

JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
16th March 2011

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2008 - 2011 UPDATE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To update the Joint Staff Consultative Committee on progress made implementing 2008 -2011 People Strategy that also incorporates the Council's Workforce Development Plan.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The 2008-2011 People Strategy is now complete and any project actions that have been rescheduled for 2011 will be carried forward to the refreshed Strategy currently under development.
- 3.2 The new draft People Strategy, incorporating a Workforce Development Plan is currently being developed. To inform this, consultation meetings have been arranged with all Heads of Service and Strategic Directors, focussing on both strategic and service considerations and the potential implications these may have for the People Strategy and the HR Service.
- 3.3 The information from these meetings will be collated and used to inform the workforce development action plan; an integral part of the People Strategy.
- 3.4 The updated People Strategy will be presented to the JSCC in June 2011.
- 3.5 Significant progress has been made against the projects in the current people strategy, attached at Appendix A are examples of some of the work achieved in 2008 – 2011 that was reported in updates to JSCC.

4. ISSUES

- 4.1 Over the last quarter we have continued to have pressures on payroll. The HR Services Manager who manages payroll, commenced maternity leave in February. Prior to this, she focussed on cover arrangements of payroll and was exploring options for the longer term future of payroll. Another member of the HR Team has also commenced maternity leave. We have two other vacant professional posts, at a time when the programme of organisational change in the months ahead is already having a significant draw on HR resources. Steps are being taken to address these issues.

4.2 Despite this there have been some very positive achievements to round up the end of the 2008 – 11 Strategy. These include:-

- Payroll was run despite the Payroll Officer being absent in February, as well as the maternity absence of the Payroll Manager. Business Continuity Planning was triggered and with our temporary agency cover and other members of the HR team stepping in, we managed to maintain a key part of the service.
- We have been doing work on changing the way that HR Services can be accessed making more use of a single phone number and e-mail address to try and resolve things faster and ensure that the more urgent things are prioritised ahead of routine or basic enquiries.
- We have topped up our organisational pool of trained Job Evaluators, sharing the training places with other councils. The newly trained Evaluators are now being further developed by observing panels and doing mock evaluations to build their skills and confidence. This supports the Councils pay and grading structure following on from our single status review in 2004.
- In January 2011, online recruitment for all applicants was launched. This allows people to apply for vacancies directly via our website.
- An outplacement programme has been developed to support the reorganisation. This includes various activities and resources, including one to one meetings, workshops, e-learning and career development interviews. A new Intranet page has also been prepared, with key information and links to further resources.
- Following the positive response from the 'Working in a Political Environment' workshops, we are arranging a Mock Committee meeting for Officers, in a similar format to those arranged for members. We are also developing a workshop on the Consultation process.
- We have confirmed our commitment to *The Vine project (VineHR)*. This is an regional internet based platform, that will provide e-learning resources and assist with collaborative working in learning and development.
- Since a comprehensive review of the appraisal processes in 2006/7, 100% of officers now have an appraisal meeting every year. To build on this success, we have recently conducted a further review that focuses the qualitative aspects of the appraisal processes.
- A new programme of retirement workshops has been developed and piloted, in liaison with Dacorum and Stevenage Borough Council.
- We continue to closely monitor what is happening on our absence performance. We were at the rate of 5.08 days per person at the end of January. Absence for February and March in 2010 was 1.25 days so we can forecast a rate of just over 6 days, an excellent year for us.

4.3 Attached at Appendix A is the People Strategy action plan with final updates to show the work that has been completed on the 2008 – 2011 Strategy.

A range of Balanced Scorecard measures are collated to measure the success of the People Strategy actions. At appendix B there is detail outlining performance against three key areas:

- Number of days lost to sick absence
- Turnover
- Percentage of staff that have completed an appraisal

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Included in the terms of reference for the Joint Staff Consultative Committee is to be the corporate interface with employees on major human resource issues and to be the strategic HR Forum for NHDC Members. The legal implications of specific proposals are considered on a proposal by proposal basis.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Implementation of the strategy will be contained from within existing budgets. Any additional costs arising from the recommended actions in the action plan will be contained from within existing budgets.

6.2 Delivery of the People Strategy is key to reducing some of the risks identified under the Council's Top Risks of Workforce Planning and Organisational Development. Delivery of the People Strategy is Risk Number 13 on the Risk Register and is reviewed on a regular basis.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The HR implications are detailed above.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

8.1 None.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To note the progress against the implementation of the updated People Strategy actions 2008-2011.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The People Strategy supports the achievement of the Authority's strategic objectives.

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

11.1 None

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix A – Updated People Strategy Action Plan extracts.

12.2 Appendix B – Key Graphs to measure Success of the People Strategy.

12.3 Appendix C - Some of achievements from the 2008 – 2011 People Strategy updates.

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14. BACKGROUND PAPERS