

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



1 June 2021

Our Ref Joint Staff Consultative Committee/9 June 2021
Contact. Committee Services
Direct Dial. (01462) 474655
Email. committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk

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

District Councillors Councillor Kate Aspinwall (Chair), Councillor Sue Ngwala (Vice-Chair), Councillor Terry Hone, Councillor Keith Hoskins MBE and Councillor Claire Strong

(Substitutes: Councillors Councillor Paul Clark, Councillor Sam Collins, Councillor Tony Hunter, Councillor Mandi Tandi and Councillor Kay Tart)

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

Staff Consultation Forum Representatives: Andrew Betts, Emma Jellis, Christina Corr, Matthew Hepburn,

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

to be held as

A REMOTE MEETING

On

WEDNESDAY, 9TH JUNE, 2021 AT 10.00 AM

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson
Service Director – Legal and Community

****MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING****

Agenda

Part I

Item		Page
1.	WELCOME AND REMOTE/PARTLY REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL SUMMARY Members are requested to ensure that they are familiar with the attached summary of the Remote/Partly Remote Meetings Protocol. The full Remote/Partly Remote Meetings Protocol has been published and is available here: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/council-and-committee-meetings .	
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Members are required to notify any substitutions to Committee Services prior to the meeting. Late substitutions will not be accepted and Members attending as a substitute without having given the due notice will not be able to take part in the meeting.	
3.	MINUTES - 10 MARCH 2021 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 10 th March 2021.	
4.	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS 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 Chair 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.	
5.	STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM To receive the minutes from the Staff Consultation Forums from March 2021, April 2021 and May 2021.	(Pages 5 - 18)
6.	INFORMATION NOTE: PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE INFORMATION NOTE OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES MANAGER To receive an update on the progress made in the last quarter on the People Recovery Plan and general HR related activities.	(Pages 19 - 34)

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| 7. | STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER
To receive a discussion paper on the Employee Assistance programme. | (Pages
35 - 36) |
| 8. | FUTURE DISCUSSION TOPICS
To consider the subjects for debate at future meetings of the Committee. | (Pages
37 - 38) |

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MINUTES OF THE STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM ENCLOSED:

MARCH 2021

APRIL 2021

MAY 2021

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Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

03 March 2021



Present: Dee Levett (DL), Christina Corr (CC), , Vic Godfrey (VG), Emma Jellis (EJ), Jo Keshishian (JK), Alison Fox (AF), William Stafford (WS), Matthew Hepburn (MH), Caitlin Bruce (CB – notes)

Circulation: Global

1. Apologies

Anthony Roche, Ian Couper, Nicola Viinikka, Dee Levett, Debbie Hiscock, Andrew Betts

2. Matters Arising

Question: Had anyone set up the automated response for the SCF inbox.

Answer: Unsure at the moment. CC/EJ to send an email to the inbox and check.

3. NHDC update

The response for the staff survey was acknowledged, thank you to all who participated. The outcomes will be shared in the next staff briefing (24/03).

Legislation on exit pay caps has been withdrawn.

Pay claim from the unions for April 2021 is being considered by a round of regional pay briefings, and the response from the National Employers group is expected after the May elections, so the outcome may not be decided until June/July.

SCF members were invited to think about potential discussion topics for JSCC meetings – this is to be revisited in the next SCF meeting.

COVID-19 vaccinations can be recorded as special leave as other medical appointments would be.

The inclusion group is looking for more staff to join. If this is something you would be interested in please email HR help.

4. People Recovery Strategy

The draft recovery plan was circulated to the SCF members prior to this meeting, IC and AR will discuss this further in April's SCF meeting.

Suggestion: It would be good to have drop ins/ zoom training for managers around mental health and how to manage this upon a return the district council offices.

Question: Would having a bad reaction to the COVID vaccine and so having to take time off as sickness absence count towards an attendance procedure trigger?

Answer: No.

Question: Is the people strategy document a working document/ draft?

Answer: The document has been agreed by the Leadership Team and aims to set out the approach to supporting staff in the recovery from the pandemic and the return to the office. – it is not expected to be redrafted, but staff comments are welcome. The strategy will result in a number of actions and these will form part of the HR service plan going forward.

5. Employee Queries

JK to raise with staff recognition award panel that some employees struggle to relate a reason for a nomination to one of the values and behaviours.

Question: Will there be any further support for working from home?

Answer: NHDC will be supplying laptops (the laptop procurement has now started) as well as wireless keyboards and mice and docking stations.

A concern was raised that the People Recovery Strategy mentions the withdrawal of the £500 set-up allowance for home-workers. JK confirmed that this allowance was introduced 10 years ago to encourage staff to start working from home, and had only ever been provided as a one-off payment. It was provided in the past to support with costs such as IT equipment and was no longer needed now that NHDC will be supplying this to all home-workers.

6. IT Update

First batch of laptops have been ordered and the second batch has been tendered. They cannot be ordered in one batch due to storage concerns.

Please may FOIs be completed and returned by the return date.

Transformation – Robotic Process Automation (RPA) software is out for tender, this closes on 05/03.

7. Building Services Update

Any queries or concerns should be emailed into the property services inbox.

8. AOB

The SCF members thanked Lea Ellis for her time and effort while she was a member of the SCF.

The SCF will now be looking for a new member – if you are interest please speak to one of the current members or email the SCF inbox: SCF@north-herts.gov.uk

Chair for next meeting – Alison Fox

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

Alternatively you can send any issues to the SCF inbox - SCF@north-herts.gov.uk

Representatives (and extension):

Emma Jellis #4312 - MSU team based on Floor 4

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

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

Nicola Viinikka Visitor Services Assistant based at Hitchin Town Hall and Museum

Matthew Hepburn #4311 - Member, Committee & Scrutiny Officer

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

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Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

07 April 2021



Present: Anthony Roche (**AR**), Ian Couper (**IC**), Nicola Viinikka (**NV**), Andrew Betts (**AB**), Dee Levett (**DL**), Vic Godfrey (**VG**), Emma Jellis (**EJ**), Jo Keshishian (**JK**), Alison Fox (**AF**), Matthew Hepburn (**MH**), Caitlin Bruce (**CB – notes**), Fallon Rumball–Nunan (**FRN – notes**)

Circulation: Global

1. Apologies

Debbie Hiscock, Christina Corr

2. Matters Arising

Question: Any Update on the set up of the automated response for the SCF inbox.

Answer: CC sent an email to the inbox and checked – No automated response. JK suggested CC or EJ to check with HR if needed for how to set the automated response.

3. NHDC update

JK gave reminder of holiday carry over as we have come to the end of annual leave year. This has now been adjusted and showing on ITrent. JK advised any issues with this to be sent to HR help.

Pay Negotiations for 2021 are ongoing – no update until mid-May.

Reminder, Friday 9th April Development Half Day – There is no theme this month however please note the Equality and Diversity resources are still available.

People Recovery Plan – This aims to take the good points from the last year (eg use of zoom meetings) wider home working will be continued into future, and wellbeing support for staff will be ongoing. The key themes for HR work are detailed in terms of what we need to do, what we should carry on doing and identifying anything we should stop doing. It is anticipated that we can progress to a more formal longer-term People Strategy in 18 months – 2 years.

A staff survey will be launched this month to obtain people's attitudes to returning and practicalities of this such as storage.

Support will also be extended to the wider district such as helping businesses/ high street.

New Vehicle Policy – This will incorporate several various other policies surrounding vehicle usage and addresses the issues necessary to avoid future tax liabilities. **IC to send out policy when finalised to SCF, Trade Union and Leadership Team.**

4. Employee Queries

Question: could the theme of the next Inclusion Group meeting be given more publication to gain more momentum?

Answer: **CB to share idea with Reuben Ayavoo**

Question: Will the Union Jack be flown above the council buildings as instructed?

Answer: It has been discussed, will consider the feelings of the community and what others do. Undecided for the moment.

Question: Has a return to office date been discussed?

Answer: This will be determined by the Government Road Map and Social Distancing Measures being reduced or concluded. The survey due to go out to staff will also impact this greatly.

5. IT Update

First batch of laptops will be rolled out week commencing 19th April and the second batch has been tendered. Roll out is on schedule to meet target.

Citrix issues (grey screen) are ongoing, but software is being produced to resolve this. IT helpdesk should be contacted in the first instance if issues continue.

320 calls last month (February) regarding lost passwords. **The 10-day alert to update passwords should not be disregarded by staff** as this impacts the IT help desk immensely.

Council Chambers are ready for postal verifications.

Question: Has anything been organised for the change in legislation for Council Committee Meetings?

Answer: A hybrid meeting will be organised with a maximum of 20 attendees in person and the rest attending virtually.

Video cameras will also be installed into the larger DCO meeting rooms to support hybrid meetings allowing staff to join meetings from home.

6. Building Services Update

First floor of the district council offices is currently not in use due to election preparations.

The possibility of installing solar panels on the district council offices roof is being looked into, should building regulations allow. This will reduce electrical and energy costs.

7. AOB

William Stafford has stepped down from SCF.

The SCF is now looking for a new member. If you are interested in becoming a member speak to one of the current members (listed below) or email scf@north-herts.gov.uk.

Suggestion: As the SCF will now be looking for a new member could this be advertised on the message board/Intranet?

Chair for next meeting – Dee Levett

Have something to say?

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Matthew Hepburn #4311 - Member, Committee & Scrutiny Officer

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

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Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

05/05/2021



Present: Anthony Roche (**AR**), Ian Couper (**IC**), Nicola Viinikka (**NV**), Andrew Betts (**AB**) Dee Levett (**DL**), Emma Jellis (**EJ**), Jo Keshishian (**JK**), Alison Fox (**AF**), Christina Corr (**CC**) Caitlin Bruce (**CB – notes**) Fallon Rumball–Nunan (**FRN – notes**)

Circulation: Global

1. Apologies

Vic Godfrey, Allison Fox, Matthew Hepburn

2. Matters Arising

Question: Any update on the set up of the automated response for the SCF inbox?

Answer: CC to action

Question: Any update on the Staff Survey for return to office?

Answer: To be sent out to all staff for completion on Wednesday 5th May 2021.

3. NHDC update

The council is now fully staffed for the Elections and thank you to those who will be assisting with this.

The Personal Development half day is on Friday 12th May - the theme for this month is Commercial - and there will be some resources provided by the Commercial team to help develop our commercial skills.

The Employee Handbook has been updated and will be published in the next week. We have taken the opportunity to incorporate several minor policies into the handbook and have removed them from the list of separate policies, such as Holiday entitlement, rates of pay, and long service awards. The intranet will be updated to redirect staff to the handbook for those specific policies.

Question: What if staff are searching the intranet for an old policy, will they know it has been moved to the Employee Handbook?

Answer: Yes, we will update the old policy pages so that it will direct you instead to the Employee handbook.

Pay negotiations are ongoing - no further update expected until mid-May at the earliest

4. Employee Queries

No Queries

5. IT Update

No Update

6. Building Services Update

Deliveries

These should be organised when a member of the 'ordering' team is onsite to take delivery, or they have arranged with someone on site to accept/check delivery for them.

Anyone witnessing antisocial behaviour should call 101 to report it and receive a crime number.

If there is damage or unsafe structures report to property services or call 4427 for immediate response.

Please report any issues occurring within the building. We would rather be informed many times than not at all.

Council Chamber

Reconfiguration of the council chamber. New wiring and floor boxes have been installed to accommodate the new layout and the wiring upgraded to serve sockets in all tables, which will allow for charging laptops and other devices.

Carbon report

Following a report commissioned by Policy and Community Engagement on our carbon footprint, we found many of the recommendations we already had in progress but produced an action plan and met with the consultant to run through the report.

Solar PV

We are pursuing the installation of solar PV at the DCO.

DSE Assessments

Reviewed DSE assessments and assisting staff with their new working environments

Additional works during COVID –

Property Services (PS) has been involved in a variety of additional work as a result of COVID. Some examples include:

- Ensuring buildings still have water flushing regimes, we have arranged legionella testing or chlorination of water systems.

- Setting up of air conditioning systems and made alterations.
- Drafting and advising on risk assessments
- Purchasing PPE, sanitiser and other COVID protection items.
- Assisting other teams with COVID measures, such as queue control
- Attended to requests for lighting buildings and changing the Letchworth fountain colour for showing support of the NHS.
- Implemented new i-Auditor mobile system for Museum staff to carry out weekly checks of their building.
- Keeping track on DCO occupancy and providing information to Directors and recovery group.

Electrical remedial works

Identified and arranged a variety of electrical remedial works, including a major upgrade of the distribution boards at Jackman's Community Centre.

Hitchin Multi Storey Car Park lift replacement

have tendered for the replacement of four lifts and HMSCP. Due to budget constraints the four lifts will be replaced with three lifts and works will commence in the summer.

Harkness Court

have been involved in the design, tender and project management of the construction works.

LED lighting upgrade

Upgraded lighting to LED at Howard Gardens and the top decks of both multi storey car parks.

North Herts Museum -

Repairs to the lifts, followed by removal from an existing maintenance contract and placing them with the original installer on a comprehensive maintenance contract.

Several new step overs and safety handrails have been installed on the roof of North Herts Museum to improve safety for staff and contractors working on the roof top plant.

Car Park Security Tender

have written a specification and tendered a contract for car park security.

Road resurfacing

project managed the resurface of a private road at Burymead Road, Hitchin

DCO diesel generator

Extending the enclosure to accommodate fuel storage.

Letchworth MSCP

Tendered concrete repair works, which will start later this year.

7. AOB

No update

Chair for next meeting – Christina Corr

Have something to say?

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JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

9 June 2021

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No.
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TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: HR UPDATE

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES MANAGER

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To update the Joint Staff Consultative Committee on the progress made in the last quarter completing HR work and projects as well as our work supporting the people issues during the Coronavirus pandemic, lockdown and ongoing restrictions.

2. STEPS TO DATE

- 2.1 The HR Update Information Note contains the 2021/22 HR Service Work Plan.

3. INFORMATION TO NOTE

- 3.1 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 often require support from other support services such as IT, Finance, Legal Services and others.

3.2 People Recovery Plan

The pandemic and ongoing restrictions have had a big impact on all the normal forward planning carried out by services including HR, as well creating difficulties for forecasting on the economy, labour, market, pay and pensions etc. The People Recovery Plan has been developed as an alternative to the People Strategy for 2020-2026 and describes how HR processes have been adapted as a result of the pandemic, and how we are supporting our staff through this period of change.

Councils across Hertfordshire and the East of England region meet regularly in virtual meetings to share knowledge and experience of employment matters, and in particular to discuss issues and share ideas on current developments relating to the ongoing restrictions and employment aspects of the pandemic.

3.3 Recruitment

- 3.3.1 Since the start of the pandemic our labour turnover has declined and as a result there has been a reduction in the number of vacancies. However, since the start of 2021 we have noticed a steady increase compared with the start of the pandemic as managers get more confident with recruiting on virtual platforms and labour turnover slowly begins to increase. For the year to date we have advertised 20 completed vacancies, with 18 of these having been successfully recruited to. By comparison, the same period in 2020 there were only 12 advertised vacancies.

The impact of the pandemic on working practices within Environmental Health has recently resulted in 4 x fixed term vacancies for Covid Marshalls. We have continued to see good levels of interest in most of our job adverts and in addition to the

Environmental Health posts, we have recently appointed applicants in Planning, Legal and Parking, as well as two new Apprentices in Legal & Community and Communications & Commercial.

The closing of Hitchin Town Hall and Museum during the pandemic caused a number of our casual staff to resign. We have recently been successful in recruiting a new Visitor Services Assistant and several casual posts in preparation for the re-opening of the Museum. This vacancy was extremely popular and saw in excess of 100 applicants.

3.4 Apprenticeships

3.4.1 **Apprentice update:** We currently have 6 Apprentices completing a range of qualifications including Customer Service Specialist, Business Administration and HR Support. We are in the process of recruiting 2 further Apprentices. We also have an existing member of staff utilising the Apprentice Levy Fund for further job-related training. Our training providers continue to be able to offer remote learning which has ensured that there has been no interruption to our Apprentices. In addition, two of our most recent Apprentices have now been successfully recruited to other positions within the Council.

3.4.2 **Local Government Apprentice of the Year Awards:** In April some of our apprentices participated in a one-day virtual event, attended by over 100 Apprentices, which was organised by the East of England Local Government Association. This was a great opportunity for apprentices to learn, network and showcase their skills, expertise, and initiative whilst working in virtual teams to learn more about the opportunities, risks, and challenges involved in delivering successful local government services.

During the day, Gillian Keegan MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Apprenticeships and Skills, spoke to the attendees. She is the first former apprentice to hold this position and talked to the group about her personal experiences, the benefits of apprenticeships and the skills that you can gain for life.

Emily Gray (Democratic Services Apprentice), who joined NHDC in December, said she really enjoyed the opportunity to meet other Apprentices from across the country.

Oliver Hill (MSU Apprentice) was an individual runner-up and was also part of the winning team. He said “the event was challenging, engaging and fun. It allowed me to collaborate with other apprentices and develop my communication and time management skills.”

An article about the Apprenticeship scheme and our participation in the national event is appearing in the next edition of Outlook Magazine.

3.5 Pay

3.5.3 **National Pay bargaining:** In mid-February the National Joint Council unions lodged their pay, and terms and conditions, claim for local government staff for 2021 which included a substantial increase of at least 10% on all spinal column points, along with a number of proposed T&C changes. and an agreement on a best practice programme of mental health support for all local authorities

During March, consultation via virtual regional pay briefings took place and feedback was considered by the National Employers group. The Interim HR Services Manager attended the East of England pay briefing along with the JSCC Vice-Chair.

On 14th May, a pay offer of 1.5% was made to the unions representing the local government workforce. There was also agreement to complete a term-time only review, and to start discussions on home-working policies, mental health support and a review of provisions for maternity, paternity and shared parental / adoption leave.

Three other claims were rejected:

- the introduction of a homeworking allowance,
- reduction of the working week to 35 hours with no loss of pay
- a minimum of 25 days annual leave for all starting employees

This pay offer was rejected by the trade unions on 21st May and it is expected that talks between the National Employers and the unions will be scheduled shortly.

3.5.3 Collection of Exit Payment data

Following the revocation of the £95K Exit pay cap regulations in February, we have been asked to collate exit payment data to submit to MHCLG. This data is intended to allow Government to assess the number and financial value of exit payments. The Government objective is still to find ways to end the perceived excessively high payments in the public sector.

3.6 Employee Benefits

3.6.1 HolidayFlex scheme: This scheme allows staff to purchase additional annual leave via salary exchange and which became a permanent benefit after a successful trial last year. During the February applications window we received applications from 10 employees – 6 whom had applied previously (Oct 2020 there were 7 applications in total). The majority of applicants were full-time staff with less than 5 years' service.

3.6.2 Support for carers: To mark Carers Week 2021 (6 – 13 June), this month's issue of Insight gives details of how staff, managers and Councillors can access the support available as a result of NHDC's membership of Employers for Carers (EfC) and also gives details of the local services provided by [Carers in Hertfordshire](#).

3.6.3 Employee Wellbeing classes: We continue to promote a range of online wellbeing classes to employees which can be accessed free of charge through our Employee Advice Service provider. The classes are available until July and cover a variety of topics which support employees in proactively managing their physical and mental wellbeing such as nutrition, managing stress, how to improve sleep and a number of exercise classes.

3.6.4 GP Helpline: The contract for the GP consultation service for all NHDC employees has been renewed. The availability of the confidential health related advice and guidance provided by this benefit proved valuable during the period of lockdown when physical access to medical support was severely limited. Staff can arrange a GP telephone consultation, or a GP online consultation (webcam) and details of how to do this are available on the intranet. The service also includes a private prescription service and a medical information service, giving access to health, disease, lifestyle and travel information.

3.7 Mental Health and Wellbeing

- 3.7.1 The HR team continue to provide support as required to those across the organisation., there have been a number of service teams who have been extremely busy due to a mix of a high volume and the nature of additional work, and some resourcing issues. We continue to update our resources that are available to staff and recently promoted additional support during Mental Health Awareness Week.
- 3.7.2 We recently held another Virtual Kitchen, which is an informal opportunity to allow staff to meet up with colleagues they may not necessarily catch up with in their working day. The session was attended by a number of staff from across the organisation.
- 3.7.3 The benefits of Workplace Wellness, the council's confidential employee advice service continues to be promoted to staff through support emails to staff and managers, as well as in regular articles in the monthly Insight e-newsletter and Intranet message board posts. Feedback from Workplace Wellness is limited to high level usage figures, but the most recent report shows a consistent number of calls to the service.
- 3.7.4 The Hertfordshire HR Leaders forum have recently secured some Covid grant funding from Public Health and are working together on a project to support employee mental health and wellbeing with the aim of reducing absenteeism related to COVID burn out, and increasing resilience of service delivery at the front line. There are a number of options being considered which include personal resilience training, additional support for Mental Health First Aiders and / or a subscription to a suitable Wellbeing app. Funding will be shared across all the Hertfordshire councils to benefit all staff.

3.8 Equality and Diversity

At the March meeting of the Inclusion Group, the discussion topic was Age with a wide range of areas covered: recruitment, secondment opportunities, retirement planning, career development and succession planning, confidence levels (in particular of younger staff), and the impact of the menopause. The next meeting is due to take place in mid-June and the group will be discussing experiences relating to disability and including those who are carers for family members with disabilities.

We are currently working with Gap-square, our equalities analytics software provider, to determine our 2021 Gender Pay Gap and to carry out an Equal Pay review using the data extracted from the iTrent payroll system. Results of these analyses will be reported to future JSCC meetings.

3.9 Shaping our Future

The Shaping our Future programme is progressing with regular meetings of the steering group which involve both staff and Members. The most recent meeting focussed on commercialisation with a presentation from Chloe Gray, Commercial Manager, and a discussion on how this can help to move the Council forward. The Shaping our Future steering group has so far focused on gathering information. At the next meeting it will consider how to translate this into a vision, which can then feed into an action plan. Part of this will include re-examining the Values and Behaviours in order that we are communicating them in the most effective way.

Staff and management development initiatives linked to Shaping our Future are detailed in section 3.10.

3.10 Learning & Employee Engagement

3.10.1 Monthly half day sessions dedicated to personal and professional development for all staff started in January. The Learning & Employee Engagement team provide guidance when necessary, to support managers and signpost staff to various resources that are available. Some months have corporately arranged activities or focussed topics, and in other months the allocated time allows managers to work with their teams or individuals can work on their own personal development. The topics covered so far have included employee wellbeing, the corporate Values and Behaviours, equality and diversity and commercialisation. The L&EE Team have recently attended a number of management team meetings to discuss how these sessions are being utilised and to answer questions from managers. The feedback has been very positive, indicating that these sessions are well received and appreciated.

3.10.2 Service Manager Development Programme

At the end of May, we launched the first cohort of a new programme of virtual workshops to develop our service managers. The programme aims to improve leadership skills, as well as covering topics such as motivation, performance and effectiveness. It is also intended to link management style with our corporate Values and Behaviours to help further embed them and bring them to life. The second cohort is will run in September/October of this year.

3.11 Staff Survey and Homeworking

3.11.1 We have recently undertaken a further staff survey to understand the views of staff around returning to the office, this will be used to plan for the future. At the time of writing this report, the survey had just closed so the results had not yet been analysed. The survey asked specific questions about when staff would like to come back into the office and what they would like to see when they come back. It also asked about attitudes to continuing levels of home-working. Our current intention in relation to home-working is that we will do what we can to make this as effective as possible (e.g. laptop roll-out, setting up meeting rooms to allow hybrid meetings). We also see the benefits of office-based working in terms of interacting with others. As well as the indirect impact of supporting the local economy (particularly in Letchworth).

3.11.2 There were separate questions/ surveys for those staff that are not office based (e.g. Hitchin Town Hall/ Museum staff and Civil Enforcement Officers).

3.11.3 Previous surveys indicated that although staff are still generally coping well with working from home, there are still some challenges around isolation and work/life balance. We are working hard to provide opportunities for staff to get together informally and continue to signpost staff to the support that is available. We will also remind staff about the possibility of outdoor meetings, when the weather conditions allow.

3.12 Absence

3.12.1 Since the last report the number of staff reported as absent from work due to COVID-19 has started to reduce in line with the national picture. There were 3 reported cases in March 1 in April and none in May.

- 3.12.2 We are currently supporting a number of long-term absence cases, with four of the eight cases being related to mental health issues. The HR team are actively to supporting the individuals and the line managers, and we make use of our Occupational Health services and Employee Assistance providers as appropriate.
- 3.12.3 Short-term absence continues to be lower than in previous years, as the majority of staff continue to work from home. Being able to work from home can help to reduce the level of minor absences as staff who are not feeling 100% may feel more inclined to continue to work without the need to commute to the office. In addition, the high level of homeworking and lower levels of social contact has probably helped by reducing the number of bugs and infections being passed between colleagues.
- 3.12.4 Absence figures for the rolling 12-month period are shown below as absence days lost per employee. The short-term absence target is 3.5 days per year, and at the end of March 2021 we were under target with 2.13 days for the year 2020/21.

Rolling 12 months	Absence days lost per employee		
	Long-term	Short-term	Total
Apr-20	0.14	0.09	0.23
May-20	0.13	0.15	0.28
Jun-20	0.26	0.16	0.42
Jul-20	0.39	0.22	0.61
Aug-20	0.27	0.2	0.47
Sep-20	0.27	0.2	0.47
Oct-20	0.35	0.13	0.48
Nov-20	0.27	0.22	0.49
Dec-20	0.16	0.13	0.29
Jan-21	0.17	0.24	0.41
Feb-21	0.24	0.07	0.31
Mar-21	0.39	0.32	0.71
Total	3.04	2.13	5.17

3.13 Leavers and Turnover

Turnover figures exclude redundancies, retirement, apprenticeships and fixed term contracts).

Year (1 April – 31 March)	
2013/14	10.1%
2014/15	12.6%
2015/16	15.1%
2016/17	9.7%
2017/18	13.0%
2018/19	12.8%
2019/20	10.7%
2020/21	8.1%

In the last 12 months we have seen a drop in the number of staff leavers reflecting the current economic downturn and more limited employment opportunities available. The labour turnover for 2020/21 was lower than the last couple of years and the lowest we have seen for more than 10 years.

4.0 **NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 Progress against the HR Service plan 2021/2022, and work on the People Recovery plan as well as work on Shaping our Future will be reported to all quarterly JSCC Meetings.

5.0 **CONTACT OFFICERS**

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Action	Corporate Objective	Target/Aim/ Outcome	Planned Start Date	Due Date	Assigned to	Other services required (only list those service inputs which would not be considered 'business as usual')
Review contract for Occupational Health services	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives	Explore procurement options for the contract for this vital employee service. Current contract ends March 2023	01/04/21	31/03/22	Maggie & Laura	Procurement & Legal
Conduct a review of employee benefits package	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives	Understanding of value to employees of current benefits package to determine future direction and possible provision of new benefits.	01/04/21	31/03/22	Maggie & Jo	
Exit payment reform	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives	Follow and implement any changes relating exit pay reform and LGPS/pension changes including pension discretions	01/04/21	31/03/22	Jo Keshishian	
Deliver "Shaping our Future" organisational development programme	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives	Build on existing work and pull together all relevant strands to develop an organisational culture and capability to meet the future needs of the Council	01/04/20	31/03/22	Ian Couper Keith Crampton	
Review of format and content of remaining HR Policies	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives	Ensure all policies are fair, necessary and consistent and are formatted with a customer facing focus.	01/11/18	31/03/22	HRM	Policy Users
Gender Pay Gap (GPG) reporting and delivery of the Inclusion Action plan	Enable an enterprising and co-operative economy	Provision of accurate information in relation to reporting requirements. Deliver on action plan e.g. leadership development, succession planning.	01/04/21	31/03/22	Jo, Maggie & Helen	
Equalities Reporting and feeding into the Inclusion group	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives	Provision of accurate information in relation to reporting requirements.	01/04/21	31/03/22	Jo & Maggie	
Mental Health Financial Wellbeing	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives	Developing the work already done on mental health, with money worries being a significant stressor, focus work on helping people manage their finances .	01/04/21	31/03/22	Helen & Laura	
Increased HR automation of processes - digital transformation?	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives	Implement changes to e-administration and process handling of HR work and link to transformation work	01/04/19	31/03/22	Jo Keshishian Laura Bignell	Customer Services, IT
Annual Pay Policy Statement	Enable an enterprising and co-operative economy	Publication to comply with Section 40 of the Localism Act & the Local Government Transparency Code 2014 and proposed changes arising from the Enterprise Bill	01/04/21	31/03/22	Jo Keshishian	Finance
Develop a wide range of Learning and Development Opportunities embracing technology where possible	Enable an enterprising and co-operative economy	To develop the wider use of GROW Zone resources and supplement face to face training activity with range of responsive and engaging solutions	01/04/20	30/03/20	Keith Crampton	
Manage the councils recruitment and training of apprentices	Enable an enterprising and co-operative economy	Ensuring effective use of the Apprentice Salary Budget and the Apprentice Levy to meet targets and support services and help primarily young people get a route into work and a career	01/04/21	31/03/22	Helen & Laura	
Income generation from selling HR services or other income generation ideas.	Enable an enterprising and co-operative economy	generate income from acting on ideas for any possible income generation from HR	01/04/21	31/03/22	HR Managers	Commercial
People recovery plan and actions associated with post-pandemic working	Support the delivery of all Council Objectives		01/04/21	31/03/22	HR Managers	

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People Recovery plan 2020-2022

Purpose

The pandemic has naturally had a very big impact on the plans to create a new People Strategy for 2020 – 2026. Covid-19 has changed all the normal forward planning, forecasting on the economy, labour, market, pay and pensions etc. The Council is also embarking on a more co-ordinated approach to organisational development and change management called 'Shaping our Future'. Its outcomes have significant HR implications and will link closely with the work of the HR team for the next two years and beyond. Given the current circumstances it was decided to adopt a 1 -2-year pandemic People Recovery plan as an alternative to a longer-term People Strategy.

1. NHDC Values and Behaviours
2. Shaping our Future
3. Employee Wellbeing
4. Recruitment & retention
5. Benefits
6. Learning & Employee Engagement
7. Communication
8. Working Arrangements

1. NHDC Values and Behaviours

The corporate Values and Behaviours define how we aim work as an organisation. The Values provide the overall framework and the Behaviours describe how we make that a reality. There has been a lot of work in developing and communicating the Values and Behaviours. Some of this was based around the physical office environment (e.g. visuals on the walls of meeting rooms, screen at the entrance to the DCO and branded coffee mugs). The current enforced working from home, as well as a likely ongoing increase in working at home, makes these visuals less relevant and effective. Therefore, the HR team will look at ways to continue to embed the Values and Behaviours.

2. Shaping our Future

The outcomes for 'Shaping our Future' have been agreed as creating a:

- A high quality, diverse, inclusive and resilient workforce, meeting the needs of our community;
- A healthy, creative and productive organisation;
- A vibrant culture that embodies our values and behaviours.

The Learning and Employee Engagement (L&EE) Manager is the lead specialist for the programme. The L&EE Business Partner will also be involved, alongside the rest of the HR team. The Shaping our Future steering group is still establishing the key areas of development, but is expected to include a focus on the following:

The introduction and integration of organisational Values and Behaviours

Leadership and Management Development

Staff development workshops

Work on equality, diversity and inclusion (including work to address the gender pay gap)

New approaches to engaging with staff

Developing commercial skills

Developing transformational thinking

People Recovery plan 2020-2022

3. Employee Wellbeing

Mental Wellbeing

This is a big concern in a time of unprecedented circumstances and how individuals react will vary, however the pandemic and changes in restrictions will continue to impact significantly on people's lives. From an employment perspective, one of the greatest impacts on mental health and wellbeing has been, and will continue to be, the implications of our new ways of working with almost all the workforce working from home. Whilst there are benefits of home-working for many issues relating to a permanent home working environment can affect health in general i.e. the concept of living at work, feelings of isolation and the lack of face to face connection with the workplace and colleagues.

At the start of lock down the L&EE team spent time developing a 'lockdown toolkit' which contains helpful advice on wellbeing, stress management, personal organisation and resilience. In addition, we have provided support materials to managers helping them to lead in the challenging circumstances they continue to face. The team will continue to develop and promote this toolkit, including adjusting it as we hopefully emerge from mandatory working at home.

The team also initiated welfare calls from HR to all staff. This supplemented excellent work by managers in keeping in touch with and supporting their teams. Whilst this was a time-consuming activity at a busy time, it helped many people and created a positive impression of HR and their response to the crisis. We will ensure that managers (supported by HR and tools such as the Employee Assistance Programme) continue to be seen as a way of accessing support in times of need.

The intranet has plenty of advice on coping with permanent homeworking <https://intranet.north-herts.gov.uk/home/coronavirus/homeworking-tips-staff> The page on remote social contact attempts to go some way to bridge the gap on the unquestionable value of workplace daily, informal interactions whilst shared resources aim to boost social wellbeing with links to quizzes and other social sites to connect teams. We will adapt this moving forward to support staff who increase the amount that they work from home on an ongoing basis

The HR team maintains provision of a large range of support that staff can access such as an Employee Assistance Programme that includes a package for confidential counselling and links to all sorts of online help with Mental Health problems. Online: www.my-eap.com username: NORTHHERTSwell. This is known to have provided valuable support during Covid-19, as well as difficult personal or work-related situations. This service is highly rated by those who make use of it, in particular the free counselling sessions, and we will continue to promote this benefit to staff including via the use of anonymised real life examples and quotes. In addition, there are 16 in-house trained mental health first aiders and there are dedicated pages of help for staff <https://intranet.north-herts.gov.uk/home/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-support-staff-and-managers>. We will continue to support the development of these first aiders, and look to train more if required.

Managers are crucial in supporting the mental wellbeing of staff. Our management and leadership development will focus on the skills and knowledge needed by managers to fulfil this part of their role with a largely remote workforce. It will also focus on the other management skills associated with increased homeworking. This will include the new on-line workshop being run called 'Managing Homeworking Performance' which aims to help address mental health and wellbeing issues whilst maintaining organisational performance.

People Recovery plan 2020-2022

The HR team will continue to support staff and managers as restrictions ease and things seemingly move back towards normal. The economic impacts of Covid-19 will last beyond the end of the medical crisis. As the crisis subsides, this may be when burn-out happens. Support will include guidance for individuals on how to spot the signs of burn-out (both in themselves and in others) and practical ways to provide support. There will be a need to allow staff time, without the immediate pressure to pick up projects that may have been put to one side due to Covid-19. This will include allowing time for a break/ holiday, as well as reverting back towards normal.

Absence

To support staff to avoid the flu virus and to help reduce winter absence levels, we offer free flu vaccinations each year. We ran another very successful programme in the autumn of 2020 with over 140 vouchers taken up by staff and we intend to continue to provide this in future years. We will also support and encourage staff to make the time to get Covid-19 vaccinations (when available).

We also have access to a very good range of services that will help support our staff at this time and reduce absence, for example an Occupational Health Service, an online GP Service and of course a vital Employee Assistance Programme. The HR team will do regular reminders of the support available

Annual Leave

A significant number of staff have built up large annual leave balances due to work pressures and not wanting to take holidays. All staff will continue to be encouraged to take regular leave, where possible. As restrictions are lifted there will be an increased demand to take annual leave, and managers will be supported in being flexible, but also mindful of the need to maintain services. The using up of annual leave balances over two years (up to 31/3/2023) will be an option to ensure staff get the opportunity to take their leave over a phased period.

Some staff have continued to use leave (e.g. to support families and others) and where service needs allow, the Holiday Flex (purchase of annual leave) will continue to be available.

4. Recruitment & retention

Recruitment has slowed during the pandemic with a lower number of vacancies: in 2020 we appointed just 36 new staff compared to 81 appointments in the previous year.. We expect recruitment to return to more normal levels as we continue to adjust to the current working arrangements, although with unemployment on the rise there is likely to be less labour turnover which in turn will create less vacancies.

Since the start of lockdown in March 2020 we have adapted our recruitment and selection procedures. Interviews can now be conducted remotely using Zoom as our preferred video conference platform. Many job roles at NHDC include a test/presentation at the interview stage, which can also be carried out remotely, either via Zoom or through the use of email, with a time limit for response. The HR team have worked with recruiting managers to give tips and advice on navigating an interview via video conferencing. In future we will look at ways of reducing the time and travel commitment associated with in-person interviews and tests, this could mean that any tests and initial interviews may continue to be conducted online. This will need to be balanced against the advantages of candidates coming to council offices allowing them to get a better sense of the organisation.

People Recovery plan 2020-2022

The council's apprenticeship scheme will continue to be important during a period where youth unemployment is expected to be high. During the recruitment campaign in August 2020 three apprentice posts were advertised, with a large volume of applications being received and all first-round interviews took place via Zoom with an independent service manager and HR representative. Successful candidates were offered a second interview with recruiting managers for final selection before job offers were made.

Retention

To support the remote onboarding of new staff, HR have introduced a New Starter Welcome call which provides an overview of HR matters with the opportunity to ask questions or discuss any concerns. Feedback suggests this is being appreciated by staff. Other induction material has also been adapted to reflect that most new staff will be working through their induction period whilst working from home. Videos to replace the content that would previously have been part of the induction training have also been developed. Following a return to office-working some further induction and familiarisation will be arranged for the cohort of new starters recruited during the pandemic.

Retention is also supported by our approach to career development and succession planning. This will be a continued area of focus and will need to be addressed whilst maintaining our goal of equality, diversity and inclusion.

A series of online workshops were introduced in November 2020 which help staff consider their future career, their confidence and what they can do to achieve their goals. We are also boosting the role of our coaches as career coaches.

Leavers

Some staff will have left the Council during the pandemic and will have not been able to say goodbye in the usual way. Where the leaver has retired and would have been eligible for a retirement buffet, then this will be honoured when restrictions on such gatherings are lifted. Teams have made use of online cards, collections and virtual gatherings to say goodbye to staff that have left.

5. Staff Benefits

As we move through the consequences of the pandemic and a "new normal" way of working becomes established for most employees, the impact of this on the Council's current benefits package needs to be considered. This will include a review of whether as an employer with a duty of care for the wellbeing of staff, the Council should consider if additional support is needed for employees. The negotiation of new contracts for traditional elements of the staff benefits package such as the OH and EAP services will provide the opportunity to review the services provided.

New and innovative ways of enhancing the remuneration package enjoyed by employees can also be explored. This will reflect that the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to mean that pay inflation will be lower than previously expected, and the Council needs to find other ways to attract and retain staff. The latest benefit to be approved has been the Holiday Flex salary sacrifice scheme following a successful trial which achieved a net saving of £2,000, with further annual savings expected.

6. Learning and Employee Engagement

With ongoing changes to restrictions, there is likely to be a continuation of full home working for the majority of staff for many months. The results of the staff survey on recovery will inform a new 'Recovery Toolkit' which will support our staff through this difficult time and the

People Recovery plan 2020-2022

continued anxieties and challenges we will face as an organisation. We will also coach and develop managers to provide the ongoing welfare support needed.

The pandemic and the shift to homeworking has seen a necessary change towards more blended learning approaches in the form of online workshops and virtual conferences, and fewer face to face events. In some ways this move to online learning for both internal and external training provides an opportunity to make learning more accessible and flexible. L&EE have taken positive steps towards this approach to ensure that development can continue through the pandemic and have already arranged a number of learning events online ranging from a Pre-Retirement Seminar to Management Fundamentals.

The team are also exploring what new skills and capabilities will be required post pandemic and therefore the requirements for new Learning and Development. L&EE work very closely with their suppliers to ensure the right approach for our staff. The excellent coaching resources that the organisation has developed are also being mobilised to play a part in supporting people working through the COVID-19 challenges.

Learning and Development half-days have been implemented to allow individuals and teams time to focus on their personal and professional development needs. This reflects the Council's commitment to supporting staff development and wellbeing. The L&EE team will continue to provide useful resources and monthly themes will be decided in consultation with the Leadership Team and the Shaping our Future group.

7. Communication

We have many things in place to ensure people remain well informed particularly through extensive remote working. The Communications team are supporting remote working with an excellent range of regular items such as Insight, virtual all staff briefings and Senior Management Group meetings.

The Staff Consultation Forum every month is being held as a virtual meeting using Zoom. The agendas and minutes are shared with all staff, and the SCF representatives will raise questions and concerns at the meetings on behalf of staff. There is also a monitored e mail address SCF@north-herts.gov.uk where people can leave items to raise at the meeting. The Trade Union liaison meetings are also continuing regularly as virtual meetings.

8. Working Arrangements

At the start of the lockdown in March 2020, the IT team worked hard to create over 100 new home-working set-ups for those who had not previously worked from home. In addition, all staff on partial home-working contracts or with ad hoc home-working arrangements in place moved to full home-working, many using their own equipment. There will be further work to be done to ensure we have consistent terms and conditions for all staff who are home-working and this will be supported by the IT providing the majority of staff with a laptop to allow them to work both from home and in the office. These laptops will include cameras and microphones to allow staff to use them for virtual meetings, such as team meetings and staff briefings. Guidelines will be developed to determine what other IT equipment and furniture will continue to be provided, which will be linked to the amount of time spent working at home. As part of this new provision, the council will cease payment of the home-working set up fee for the purchase of IT equipment which was introduced in 2010. The eligibility for this payment has already substantially diminished.

People Recovery plan 2020-2022

The return to office-working and using our buildings will be dependent on government guidelines, the safety of staff and service delivery needs. Initial occupation will also be limited by the equipment (e.g. IT and furniture) that has been taken home.

Many staff have indicated their preference for greater home-working (compared to pre-pandemic) in the future and service areas will review the requirements for office working to facilitate this where possible.

STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER

June 2021

The value of an Employee Assistance Programme

The profile of mental health and wellbeing both inside and outside of work has never been higher. Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) can be an essential support service designed to assist employees in resolving personal problems, that may also be adversely affecting an employee's performance at work.

North Herts District Council's current EAP provider is Workplace Wellness. This confidential service offers all Council employees, their immediate families and Councillors free access to expert guidance, invaluable information, and specialist support from qualified professionals any time, day or night, either over the telephone or online. Where appropriate, Workplace Wellness can also provide employees and Councillors with up to 6 sessions of counselling either face to face, or by video or phone call.

This advice service can help people prepare for, and successfully cope with, life's events and challenges and the things that cause individuals and families to become distracted, anxious, or feel out of control. Workplace Wellness can help when people feel they don't know where to turn or who to go to for the right information, their service includes:

- Consumer rights and legal information – benefits, housing problems, tax credits, disability, neighbour disputes
- Debt Management and Budgeting –creditors, financial health check
- Emotional Support – poor work/life balance, illness, crisis, anxiety, loss, self-confidence, workplace pressure
- Family Relationships - communication, marriage, co-habitation, coping with teenagers
- Health & Wellbeing - problems sleeping, fitness, weight management, alcohol, nutrition
- Work and Career issues – change, team dynamics, work overload, conflict

In the last 12 months North Hertfordshire District Council has seen 7.5% uptake of the EAP service, based on our headcount of approximately 400 (employees and councillors combined).

Service Type	Apr 20 – Jun 20	Jul 20 - Sep 20	Oct 20 - Dec 20	Jan 21 - Mar 21
Emotional Support	3	9	2	4
Legal & Information	4	3	2	2
Management Support	1	0	0	0
Total	8	12	4	6

Workplace Wellness have confirmed that the average utilisation for EAP is usually measured at 5.3% of a workforce so we are currently slightly above average.

The HR team are committed to ensuring staff are aware of the EAP service and we provide employees with details and the link to the website at relevant opportunities including;

- in correspondence to employees involved in disciplinarys, complaints and improving performance meetings;
- in all attendance management and long-term absence related letters.
- Regular articles in Insight promote the benefits of EAP
- Details of the service are outlined on the staff intranet
- New employees are made aware of the service at their HR Welcome meeting.
- Reminders about EAP during the 'check in' calls and emails made to all staff during 2020.
- More recently we have also added details of the EAP and link to the website on all HR staff email 'out of office' messages

The annual cost of EAP is £1,800 – approximately £4.50 per employee / councillor – and as a supportive employer it is an important benefit that we are able to offer. Whilst it is difficult to put the price on peace of mind or the value of the support that EAP can provide, if it helps to prevent a long-term absence, or supports our employees through a difficult time then it is a relatively low cost and worthwhile staff benefit.














It is difficult to use the level of take up as a way of evaluating how successful an EAP service is. Without knowing the context of the contact, a high level of take up could suggest that there are concerns and stressors in an employee's work, whereas lack of use could indicate there are less concerns, or there could be other reasons for low uptake. However, we have received feedback from a number of employees who have told us they found the EAP to be a huge benefit to them. See extracts from a couple of testimonials we have received:

"I have used the online resources that are available and have found them really useful – it is good to know that there is a wealth of information available in one place, without me having to trawl the Internet looking for it"

"I have used the Employee Assistance Programme in the last couple of months. I found the call centre staff and counsellors very supportive and professional. Due to lockdown all my counselling appointment were via telephone, but that did not impact on the valuable support I received."

It is important for HR to continue to promote our EAP, so staff are aware of the service and how to access it in times of need, creating a healthy, resilient culture. HR will continue to listen to feedback from employees and investigate any potential pitfalls to ensure we are being provided with the most effective service.

JSCC Strategic Discussion Topics Suggested Items: 2020-22

Continuous Development
 Essential Learning
 Coaching
 Career Development/Succession Planning
Health and Well Being
 The role of Occupational Health
 Long Term Absence Management
 Outplacement Support
 What's the employer's role in keeping staff healthy?
 Continuing to provide support for staff during these uncertain times
Employee Relations
 Employment Tribunals
 Employment law update - What can we expect in terms of employment law changes in the next 12 months and beyond?
Resourcing
 Social Media for recruitment
 Recruitment - How we are modernising the recruitment process
Equalities
 Future Streams of mandatory pay cap reporting
20's Diversity, changing workplace accommodation and practices to embrace all equality streams.

JSCC Strategic Discussion Topics Suggested Items: 2020-22

JSCC		Discussion topic
2017	March	Obesity and disability
	June	TUPE
	Sept	Shared Parental Leave
	Dec	Local Government Pension Scheme: What is the current position and what changes are planned?
2018	March	The future for Apprenticeships Apprentice Levy, Public sector targets and Higher Apprenticeships
	June	Coaching for individual and organisational development
	Sept	Update on new and proposed family friendly legislation – e.g. Parental Bereavement, Grandparental Leave
	Dec	How we are modernising the process for on-line applications
2019	March	Essential Learning – Responding to growing demands and how L&D support organisational change
	June	The role of Occupational Health at NHDC
	Sept	The role of employer supporting employees with mental health problems.
	Dec	Salary Sacrifice: What are they, what have we got on offer and what's their future?
2020	March	Career Development, Talent and Succession Planning
	June	N/A
	Sept	Knowledge Transfer
	Dec	Support for Carer's
2021	March	Salary Sacrifice Schemes, what we have and what's their popularity
	June	The value of an Employee Assistance Provider
	Sept	The challenges and rewards of long term home-working
	Dec	