



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 6 FEBRUARY 2020

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Employment Committee on progress made on the action taken so far and to outline next steps following an initial report to the Committee in September 2019.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The recruitment and retention project is part of the Council's People Strategy 2017-2020.

Background

3. Recruitment and retention continue to be one of the key challenges for the Council. The previous report to the Committee identified the main issues as follows:
 - i. A number of posts are difficult to recruit to due to market forces. These include, amongst others: Social Workers, Engineers and Solicitors;
 - ii. The Council, to ensure that it retains a competitive edge, needs to update its branding in the job market so it can attract a diverse workforce;
 - iii. The recruitment process is outdated and requires modernisation; and
 - iv. There is, in a number of areas, a perceived or actual lack of opportunity for employees to be able to progress their careers which has led to some leaving the organisation.
4. A further number of pieces of work have been completed or progressed to tackle these issues. These are detailed below.

Progress to date

5. A number of key pieces of work have already been completed. These include:
 - i. Career grade scheme guidance publicised;
 - ii. New exit questionnaire process implemented;
 - iii. New recruitment and retention incentives policy implemented;
 - iv. Market premia payments agreed and in use across a number of shortage areas and roles (report to the Employment Committee on 5 December 2019 refers);
 - v. Pay – research indicated that an increase in base pay would not have a financially viable impact upon recruitment and retention. Therefore, it was agreed that the focus should be on the use of a new incentives policy and other non-financial benefits;
 - vi. New web pages – early analysis demonstrates that the new pages have led to an increase in the number of visitors to the site; and
 - vii. Recruitment/Job fair guidance published and promoted.

Next steps

6. The following work is in progress and a further update will be provided in due course:
 - i. CV and Flexible Hiring implementation. In order to realise the benefits of these two initiatives, recruiting managers will require a significant level of training and support;
 - ii. Review of assessment and selection methodology – research indicates that a good selection process does not just hinge on conducting an interview and a test. There are other methods the Council could consider which would support the organisation in selecting the best candidates to work for them. Following a comprehensive workshop with managers, further work is underway to provide options and recommendations;
 - iii. Environment and Transport offer – this will concentrate on promoting the benefits of career development, public service and flexibility. Particular attention will be paid to hard-to-fill posts and encouraging applications from groups who are not currently fully represented in the workforce;

- iv. Corporate induction – it has been recognised that the induction process needs to be modernised to capture and engage all new starters. It will include, for example, the Council’s values and behaviours, expectations regarding performance, the support on offer for learning and development, smarter working opportunities and staff benefit scheme;
- v. Lease car scheme – work is underway to implement a salary sacrifice scheme which provides access to electric and low emission vehicles. This could act as a recruitment and retention tool but it will also contribute to the Council’s commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030; and
- vi. Health insurance – a health insurance scheme, which is complementary to the NHS, could help to recruit and retain professionals from the private sector. Options and recommendations are currently being explored.

Conclusion

- 7. A variety of activities is being undertaken to address the challenge of recruitment and retention. A future update on progress will be provided to the Employment Committee at appropriate times.

Recommendations

- 8. The Employment Committee is asked to consider and note the action taken so far and future next steps outlined in the report to address the challenge of recruitment and retention.

Background Papers

- 9. None.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

- 10. None.

Equality and Human Rights Implications/Other Impact Assessments

- 11. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment will be carried out for specific policies and procedures where appropriate.

Officer to Contact

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