



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 6 FEBRUARY 2025

PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE - RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

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 in relation to Recruitment and Retention projects which are part of the Council's People Strategy.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. On 23 May 2024, the Employment Committee approved the People Strategy 2024 – 2028.
3. The People Strategy identifies the workforce priorities for the Council between 2024 – 28. The Strategy provides the framework by which the Council will take key workforce priorities forward, all focused on making sure that the Council achieves its strategic objectives. It is divided into three themes: Workforce and Culture, Leadership and Management and Performance Management.
4. Key programmes of activity were identified relating to recruitment and retention and will be delivered as part of the Workforce and Culture theme.

Background

5. Recruitment and retention continues to be one of the key challenges for the Council and has been identified as a risk on the Corporate Risk Register. The progress of recruitment and retention projects are discussed and monitored as part of the Corporate Risk Register process.
6. There are a number of business of usual initiatives which support recruitment and retention challenges. These include the payment of recruitment incentive payments and the introduction of career grade schemes. In recent years, there has been an increase in the use of recruitment incentive payments (e.g. market premia and retention payments) across the Council, with an increase of these incentives being paid to lower paid employees in front line services (e.g. Waste services).

Data

7. The table below details the number of jobs advertised and the average number of applications for each job. The table also provides data on employee turnover in 2023 and 2024.

Year	No of jobs advertised	Average no. of applications per job advert	Turnover
2024	1048	8.2	10.5%
2023	936	11.5	12.4%

The data illustrates that compared to 2023 job adverts are attracting more applicants and turnover has decreased.

Progress to date – People Strategy 2020 - 24

8. A number of key pieces of work to support recruitment and retention have already been completed as part of the previous People Strategy. These include:
- i. Career grade scheme guidance;
 - ii. Revised recruitment and retention incentives policy implemented and promoted;
 - iii. Selection methodology guidance implemented and promoted;
 - iv. Promotion of Flexible Hiring as part of the recruitment process;
 - v. Introduction of CVs as part of the application process;
 - vi. Implementation of a new recruitment system, Oracle Recruitment Cloud (ORC).

People Strategy 2024 – 28: Recruitment and Retention projects

8. The first year of the People Strategy committed to the following recruitment and retention projects.
- i. Values and Behaviours represented in the recruitment process – completed.
A significant amount of work has been invested in consolidating the Values and Behaviours for the existing workforce. However, it was recognised that we were not communicating our Values and Behaviours to candidates. Therefore, reference to these values are far more visible throughout the recruitment process, including the careers website, the job advert and job description.
 - ii. Resourcing Project Work Template – completed.
The template has been produced as a guide to support HR Advisers and recruiting managers when carrying out a ‘deep dive’ in recruitment and retention challenges in a service or department.
 - iii. Oracle Recruitment Cloud (ORC) evaluation – in progress.

As the new recruitment system, ORC, has now been in place since 2022, it was deemed appropriate to carry out an evaluation to assess its impact. The evaluation will examine all aspects of the system, including the data relating to number and demographic of applicants and 'time to hire.'

- iv. ORC and R&R data and reporting – in progress.
This project will provide People Services and recruiting managers with the tools and data to monitor recruitment activity, which will help to inform areas which require focus and improvements.
9. The intention for Year 2 (2025/26) was to focus on long term projects, e.g. building relationships with schools and colleagues. However, the projects undertaken in 2024 highlighted the requirement to improve the end-to-end recruitment process for the hiring manager and candidate.
10. Therefore, a decision has been made to commence a short-medium term project which will focus on improving processes, maximising technology and the current system's functionality and improving the customer journey. This focus will free up HR resource in the medium to long term which will enable the Service to support key workforce issues, such as performance management and workforce planning.
11. As a result of the Council's financial position, it will be necessary for this work to be undertaken by utilising current resources. Therefore, it will be necessary to review work plans to re-prioritise People Strategy projects and business as usual activities.
12. In line with this approach, it will be necessary to communicate this with senior managers and departments.

Conclusion

13. Recruitment and retention continues to be a challenge for the Council. People Strategy projects and business as usual activities all support these challenges. Resources will be focused on improving the basics around recruitment with a view to looking at more long term, outward facing initiatives in the future. A future update on progress will be provided to the Employment Committee at appropriate times.

Recommendation

14. 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

Update on the People Strategy, Employment Committee, 23 May 2024:
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=212&MIId=7424&Ver=4>

People Strategy:

<https://leics.sharepoint.com/sites/peopleservices/Shared%20Documents/people-strategy.pdf?CID=cf428c10-b1bb-46a8-8cc8-0ca5f42adc65>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

15. None

Equality and Human Rights Implications/Other Impact Assessments

16. 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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