

**JSCC HR Retention and Equalities Update
19th September 2012**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To update JSCC on the current position with regard to equalities in employment and the Council's retention rate.

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 Equalities and the retention of staff are projects contained in the People Strategy. This report is to update JSCC on progress with equalities and retention in relation to our employees.
- 3.2 This Report covers leavers from the Council during the period 1st January 2012 to 30th June 2012, looks at the reasons for leaving and identifies any retention issues that need to be addressed. The period of reporting has been changed from previous Reports in order to align it with the Annual Leavers Report for the Publication of Equalities Data which is published each January and is based on January - December figures. This, and a number of sets of other equality in employment data, are required to be published on the Council's website annually under the Local Government Equality duty.

4. ISSUES

- 4.1 The turnover figure for the period 1st January 2012 to 30th June 2012 was 4.2%, which is significantly lower than the figure reported in the previous Report for April to September 2011 which was 9.7%. Turnover for the period January 2011 to December 2011 was 15.23%. As a benchmark, the median average annual turnover rate for districts is 11.9% and for local government as a whole is 12.3% (taken from the 2011 Local Government Workforce Survey).
- 4.2 15 people (not including Play Scheme Workers on short term contracts) left the Council in the period January 2012 to June 2012. Of these the majority (53.3%) were resignations for new jobs or relocation. 4 people (27%) left due to retirement. Of these 3 (20% of the total leavers) left prior to normal retirement age, and of these 3, one retired under the 85 year rule and one retired early due to ill health. There was one death in service, one redundancy and one dismissal during the same period.
- 4.3 One leaver (6.7% of the total) was from an ethnic minority group and one had a declared disability. The former figure is about the same as the current overall percentage of ethnic minority staff in the workforce (6.4%) and the latter is just above the overall rate of 5% staff with a disability across the Council. It does however have to be remembered that the numbers within these categories of leavers are very small. Regardless of the numbers involved however, in analysing the data for leavers from protected groups the

significant factor is to ensure that the reason for leaving did not directly relate to either their declared ethnicity or disability, which we understand they did not.

- 4.4 There was one leaver in each of the under 25 and 25 -34 age ranges, 4 in the age range 35 – 44 and 3 in the age band 45 to 54. As in previous analyses, the largest number of leavers (6) was in the 55 to 64 years age band. As could be expected all those retiring were aged 60 or over. Those who resigned from the Council were spread across the age ranges, with the largest number, 3 or 38% of this group, coming from the age 45-54 category.
- 4.5 33% of leavers were in the grades ranging from 1 to 3. 20% were in the grade ranges of 4 to 6. 6.7% in the range of 7 to 9, 27% were in the range of grades 10 to 12 and 6.7% were in grade 13 and above. The two highest figures are significantly above the percentages for all staff at these grades which are 21% in grades 1 to 3 and 19% in grades 10-12.
- 4.6 The number of male leavers (9 – 60%) is considerably higher than the percentage of males in the Council which is 34% and number of female leavers (6 – 40%) is considerably below that in the overall make up of the organisation which is 66%.
- 4.7 Taken as an annualised rate of 8.4%, the overall turnover rate remains low and is significantly below the national figures for both local government as a whole and district councils. However the figure for 2011 as a whole is around 3% higher than that in the 2011 Local Government Workforce Survey.
- 4.8 Two areas are worth highlighting, the high percentage of turnover in grades 1-3 and 10-12 compared with the overall percentage of staff in these grades and also the high percentage of men who have left in the period considered against the percentage of male staff as a whole.
- 4.9 As set out in 4.2 we can see we are getting a higher resignation rate than we have had over recent years. The 2012 Staff Survey has identified that job security and opportunity for career progression are areas with higher dissatisfaction levels. In addition the long period of pay freezes creates another pressure on retaining people. In the case of any voluntary resignations exit questionnaires and or exit interviews are routinely carried out to establish clear reasons for leaving.

5. EQUALITIES PERFORMANCE

We are maintaining our performance indicators BV11a, b and c, BV16a and 17a.

- BV 11a - top 5% of earners that are women is currently at 38.52% (Local government median average for districts is 30% and for all authorities is 40% - 2011 Local Government Workforce Survey)
- BV 11b - top 5% of earners that are from ethnic minority groups remains at 0%. (Local government median average for districts is 0% and for all authorities is 2% - 2011 Local Government Workforce Survey)
- BV 11c - top 5% of earners that have a disability is 12.84%, (Local government median average for districts is 1% and for all authorities is 3% - 2011 Local Government Workforce Survey)
- BV16a – the percentage of employees with a disability is 5.57%, which is slightly higher than the equivalent figure for the same time last year which was 5.51%.
- BV17a – the percentage of employees from an ethnic minority group is 7.8%, which again is slightly higher than the equivalent figure for 2011 which was 7.61%.

6. EQUALITIES DATA

- 6.1 We collect equalities data from our employees and potential employees through the recruitment process. We also periodically request updates from all employees, however despite a number of exercises to improve the quality and quantity of data held, a significant number of staff choose not to provide the information in certain categories e.g. disability, religion and sexual orientation.
- 6.2 Where an employee has declined to give the information their file has been annotated accordingly to prevent future requests causing frustration or distress. We will however continue to promote the message that the more complete data we have on individual staff, the more accurate an equalities picture we can obtain for the Council, which will enable us to gauge what remedial equalities actions we need to take in the future.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 These are outlined in the body of the report.

8. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 All actions mentioned in the report can be accommodated from within existing budgets.
- 8.2 Risk relating to workforce planning is currently a Top Risk for NHDC. This risk is monitored by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

9. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The HR implications are outlined in the body of the report.

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1st October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5th April 2011. There is a General duty, described in 9.2, that public bodies must meet, underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.
- 10.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 10.3 It is important that the authority maintains a consistent set of data regarding the make-up of its workforce, and ensures that where employees do leave, it is centred on their personal choice to improve their career options, relocate or retire, and not any inequity in their workplace, or failure to meet their individual needs arising from a disability or cultural need.

11. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

None

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 JSCC to note the update on retention and progress with equalities in relation to our employees.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 To maintain the awareness of the retention and equalities situation by the JSCC.

14. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None

15. APPENDICES

None

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

Maggie Williams
Employee Relations Officer
Human Resources
Telephone No. 01462 474506
Maggie.williams@north-herts.gov.uk

Kerry Shorrocks
Corporate Human Resources Manager
Human Resources
Telephone No. 01462 474224
Kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk

Fiona Timms
Performance and Risk Manager
Telephone No. 01462 474251
Fiona.timms@north-herts.gov.uk

Anthony Roche
Acting Corporate Legal Manager and Monitoring Officer - Legal Services
Telephone No. 01462 474588
Anthony.roche@north-herts.gov.uk

Liz Green
Head of Policy and Community Services
Telephone No 01462 474230
Liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None