

Time began: 10.36am  
Time ended: 11:20am

**Personnel Committee  
22 June 2023**

Present            Councillor Evans (Chair)  
                    Councillors Bonser, Amin, Eyre, A Holmes, J Khan,  
                    Nawaz, Smale

Officers present    Liz Moore – Head of Human Resources and Occupational  
                    Development  
                    Adele Ashmore – Strategic HR Manager  
                    Carl Ward - Occupational Health and Wellbeing  
                    Operations Manager  
                    Paul McMahon - Principal Lawyer

**01/23 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received for Tania Hay

**02/23 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair**

There were no late items.

**03/23 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**04/23 Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 April 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

**05/23 Colleague health and wellbeing update**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Policy, Insight and Communications which provided an update on colleague health and wellbeing.

It was noted that the Council provided an in-house, doctor-led Occupational Health service. It was reported that the referring manager now received the full Occupational Health report within 24 hours of the appointment, to support them to manage the absence quickly and efficiently.

It was noted that the Occupational Health service continued to perform well against service level agreements, delivering appointments within 5-10 days of receipt of the referral. The service delivered above local benchmarks where appointments were offered within 25 days.

It was reported that in addition to providing advice on pre-employment checks for successful candidates, and referrals for existing colleagues including those absent from work due to ill health, the Occupational Health team also provided a face-to-face statutory health surveillance provision for several of the Council's job roles. In 2022, a total of 2863 appointments were offered by the service and the breakdown of those appointments was:

- 1832 health surveillance
- 1031 health assessments including for absent colleagues

It was reported that an integral part of the Council's wellbeing offer was the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which was externally hosted. Colleagues could access information and advice on a range of health and financial matters, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. It was noted that the Council's usage was at 3.9%, above an industry average of 1.4% for year ending March 2023. The Council had extended its arrangement for this service for another two years up to May 2025. It was reported that counselling services were also available through the Council's EAP. A total of 112 employees were provided with counselling support during April 22- March 23, each with an opportunity to access up to 8 counselling sessions. It was reported that the average take-up was 7 counselling sessions each and that the most popular format for the session was telephone consultations.

A councillor asked whether the service had received positive feedback. It was noted that 7 out of 10 colleagues who had used this service had given positive feedback on their experience.

The Committee noted that the top three reasons for accessing counselling sessions were anxiety, women's health and family. Work related issues accounted for 28%, whilst personal issues were 72%. A further positive development was that since last July, colleagues' family members had also been able to access support from the Council's EAP.

It was reported that the Council had also changed how colleagues reported their sickness absence if they were unwell and are unable to attend work. Since 1 June 2023, colleagues now rang their manager if they were unwell, rather than ringing an externally hosted absence reporting line. The Council anticipated that this early contact with a line manager when a colleague was unwell would help to underpin the importance of line managers engaging with colleagues at the earliest stage of their absence. Early conversations, and continuing dialogue if a colleague remained absent due to ill health, were important factors in supporting and managing colleague attendance.

It was noted that the Council's performance on attendance for the last financial year was 13.34 and that this showed a slight increase on the previous year's performance of 12.81 FTE days lost. A councillor asked for a future report to include a breakdown of the most common absence types for each directorate.

A councillor questioned why absence levels had increased. It was noted that this was a national trend and that delayed operations and diagnoses as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic was a contributing factor.

It was reported that the Council recognised that wellbeing did not start and end in the workplace. The Council wanted to empower its colleagues to make informed choices and engage in positive health and wellbeing behaviours so that they could thrive at the Council and beyond. It was reported that the Council would be exploring the following actions during 2023/24:

- Potential to develop our existing mental health champion network into an over-arching wellbeing champion network to signpost colleagues on a range of health and wellbeing issues.
- Improve the understanding of occupational health and wellbeing and developing a culture of wellbeing – by regular team discussions to ensure that our comprehensive wellbeing offer is understood, complemented by a wellbeing programme running throughout the year.
- Provide appropriate guidance based on national campaigns and relevant research in line with our NHS partners. This will provide information to our workforce to allow them to make informed decisions about their own health and wellbeing. We will maximise all opportunities with collaborate with partners.
- Provide the support and tools needed to make healthy choices, so that our colleagues can continue to take responsibility for improving their own health and wellbeing.
- Develop a wellbeing activity calendar, and all the activity associated with the planned actions to be supported by the identified champion network

**Resolved:**

1. **to note the considerable colleague health and wellbeing offer that is available to the Council's colleagues, and the importance of supporting colleagues to take personal responsibility for their wellbeing.**
2. **to note that from 1 June 2023, the Council has moved from an externally hosted absence reporting platform to colleagues contacting their manager if they are absent from work due to ill health.**
3. **to note the Council's attendance management performance of 13.34 FTE days lost for 2022/23, and the future focus in 2023/24 on health and wellbeing.**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Policy, Insight and Communications which provided and update on The Apprenticeship Programme.

It was reported that the Apprenticeship Team had developed an apprenticeship programme that was an integral part of the council's approach to workforce development, talent management and succession planning.

It was noted that this apprenticeship programme had supported the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Council Plan and would continue to support the People and Culture strand of the Delivery Board programme.

It was noted that in November 2018 the Council had started to work in partnership with the University of Derby developing a Leadership and Management programme. This included all levels of management:

- Level 3 Team Lead/Supervisor Diploma.
- Level 5 Operational Manager, Foundation Degree.
- Level 6 Chartered Manager Degree.
- Level 7 initially Masters, now Post Graduate Diploma Senior Leadership.

The Committee noted that this was a very successful partnership that had supported numerous colleagues to undertake apprenticeships, enabling them to develop within their job roles and gave them the knowledge and skills to progress their careers and support the council to deliver quality services.

It was reported that 130 colleagues have taken up this opportunity, with 37 colleagues having successfully completed their apprenticeships and graduated.

It was noted that over the last year the Council had been working with the Children's Residential Team and Derby College, supporting team colleagues to upskill, and enabling them to achieve mandatory qualifications through apprenticeship programmes. The Council currently had 18 colleagues on a rolling programme and now had a process in place to enrol new starters once they had completed their probation period.

It was reported that the council was also supporting to upskill colleagues with their maths and English functional skills to enable them to start on the apprenticeship programmes.

The Committee noted that this partnership working had resulted in Children's Services being able to demonstrate that they had a robust training programme in place ensuring they remained compliant with the regulatory qualifications, with the Head of Service receiving positive feedback from Ofsted inspectors regarding this approach.

It was reported that the Apprenticeship Team were also working with Nottingham Trent University and the Workforce Development Teams in

Children's and Adults Services to support with the shortage of Social Workers. The Council now had 14 colleagues who had been enrolled on the Social Worker apprenticeship over the last three years, with 5 colleagues successfully graduated and completed their apprenticeships in January this year.

It was reported that the current starting salary was £9.18 an hour for their first year rising to national minimum wage for age for their second year if they were 21 years and over.

It was noted that the Council's retention rate for apprentices following the completion of their apprenticeship was currently running at 79%. The Council encouraged managers to continue to develop apprentices onto higher level apprenticeships, offering career pathways in various service areas

It was reported that the Apprenticeship Team were heavily involved in partnership working with internal and external partners, including:

- Participating in the corporate recruitment and retention group, collaboratively working across all service areas to develop a strategic approach and priorities.
- Working with the Care Leavers EET Development Board, supporting the positive destination strategy.
- Working with management teams across the council, supporting them with their team development needs.
- Working with the 'Open Doors Forum' to promote apprenticeships opportunities to Black African Caribbean people of Derby.
- Participating in the Derbyshire Academy - Bringing together representatives across Health, Community, Primary and Social Services to support the 'JoinedUpCareers' and Integrated Care initiatives.
- Partnering with the D2N2 Public Sector compact Group and the East Midlands Apprenticeship Ambassador network.

The Committee noted that between the start of the Apprenticeship Levy in April 2017 and 12 June 2023, the Council had transferred a total of £4,441,240.47 into its Apprenticeship Levy Digital Account. It was reported that to date the Council had drawn down £2,303,634 for internal apprenticeship training programmes and had transferred £155,088 of our Levy fund to local employers. It was noted that between November 2019 and June 2023, £660,903 of the Councils Levy fund had expired and had been returned to the government. It was reported that as of 12 June, there was £1324,703 in the Councils Levy fund.

A councillor asked whether the Council could transfer levy funds to Derby Homes. The Head of Human Resources and Occupational Development

informed the Committee that the Organisational Development Manager was looking into this and was in discussions with Derby Homes.

**Resolved:**

1. to note the apprenticeship programme approach.
2. to note the information on where we are now with our apprenticeship programme.
3. to note the Levy payments made to date, the drawdown for training programmes and expired funds as of 12 June 2023.

MINUTES END.