
To: Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board 1

Date: 21st September 2022

Subject: HR Update – People Plan 2019-2022

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To update Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board 1 on the achievements of the HR service over the last 18 months. This includes detailing progress of year 2 actions from the current People Plan 2019-2022.

2 Recommendations

Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board 1 are recommended to:

- 2.1 1) Note and comment on the progress being made by the HR Service in relation to progressing the year 2 actions outlined the People Plan 2020-2022.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 In January 2020, HR launched the People Plan 2019-2022, which detailed the work the service would undertake over the next two years in line with the wider Council plan. Scrutiny Board 1 members were updated on the progress of the first year of the plan in January 2021.
- 3.2 The last 18 months has been a challenging period for us all due the covid-19 pandemic. All Council services had to adapt and develop their service delivery models as part of our organisational response to the pandemic.
- 3.3 For the Human Resources Service, this involved redeploying Council staff to support the organisational response. Alongside recruiting temporary staff for our new services such as LFT service and managing increasing payroll processes, including implementing the furlough scheme. We also needed to response to ever changing national guidance, including health and safety measures.
- 3.4 During the pandemic supporting the health and wellbeing of our workforce was our key focus. A number of health and wellbeing initiatives were developed, and we adapted our agile and flexible working approaches. Three health and wellbeing surveys were undertaken to support us to respond to the changing needs of our workforce.
- 3.5 The HR response to the pandemic, is one of many achievements in the last 18 months. Whist responding to organisational needs during the pandemic, the service has remained focussed on delivering the actions outlined in year 2 of the People Plan.
- 3.6 The summary of achievements will focus on the following key areas:
- Employee engagement
 - Employee health, safety and wellbeing
 - Diversity and Inclusion
 - Workforce and talent development
 - Pay, reward and recognition

- HR digital programme
- 3.7 To support our employee engagement activities we have developed our Employee Engagement Plan 2021-2023 which sets out our initial objectives for this area of work.
 - 3.8 A key aspect of our employee engagement activities has been embedding our One Coventry Values. The values have been embedded within our recruitment practice and our appraisal process from 2021/22 onwards.
 - 3.9 The 'One Cov' monthly Newsletter was launched in June 2021, and this has been well received by the workforce. For employees who can't access the newsletter online they receive a copy with their payslip and/or they can read it on the Staff App.
 - 3.10 Two health and wellbeing workforce surveys were completed during 2021 (January and September). Our latest survey was completed July 2022. For each of our workforce surveys we have had a fantastic response from the workforce. As part of our engagement approach we always ensure that we communicate the changes we have made as a direct result of the survey feedback.
 - 3.11 Improving the health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce remains a key priority. We have developed our Employee Health and Wellbeing strategy in 2021 to capture our strategic objectives and how our operational delivery will achieve these objectives. We have developed a rolling programme of health and wellbeing initiatives which is ever evolving in response to the changing needs of the workforce. The programme has the development of Wellbeing Champions, Mental Health First Aid Responders and Cancer Buddies.
 - 3.12 The Musculoskeletal(MSK) Interventions Programme has been successful in fast tracking employees in physically demanding jobs for investigation and/or treatment to either prevent them from being absent from work or helping them to return to work sooner, resulting in a measurable saving to the organisation. We have also introduced Podiatry Clinics in response to emerging needs in relation to foot health for employees who are on their feet most of their working day.
 - 3.13 In September our Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service achieved the Bronze Thrive Award and we are currently working towards the silver accreditation.
 - 3.14 Our health and safety team has reviewed all our risk assessments and delivered Health & Safety AIM programme.
 - 3.15 Over the last 18 months we have updated several our HR policies including Market Supplement, Fixed Term Worker, Family Friendly, Diversity and Inclusion, Recruitment and Selection as well as launching a new attendance management policy – Enabling Attendance in November 2021 working in partnership with our Trade Union colleagues. The new policy has greater focus on supporting health and wellbeing in the workplace. At each stage of the policy there is an emphasis on partnership working between us and employees to achieve sustained attendance at work.
 - 3.16 The Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2023 (including action plan) outlines the actions we are taking to ensure that our organisational culture values diversity and actively promotes inclusion. We are committed to having a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve.
 - 3.17 Working closely with our thriving Employee Networks we have ensured that we have accessible engagement and communications. Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) is featured in every 'One Cov' Newsletter. We have increased our awareness raising campaigns, for example Race Equality Week, Pronouns and Rare Disease Day.
 - 3.18 Tea/Coffee Break sessions have provided opportunities for employees to share experiences & offer feedback. The individual Employee Networks are meeting regularly and are building cross functional support networks. These are all positive steps towards creating a culture of

openness, engagement, and trust, whereby all employees can bring their whole selves to work.

- 3.19 We have increased the scope of our workforce diversity and monitoring information. We have aligned our EDI categories with the Census and ensured a consistent approach is taken across HR systems. Added in options to self-describe pronouns, gender identity & sexuality.
- 3.20 Our training and development offer for existing employees has included our revamped leadership and management programmes and access to apprenticeship levy qualifications. In addition, we are promoting the use of coaching and mentoring via West Midlands Employers and our online coaching platform – Coaching Culture launched in June 2022
- 3.21 We are continuing to recruit apprentices across the organisation and have had particular success within the Highways Service and Legal Services. We are in the process of developing our work experience offer and we are currently working with 3 three schools.
- 3.22 Developing our future talent pool is important not only for diversity but it will help us attract the next generation of talent. Over the last 12 months we have also ran two internship programmes:
 - Employ Autism Programme
 - Work Placements - Coventry University Postgraduate Consultancy Scheme
- 3.23 Our employee benefits package has been expanded through our external supplier.
- 3.24 A three tier Employee Recognition Framework has been developed. Level one of the framework is our Cheers for Peers recognition scheme which helps us all to say ‘thanks’ or give praise for a job well done. This was launched in May 2022 and to date 849 people/thank you have been sent by peers.



- 3.25 The Job Evaluation process has been updated to make the process easier for managers to get posts graded appropriately.
- 3.26 Within payroll services there have been a number of pay related improvements in terms of calculating holiday pay for starters, leavers, and Term time only employees. The team also set up the Leicestershire LGPS Pension Scheme, plus the team have managed movement in the payroll customer base.
- 3.27 A number of online forms have been developed to support HR processes including, the Return-to-Work meeting form (Enabling Attendance Policy) and Flexible Working Applications (Agile and Flexible Working Framework). Automation of these processes has improved our data collection, provided efficiently within the HR service and improved customer service for the organisation.

4 Next Steps

- 4.1 Subject to feedback from Scrutiny Board 1 and final approval from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources the HR service will have an updated three year People Plan 2022-2025 to deliver. Updates on progress will be provided to both the Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Board 1.

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