

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



6 December 2019

Our Ref JSCC/18.12.19  
Your Ref.  
Contact. Committee Services  
Direct Dial. (01462) 474655  
Email. [committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk)

To: The Chairman and Members of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee of North Hertfordshire District Council

District Councillors Councillor Kay Tart (Chairman), Councillor Kate Aspinwall, Councillor Terry Hone, Councillor Keith Hoskins MBE and Councillor Claire Strong

(Substitutes: Councillors Councillor Paul Clark, Councillor Tony Hunter and Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb)

UNISON Representatives: Debbie Ealand, Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews and Dee Levett

Staff Consultation Forum Christina Corr, Lea Ellis, Ben Glover, Emma Jellis and Representatives: James Watson

You are invited to attend a

**MEETING OF THE JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

to be held in the

**FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 2/3, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,  
GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY**

On

**WEDNESDAY, 18TH DECEMBER, 2019 AT 10.00 AM**

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson  
Service Director – Legal and Community

## **Agenda**

### **Part I**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>2. MINUTES - 3 OCTOBER 2019</b> To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 3 October 2019.	(Pages 5 - 10)
<b>3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS</b> Members should notify the Chairman of other business which they wish to be discussed by the Committee at the end of the business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency.  The Chairman will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
<b>4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
<b>5. STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM</b> To receive the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum Meeting held on 2 October 2019 and the draft Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum Meeting held on 6 November 2019.	(Pages 11 - 18)
<b>6. PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE AND ANNUAL REPORT 2019</b> INFORMATION NOTE OF THE CORPORATE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER.  To receive an update on the progress made in the last quarter on the People Strategy 2015 – 2020.	(Pages 19 - 34)
<b>7. INFORMATION NOTE - EQUALITIES UPDATE</b> INFORMATION NOTE OF THE SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS MANAGER.  To update the Committee regarding equalities at the Council in respect of Equalities Data and Gender Pay Gap.	(Pages 35 - 54)
<b>8. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER - SALARY SACRIFICE SCHEMES</b> To receive a discussion paper on Salary Sacrifice Schemes.	(Pages 55 - 56)

**9. FUTURE DISCUSSION TOPICS**

To consider the subjects for debate at future meetings of the Committee.

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## NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 3, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,  
GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY  
ON THURSDAY, 3RD OCTOBER, 2019 AT 10.00 AM

#### MINUTES

**Present:** Councillors Kay Tart (Chairman), Kate Aspinwall, (Vice-Chairman),  
Terry Hone and Keith Hoskins

**In Attendance:** Ian Couper (Service Director – Resources, Kerry Shorrocks (Corporate  
Human Resources Manager), Dee Levett (Unison Representative),  
Christina Corr (Staff Consultation Forum Representative), Emma Jellis  
(SCF Representative), Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and  
Scrutiny Officer), Amelia McNally (Committee, Member and Scrutiny  
Officer) and Obianuju Nganwuchu (Business Administration Apprentice  
(Democratic Services)

#### 13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

*Audio Recording – 13 Seconds*

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Claire Strong.

#### 14 MINUTES - 27 MARCH 2019

*Audio Recording – 25 Seconds*

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 27 March 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

#### 15 MINUTES - 19 JUNE 2019

*Audio Recording – 55 Seconds*

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 19 June 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

#### 16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Audio Recording – 1 Minute 15 Seconds*

- (1) The Chairman welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) The Chairman drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

#### 17 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM MINUTES - 5 JUNE 2019

*Audio Recording – 2 Minutes 8 Seconds*

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the Staff Consultation Forum (SCF) Minutes of the 5 June 2019. She informed Members that during SCF Meetings, staff tended to raise queries regarding the maintenance and cleanliness of the District Council Offices. The Corporate Human Resources Manager stated that these queries were answered by the Facilities Team Leader.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager informed the Committee that SCF Representatives were able to raise matters at SCF Meetings which had been brought to their attention by other colleagues. The Corporate Human Resources Manager further added that there was a dedicated SCF email address which allowed Staff to send suggestions and comments to the SCF Team. Similarly, SCF Minutes were circulated to Staff via Outlook and published on the Intranet.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager outlined some of the matters that were discussed at the SCF meeting on the 5 June 2019:

- Union Pay Claim;
- The Payroll Project - procurement of contract; and
- The announcement of the Statutory Annual Leave days for Christmas.

**IT WAS AGREED:** That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 5 June 2019 be noted.

**18 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM MINUTES - 3 JULY 2019**

*Audio Recording – 7 Minutes 35 Seconds*

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the Staff Consultation Forum Minutes on the 3 July 2019. She informed the Members of the Committee that the following items had been discussed in the meeting:

- The dates of the Christmas closure;
- The Payroll Project;
- Demonstrations of the new payroll system were given; and
- The attendance of SCF Representatives at the Joint Staff Consultation Committee.

**IT WAS AGREED:** That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 3 July 2019 be noted.

**19 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM MINUTES - 7 AUGUST 2019**

*Audio Recording – 9 Minutes 41 Seconds*

The Corporate Human Resources Manager informed the Committee that there was not usually a Staff Consultation Forum Meeting in August owing to it being a quieter month for Council business. However, despite this, an SCF Meeting was held on 7 August 2019 to allow the following important items to be discussed:

- Discussions on two restructures;
- The Payroll Project;
- Information in relation to the Christmas closure - Booking off Statutory Days on the payroll system. The Corporate Human Resources Manager informed the Committee that there were more Part-Time Staff than Full-Time; therefore it was important that all staff knew how to book off these Statutory Days within the system; and
- The Career Development Survey.

The Unison Representative raised the issue regarding parking for Careline Staff and explained that on some evenings when Committee Meetings took place, the Car Park was becoming increasingly full, which had lead to some of Careline staffs' cars being blocked in. This was unacceptable due to the nature of their business.

In order that this issue be resolved, the Committee recommended that reminders go out to Members to inform them that the Multi-Storey Car Park opposite the District Council Offices would remain open for Planning and Council meetings.

The following Member asked questions:

- Councillor Kay Tart.

In response to questions raised, both the Corporate Human Resources Manager and the Service Director – Resources, provided the following information:

- Careline had a requirement of between 4 and 6 car parking spaces;
- A reminder would be put on the front page of the Committee Meeting Agendas and in the Member Information Service to inform Councillors that the Multi-Storey Car Park was open for some evening Committee meetings.

**IT WAS AGREED:** That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 7 August 2019 be noted.

## 20 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM DRAFT MINUTES - 4 SEPTEMBER 2019

*Audio Recording – 16 Minutes 32 Seconds*

The Corporate Human Resources Manager outlined the issues raised at the Staff Consultation Meeting on the 4 September 2019:

- The Payroll contract had been awarded to Liberata;
- The system that would be used was Itrent;
- Self-service Payroll would be rolled out to Members;
- Flu jabs were being offered to all members of staff.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Terry Hone;
- Councillor Kay Tart; and
- Councillor Kate Aspinwall.

In answer to questions, the Corporate Human Resources Manager and Service Director – Resources confirmed the following:

- Councillors would be able to access their payslips online once the new payroll system was underway;
- Historic data from Serco would be extracted. However, it was recommended that P60s and payslips be printed out to 'err on the side of caution'.
- The majority of the 'Office moves' had taken place;
- Members would be informed as to where Departments and Colleagues were now located within the building;
- The Payroll contract had been awarded for 5 years and would commence in April 2020;
- The Windows 10 operating system update was underway, and it was hoped this would be concluded by mid-January 2020; and
- The cost quoted to extract the historic data from Serco was reasonable.

**IT WAS AGREED:** That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 4 September 2019 be noted.

## 21 PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE - INFORMATION NOTE

*Audio Recording – 23 Minutes 25 Seconds*

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the People Strategy Update and the following items were raised:

- Discussion on Equal Pay would be moved to the next JSCC meeting; and
- Through the National Pay Claim, the unions were requesting an increase in the amount of Annual Leave to be given to Staff on the lowest Pay Grade.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Kay Tart;
- Councillor Kate Aspinwall; and
- Councillor Terry Hone.

In answer to questions raised; the Corporate Human Resources Manager confirmed that:

- The amount of Annual Leave for those on the lowest Pay Grade was 21 days which would be increased to 22 days after 5 years service.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager directed Members to paragraph 3.71 and 3.73 on page 33 of the report. She informed the Committee that 177 members of staff had completed the Career Development Survey.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager drew attention to the Key Performance Measures on page 35 of the report, and suggested that the reason that appraisals had not been received by the target date had been due to Long Term Sickness or Maternity Leave.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager directed Members to Absence Rates on page 36 of the report. Members were informed that there was no long term absence in July 2019 and short term absence was 0.60 over target in the full Calendar Year 2018/19.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager assured Members of the Committee that there was support available from the Human Resources Department and Occupational Health for Staff on Long Term Absence.

**IT WAS AGREED:** That the information note entitled People Strategy Update be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To enable the Committee to consider the People Strategy Update.

## 22 STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER - EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH

*Audio Recording – 41 Minutes 46 Seconds*

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the Strategic Discussion Paper - Employee Mental Health and highlighted the following:

- There was a great deal of support available to all members of staff;
- Occupational Health advised staff on Health and Work related issues;
- The Employee Assistance Programme was offered by Workplace Wellness. It was offered free of charge to all staff and Councillors. This was a confidential service offering support day and night;



- The Council's Flexible Working was a well developed culture;
- National Stress Awareness had been promoted.
- The Active Communities Team had arranged lunch time walks and healthier snack boxes for staff;
- There were Mental Health First Aid Courses; and
- The Human Resources Work Plan for next year was to focus on Financial Wellbeing.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Terry Hone; and
- Councillor Kay Tart.

In response to questions raised, the Corporate Human Resources Manager advised that:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme was a good scheme in which the employer contributed approximately 18.5%;
- The Council offered a Pre-retirement Seminar to help staff plan for their own retirement;
- Training on First Aid was taking place, this included Mental Health First Aiders; and
- There was a list of First Aider names on every floor of the District Council Office.

**IT WAS AGREED:** That the discussion paper on Employee Mental Health be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To enable the Committee to consider the discussion paper on Employee Mental Health.

## 23 FUTURE DISCUSSION TOPICS

*Audio Recording – 56 Minutes 15 Seconds*

Members considered which subjects should be discussed at future meetings and

**IT WAS AGREED:** That the discussion topic for the next meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee would be:

- Salary Sacrifice Schemes

The Next meeting of The Joint Staff Consultative Committee would be held on Wednesday 18 December 2019 at 10:00am.

Chairman

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## Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

02 October 2019



**Present:** David Scholes (**DS**), Dee Levitt (**DL**), Hannah Sweetman (**HS**), Emma Jellis (**EJ**), Kerry Shorrocks (**KS**), Lea Ellis (**LE**), Caitlin Bruce (**CB** - notes)

**Circulation:** Global

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### 1. Apologies

Anthony Roche, Christina Corr, Ian Couper, Ben Glover, Toby LeSage, Rebecca Webb

### 2. Matters Arising

**LE** Mentioned that there are still issues with the toilets on floor two not getting toilet paper replaced – **If members of staff notice there is little or no toilet paper they should email property services to bring it to their attention**

**LE to speak to Helen Bylett and Keith Crampton about promoting 'working in a political environment training' and the opportunity for staff members to go to a council meeting.**

Going forward a note will be placed on the front of the agendas at council meetings in an attempt to stop careline staff being blocked in to or not being able to find a parking space. The multi-storey car park opposite the district council office is also open during evening meetings and reminders of this and that the car park will not close before the committee meetings end will be given to councillors/public.

**KS** Gave an update on the cycle to work salary sacrifice saying that we would be remaining with our current provider, Halfords but there will also be a list of other local retailers that are available. The window open so people can join the scheme will also remain open so they can opt in at any time. More information will be available soon.

### 3. NHDC Update

**KS** went to the regional pay briefing on 16/09/19. The Unions pay claim is 10% or £10 per hour, whichever is the greater. Harry Honnor. The Principal Negotiating Officer on the Employers side led the event that started with a presentation of the pay claim by the trade unions. This event is a regular one as part of the work done on national pay bargaining and a number of these regional events had already happened by 16<sup>th</sup>. Ahead of these events those attending were asked to come prepared with answers to some questions including:-

- *How much have you assumed in budget for 2020 pay award?*
- *How do you view an appropriate level of settlement in the context of other increases in the public sector, in particular schoolteachers' award of 2.75%?*

We confirmed that our budget assumed a 2% pay increase. However we also confirmed that at some point it is expected that pay increases will return to those being similar to

other public sector partners. The overwhelming feedback from Councils was that everyone had budgeted for 2%. The Employers side explained that due to the Brexit uncertainties and the possibility of a general election a pay offer was unlikely to be made in the near future. Updates to SCF will be made when more details are known.

**KS** Gave update on the payroll project – we will be working with Liberata using the iTrent system, we have a number of payroll champions lined up and have had the kick off meeting with Liberata to begin working on the blueprint for what our service will look like, there is work going on with Serco regarding parallel runs and extracting data. What we are hoping to do is get a demo of iTrent to show at staff briefings. The system will be a great improvement on the one we currently have.

**KS** and **EJ** will attend the 3 October JSCC meeting as the SCF representatives.

**DS** Gave an update on the budget for next year, a few announcements about local government settlement were made in September – negative Revenue Support Grant (we pay the government money as opposed to us getting a grant) is not happening for next year. The news homes bonus announcements have been postponed for now. The amount that councils can increase council tax was capped at 3% this is now 2%. Overall for the forthcoming year it is slightly positive in terms of what we thought we were going to get and what we are going to get, however these are the current government's intentions and they will not be locked down until January

**DS** Stated that there was work being done on the new council plan and will hopefully be agreed by full council ahead of the budget process

There is the potential that there will be another general election, if this is the case help from as many staff as possible will be greatly appreciated

#### **4. Employee Queries**

Frustrations around the manager self service issue was raised.

**KS** apologised that a permanent solution had not been found but confirmed in the interim the system will work normally following these two quick steps.

- 1 Log in as normal and remove the 's' from the 'https' in the web address bar
2. Press enter and click show all content and all outstanding tasks will be available as normal.

Return to 'https' to use other self service facilities.

The SAP Support IT team is continuing work on resolving this issue.

A query around vacancies being advertised internally only before they are advertised externally to allow for more development opportunities was raised.

**KS** replied that whether to advertise internally and externally is a manager's decision and as a small organisation it may be difficult to find any candidates for more specialist roles without advertising externally some roles are advertised internally only and when posts are advertised externally internal candidates are able to apply.

An employee queried if the stat days for the Christmas shutdown had been allocated – **KS** replied that the days had already been added to annual leave balances and are now on SAP ready for employees to book off. A reminder of the note sent out about booking these is below.

*“As you will be aware the Council have agreed to shutdown the Council Offices for the Christmas period this year from 4pm on Christmas Eve, reopening on 2 January. There are 3 Statutory Days over this period: 27 December, 30 December and 31 December. The additional annual leave for the extra Stat Day has now been added to leave allocations on SAP. Please remind employees that all Stat Days must be booked as leave on SAP (where they fall on normal working days) This should be done by 1st December.”*

It was raised that signs in the car park opposite the district council offices directing people to the shops may be useful for members of the public – This will be raised with the parking team

**LE** acknowledged all of the good work the social group are currently doing

**HS** thanked members of SCF as this will be her last meeting before leaving NHDC – the members of the SCF wished **HS** luck for the future.

The SCF are currently looking for a new rep, if you are interested please email the SCF inbox: [SCF@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:SCF@north-herts.gov.uk)

## 5. Chair of next meeting

Dee Levitt

## Have something to say?

If you have an issue you think should be brought to the attention of the SCF, please contact any SCF representative via phone, email or in person. They will raise your issue at the next meeting. You will not be identified unless you want to be.

Issues relating to property e.g. broken lift, non-flushing toilets, etc. must always be reported to Property Services in the first instance: [propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk)

Alternatively you can send any issues to the SCF inbox - [SCF@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:SCF@north-herts.gov.uk)

Representatives (and extension):

**Lea Ellis** #4830 - Community Engagement team based on Floor 3

**Ben Glover** #4248 - Planning team based on Floor 3

**Emma Jellis** #4312 - MSU team based on Floor 4

**James Watson** #4209 - Commercial team based on Floor 4

**Christina Corr** #4325 - Senior Technical Officer R&B team based on Floor 5

The SCF are currently looking for a new rep, if you are interested please email the SCF inbox: [SCF@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:SCF@north-herts.gov.uk)

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## Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

06 November 2019



**Present:** Anthony Roche (**AR**), Ian Couper (**IC**), James Watson (**JW**), Toby Le Sage (**TLS**), Ben Glover (**BG**), Dee Levitt (**DL**), Andrew Betts (**AB**), Allison Fox (**AF**), Emma Jellis (**EJ**), Kerry Shorrocks (**KS**), Olly Charter (**OC – notes**), Jo Dufficy (**JD**), Andy Bateman (**ABa**)

**Circulation:** Global

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### 1. Apologies

Christina Corr, Rebecca Webb, Lea Ellis, Vic Godfrey, David Scholes, Debbie Hiscock

### 2. New Representatives

Two new representatives have joined the SCF, Allison Fox from Planning and Andrew Betts from the Buntingford Waste team.

### 3. Document Centre Restructure

The proposed restructure looks at closing down the Document Centre, and outsourcing any remaining printing to Herts County Council (HCC). **JD** explained that over the years there have been previous restructures at the Document Centre, resulting in there currently being only 2 members of staff working there. In recent years printing has declined by around 60% at the Document Centre, and now the Outbound Mail and ModGov projects will act as a catalyst to further decrease the demand for printing. Alternative options were considered, such as commercialising the Centre or relocating - as a developer has bought the land that the Document Centre is on and so it can't stay in the current building. One person will have a change in line manager, team and location and one redundancy, there is an ongoing consultation, with no option to TUPE over to HCC.

HCC will provide the printing at-cost to NHDC, and no other local business in the district would be able to offer the same. There is a current trial period of outsourcing the printing to HCC.

Council Tax letters along with Careline's printing is now outsourced which was part of the Outbound Mail project.

The printers at the Document Centre are coming to the end of their lease, and so will be returned. IT is currently trying a new printer ahead of the MFD contract coming to an end.

**ABa** confirmed that there are no issues being raised from the team at the Document Centre.

### 4. Matters Arising

An MIS note has gone out to members regarding the promotion of 'Working in a Political Environment training'

There is still the issue with SAP. **KS** reminded staff about the message on the intranet to help staff get around the issue: <https://intranet.north-herts.gov.uk/manager-self-service-ongoing-sap-issues> .

If staff are unable to log into SAP they need to close down Internet Explorer and re-open it again.

## 5. Building Services Update (IC)

The new cleaning contract is in place meaning that there is now an evening office clean as opposed to an early morning clean.

**This is an update from what was said at the meeting.** Desks are included in the cleaning contract but are only cleaned on an annual basis with materials provided in the cleaning boxes for staff to do more regular cleans if required.

The Air-Con on the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor is being investigated as it is not operating correctly. The engineers are working on it but have not yet diagnosed the issue.

The 5<sup>th</sup> floor trial with the Air-Con in the meeting rooms seems to be working well. The Air-Con remains off until it is turned on for a meeting and the room seems to heat up fairly quickly. It is likely this process will be carried out across the floors which will save money and energy.

There was an issue raised about the staff entrance door working intermittently, with some staff struggling to leave the office. **Property Services to look at cause of this issue and ways staff can get help if this happens to them (i.e. a number to call).** **Update: We think this is caused by the sensor getting confused, which can particularly happen when you stop to do something after it has been activated. Pressing the button by the door or going back in to the building and coming out again should fix it. If that doesn't work and it is out of hours then (as a last resort) you can use a fire escape, but please make sure that they properly close behind you. Arena Security are keyholders and can be contacted on 01462 481811.**

**Property Services to look at potential 'comment box/board' for staff members to report anything and/or give feedback/suggestions to Property Services by the staff entrance. Update: To avoid comments getting lost or not being acted on promptly, suggested that staff could send an e-mail to the Property Services e-mail address from their phone. The team will still act on e-mails coming from personal addresses.**

## 6. IT Update (TLS)

The new 5 year IT strategy has been drafted up. Previously the strategies have been for 2 or 3 years. Members are now proof-reading the strategy.

The Windows 10 upgrade is making good progress. The IT team will need to update all NHDC PC's to Windows 10, doing 1 bank of desks at a time to avoid major disruption. There will be drop-in sessions for staff to look at Windows 10 as some of the features will look and operate slightly differently.

IT is part-way through the review of the documents stored at Unit 3. Old boxes which have passed the 'keep until date' are being destroyed, as the boxes are starting to decompose. Staff are reminded to retrieve any documents that they need.

IT is also working on an Active Navigation project which will allow service areas to delete old and unused documents from the G-Drive. This is for compliance with regulations rather than saving storage.



The review on retention of document schedules that service areas have is underway. Service areas have been asked to review their retention policies, in aim that they will have around 10/15 regular documents which they know the retention schedule for. This will tie in with the Active navigation project.

IT was asked whether the microfiche down in CSC is being going to be reviewed. **TLS** said IT are aware that it needs to be updated/reviewed but as there is such a large amount of documents it will take a long period of time; therefore it is on hold.

## **7. NHDC Update (KS + AR)**

**KS** updated the group on the Annual Pay Review bargaining. A letter from the employers' side has been received stating that there will be no action on their behalf until after the general election.

The payroll project is now in the blueprinting stage, which is where the system is being configured to meet the needs of NHDC. Further updates will be provided and hopefully there will be a test system available soon so that training can begin in due course.

**KS** also gave a reminder of the Christmas close-down:

*"As you will be aware the Council have agreed to shutdown the Council Offices for the Christmas period this year from 4pm on Christmas Eve, reopening on 2 January. There are 3 Statutory Days over this period: 27 December, 30 December and 31 December. The additional annual leave for the extra Stat Day has now been added to leave allocations on SAP. Please remind employees that all Stat Days must be booked as leave on SAP (where they fall on normal working days) This should be done by 1st December."*

**AR** reminded staff about the general election in 5 weeks time on 12<sup>th</sup> December. The elections team will be very busy in the run up to elections and staff are asked to help out on the day of the election, if possible.

The new 2020-2025 Council Plan has been agreed by Cabinet and is due to go to full Council for sign off.

The budget process has been started to decide the budget for the next year.

## **8. Employee Queries**

If cleaning boxes on the floors are nearly becoming empty please send a request to [propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk) to re-fill the box.

The deflectors on some of the Air-Con units on various floors are receiving good praise from some staff as they are feeling warmer.

## **9. Chair of next meeting**

**Ben Glover**

# **Have something to say?**

If you have an issue you think should be brought to the attention of the SCF, please contact any SCF representative via phone, email or in person. They will raise your issue at the next meeting. You will not be identified unless you want to be.

Issues relating to property e.g. broken lift, non-flushing toilets, etc. must always be reported to Property Services in the first instance: [propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk)

Alternatively you can send any issues to the SCF inbox - [SCF@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:SCF@north-herts.gov.uk)

**Representatives (and extension):**

**Lea Ellis** #4830 - Community Engagement team based on Floor 3

**Ben Glover** #4248 - Planning team based on Floor 3

**Emma Jellis** #4312 - MSU team based on Floor 4

**James Watson** #4209 - Commercial team based on Floor 4

**Christina Corr** #4325 - Senior Technical Officer R&B team based on Floor 5

**Andrew Betts** #4282 - Contracts Officer (Waste Management based at Buntingford)

**Allison Fox** #4203 - Technical Support Officer based on Floor 3

**JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
18 DECEMBER 2019**

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE AND ANNUAL REPORT  
2019**

**INFORMATION NOTE OF THE CORPORATE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER**

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To update the Joint Staff Consultative Committee on the progress made in the last quarter on the People Strategy 2015 – 2020 which covers the Workforce Development needs and to provide a round up of the work of the HR Department and JSCC over the 12 months January 2019 to December 2019.
- 1.2 During 2020 a new People Strategy will be developed to cover the period 2021 to 2026. The Local Government Employers will be releasing a new Workforce Development Framework during Spring/Summer 2020 and because the Framework will be tailored to meet the difference's between County, Borough and other Councils and will have a specific version for a Shire District. It's proposed the Council adopts the framework to create a workforce development plan and create the People Strategy alongside that during autumn and winter 2020/2021.

**2. STEPS TO DATE**

- 2.1 This Information Note summarises the HR work progress over the year including a short round up of our year's Strategic Discussions and other regular reviews such as equalities and retention.

**3. INFORMATION TO NOTE**

- 3.1 Progress against the People Strategy is reported to all quarterly JSCC Meetings. Attached at Appendix B is the HR Service plan 2019/20. The terms of reference for the Joint Staff Consultative Committee are to be the corporate interface with employees on major Human Resources issues and to be the Strategic HR Forum for NHDC Members. HR projects do require support from other support services such as IT, Finance, Legal Services and others.

**3.2 Recruitment**

Recruitment has been particularly busy this year with a total number of vacancies advertised during the period January to November 2019 at 93 (compared to 68 over the same period 2018). These include posts advertised from restructures and both internal and external recruitment.

The recruitment of Apprentices has been an important part of the recruitment activities this year and we have now have 12 Apprentices working at the Council including replacing posts where the apprentice moves to a permanent post. Two more Apprentices are at the recruitment stage with appointments expected by January 2020.

We are planning recruitment to start before an apprenticeship ends and have used the apprentice levy and apprentice salary budgets really well.

### 3.3 Equal Pay and Equalities

The Equalities Data for 2018 (required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010) was sent for publication in time for the 31st January 2019 deadline.

Mandatory gender pay gap reporting was introduced in the public sector from the end of March 2017 and the Council has published 2 sets of data with a full report for 2017 and 2018. We now have a very active Gender pay Gap working group and have completed a number of projects. Among these was a survey of staff on career development aspirations, procuring Gap Square software to drill further into pay equality, promoting awareness of unconscious bias through communications and training and introducing software to neutralise language used in Job Descriptions, Person Specifications, job adverts, interview and assessment materials.

There is a separate Equalities Information Note that has more details on all the work completed this year.

### 3.4 Pay

April 2019 saw the end of a two year pay deal of 2% with higher increases for the lowest paid to meet the rising rate of the National Living Wage and to work towards it increasing up to the rates expected in 2020. The Council now pays £9.09 at the lowest pay point, this is the rate paid to the majority of Apprentices. We do not operate any minimum pay or age related minimum pay rates. This pay deal incorporated a review of the LG National Pay Spine although the Council doesn't use this, we do apply salary increases in line with national pay bargaining pay increases.

Trade Union (Unison) Pay Claim 2019/20, the pay claim is positioned by the Trades Unions as a "bold" pay claim after the pay freezes and low increases in recent years. The pay claim calls for pay deal of 10% or £10 per hour, whichever is greater.

The regional pay briefing took place in September. They sought employer views on affordability. The majority of councils have budgeted for a 2% increase. The Employers advised councils there was unlikely to be any pay offer until after a general election and have recently written to councils to confirm this with the election now on 12 December.

The current contract with Serco for our payroll service will end in March 2020. A full tender process has been undertaken and a new supplier, Liberata, will provide a payroll service using iTrent software from 1 April 2020. This work has taken a significant amount of resources from the HR team throughout this year and the work will remain intensive until well beyond the go live date including training on self service for staff, managers and councillors, who will use self service for the first time. Elections payroll is also included. The officer leading this work is Rebecca Webb, HR Services Manager supported by the rest of the HR team. The project is also supported by other services such as IT and Finance and a number of other staff have volunteered to be payroll champions.

The iTrent system is a far more modern and user friendly system than the current SAP system and IT have been further working with HR on introducing chat bots to the system to help users via new AI intelligence. The self-service aspects of the new iTrent system can be accessed from mobile devices allowing officers and councillors greater flexibility, for example in claiming expenses and viewing payslips.

### 3.5 Benefits

The contracts for the provision of EAP and OH services to the Council expired on 31 March 2019. These had been procured under an HCC Framework which was re-procured by HCC as a new Framework with effect from April 2019. NHDC were named on this new Framework and as the specifications for the services offered matched our needs, we called off from this for the provision of both OH and EAP services. Under the new contract, OH services continue to be provided by Optima Health, as under the previous contract, for the period 1.4.2019 – 31.3.2022, but with a saving of £2.90 per head per annum which amounts to almost £1,000 per year. The EAP service from 1 April 2019 is provided by Right Corecare trading as Workplace Wellness, who in the past has provided a confidential advice service for NHDC employees, although not under the most recent contracts. This contract is for 4 years from April 2019 and has also resulted in a per head saving to the Council. In this case the saving is £1.95 per head per year, almost £700 per annum in total. Councillors are able to take advantage of the services provided by this valuable support scheme.

In the middle of the year the Council launched a free GP consultation service as a new employee benefit. Employees can arrange a GP consultation either by telephone or on line and the service also includes the option of a face-to-face webcam consultation with a GP, a private prescription service (this service incurs a charge payable by the employee) and a medical information service, where there is access to health, disease, lifestyle and travel information on over 700 topics.

The Council continues to have salary sacrifice schemes for childcare vouchers and lease cars and re-launched its Cycle2work scheme in conjunction with Halfords on 1 December 2019. More details of salary sacrifice schemes are given in the Discussion Topic paper for this meeting.

### 3.6 Learning and Employee Engagement

The organisation's Values and Behaviours are now becoming an integral part of the way we do things and will be part of a planned Organisational Development Strategy.

The Values and Behaviours are also integral to the Senior Leadership Team coaching and development programme that is currently underway. They are also embedded in our induction programme and all of the workshops that we deliver to our staff.

A newly introduced staff recognition scheme, will draw on the Values and Behaviours as they form the basis for the criteria for recognition and reward.

We have recently undertaken training to provide the Organisation with Mental Health First Aiders, this is a demonstration of our continued commitment to wellbeing.

We have undertaken a number of initiatives to address the gender pay gap and to encourage diversity within the organisation.

### 3.7 Regular Performance Review

We are continuing to emphasise the Values and Behaviours as a basis for discussion.

During the next year, we will be encouraging managers to embrace RPR as a means for regular one to ones and discussions.

The RPR is a key tool in discussing career aspirations and to consider succession planning, this will allow Managers and the Learning & Employee Engagement Team to address some of the feedback given during the recent Career Development Survey.

We will continue to monitor the Learning and Development requirements raised in the RPR, through an annual snapshot review, but this can be conducted at any time throughout the year, in line with the needs of the Service. This will create more flexibility for Managers and staff.

### 3.8 Organisational Restructures

The HR team are currently supporting a couple of service restructures, with most service areas having settled following last year's senior management restructure. In addition to the team continues to support absence management and a number of employee relations cases.

The Learning and Employee Team continue to work alongside the departments to consider development needs associated with organisational change.

### 3.9 HR Policies

The majority of the Council's policies emanate from the Resources team. During 2019 a review was commenced of the format and content of these. This work ran concurrently with a project being undertaken by HR to streamline HR policies and ensure they were easily accessible, user friendly, current and relevant. So far, as a result of this review, the contents of the Attendance at Evening Meetings, Long Service Awards and Rates of Pay policies have been incorporated into the Employee Handbook thus reducing the number of separate documents employees need to be aware of. Work is ongoing on this project and the next step is to modernise the Employee Handbook to a web based format.

One other significant policy change was to introduce contractual shared parental pay and make these payments equivalent to those available as contractual maternity pay.

### 3.10 Absence

The Short Term absence target of 3.50 for 2018/19 was exceeded by 0.60 days per FTE. Short term absence rates have risen over the period 2017 – 2019. A discussion paper was included on the Senior Management Team meeting of 5/11 with the suggestion that the 4 Service Director areas with the highest rates are given HR support to further drill down to why rates are rising and to support managers with any specific issues.

Long-term absence is at a very low rate and is lower than in recent years. When there are long term absence cases the HR team work closely with managers to support a return to work as soon as possible.

### 3.11 Flu Vaccinations

The 2019 Seasonal Flu vaccination programme was as popular as in previous years with sessions offered at the Council offices. Those that could not make it to the sessions could opt for the vaccination voucher which can be redeemed at any local Superdrug pharmacy. The cost of the vaccination is £7 per person (plus a charge for the onsite clinic) and is paid for by NHDC. This has a number of benefits; for individuals with long term health conditions and those who have caring responsibilities for young or elderly relatives. The Council may also benefit from less flu related illness. This year 106 staff took up the offer of a flu vaccination which is similar to previous years.

### 3.12 Children's Christmas party

The annual joint funded Unison and NHDC Children's Christmas tea party was arranged by an HR Apprentice, with help from the Trade Union and other officers including our own Father Christmas. This is always a really lovely event for around 20-25 children and grandchildren of council officers. The party for 2019 was held in rooms 2 and 3 on floor 1 of the District Council Offices on Friday 13th December 2019 4:00 - 6:00pm.

### 3.13 2019 Audits

During 2019/20 the following audits involving HR took place:-

- Flexi time
- Workforce planning
- Equalities
- Apprentice Levy
- Overtime
- Risk Management
- Allowances & Expenses

### 3.14 Strategic HR Discussions of 2019

In March we discussed the work of the Learning and Employee Engagement Team and how they support organisational change through development activities and employee engagement. In June it was the role of Occupational Health at the Council and in September all the various things that are done to support the Council in helping with staff and councillors with their mental health and wellbeing. We are rounding up the year with a discussion paper at the December JSCC on Salary Sacrifice Schemes.

### 3.15 Balanced Scorecard

Balanced Scorecard measures will continue to be collated to measure the success of the People Strategy. Key measures are as follows:-

- Number of days lost to sick absence per Full Time Equivalent.
- Turnover

## 4.0 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 Progress against the People Strategy and the annual work plan will be reported to all Quarterly JSCC Meetings and an annual report presented to the December meetings.

## **5.0 APPENDICES**

5.1 Appendix A – Key Performance Measures

5.2 Appendix B – HR People Strategy Work Plan for 2019/20

## **6.0 CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 People Strategy 2015 – 2020



## Key Performance Measures

## Turnover

Year (1 April – 31 March)	%
2008/09	8.57%
2009/10	10.20%
2010/11	10.63%
2011/12	14.45%
2012/13	15.24%
2013/14	10.07%
2014/15	12.58%
2015/16	15.14%
2016/17	9.74%
2017/18	12.97%
2018/19	12.8%

(Turnover figures exclude redundancies, apprenticeships ending and end of fixed term contracts)

## Absence Rates

November 2018 to October 2019 rolling year - Days Lost Per FTE By Month. 5.46  
The Headcount figure at end October was 377 staff and a full time equivalent (FTE) of 298.73

For the full calendar year 2018/19, 4.10 per FTE days short term absence was lost against a target of 3.50 days, 0.60 over target.

Long term absence fell considerably in the latter part of the year and has remained at negligible rates since November 2018, 106 Staff took up flu vaccinations that should reduce the number of days lost over winter months for influenza.

For the 7 months April to October compared to the same 7 months of last year Short Term absence is marginally down by 0.24 days per FTE.

	Long Term	Short Term
Nov 2018	0.08	0.29
Dec 2018	0.09	0.20
Jan 2019	0.10	0.61
Feb 2019	0.00	0.51
Mar 2019	0.01	0.37
Apr 2019	0.02	0.23
May 2019	0.04	0.20
June 2019	0.07	0.26
July 2019	0.00	0.41
Aug 2019	0.05	0.18
Sept 2019	0.02	0.21
Oct 2019	0.00	0.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.49</b> (less than a half day per FTE	<b>3.96</b>

**2019/2020 HR Service Work plan**

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
<b>Organisational Development</b>								
Support organisational structure changes to meet Council budgets	Responsive & Efficient	Provide HR support for service ongoing restructure work	Staff are well supported through change.	Communications, consultation including informal, group, TU/SCF and individual. Paperwork, administration advice and support for any redundancy including appeals Outplacement activities and any recruitment	SD restructure plans approved SD communicates rationale with staff. Consultation opens, consultation closes, feedback is provided on the final outcome and the changes are implemented.	Kerry Shorrocks and HR team	01/04/2019	31/03/2020
Continually promote use of coaching	Responsive & Efficient	Continue to develop the Councils use of coaching as a development tool and to support the pool of coaches in their professional development.	Demonstrable increasing uptake of coaching as a development option by all staff.	Arrange regular coaching supervision sessions and regularly promote coaching benefits.	In house coaching group report increased coaching activity both formal and informal coaching.	Keith Crampton	01/04/2019	31/03/2020
Support Organisational Change/Well-Being	Responsive & Efficient	Provide Learning and Employee Engagement activities that proactively support the challenges of change faced by the organisation in the coming years.	Managers and staff feel equipped with the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to achieve positive change outcomes.	Resource and run development activities that support organisational change in line with new organisational values.	Programmes and workshops run throughout the year both strategically and in response to specific requests.	Keith Crampton	01/04/2019	31/03/2020

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
<b>Organisational Development</b>								
New Values and Behaviour Embed Values and Behaviours framework performance by 1st April 2020	Responsive & Efficient	Following facilitation of the development of Values and Behaviour framework they now need to be embedded in and form a major part of organisational culture.	Values used for RPR, talent/succession planning, recruitment and performance management	Visible and referred to in all processes and communications	making a significant impact on organisational development and change	Keith Crampton and Helen Bylett	01/04/2019	31/03/2020
Final year liP recommendations and managing out scheme	Responsive & Efficient	Arrange and manage the liP interim review	Act on final recommendations which will take the organisation to the end of accreditation period in June 2020	Undertake final interim review in June 2019	Going Forward use new Values and Behaviours to provide a suitable framework to develop the organisation	Keith Crampton	01/04/2019	30/06/2020
LMS (Grow Zone)	Responsive & Efficient	The GROW ZONE fully functional and developing to meet organisational needs for the next 5 years.	A Learning Management System or alternative that meets the needs of the organisation for the next 5 years.	Continue to develop the use of the system with more generic training content and possible capacity for hosting RPR process	Wider use of GROW Zone as portal for individuals to manage all learning and development and to record RPRs	Helen Bylett	01/04//2019	30/06/2020

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
<b>Organisational Development</b>								
Resource cost-effective learning to meet needs	Responsive & Efficient	Support both corporate and departmental learning by sourcing cost effective learning solutions and looking for opportunities to generate income	Best value obtained from budgets available.	Explore opportunities to operate in a more commercial way and to work in partnership where this provides opportunities to achieve the desired outcome.	Regular reviews of all training budgets undertaken with group accountant on a monthly basis.	Keith Crampton & Helen Bylett	08/04/2019	01/04/2020
Gender Pay gap and general talent/succession planning for staff	Responsive & Efficient	Survey staff on career aspirations to develop a strategy for planning succession to meet individual needs and future organisational requirements.	Strategy agreed and in place together with a framework which is successfully identifying and developing talent for future roles.	Survey of staff and supporting personal development plans and learning solutions.	Survey Development analyse survey results , report to senior managers and HR provide support advice and learning solutions.	Communications Team, HR Team with L&EE lead	01/05/2019	31/03/2020
Preparation for renewal of People Strategy for 2020 to 2025	Responsive & Efficient	Research for creation of an efficient strategy to meet the needs of the council's workforce and people resources which gives the Council value for money. Deliver on findings.	Long Term Strategic Direction for People Management	Meet with relevant stakeholders, Research and planning Draft the Strategy Communicate Launch	Launch of the new People Strategy	Kerry Shorrocks	31/10/2019	31/12/2020

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
<b>Pay &amp; Reward</b>								
New Payroll Contract Procurement of Payroll Contract	Responsive & Efficient	Prepare detailed specification and go out to tender	New payroll provider is found to start implementation for 2020 payroll	Prepared Tender Tender out Evaluation of Tenders Payroll demonstrations Tender evaluations and Selection	Prepared Tender Tender out Evaluation of Tenders Payroll demonstrations Tender evaluations and Selection	HR Services Manager and HR Team	01/04/2019	Complete
Payroll Exit Plan	Responsive & Efficient	Value efficient and fit for purpose payroll service	Serco Exit to run alongside implementation with new provider	Manage an organised exit from Serco contract in line with the call off contract including transition Costs assessments from both sides of transfer.	Exit plans agreed with key dates and costs identified and agreed	Maggie Williams & Kerry Shorrocks and finance officers	30/03/2019	30/09/2020
Payroll Implementation Project to new payroll for 1 April 2020	Responsive & Efficient	Value efficient and fit for purpose payroll service	New provider /NHDC and Serco work leading to implementation	Project plan developed to cover each step leading up to migrating pay data from old to new provider	Parallel pay runs carried out and tested	Rebecca Webb & HR Managers IT Procurement finance	30/06/2019	01/04/2020
Training and Guidance for use of new payroll systems and embed new contract for payroll service from 2020	Responsive & Efficient	Provision of accurate information in relation to reporting requirements.	Training and guidance for all self service users	Self Service training on the system for all staff and councillors and self help guides created.	Training design Guidance created Communications	HR Managers and Business Partners	01/01/2020	30/6/2020

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
<b>Pay &amp; Reward</b>								
Annual Pay Policy Statement	Responsive & Efficient	Prepare the annual pay policy statement incorporating all recent changes in regulations and guidance.	Publication to comply with Section 40 of the Localism Act & the Local Government Transparency Code 2014 and proposed changes arising from the Enterprise Bill.	Use of Guidance, drafting report to Council, Council approval, final amendments and publication.	Approval at Full Council and Publication.	Kerry Shorrocks	30/12/2019	01/03/2020
Follow and implement any changes to Exit payments and recovery and changes to LGPS and Early Severance Policy	Responsive & Efficient	Regulations implemented	Contribute feedback to Govt Consultation Follow progress of Govt Consultation	Report outcome and options and communications and any policy changes/development	Close of Consultation Outcome of Consultation	Kerry Shorrocks	01/04/2019	31/3/2020
Equalise Shared Parental Leave provision	Responsive & Efficient	New Policy in place	Provision of NHDC shared parental leave payments to male employees to pay the same as NHDC Maternity Pay	Shared Parental Leave Policy updated	Policy redrafting Communications and new policy in place	Rebecca Webb	01/04/2019	31/08/2019
Explore modernising the approach to both long service awards and retirement recognition	Responsive & Efficient	Look at what is in place currently and be	Fit for purpose reward schemes for retirement and Long service	Benchmarking others Pulse survey of staff considering alternatives	Policies updated and communications	Maggie Williams	01/04/2019	31/3/2020

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
Recruitment & Retention								

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
<b>Recruitment &amp; Retention</b>								
Brexit and impacts on employment Law	Responsive & Efficient	Legislation emanating from the EU has been the leading source of UK employee legislation over the last 15 to 20 years	HR must be abreast of the changes arising from Brexit and implement correct employment law to protect the council.	Following employment law changes, reading CIPD ACAS and seminars	Employment law changes HR Policy amendments	HR Managers	01/04/2019	31/03/2020
Managing an effective Apprentices Scheme	Responsive & Efficient	Manage a scheme targets, Apprentice training levy and new higher apprentice opportunities	A continued well regarded apprentice scheme that meets the needs of individuals and the organisation including improved demographic profile and talent management.	Regular reports to SMT to ensure efficient use of budgets and Apprentices appointed to areas that have a need and can support and develop Apprentices	Further use of Higher apprentices phased in.	Kerry Shorrocks/ Helen Bylett	18/04/2019	31/3/2020
Support services going through Shared services or Outsourcing/TUPE changes	Responsive & Efficient	Provide HR support for managers during restructures and TUPE negotiations.	Staff are well supported through change.	HR Business Partners to support and advise managers through periods of change management.	Consultation process successfully concluded.	Rebeca Webb/ ER Team	Ongoing	Ongoing
Gender pay gap reporting	Responsive & Efficient	Ensure statutory requirements are met.	Provision of accurate information in relation to reporting requirements.	Prepare a business case to consider purchasing software that allows better analysis of data to drill down and identify where the issues are occurring.  Software purchased and implemented December 2019	Report run on required date. Submission of data by required date and in the required manner. Detailed analysis of figures using new tool if purchased.	Maggie Williams	01/05/2019	30/3/2020



Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
<b>Recruitment &amp; Retention</b>								
Gender Pay Gap Delivery of action plan	Responsive & Efficient	Creation and delivery Provision of an GPG action plan	Reducing Gender Pay Gap year on year.	Working Group established Action plan created Action Plan agreed Items delivered over the 2108/19 period Actions include regularising shared NHDC parental leave payment with that of maternity leave. A Career Development survey of staff and Unconscious bias training	New SPL Policy in place. CD survey results and action planning from that.	Kerry Shorrocks, Keith Crampton Other managers and volunteers	01/04/2019	31/3/2020
<b>Providing an HR Service</b>								
Review of format and content of all HR Policies	Responsive & Efficient	Ensure all policies are fair, necessary and consistent and are formatted with a customer facing focus.	Completion of policy transition and easier navigation for end users	HR Policies are gradually moved to new style consistent with other Council policies	Each policy in the new format	HR Managers and BP's	01/11/2018 (two year project)	31/12/2020
Increased HR automation of processes and continued move to paperless HR	Responsive & Efficient	Building on work already completed further streamlining and automation of HR processes	Service more suited to remote working and to cut down on manual document storing and HR scanning work	Implement changes to e-administration and process handling of HR work.	Each new systems and new process implemented	HR Managers	01/04/2019	31/3/2020
Savings and potential Income generation from HR services	Responsive & Efficient	Deliver savings and generate income from acting on ideas and opportunities.	Deliver savings and or generate income	Act on staff suggestions and initiatives.	Each saving / income made	Kerry Shorrocks and HR Managers	01/04/2019	31/3/2020

Action Title	Objective	Description of the Action	Desired Outcome	Sub-Action	Milestones	Assigned To	Planned Start Date	Due Date
<b>Recruitment &amp; Retention</b>								
Policy Reviews	Responsive & Efficient	Follow a planned and regular review schedule for existing policies, introduce new policies as required and respond to changes in legislation and good practice.	Clear, fair and consistent policies which cover all required aspects of the employment relationship.	Regular policy reviews and monitoring of developments.	All policies regularly reviewed as required and new policies introduced to meet any deadlines imposed.	HR Team	01/06/18	31/3/2020

**JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
18 DECEMBER 2019**

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: EQUALITIES UPDATE**

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS  
MANAGER

**1. SUMMARY**

This is an update regarding equalities at the Council in respect of:

- Equalities Data
- Gender Pay Gap

**2. STEPS TO DATE**

This note is provided to the Joint Staff Consultation Forum to update the Committee on the Council's current equalities profile.

**3. INFORMATION TO NOTE**

**3.1 Equalities Data 2018**

**3.1.1 Data**

Appendix 1 to this Report shows a summary of the equalities data for the Council for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 which was published in full on the Council's website in January 2019 in accordance with The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). The Equality Duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. The Equality Duty is supported by specific duties which require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty; and to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

The data provided covers recruitment, current staff, application of HR policies, refusal of applications for learning and development, analysis of those taking and returning from maternity leave, analysis of leavers from NHDC employment and a summary of the most recent Equal Pay Review Report.

The first few pages of the full Equalities Data Report give an overview of the equalities picture in respect of current staff and those joining and leaving the Council in 2018. This is followed by data showing more detailed analysis by protected characteristic.

The equalities profiles for employees, new joiners and those who left the Council in 2018 are given below. Previous years' figures are shown in brackets. In the provision of the data, percentages have been used instead of raw numbers in order to protect confidentiality and analysis has not been undertaken where overall numbers are less than 10. Figures may not always add to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.1.1.1 Employees

- **2018 - 69% female, 32% male**  
(2017 - 66% female, 34% male, 2016 - 66% female, 34% male, 2015 - 66% female, 34% male).
- **2018 - 80% not disabled, 3% disabled**  
(2017 - 78% not disabled, 4% disabled, 2016 - 78% not disabled, 5% disabled, 2015 - 75% not disabled, 4% disabled).
- **2018 - 88% White, 6% other ethnic origin**  
(2017 - 87% White, 7% other ethnic origin, 2016 - 88% White, 5% other ethnic origin, 2015 - 88% White, 6% other ethnic origin).
- **2018 - 76% heterosexual, 2% gay, lesbian or bisexual**  
(2017 - 77% heterosexual, 1% gay, lesbian or bisexual, 2016 - 76% heterosexual, 1% gay, lesbian or bisexual, 2015 - 74% heterosexual, 1% gay, lesbian or bisexual).
- **2018 - 49% Christian, 23% no religion, 5% other religions**  
(2017 - 54% Christian, 18% no religion, 4% other religions, 2016 - 53% Christian, 18% no religion, 5% other religions, 2015 - 53% Christian, 18% no religion, 5% other religions).
- **2018 - 2% under 21, 7% aged 21-25, 13% aged 26-34, 22% aged 35-44, 31% aged 45-54, 22% aged 55-64, 3% aged 65 and over**  
(2017 - 2% under 21, 5% aged 21-25, 11% aged 26-34, 25% aged 35-44, 32% aged 45-54, 22% aged 55-64, 4% aged 65 and over, 2016 - 2% under 21, 6% aged 21-25, 10% aged 26-34, 24% aged 35-44, 34% aged 45-54, 22% aged 55-64, 3% aged 65 and over, 2015 - 2% under 21, 5% aged 21-25, 8% aged 26-34, 24% aged 35-44, 33% aged 45-54, 24% aged 55-64, 3% aged 65 and over).
- **2018 - 55% married, 32% single, 5% divorced, 1% civil partnership, 1% widowed**  
(2017 - 60% married, 27% single, 3% divorced, 1% civil partnership, 1% widowed 2016 - 59% married, 29% single, 3% divorced, 1% civil partnership, 2015 - 58% married, 27% single, 4% divorced, 1% civil partnership).
- **2018 - 67% full time, 33% part time**  
(2017 - 65% full time, 35% part time, 2016 - 67% full time, 33% part time, 2015 - 65% full time, 35% part time).

### 3.1.1.2 Joiners

- **2018 - 38% female, 62% male**  
(2017 - 41% female, 59% male, 2016 - 64% female, 36% male, 2015 - 60% female, 40% male)
- **2018 - 93% not disabled, 5% disabled**  
(2017 - 97% not disabled, 0% disabled, 2016 - 86% not disabled, 12% disabled, 2015 - 93% not disabled, 5% disabled).
- **2018 - 82% White, 12% other ethnic origin**  
(2017 - 86% White, 14% other ethnic origin, 2016 - 88% White, 7% other ethnic origin, 2015 - 88% White, 7% other ethnic origin).
- **2018 - 89% heterosexual, 3% gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual**  
(2017 - 84% heterosexual, 3% gay, lesbian or bisexual, 2016 - 90% heterosexual, 2% gay, lesbian or bisexual, 2015 - 82% heterosexual, 5% gay, lesbian or bisexual).

- **2018 - 37% Christian, 5% other religions**  
(2017 - 41% Christian, 3% other religions, 2016 - 45% Christian, 4% other religions, 2015 - 47% Christian, 22% other religions).
- **2018 - 8% under 21, 14% aged 21-25, 25% aged 26-34, 20% aged 35-44, 22% aged 45-54, 8% aged 55-64, 0% aged 65 and over**  
(2017 - 5% under 21, 14% aged 21-25, 27% aged 26-34, 24% aged 35-44, 30% aged 45-54, 0% aged 55-64, 0% aged 65 and over, 2016 - 10% under 21, 21% aged 21-25, 21% aged 26-34, 17% aged 35-44, 24% aged 45-54, 5% aged 55-64, 2% aged 65 and over, 2015 - 20% aged 16-20, 28% aged 21-30, 34% aged 31-40, 7% aged 41-50, 10% aged 51-60).

### 3.1.1.3 Leavers

- **2018 - 66% female, 34% male**  
(2017 - 59% female, 41% male, 2016 - 62% female, 38% male, 2015 - 64% female, 36% male).
- **2018 - 84% not disabled, 7% disabled**  
(2017 - 85% not disabled, 7% disabled, 2016 - 82% not disabled, 8% disabled, 2015 - 73% not disabled, 3% disabled).
- **2018 - 79% White, 10% other ethnic origin**  
(2017 - 83% White, 15% other ethnic origin, 2016 - 87% White, 7% other ethnic origin, 2015 - 80% White, 7% other ethnic origin).
- **2018 - 85% heterosexual, 3% gay, lesbian or bisexual**  
(2017 - 80% heterosexual, 4% gay, lesbian or bisexual, 2016 - 85% heterosexual, 3% gay, lesbian or bisexual, 2015 - 68% heterosexual, 8% gay, lesbian or bisexual).
- **2018 - 53% Christian, 28% no religion, 7% other religions**  
2017 - 37% Christian, 35% no religion, 10% other religions, 2016 - 48% Christian, 28% no religion, 4% other religions, 2015 - 51% Christian, 19% no religion, 2% other religions).
- **2018 - 7% under 21, 12% aged 21-25, 16% aged 26-34, 22% aged 35-44, 14% aged 45-54, 19% aged 55-64, 10% aged 65 and over**  
(2017 - 11% under 21, 7% aged 21-25, 17% aged 26-34, 20% aged 35-44, 28% aged 45-54, 13% aged 55-64, 4% aged 65 and over, 2016 - 2% under 21, 13% aged 21-25, 8% aged 26-34, 25% aged 35-44, 17% aged 45-54, 23% aged 55-64, 12% aged 65 and over, 2015 - 11% under 21, 16% aged 21-25, 14% aged 26-34, 19% aged 35-44, 14% aged 45-54, 23% aged 55-64, 4% aged 65 and over).
- **2018 - 33% married, 29% single, 2% divorced**  
(2017 - 33% married, 54% single, 7% divorced, 2016 - 52% married, 33% single, 7% divorced, 2015 - 36% married, 41% single, 1% divorced, 1% widowed).
- **2018 - 57% resigned, 14% retired, 12% came to the end of a fixed term contract, redundancy 7%, 3% were dismissed and 2% died in service**  
(2017 - 61% resigned, 22% came to the end of a fixed term contract, 7% retired, 2% early severance, 2% died in service and 7% were dismissed, 2016 - 52% resigned, 13% came to the end of a fixed term contract, 7% were made redundant, 12% retired, 5% transferred under the TUPE regulations and 5% were dismissed, 2015 - 53% resigned, 31% came to the end of a fixed term contract, 7% were made redundant, 3% transferred under the TUPE regulations, 3% retired and 1% died in service).

### 3.1.2 Analysis

These figures show that the make up of the Council's workforce, joiners and leavers by protected characteristic remains very stable with few changes. There are however some points to note:

#### Gender

- Slight increase in females in the workforce (3%) after 3 years of no change
- Continued decrease in the percentage of joiners to the Council who are female. This has been significant over the past 4 years and is particularly obvious when comparing 2016 when 64% of joiners were women with 2018, when only 38% were.
- The 2018 figures show there has also been a 7% increase in female leavers from the Council. Two-thirds of those leaving the Council are female which is in line with the current staff profile. 75% of those who resigned from the Council were female and all those leaving due to redundancy, both compulsory and voluntary, (4 staff), were also female.

#### Disability

- The number of the Council's staff who class themselves as disabled has decreased since 2017, continuing the trend of the last 3 years
- Very few of those who joined the Council in 2018 (1 person) declared themselves to be disabled.
- The number of those leaving the Council who declared themselves to be disabled did not change between 2017 and 2018 but this at 7% this is still more than double the percentage of those still working for the Council who class themselves as disabled.

#### Ethnic Origin

- The % of White new recruits, and leavers decreased in 2018 and there was a very little change, (1%), in the number of staff who classed themselves as White.
- The biggest % fall (4%) in the White ethnic group was in those who left the Council but there was also a 5% fall in leavers from other ethnic groups.

#### Sexual Orientation

- There has been very little change in the sexual orientation of new recruits, staff and leavers during 2018 although there was a very small increase (1%) in the number of gay, lesbian or bisexual employees and the same percentage drop in leavers in this group.

#### Religion

- The significant downward trend of those whose religion is Christian continues for employees and for those joining the Council in 2018. There has also been a large increase, (16%), in leavers who class themselves as Christians.
- The number of those with no religion working for the Council has grown with a decrease in this group leaving the Council.
- There has been a slight increase (1%) in those of other religions joining and working for the Council and a 3% decrease in those from other religions leaving the Council.

#### Age

- The age profile of Council employees has varied very little between 2017 and 2018.
- There were slight increases in staff, (2%), joiners, (3%), and leavers, (1%), aged up to 25 in 2018.
- The age group 45-54 remains the largest group of employees and accounts for nearly a third (31%) of all staff.
- 29% of those leaving the Council in 2018 were over age 55, a 12% increase over 2017.

#### Marital Status

- There has been a decrease in married employees which is matched by an increase in single employees in 2018.
- There has been no change to the numbers of those leaving the Council who are married, a 25% decrease in those who are single and a 5% decrease in those who are divorced.
- Marital status of those joining the Council is not requested during recruitment

#### Full time/Part time

- There has been a 4% increase in females working full time for the Council in 2018.
- There has been a small % reduction in both full time and part time disabled employees.
- The age, race and sexual orientation profiles of full time and part time workers changed little in 2018 compared to the previous year.

#### Long Term Sick

- There has been a significant increase in the number of long term sickness cases in 2018 which follows the trend from 2016, (2018 - 49 cases, 2017 – 26 cases, 2016 – 19 cases).
- Analysis of the age profiles of those on long term sickness absence shows a marked drop in cases in the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups of 9% and 22% respectively and an increase of 9% in cases in the 55-64 age group.
- The number of cases for those in non-white groups has dropped by 14% in 2018.
- There has been a noticeable swing in the gender of those on long term sick leave with females now comprising 75% of these in 2018 as opposed to 54% in 2017.

#### Attendance Procedure

- The number of cases in 2018 dropped to 10 from 13 in both 2017 and 2016.
- In 2018 there was an increase of 5% in cases in the 21-25 and 26-34 age groups. In 2018 the percentage of those under this procedure who are women reduced by 5% but they still form 80% of cases.
- Reversing the trend of last year, there has been an increase in White staff under the procedure of 28% and a decrease in Other Ethnic groups to 0 from 38%.

NB There are small numbers of staff under this procedure so there is a larger percentage distortion

## Leavers

- There was an increase in leavers in 2018 to 58. This compares to 46 leavers in 2017 and 60 leavers in 2016.
- The number of staff going on maternity leave in 2018 (2) was the same as in 2017. The number of those who returned from maternity leave dropped from 4 in 2017 to 2 in 2018.
- The picture for reasons for leaving is mixed with the numbers leaving by reason of retirement and redundancy increasing and those leaving by reason of resignation, dismissal and end of contract decreasing.

## 3.2 Gender Pay Gap

### 3.2.1. Background

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish statutory gender pay gap calculations every year. Accordingly, NHDC are required to calculate and publish the following gender pay data:

- Gender pay gap (mean and median averages)
- Gender bonus gap (mean and median averages)\*
- Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses\*
- Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the Council's pay structure

\*The Council does not operate any bonus schemes but the definition of bonus under the Regulations on gender pay gap reporting includes long service awards and for this reason the Council has had to produce bonus figures for publication for 2017 and 2018.

### 3.2.2 Data

The data must be a snapshot of salary data on 31 March each year and the bonus pay gap must be calculated from all bonus payments made in the 12 months up to and including the snapshot date of 31 March. This data must be published on the NHDC website and a government website by 30 March each year.

NHDC gender pay reporting figures have been calculated by our outsourced pay service provider, Serco, using the standard methodologies outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

The gender pay gap and equal pay are not the same and do not have the same purpose. The Equality and Human Rights Commission defines the difference as follows:

- Equal pay means that men and women in the same employment performing equal work must receive equal pay, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation or the labour market. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

The broad purpose of the equal pay provisions of the Equality Act 2010 is to require equality of treatment in employment as between men and women in respect of pay and other contractual terms. The stated aim of the gender pay gap reporting legislation is to introduce greater levels of pay transparency.

Salaries at NHDC are determined through a grading system which evaluates the job and not the post holder. It makes no reference to gender or any other personal characteristics of existing or potential job holders. Therefore, we are confident that NHDC is paying the same salary to roles of equal value and that its gender pay gap may be as a result of the roles which men and women undertake within the Council and the salaries that these roles attract.



### 3.2.3 Results

The first set of tables below, (Tables 1 – 3), show the Council's gender pay gap figures for 2019. Tables 4 – 6 contain a comparison of the NHDC figures for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019. The highlighted figures must be reported on the Gov.uk website.

**Table 1 Gender Pay Gap 2019 – Hourly Pay**

	Mean Hourly Rate	Median Hourly Rate
Female	£14.47	£13.01
Male	£19.13	£18.33
Gender Pay Gap	24%	29%

**Table 2 Gender Bonus Gap 2019**

	Mean Bonus rate	Median Bonus rate
Female	£50.00	£50.00
Male	£50.00	£50.00
Gender Bonus Gap	0%	0%

**Table 3 Quartile Pay Bands 2019**

	Males	Females
Lower Quartile	28.40%	71.60%
Lower Middle Quartile	15.85%	84.15%
Upper Middle Quartile	27.16%	72.84%
Upper Quartile	58.54%	41.46%

**Table 4 Gender Pay Gap 2017 – 2019 – Hourly Pay**

	Mean Hourly Rate			Median Hourly Rate		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Female	£13.94	£14.19	£14.47	£12.05	£12.48	£13.01
Male	£18.57	£18.43	£19.13	£18.17	£16.85	£18.33
Gender Pay Gap	25%	23%	24%	34%	26%	29%

**Table 5 Gender Bonus Gap 2017 – 2019**

	Mean Bonus rate			Median Bonus rate		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Female	£73.52	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00
Male	£66.67	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00
Gender Bonus Gap	-10.27%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

**Table 6 Quartile Pay Bands 2017 - 2019**

	Males			Females		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Lower Quartile	22.78%	30.86%	28.40%	77.22%	69.14%	71.60%
Lower Middle Quartile	16.25%	17.07%	15.85%	83.75%	82.93%	84.46%
Upper Middle Quartile	41.78%	37.80%	27.16%	58.23%	62.20%	72.84%
Upper Quartile	58.23%	59.76%	58.54%	41.77%	40.24%	41.46%

### 3.2.4 Analysis

The Council's Gender Pay Gap figures for 2018 were submitted in March 2019. The full Gender Pay Gap Report is attached as Appendix 2 and is available on the NHDC website.

In respect of the Action Plan attached to the Report the career development survey has been completed and the outline results were circulated to all staff. A number of staff contacted HR to arrange for a career development discussion. It's planned to recirculate the results to staff and ask again that anyone wanting to discuss their career development should contact HR. It's also planned to do further work with the Management Support Unit (MSU) as a pilot. The MSU has a lot of women working in support roles.

Consideration of the tools for ensuring the use of gender neutral language in recruitment advertisements and for deeper analysis of the Council's gender pay gap, and in time the ethnic pay gap, data have now been introduced. The Council is proceeding with Gapsquare software that will help find where there are particular pay disparities so actions can be developed to address these.

The software for gender neutral language in recruitment advertisements was explored and HR are now using the free software correct language to gender neutral words in job adverts, job descriptions and person specifications, and interview questions.

The group is also working introducing a staff network group to link up staff with the aim of developing knowledge of other service areas and provide information for people on things such as career coaching and other opportunities to and help them develop.

The figures for the Council's 2019 gender pay gap which need to be submitted in March 2020 and are shown above, have only recently been received and analysis is underway which will lead to the production of the 2019 Gender Pay Gap Report. Key points to note are:

- All quartiles showed an increase in the proportion of females but this was largest in the upper middle quartile where the increase was over 10.6% which is a very positive sign.
- The gross hourly pay rate including all allowances and enhancements and less salary sacrifice payments in this quartile ranges from £13.55 - £18.86 per hour.
- The average differences in the pay packets of women compared to men at the Council are £4.66 per hour (mean) and £5.32 per hour (median).
- The narrowing of the mean and median gender pay gap in 2018 was not sustained in 2019.
- The Action plan to go with the report has been developed and the 2019 results, report and action plan will be published by 31 March 2020.

## 4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 There will be a further update on equalities prepared for the March 2020 JSCC.

## 5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of Equalities Data 2018
- 5.2 Appendix 2 – Gender Pay Gap Report 2018

## 6. CONTACT OFFICERS

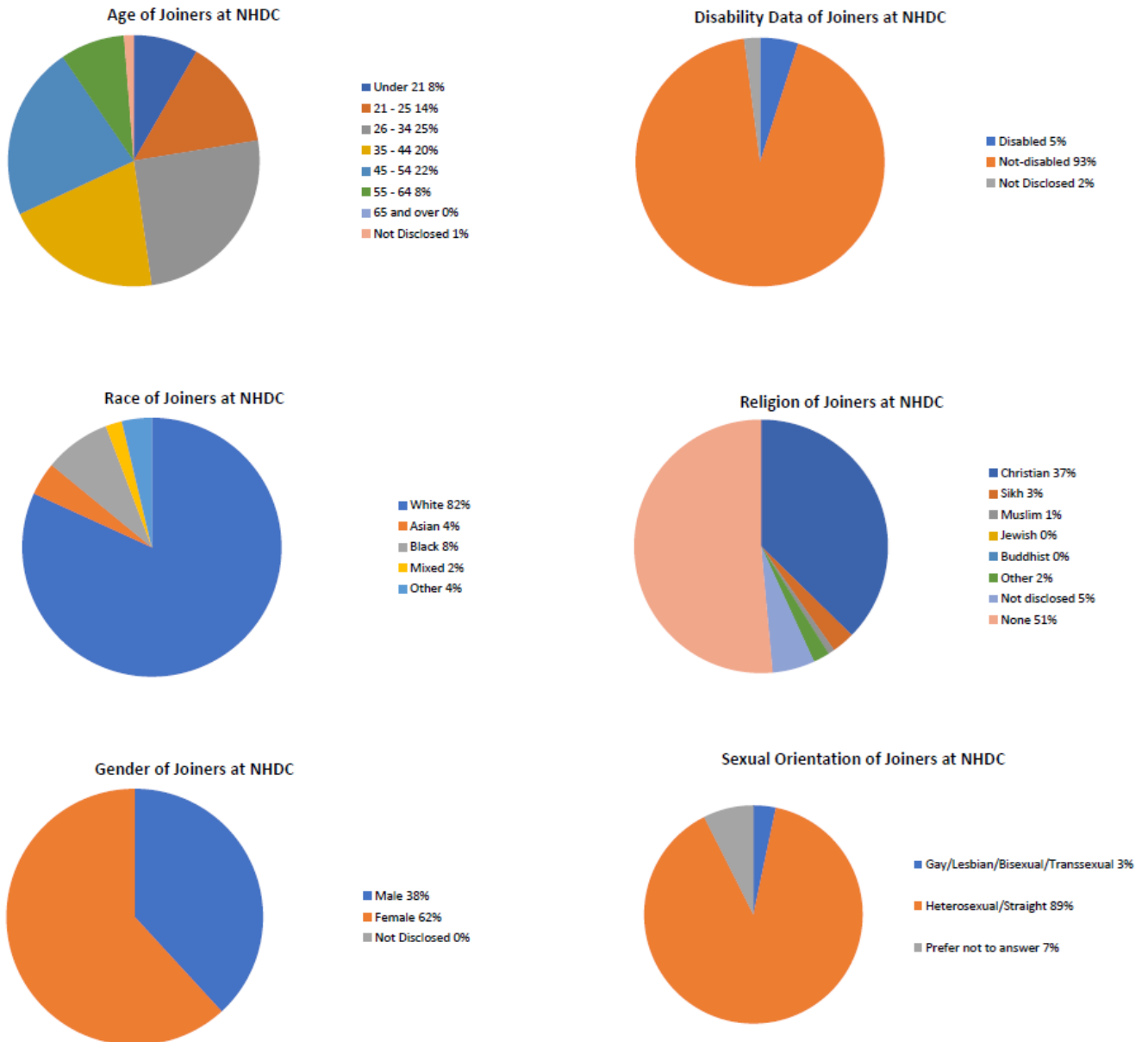
- 6.1 Maggie Williams – Senior HR & Contracts Manager 01462 474506  
[Maggie.williams@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Maggie.williams@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 6.2 Kerry Shorrocks – Corporate Human Resources Manager 01462 474224  
[Kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk)

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Equalities data for the Council for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018 published in January 2019 in accordance with The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). Available on the Councils Website.
- 7.2 The Council's Gender Pay Gap Report 2018 published in March 2019 in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. Available on the Councils Website.

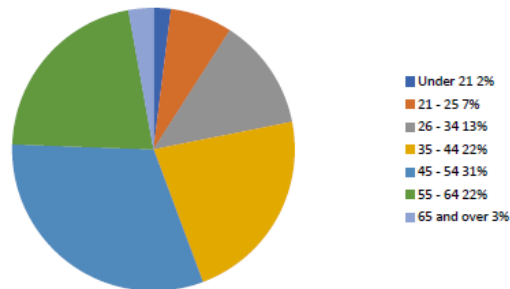
## Appendix 1 Summary of 2018 Equalities Data for Joiners, Current Staff and Leavers

### Joiners

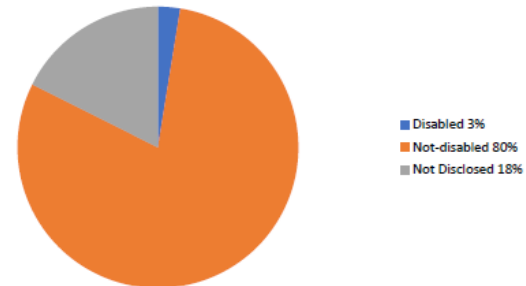


Current Staff

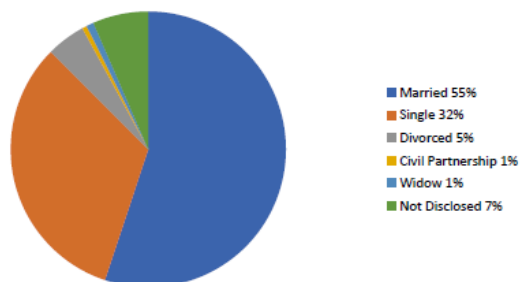
Age of Current Staff at NHDC



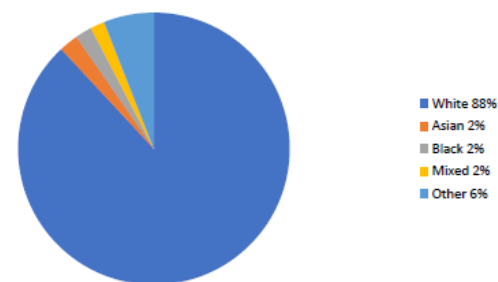
Disability of Current Staff at NHDC



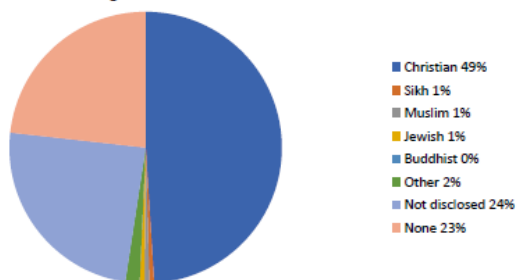
Marital Status of Current Staff at NHDC



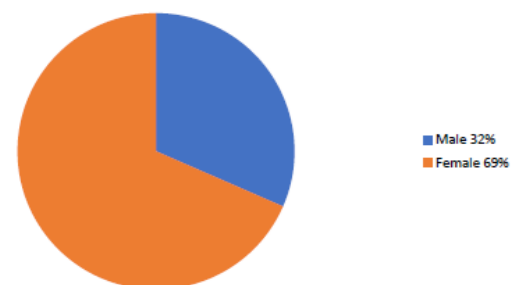
Race of Current Staff at NHDC



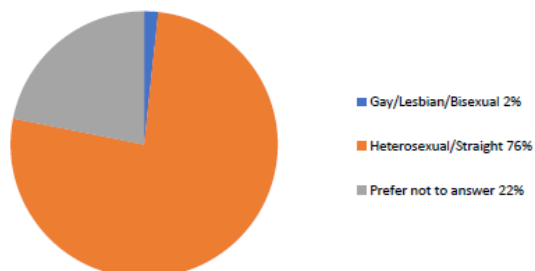
Religion of Current Staff at NHDC



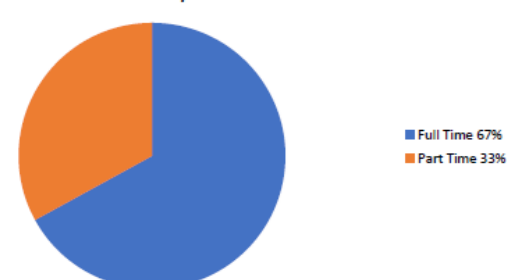
Gender of Current Staff at NHDC



Sexual Orientation of Current Staff at NHDC

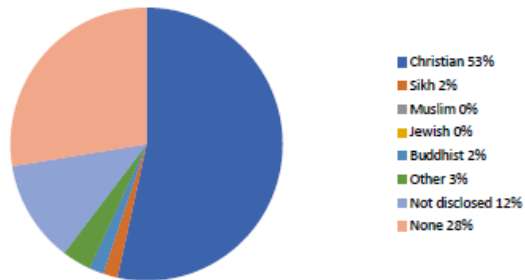


Full Time V Part Time Split of Current Staff at NHDC

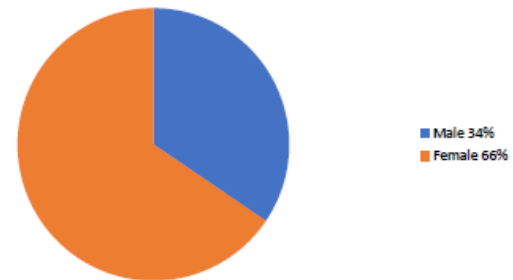


Leavers

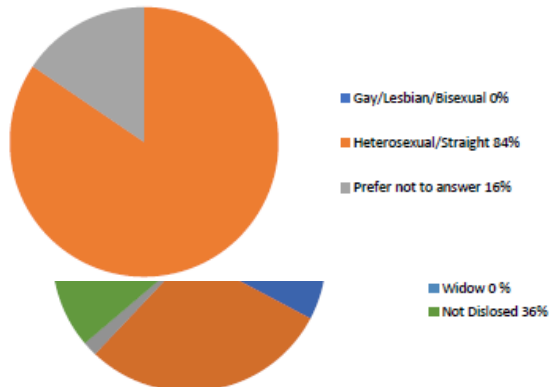
Religion of NHDC Leavers



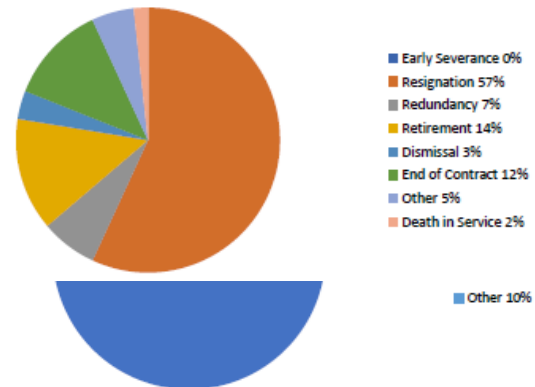
Gender of NHDC Leavers



Sexual Orientation of NHDC Leavers



Reasons for Staff Leaving NHDC



## Appendix 2

# Gender Pay Gap Report 2018

## 1. Summary

This report provides gender pay data on the gap between salaries and bonuses for North Herts District Council's male and female employees. It also provides narrative to put the gender pay gap into context.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Requirements

From April 2017 under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish statutory gender pay gap calculations every year. Accordingly, NHDC are required to calculate and publish the following gender pay data:

- Gender pay gap (mean and median averages)
- Gender bonus gap (mean and median averages)
- Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses
- Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the Council's pay structure

### 2.2 Data

The data must be a snapshot of salary data on 31 March 2017 and on the 31st March each year thereafter and the bonus pay gap must be calculated from all bonus payments made in the 12 months up to and including the snapshot date of 31st March 2017 and up to the 31st March each year thereafter. This data must be published on the NHDC website and a government website by 30 March 2018 and by the 30th March each year thereafter.

### 2.3 Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay

The gender pay gap and equal pay are not the same and do not have the same purpose. The Equality and Human Rights Commission defines the difference as follows:

- Equal pay means that men and women in the same employment performing equal work must receive equal pay, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation or the labour market. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

The broad purpose of the equal pay provisions of the Equality Act 2010 is to require equality of treatment in employment as between men and women in respect of pay and other contractual terms. The stated aim of the gender pay gap reporting legislation is to introduce greater levels of pay transparency.

Salaries at NHDC are determined through a grading system which evaluates the job and not the post holder. It makes no reference to gender or any other personal characteristics of existing or potential job holders. Therefore, we are confident that NHDC is paying the same salary to roles of equal value and this is checked with regular equal pay reviews. The gender pay gap results from the roles which men and women undertake within the Council and the salaries that these roles attract. The Council outsources most frontline services such as

grounds maintenance, refuse, recycling, street cleaning and housing; all areas of work which traditionally attract male employees to jobs on the lower quartiles.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Gender Pay Gap Report

The gender pay reporting figures have been calculated by our outsourced pay service provider Serco using the standard methodologies outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. The highlighted figures are those that have been published.

**Table 1 Gender Pay Gap – Hourly Pay**

	<b>Mean Hourly Rate</b>	<b>Median Hourly Rate</b>
Female	£14.19	£12.48
Male	£18.43	£16.85
<b>Gender Pay Gap</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>26%</b>

**Table 2 Gender Bonus\* Gap**

	<b>Mean Bonus rate</b>	<b>Median Bonus rate</b>
Female	£50.00	£50.00
Male	£50.00	£50.00
<b>Gender Bonus Gap</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

\*Long service cash awards are the only payments made by the Council falling under the gender pay gap definition of bonus pay. 3 awards were made in the relevant reporting period.

**Table 3 Quartile Pay Bands**

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
Lower Quartile	30.86%	69.14%
Lower Middle Quartile	17.07%	82.93%
Upper Middle Quartile	37.80%	62.20%
Upper Quartile	59.76%	40.24%

#### 3.2 Analysis

**Table 1** The Council has a total of 16 grades, however as the top 5 managerial grades, (Grades 11-16), are predominately filled by males, 64%, the overall average hourly rate in the Council is positively influenced in favour of males. This result arises because of the number of males and females in the senior roles, rather than males being paid more for doing similar roles to females. However it is worth noting that the gaps in both mean and median pay have lessened since the previous report. The most prominent fall is in median pay where the gap has narrowed 9% since 2017. The gap in mean pay has fallen from 25% to 23% in the same period.

The opportunity to increase the number of females in senior roles is dependant on relevant vacancies arising. During the period April 2017 to March 2018 5 roles were appointed at grade 11 and above, with 3 of these roles being filled by men and 2 by women.

Car allowances at the Council are paid to those in Grades 11-16 and enhance the pay of staff at this level. These allowances have not increased since 2004. As 64% of those in these grades are men, this increases the hourly rate for men in these grades and the overall male average hourly rate in the Council.

Nearly 7% of staff at NHDC take advantage of the salary sacrifice schemes the Council offers. As gender pay gap calculations use gross salary figures after salary sacrifice amounts have been



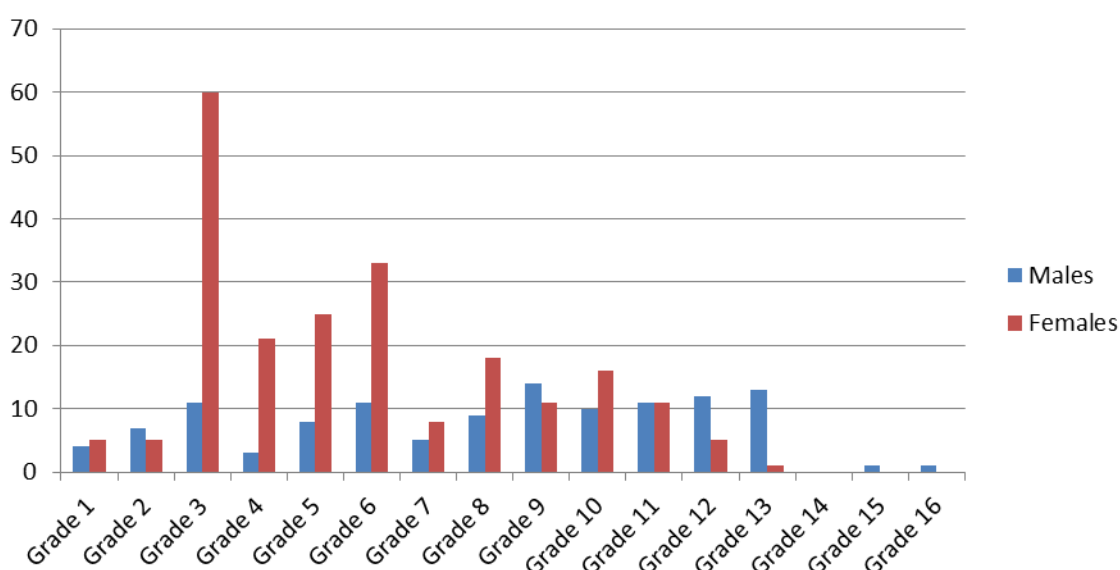
deducted, and 65% of those in the Council's salary sacrifice schemes are women, this decreases the overall female average hourly rate in the Council.

Additional responsibility payments enhance the pay of Council staff. These were paid to 8% of NHDC staff on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 and those receiving them were 46% men and 54% women.

**Table 2** The definition of bonus pay under the Regulations means the Council's long service cash awards are included for the purpose of reporting our gender pay gap. The bonuses set out in Table 2 reflect the gender bonus pay gap of the long service awards given to 3 members of staff, ( 2 males and 1 female), in the relevant reporting period.

**Table 3** The gender split across all employees is 64% female 36% male and this profile has been static for a number of years. Table 3 illustrates that the breakdown of males and females is not consistent in all pay grades and this is illustrated more clearly in the chart below. In 2017 there was a dominance in favour of males in the upper quartile and this has not changed in 2018 when the figures moved a further 1.5% in favour of males in this quartile. In the lower quartile there are 8% more males compared to the 2017 figures. This significant increase, together with a small increase in males in the lower middle quartile shows lower level roles are now more attractive to males than previously. These results, coupled with a 4% increase in females in the upper middle quartile since last year, have contributed to the overall reduction of the gender pay gap at the Council.

### **Breakdown of Males / Females in Pay grade**



### **3.3 Commentary**

The Council has a large number of customer facing administrative roles in the grades below Grade 8. Many of these jobs are part-time and/or are suitable for flexible working which makes them attractive to women with caring responsibilities. The pattern of roles in the lower quartiles being predominantly held by females is further exacerbated by the fact that the Council outsources many of its operational functions such as grounds maintenance, refuse, recycling, street cleaning and housing; all areas of work which traditionally attract male employees. If these roles were filled directly by NHDC employees then there would be an

increased number of men within the lower two quartiles and it is likely that the gender pay gap would be significantly reduced.

With respect to career progression, a number of factors are likely to adversely affect more women than men. These include taking breaks from work for caring responsibilities, the reduction of turnover in senior roles and the flattening of management structures and hierarchies in the recent years of austerity which has restricted the available opportunities.

### **3.4 Action Plan**

The Council's current Gender Pay Gap Action Plan is attached as Appendix 1.

## **4. Workforce Monitoring**

The Council regularly monitors its workforce statistics which includes information on pay, staff turnover and exit information, recruitment, employee relations matters and the equalities profile. This monitoring ensures that trends can be identified and appropriate action taken if there are areas of concern.

## **5. Policies**

The Council has a number of policies and procedures that ensure transparency, fairness and equity. These include:

- Job evaluation (HAY) for all roles
- A well-designed pay scale with a restricted number of incremental points
- Formal authorisation processes for changes in pay
- A fair and equitable Market Supplement Policy based on external benchmarking
- A fair and equitable Additional Responsibility Pay Policy
- An on line recruitment system in which gender is not known until interview stage
- A competency based interview process with a clear scoring method
- Family friendly policies such as flexible working, including part-time working and job sharing, flexi-time, home-working, special leave, time off for dependants and parental leave.
- Exit questionnaires and interviews to gain feedback on employment experiences.

## **6. Equal Pay Review 2018**

Following the implementation of the single status agreement and the 2004 Pay Review, the Council has undertaken regular equal pay reviews. A further equal pay review was undertaken in 2017 and the results of this produced during last year.

The review covered the main areas where inequalities are likely to exist. The review of NHDC data has been undertaken using grade, gender, age, ethnic group, disability, religion, sexuality and hours worked. The areas of additional responsibility pay, market forces payments, disturbance/standby allowance, protected pay, attendance at evening meeting allowances and starting pay were also explored. In order for comparisons to be made the average, (mean) salary was calculated for each grade in the groups considered. Differences above 3% between the groups being compared were considered significant and analysis focused mainly on the instances where these occurred.

In the context of the Council's gender pay gap the following findings are relevant.

### **6.1 Gender**

A high number of female workers is a feature of Local Government and North Herts District Council is no different, with 66% of the workforce being women. Nationally over 48% of local Government female workers are part-time and these figures have changed very little for a number of years. Part-time working is an excellent means of balancing work and the responsibilities of childcare and can be regarded as flexible working. Despite the introduction of statutory shared parental leave and other family friendly measures, the trend is still for women to be the principal carers and this is the main contributor to the demand for part-time work. Looking at the average pay for part time staff at the Council, there has been a move towards part time staff earning more than their full time colleagues since the last Report with over 80% of comparisons now being in favour of part time staff. Women working full time at the Council earn more than their male counterparts in 75% of the comparisons that can be made. When looking at all female and all male Council employees almost 70% of the comparisons are in favour of women. This reinforces that whilst the workforce profile, where the majority of women, 80%, are concentrated in the grades up to Grade 9, has a significant effect on the gender pay gap figures, there are no underlying gender based equal pay issues at the Council.

### **6.2 Starting Salaries and Allowances**

The study of allowances and starting salaries at the Council did not indicate discrimination was occurring in the way these were being applied. It is noted however, that the revision of the circumstances in which Additional Responsibility Payments can be made at the Council has led to a 100% increase in the number of such payments being made since the previous Equal Pay Report and reflects the need for pay mechanisms to ensure appropriate reward for those taking on additional responsibility in difficult economic times for the Council. There has been a significant increase in ARP made to female staff and the proportion receiving these now better reflects the overall female/male split at NHDC.

## North Herts District Council Gender Pay Gap Action Plan

- The Council pays females equal pay for work of equal value and checks this with regular equal pay reviews.
- The Council has a well established culture of flexible working including part time, job share, flexi time and home working.
- The Council collects monthly data on the highest earners by gender. At January 2019 the Council had 49.2% of female high earners.
- Front line services including Housing, Grounds Maintenance, Refuse and Recycling and Leisure centres are contracted out. These services attract lower paid male workers and this contributes to our Gender Pay Gap.

### Gender Pay Gap Principle Target

The Council plans to narrow a 10% differential of 55% male to 45% female distribution in Grades 9 and above.

Action Rationale	Proposed action	Target outcome	Timescale and measures
76% of our workforce up to Grade 8 is female.  This large percentage of females in our organisation is seen as a significant opportunity to increase the number of female staff into management and professional grades.	Survey our staff in Grades 1 – 8 to establish those that have career aspirations and arrange career development meetings and plans.	Reduce a 10% differential in male female gender at grades 9 upwards.	2019 to 2021 and review bi annually. Measures Survey results and numbers of career plans produced and delivered against.
Encourage more male staff to share childcare to allow more females to take up career opportunities against a backdrop of 2% take up of SPL nationally	Enhance Shared Parental Leave payments granted by the Council to equal those for maternity leave and promote this to staff.	Shared parental leave take up rates.	April 2019 and annual take up rates
All recruitment is undertaken blind of equality data until the interviewing stage and then the use of standard questions and training regarding unconscious bias is used to ensure a fair process for selection and appointment.	Continue with recruitment good practice and training aimed at eliminating unconscious bias	An increased number of female applications shortlisted and appointments at	2019 onwards Numbers training and training feedback analysis

<p>The Councils Recruitment and Selection workshop has been reviewed and now includes additional content relevant to addressing the Gender Pay Gap.</p> <p>The training is focussed on clear and objective selection criteria and now includes an enhanced session covering unconscious bias. This element allows recruiters to discuss the impact of culture, conditioning and language.</p> <p>In addition further specific training workshops are being designed focussed on job design (Job descriptions and person specifications).</p>		Grade 8 and above	
<p>Consider language used in adverts including posts advertised internally to ensure language is not used that may deter female applicants.</p> <p>Consider purchasing a tool that searches for alternative language that should not deter female applicants.</p>	Ensure that adverts and job descriptions and person specifications use appropriate language that does not deter female applicants.	Numbers of female applicants as a proportion to male both internal and external applications. Number of female v male appointments	2019 – 2021 with bi annual review
Consider purchasing tool that allows better analysis of data to drill down and identify where the issues are occurring.	Analyse gender pay gap figures in greater depth to provide the evidence of the root causes which will influence the determination of actions to reduce the gap	Actions to reduce the gap are effectively focused	2019 with quarterly updates on the current profile of the Council's staff

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## STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER

December 2019

### Salary Sacrifice Schemes

#### **What is a salary sacrifice scheme?**

Salary sacrifice is where an employee agrees to exchange part of their salary to get a non-cash benefit from their employer. The deduction in salary is taken from gross pay so once the salary is given up overall pay is lower and therefore the employee pays less tax and National Insurance, although depending on the scheme, they may still incur a benefit in kind liability. In addition, the employer does not have to pay employers' National Insurance on the part of the salary exchanged and this saving can be used to fund the administration of the salary sacrifice scheme.

The salary sacrifice arrangement is set up by amending the employee's contract of employment. It is a permanent reduction in pay and can only be amended in very specific circumstances.

#### **What non cash benefits can be offered under a salary sacrifice scheme?**

Prior to April 2017 a range of salary sacrifice benefits could be offered tax free including:

- Childcare
- Cycle to work schemes
- Lease cars
- School fees
- Accommodation
- Computer equipment
- Work-related training
- Car parking near the workplace
- Some pensions contributions
- Additional leave

In his Autumn 2016 Statement the Chancellor announced changes which meant that the PAYE advantages offered through salary sacrifice schemes ended for anyone joining a scheme from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Some schemes however remained exempt from PAYE and NI post this date. They are:

- Childcare
- Cycle to work schemes
- Ultra-low emissions cars (ULEVs)
- Some pensions contributions
- Employer provided pensions advice

#### **What salary sacrifice schemes has the Council supported?**

Over the years the Council has offered a number of salary sacrifice schemes for employees:

##### Home Computing Initiative (HCI)

This was a government program introduced in 1999 to improve the IT literacy of the UK workforce which allowed employers to provide personal computers, software and computer peripherals to employees under a salary sacrifice leasing scheme. NHDC commenced a scheme in 2006, but shortly afterwards the HCI scheme was discontinued and the tax exemption removed, so the scheme was closed. There was a good take up of the scheme by NHDC employees. Overall however their experience was mixed, as the supplier, whose business centred on providing equipment under the HCI, went into administration when the scheme was terminated and therefore could not continue to provide the required support during the whole 3 year period of the lease agreements.

##### Childcare Vouchers

The Council has offered the facility of childcare vouchers to employees for many years and for the past 6 years, this has been as a salary sacrifice scheme from Kiddivouchers. The Scheme currently has 26 members, 13 of whom are actively ordering vouchers at present. Since its launch the scheme has saved our employees over £89,500 and has provided the Council with employer National Insurance savings of almost £37,500.

From 2017 the Government's Tax-Free Childcare Scheme had a significant impact on salary sacrifice childcare voucher provision as employees could not take advantage of both

# STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER

December 2019

## Salary Sacrifice Schemes

sources of childcare support. Whilst existing recipients of Kiddivouchers can continue to receive them until the child reaches the maximum age under the Kiddivouchers Scheme, the Council ceases to offer the Scheme or the staff member leaves the Council, from 4 October 2018 no new applications could be accepted.

Employee feedback on the NHDC Kiddivouchers scheme has always been very positive and it is seen by many as a valuable benefit. Individual circumstances such as earnings, tax banding and the cost of childcare determine whether Tax Free Childcare is more advantageous and so for some, no longer being able to join the Council's childcare voucher scheme is a significant disadvantage and one which NHDC can do nothing to mitigate.

### Halfords Cycle2work Scheme

Cycle to work is a government-approved salary sacrifice initiative allowing staff to hire a bike and accessories from the Council for the purpose of cycling to work. The NHDC Scheme is offered through Halfords with options to select a bike from Halfords, Cycle Republic, one of the local independent bike shops Halfords work with or on line via Halfords, Cycle Republic or Tredz. Electric bikes are included in the Scheme.

Since the Council commenced the Scheme in 2013, 16 employees have taken advantage of it. The Scheme has been re-launched from 1 December 2019 and it is hoped that with the current focus on environmental issues, the rates of uptake will be increased. With previous schemes resulting in relatively few orders, it is difficult to fully assess the value of this benefit to employees, but there still remains the view that it is a Scheme whose availability sends a positive message to staff and aligns with the Council's values and behaviours.

### Justdrive Lease Car Scheme

This salary sacrifice scheme, introduced by NHDC in December 2014, enabled employees to exchange part of their gross salary for a new car with the monthly payments including the financing of the vehicle, motor insurance and maintenance. Despite positive marketing, staff perception was that the package was expensive and the benefit in kind liability it attracted a disincentive; interest was therefore low, with only 4 participants in the first 2 years.

From April 2017 the tax changes mentioned above led to the decision to amend the scheme to offer ULEVs only. A staff survey regarding the scheme held in Spring 2017 indicated there was little appetite for it and with no further cars being ordered under the scheme since November 2016, a contract review in November 2018 concluded the scheme should be closed to new entrants. Arrangements for existing participants in the scheme remained unchanged and the final Justdrive lease will expire in February 2020.

### **What's the future for salary sacrifice schemes?**

Historically, salary sacrifice schemes formed a valuable addition to an organisation's flexible benefits offering and could be seen to encourage wider social and economic objectives, such as motivating more people to save extra for their retirement, helping working parents to balance their work and home lives and supporting a healthy workforce. All of which in turn led to higher productivity.

The April 2017 tax changes driven by financial restraints seriously curtailed the use of these schemes as few remained tax efficient. There were also unintended consequences on the wider objectives e.g. the retention of tax advantages for cycle to work schemes but not other health related benefits such as gym membership or dental insurance decreased the incentives to promote a healthy workforce. It is therefore hard to see that salary sacrifice schemes will become popular again, unless there is a shift in government policy.