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To: Scrutiny Board 1

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Subject: HR Update

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## 1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The purpose of this note is to provide Scrutiny Board 1 with a summary of achievements made by the HR service over the last 12 months which will include the following key areas:
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
  - Staff Health and Wellbeing
  - The HR Scorecard
  - Tribepad – our new recruitment system

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny 1 are being asked to comment on the progress being made by the Director of HR and the HR Service to date in relation to progressing the actions/activities as outlined in the People Plan 2020- 2022.

## 3 Information/Background

- 3.1 In January 2020, HR launched the People Plan (see appendix 1), which detailed the work the service will undertake over the next two years in line with the wider Council plan. The People Plan focuses on five main areas; organisational development, pay, reward and recognition, health, safety and well-being, workforce planning, information management and support and sustainability.
- 3.2 The organisational development priorities are to establish a supportive learning culture, develop greater staff engagement, to continue to build on the apprenticeship offer and build better links with schools.
- 3.3 In addition, we have been able to progress our ambitions for developing greater staff engagement across the organisation through the development and introduction of the organisation's One Coventry values which has been staff led. Staff from across the Council, including those staff who work remotely, were involved in suggesting a set of values which were important to them through a process of using an info scribe which created images from their suggestions which ultimately led to staff vote – we received 1384 votes which created our One Coventry Values.



- 3.4 These values are now in the process of being embedded into our recruitment and appraisal processes, plus they will form the cornerstone of our recognition scheme. The importance of the values is not to be underestimated, as they will shape and inform the culture of the organisation going forward.
- 3.5 This work did take longer than anticipated due to the pandemic, which also impacted on several other work areas. For example, all the training provision for the year including

induction has been reworked and is now delivered online, which was a considerable challenge as well as a lot of work. Work has continued with apprenticeships albeit on a reduced basis, work experience has been delivered online as well but some elements of the apprenticeship strategy are on hold such as recruitment fayres with schools for example, but we hope to launch these again in September 2021.

- 3.6 Organisational Development have also supported the launch of the new staff app, we are one of the few Local Authorities to have such an engagement tool and they are continuing to develop its use.
- 3.7 Organisational Development have also led on the introduction of the new employee benefits package, which launched in December. The benefits package has been expanded and has its own digital platform and enables staff to access lifestyle savings, a cycle to work scheme, 24/7 counselling and through salary sacrifice lease cars, electronic goods, bikes including e-bikes and over the next few months we'll be offering financial education to our staff . This platform is a one stop shop for all the Council benefits including travel cards, it is part of our new reward and recognition plan as well as being a retention aid.
- 3.8 Our Health, Safety and Well-Being, service have had a very busy year as a result of the pandemic. They have supported the introduction, training and audits of the Covid-19 risk assessment and vulnerable employee risk assessment (VERA) across the Council and Schools. Significant work was undertaken to strengthen and improve the support available for both physical and mental health of staff as well as introduce a Health and Well-Being App called Kaido which encourages team challenges as well as providing useful health information that has proved very popular. Although this activity related to the response to the current situation, it has also progressed the overall aim of improving our position on staff health and well-being.
- 3.9 Alongside this, a Health and Well-Being group has been established which is made up of HR team members, Trades Unions representatives and Public Health colleagues. In the last year, the group has developed a staff health and well-being handbook which is now included within induction and the group are just in the process of completing the draft Health and Well-Being Strategy for staff.



- 3.10 Several new initiatives were also introduced such as menopause training and an employee assistance programme which is available 24/7, 365 days a year to support staff who work outside of normal office hours.
- 3.11 Improvements are continuing to be made to improve the data and information provided as a service, with both a corporate scorecard and more detailed localised service data which is now provided on a regular basis. HR is in the process of changing its reporting tool and once this is completed it will further improve the quality provided.
- 3.12 A number of policies and procedures have been reviewed and revised including the Domestic Violence Policy and the Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.
- 3.13 Recruitment have successfully introduced a new online system which has improved both the candidate and manager experience, all applications can be tracked enabling detailed and informative management information. The system also ensures that all corporate recruitment is now anonymised, this work aligns with our organisational commitment which is set out in our new Diversity and Inclusion strategy to build a more diverse workforce. Additional advertising streams have also been added including the use of diversity focused advertising spaces such as Jobs4BAME. We can now seek feedback from all candidates to help us to continually improve our offer.

- 3.14 To underpin these changes, we have extended where we advertise to ensure we are widening our audience and increasing the diversity of applications/candidates.
- 3.15 As part of the Council's commitment to improving engagement and gaining feedback from employees, an online leavers survey is completed. This data is anonymised and used to produce a report every quarter and at the end of the year. The purpose of the leavers survey is to provide information about why employees have left the employment of Coventry City Council, how people felt about working at the Council and to identify any areas of concern.
- 3.16 Linked to this, is the work we have undertaken to progress the Diversity and Inclusion agenda. Our management information has shown that our workforce does not reflect the communities that we service and that we need to improve representation at senior levels across the organisation. We are a member of the ENEI (Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion) and as part of that membership we were able to access their assessment tool called 'TIDE'. Having completed the assessment, we were given an overall score of 54% which puts the Council at the 'realise' stage of the assessment, we are aiming to be at the 'sustain' stage of the assessment. Utilising this information, has enabled us to develop a diversity and inclusion strategy to identify a number of actions to address areas of concern, concentrating on the employee life cycle we aspire to provide an inclusive environment that promotes diversity & inclusion for all of our existing and new staff.
- 3.17 The Employee Networks have also been re-launched very successfully, each of the 5 networks has a named Chair and Co-Chair, Director sponsorship and a small budget to facilitate meetings and conferences. External support has also been provided to the groups to assist in making them sustainable for the longer term. This has resulted in a Women's Group just recently being established, a very successful Black History Month and some thought-provoking articles being published on the intranet. We are also working with Stonewall to become an inclusive employer.
- 3.18 As part of the consultative arrangements with the Trade Unions a Diversity and Inclusion Group has also been established which is chaired by the Head of Organisational Development and attended by the Trades Unions and the Employee Network Chairs. This group are working together on the Diversity and Inclusion strategy as well as reviewing relevant policies and procedures. The trades unions do feel progress is being made.
- 3.19 Finally, unconscious bias training has taken place across the HR service and is in the process of being arranged for all employees, commencing with senior managers and Members.

#### **4 Next Year**

- 4.1 The People Plan outlines the work of HR for a two year period, so in addition to the activities already under way the following is also planned; an engagement campaign for the values, revisions to both the recruitment and appraisal process to incorporate the values, an upgrade of the payroll to a cloud based system, introduction of the personal adjustment passport, and to complete the policy reviews/revisions, particularly Promoting Health at Work.

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## Appendix 1



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Resources Strategy.pdf