personal Assistant/Executive Support Officer during the service WFB meeting.
 - The Personal Assistant/Executive Support Officer recording the decisions to e-mail the requesting manager after the meeting with the outcome. This process is being automated and will be available as soon as possible.
 - **NB: Managers are to be advised that ERP forms should not be submitted until approval has been given at the Workforce Board.**

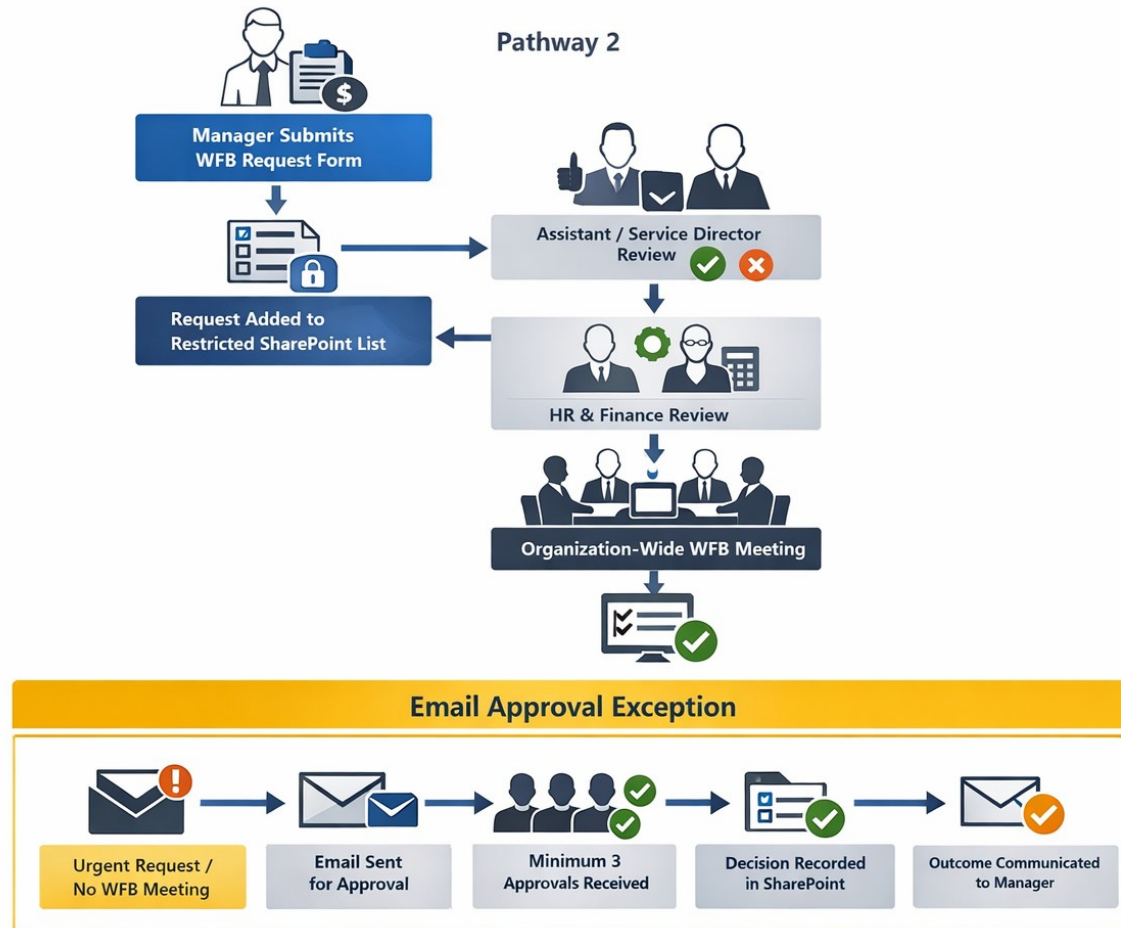
Pathway 1



Process – Pathway 2

- Pathway 2 requests will be considered at the weekly Organisation-wide WFB. The WFB will consist of:
 - David Shaw Director of Children's Services
 - Rachel Robinson Executive Director (Public Health)
 - Molly Sullivan Strategic Finance Business Partner (Revenue)
 - Sam Collins-Lafferty HR & OD Manager
- Admin:-
 - Sam Davies/Tracey Yates Executive Support Officers
- In the absence of up to one member of the WFB the meeting will still take place. In the absence of two members the meeting will not take place.
- Where a WFB is not scheduled to take place or has been postponed for any reason, consideration and approval of urgent requests may take place by email. Approval via email will be considered within 48hrs, require email confirmation from at least 3 members of the WFB and decisions will then be recorded in the SharePoint decision log.
- Requests will be by exception, following the pathway 2 guidance, and the WFB will make decisions taking account of the following:
 - The move to zero agency workers with effect from 1 April 2024 (other than in exceptional circumstances)
 - Reviewing and ending, where appropriate, consultants and contractors.
 - Apprenticeship first recruitment
 - Reviewing and ending, where appropriate, fixed term contracts
 - Proposed and current restructures across the teams
 - Business continuity
- **The WFB will also take an active role in supporting consistency of decision making across the Council through auditing of service area WFB decisions, particularly related to key workforce themes. This activity will be outlined in a quarterly overview report to be shared with Leadership Board and other key groups such as SLF.**
- The WFB forms will populate a restricted SharePoint List. The relevant Assistant/Service Director have access to the SharePoint List and they will need to approve that the request is taken forward for review or is deferred so they can liaise with the Manager making the request. It is assumed that service/team managers will have already held conversations about any requests with the relevant Service Director and HR/Finance. **NB: Only requests agreed by the Assistant/Service Director and with all completed information in SharePoint before the deadline will be considered by the WFB.**
- Relevant HR BP and Finance BP to review the request prior to Organisation-wide WFB meeting and note their recommendation of whether to approve, decline or defer the request, and to raise any queries with Molly Sullivan/Sam Collins-Lafferty.

- Decisions will be recorded on the SharePoint List by the Executive Support Officer during the meeting.
- Following the meeting, decisions will be communicated to managers by the Service Director. The Executive Support Officer recording the decisions to e-mail Service Directors after the meeting to remind them to check the decisions in the SharePoint List and to communicate to managers.
- NB: Managers are to be advised that ERP forms should not be submitted until approval has been given at the Workforce Board.



Organisation-wide WFB Exemptions (These will be reviewed during the first 6 weeks of the new arrangements from 1st April 2026 and amended or confirmed):

- Four Rivers Nursing Home *(necessary to have staff to run the nursing home and be regulatory compliant)*
- START *(necessary to have staff to run the service and be regulatory compliant)*
- Children residential services *(necessary to have staff to run the home and be regulatory compliant)*
- Enable *(they have a number of external contracts/grants – these posts are often short term and have to be agreed)*
- Shropshire Music Service *(they have a number of external contracts/grants – these posts are often short term or casual and have to be agreed)*
- Shire Services site specific roles and/or cover *(these are all funded via the individual client and are essential to run the kitchen and be regulatory compliant)*