

**JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**28 JUNE 2017**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM No.**

**6**

**TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE**

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.

**2. STEPS TO DATE**

- 2.1 The People Strategy Information Note has been updated with the HR 2017/18 Service Plan, work plan.

**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 work plan, taken from the HR Service Plan for 2017/18. 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 continues to be busy with several vacancies currently being filled. We have Apprentices in Property Services, HR, Active Communities, The Document Centre/CSC, MSU, Community Safety, Environmental Health and we are recruiting for one in Finance
- 3.3 The HR Service Plan project highlights show the progress made since the last JSCC in March 2017.
- 3.4 We now have our online account up and running to pay the Apprentice Levy and to purchase apprentice training in future. We are also following the progress of the Hertfordshire Apprentice Alliance (HAA) and the work going on through the East Of England Local Government Association (EELGA) on collaborative working and best practice.

- 3.5 From 6 April 2017 changes to the Intermediaries Legislation (“IR35”), affected how workers contracted to the Council through an intermediary, usually a Personal Services Company (PSC) are managed. Self-employed contractors who undertake work directly for the Council are not affected.

All contractors and other third party workers engaged by the Council were assessed using the HMRC’s Employment Status test. It remains to be seen what the full implications of these changes will be in terms of increases in costs or availability of such workers in the public sector. The new procedures were extremely heavy on time and resources to implement and resulted in only one worker being assessed as being required to have tax and NI deductions made by the Council as an “off payroll” worker. To date no invoice has been received from this worker since the changes came into operation so it has not been possible to assess how the new processes are working or whether there has been any noticeable increase in price. One further worker refused to undergo the HMRC Employment Status test and so can no longer work for the Council.

Given the uncertain impact of the changes and the increase in administration required for contractors and agency workers it continues to be recommended to managers that they avoid using this type of worker wherever possible by using direct recruitment methods to fill resourcing needs.

- 3.6 Feedback for a new improved shortlisting process has been positive and the process is now being used for the majority of vacancies. IT has built the system for online shortlisting for managers, it is being tested and it looks very promising and we are hoping for a go live date during the summer.
- 3.7 Mandatory gender pay gap reporting was introduced in the public sector from the end of March 2017 with the first set of data needing to be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. Discussions are underway with Serco regarding the reporting requirements and whether these can be met by using an amendment to the SAP Payroll system which is currently under development or whether a bespoke report will be required to meet the Council’s needs.
- 3.8 The new Regular Performance Review (RPR) has been successfully implemented and started its second full cycle in April 2017. It has been well received and applied consistently across the organisation. A new set of organisational competencies have been developed and agreed by Corporate Board. These will be introduced and communicated during the course of 2017. They will not only be used for RPR but also integrated into our recruitment and succession planning processes.
- 3.9 The Learning and Development team are continuing to develop activities that support organisational change under the heading of ‘Meeting the Challenge’. A workshop for managers was run in October and will be run again during 2017/18.
- 3.10 An Institute of Leadership and Management level 5 programme has been completed and the majority of participants have completed their assignments. The L & D team will investigate the need for further training of this type.
- 3.11 The L & D team have developed new organisational values which have been agreed by Corporate Board. These will be launched and communicated following further consultation and used to drive and support organisational change. These new values more fully reflect the current environment and context in which the Council operates.

- 3.12 The Council's Investors in People assessment against revised criteria is in its final stages with the assessor conducting individual and group discussions this week. The result of the assessment will be known within the next few weeks and will form the basis of an action plan for further improvements throughout 2017/18 and beyond.
- 3.13 The team are currently supporting a couple of service restructures, in addition to the usual absence management and employee relations case work.
- 3.14 It was agreed to carry out a survey of staff given the changes to salary sacrifice car schemes. Very few members of staff who replied are in the scheme (3) which is what we expected; the expense of the scheme was a strong factor with commentators thinking the scheme was expensive or not a good deal. There was some support for electric cars promoting the Council's green agenda (3/24) The interest in Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV's) was noted but the fact that take up hasn't been of this type of car was also acknowledged. Very few comments gave a positive indication that the individuals would be interested in joining the scheme (3/24). The scheme will stay open to offer ULEV's and there is a contract review date of 30/11/18 when the future of the scheme will be reviewed.
- 3.15 A new contract with a reduced commission rate has been agreed for the provision of Kiddi vouchers and the contract for Wider Wallet retail discount scheme has also been renegotiated. Previously these schemes have been called off from a Framework Agreement, but a revision of terms of the Framework Agreement on its last renegotiation made it better value for the Council to now contract directly with the supplier, who provides both these schemes, for the new arrangements. The current contract for the cycle to work scheme ended in April 2017, but due to the low take up in recent years (four employees in the last three years), it was decided not to offer the scheme this year and consider the level of interest next year before entering any new contractual arrangements.
- 3.16 Under the statutory requirements in respect of pensions auto enrolment, all those who have opted out of an employer's pension scheme have to be re-enrolled every third anniversary of the original auto-enrolment. For the Council this meant that all staff who had opted out of the LGPS had to be re-enrolled by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and a re-enrolment declaration submitted to the Pensions Regulator by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017. In total 31 individuals were re-enrolled by the deadline date and the majority of these have now opted out of the scheme once more.
- 3.17 The agreed salary increases were processed with April pay and the revised Rates of Pay Policy which includes the uplifted salary ranges has been published. The pay Policy Statement was also completed for 2017/18 and is published on the Council's website.
- 3.18 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 employee
  - Turnover
  - Percentage of staff that have completed an appraisal

## **4.0 NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 Progress against the People Strategy and the annual work plan will be reported to all quarterly JSCC Meetings.

## **5.0 APPENDICES**

- 5.1 Appendix A – Key Performance Measures
- 5.2 Appendix B – HR People Strategy Work Plan for 2017/18

## **6.0 CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 People Strategy 2015 – 2020