

Time began: 10.30am
Time ended: 11.18am

**Personnel Committee
20 November 2019**

Present Councillors Potter (Chair), Cllr Carr (Vice Chair)
 Councillors Holmes, Testro

Officers present Liz Moore – Head of Human Resources
 Tania Hay – Apprenticeship Levy Project Manager
 Diane Sturdy – Organisational Development Manager
 Paul McMahon – Principal Lawyer
 Paulette Brown – Employment Solicitor

16/19 Apologies

Apologies were received from Hanna Prince and Kristian Ludlow

17/19 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

A Late Item on the date of the next Personnel Committee meeting was introduced by the Chair. The Chair stated that the next Personnel Committee meeting was due to take place on 9 January 2020.

The Head of Human Resources informed the Committee that a meeting between herself and the Trade Unions was due to be held on 22 November 2019. It was noted by the Committee that it was expected that proposed changes to several policies, including the Council's Redeployment Policy and Protection of Earnings Policy were expected to be discussed with the Unions at this meeting. The Head of Human Resources informed the Committee that before any policy changes could be implemented, they would need to be approved by Personnel Committee. The Head of Human Resources suggested that the date of the next meeting be brought forward to the week commencing 16 December 2019.

The Principal Lawyer informed the Committee that the Chair had been advised that he had the right to move the date of the next Personnel Committee meeting. The Principal Lawyer also informed the Committee that despite having the right to unilaterally move the date of the next Personnel Committee meeting, the Chair was willing to hold a vote on this matter, should there be any objections. Councillors expressed their support for changing the date of the next meeting and the Chair stated that the next Personnel Committee meeting would now be held at 10:30am on Friday 20 December 2019.

18/19 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

19/19 Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 October 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

20/19 Attendance Management Project Update

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources on the Attendance Management Project Update.

This report was presented by the Organisational Development Manager and provided an update on support measures that were in place for managers and colleagues and other recent progress.

A Councillor queried the figure at point 1.3 of the report for the Council's target for days lost per full time employee and was informed that the correct figure was 10.6 rather than 10.5.

The Committee noted that the Attendance Management Project Group continued to provide direction in order to support the aim of reducing sickness absence rates in the Council and that this was a high priority for CLT. It was also noted that at the end of October 2019, the full time equivalent days lost per FTE was 12.37 days over the 12 month rolling period, against a current Council target of 10.6 FTE days for 2019/20. It was also noted that the actual figure for April – September 2019 was 5.8 days, which suggested a year end forecast of 11.6 FTE days for 2019/20. The Committee noted that this showed a downward trend.

It was reported that the Council's Return to Work compliance for the rolling 12 months to the end of October 2019 was 76.5% and that an updated figure would be brought to a future Personnel Committee meeting. It was noted that the target for return to work compliance was 90%. The Organisational Development Manager stated that 76.5% was still a disappointing figure and that discussions were taking place on this issue. It was noted that there had been significant communications regarding the need to prioritise RTW meetings as the conversations were essential in supporting colleague wellbeing and improved attendance. It was reported that Director absence targets had been set for each Strategic and Service Director and that these targets had taken effect from April 2019.

The Committee noted that in order to support improvement in colleague wellbeing and attendance, the HWAT had the following support in place for managers to access to ensure that they were effectively managing their employees' health, wellbeing and attendance:

- Health and Attendance Clinics – available weekly for all managers to assist with health, wellbeing and attendance issues. The clinics would now include a HR Advisor.

- FirstCare system – all support/management actions should be recorded on FirstCare under the employee notes tab.
- Absence monitoring on FirstCare – allowed managers to record what action/support was being taken with regards to absence management.
- Training – there were a range of courses available to managers to assist with effectively managing health and attendance. These included; health, wellbeing and attendance new manager Induction, stress management for managers, using FirstCare effectively, stress risk assessment and leadership development.
- Mental Health First Aid. There were now 150 accredited Mental Health First Aiders in the Council able to provide support on a first aid basis to any colleague in distress.

The Committee noted that Mental Health and stress related absence was the biggest cause of sickness (31%) by absence spells and working days lost across the organisation. It was reported that the average length of absence was now 17.4 days, down from 20 days, which showed an improvement. The Committee noted that Mental Health and stress related absence was a particular problem within People Services where more than 1 in 3 days lost to sickness absence were mental health related. It was reported that the average length of mental health absence in People Services was now 18.3 days, down from 22.5 days, which showed an improvement. It was reported that Peoples Service Directors were promoting Mental Health First across the service and were also looking at other ways of supporting colleagues.

It was noted that Mental Health First Aider training was in place to recruit and Train 400 Mental Health First Aiders and that the Council had over 150 accredited Mental Health First Aiders trained. It was also noted that a further 16 MHFAs would be trained and accredited by the end of November 2019. It was reported that HWAT had started targeted recruitment of MHFAs to ensure the Council's most vulnerable work areas had sufficient provision.

The Committee noted that the HWAT were currently reviewing the Council's approach to safeguarding colleague wellbeing. It was reported that the aim of this was to create a plan that would ensure NICE guidance and the governments Thriving at Work standards were met and where possible exceeded throughout the organisation. It was noted that a Wellbeing Plan was currently being developed to work on the issues highlighted in this report and that it was expected this plan would be rolled out in January 2020.

The Chair questioned whether feedback from MHFAs was available and whether the introduction of MHFAs had led to a reduction in sickness absence rates at the Council. The Organisational Development Manager reported that MHFA interventions had kept some colleagues at work and had helped some colleagues to return to work sooner than they would have otherwise. The Head of Human Resources reported that MHFA services had been accessed 118 times in the last 12 months and that MHFAs were able to provide feedback on their experiences, at networking events. The Organisational Development Manager reported that there had been a rise in MHFA use and that there was a drive to increase the availability of MHFAs at remote locations such as Perth

House. The Organisational Development Manager informed the Committee that she would be able to provide more figures on MHFAs at the next Personnel Committee meeting.

The Vice-Chair stated that if Return to Work rates could be improved, more data would be available and that this could help the Council to better understand mental health absences. A Councillor asked what could be done if a MHFA felt that an issue raised with them required intervention from management. The Head of Human Resources informed the Committee that confidentiality was very important to MHFAs and that they offer support and advice to individuals rather than raising issues with management without the individual's permission. However, the Head of Human Resources informed the Committee that MHFAs would use their best judgement and speak to the Health and Attendance Adviser if an issue was extremely serious and if the MHFA had concerns about the safety of the colleague seeking support, or the safety of others.

A Councillor asked whether follow-ups were held between MHFAs and the individuals they had assisted. The Organisational Development Manager informed the Committee that MHFAs do not take on an ongoing role and that if an individual required long term support they would be referred to Occupational Health and/or the Employee Assistance Programme by MHFAs.

The Committee resolved to approve the recommendations detailed below.

- 1. To note the updated absence data and the continued support from the Project Group, with the aim of reducing sickness absence rates in the Council.**
- 2. To take forward the request for a senior manager from People Services to attend the next Personnel Committee in 2020.**

21/19 The Apprenticeship Project Update

The Committee received a report from the Service Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development on The Apprenticeship Project update.

This report was presented by the Apprenticeship Levy Project Manager and provided a breakdown of the retention rate for apprentices once they had completed their initial programme, along with a breakdown of the diversity and gender makeup of the Council's apprentices. The report also updated the Committee on:

- The Council's Levy payments and drawdown to 6 November 2019.
- The Apprenticeship Strategy authorised by the Apprenticeship Board.
- The request that local businesses, Enterprise for Education and Derby Renaissance Board are all consulted with regarding the 25% Levy Transfer.

It was noted that as of 6 November 2019 the Council had transferred a total of £1,898,358 into the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Apprenticeship Levy Digital Account and had drawn down £436,468 for apprenticeship training programmes. It was noted that this equated to spending 22.99% of the Council's Levy fund.

The Committee noted that the Apprenticeship Strategy supported the Council's vision and aim, along with the wider economic and related strategic aspirations and priorities for Derby. It was also noted that the Strategy was linked to the broader Workforce Strategy and required behaviours and was aligned with the HR & OD Strategy.

It was reported that it had been agreed at the 30 September Apprenticeship Board meeting to continue with the project and the current resource model: HR Apprenticeship Team managing the Apprenticeship Project, Service and training provider management for the next financial year 2020/2021.

The Committee noted that this model enabled the HR and OD Service to work in partnership with DALs as the Council's preferred training provider, and also with other key internal stakeholders such as Economic Growth Service, Adults and Children's Social Care Teams, Schools Improvement Team and the Communications and Marketing Team. It was noted that this enabled the Council to continue to develop its external joint and partnership working, building on its existing relationships and networking mechanisms.

It was noted that the Council had 16 new start Apprentices and 106 existing colleagues currently on programmes. It was reported that the Council's retention rate for new start apprentices once they had completed their initial programme was 60% and that apprentices coming to the end of their fixed term training contract were given support and advice. It was noted that apprentices were also given priority, after staff that had been redeployed, for recruitment to any appropriate vacancies within Derby City Council.

The Board noted that there were varying reasons why apprentices had chosen to leave the Council, including securing external jobs in the City, going onto further education i.e. college or university courses and coming to the end of their contract. It was reported that progress had been made on the transfer of a proportion of the Council's unspent levy account and that this involved payments to Derby Homes and an external care home provider, Right At Home.

It was noted that this transfer had taken a while to negotiate and set up and that the approval of these arrangements had been given by the Apprenticeship Board on 30 September following the submission of the Apprenticeship Levy Project Manager's report on 16 September. It was noted that this report was now awaiting Cabinet Member approval and sign-off in order to release these payments. It was noted that a draft grant contract had been prepared for Right At Homes and that a similar grant contract would be adopted for Derby Homes.

The Committee noted that it was necessary to await the outcome of the Cabinet Member's decision before investigating any other potential transfer arrangements. It was reported that in relation to potential additional activity on the 25% transfer, further discussions were required by officers in order to determine the priorities and the resource levels available.

The Committee noted that there were 12 Key Priorities for the Derby City Council Apprenticeship Strategy, these were:

- We use the evidence base and strategic direction provided by the 'Roadmap'. (The Council had engaged with Derby College to create this)
- We develop robust systems for monitoring the quality of the apprenticeship experience, ensuring that improvements are implemented in a timely and rigorous manner. (Procurement contracts were in place with training providers, with quality assurance measures in place)
- We are encouraging collaborative working by challenging and breaking down silos to deliver for Derby.
- We are raising awareness amongst Council leaders and colleagues of the opportunity presented through effective use of the levy fund. (Communications on this were being put out regularly and a strategy to make communications more robust was being considered)
- Apprenticeship training provides a route into employment with the Council.
- Apprenticeship training is aligned with our resourcing and development needs and supports progression within the Council. (A Workforce development Plan was being developed with the Organisational development Team)
- We utilise apprenticeship training for existing as well as new staff, of all ages and at a range of skill levels. (65 managers were on this programme with Occupational Development)
- We actively consider the use of Apprenticeships as part of our city's workforce planning activities, complying with our Public Sector Duties. (The Economic Growth Team were assisting with this)
- Utilise our internal trainer provider (DCCALS) to ensure maximum funding claimed back and reinvested in Derby.
- We raise the profile and brand of Derby City Council as an attractive employer in the local area. (There were plans to bring the external Apprentice Hub into a Derby Apprenticeship Service which would be launched in spring 2020)
- We tackle business problems using the tools available to us, for example, such as addressing aging workforce and the leadership development.
- We raise the profile of apprenticeships and the benefits to residents & businesses of Derby. (This would involve working with the Economic Growth Team)

The Chair stated that it was positive to see that people of all ages were being welcomed onto apprenticeships with the Council. The Vice-Chair questioned why there were negative figures in the levy payments in Appendix one. The Apprenticeship Levy Project Manager informed the Committee that this was due to a lag in the system and that Derby University originally had 48 manager apprentices and that some of these individuals had left the scheme and this had resulted in a refund for the Council.

The Committee resolved to approve the recommendations detailed below.

- 1. To note the Levy payments made to date and the drawdown for training programmes that we have instigated as of 6 November 2019.**
- 2. To note the Apprenticeship Strategy approved by the Apprenticeship Board.**
- 3. To provide the breakdown of the retention rate for apprentices once they have completed their initial programme, along with a breakdown of the diversity and gender makeup of the Council's apprentices.**
- 4. To note the update on the request that local businesses, Enterprise for Education and Derby Renaissance Board are all consulted with regarding the 25% Levy Transfer.**

22/19 Temporary Agency Usage July 2019 to September 2019

The Committee received a report from the Service Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development on Temporary Agency Usage from July 2019 to September 2019.

This report was presented by the Head of Human Resources on behalf of the Human resources Shared Services Manager. The report provided figures on agency usage through the Matrix contract covering the period July 2019 to September 2019.

The Committee noted that the figures presented demonstrated an increase in agency spend compared to the previous quarter and that spend needed to continue to be closely monitored, especially in light of budgetary pressures.

The Committee noted that the increase in agency spend had mostly been in Communities and Place and that this needed careful monitoring. The Head of Human Resources suggested that this increase was possibly due to the time of year and increased cover being required whilst staff took holidays, and that this would require further analysis.

The Committee noted that the category with the highest spend was General Industrial for the first time in 12 months followed by Qualified Social care. It was reported that the HR Shared Services Manager would discuss this with

management. It was reported that the Council continued to work with agency staff to encourage them to take up contracts directly with the council but that agency workers did not always want to do this.

The Committee noted that Communities and Place had worked hard to successfully reduce agency dependency at Stores Road. The Vice-Chair stated that there should be a reduction in the figure for agency cover pending recruitment. The Head of Human Resources informed the committee that this figure was being looked into and that Human Resources aimed to support a reduction in this figure by improving time-to-hire.

The Committee resolved to approve the recommendations of the report detailed below:

- 1. To note the content of the report.**
- 2. To continue to monitor the appropriate use of agency staff, the length of agreements and to consider other alternatives whenever possible to ensure that a reduction is achieved.**
- 3. To note the increase over the previous quarter.**

23/19 Employee Code of Conduct - inclusion of the Council's new values

The Committee received a report from the Service Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development on the Employee Code of Conduct - inclusion of the Council's new values.

This report was presented by the Head of Human Resources and informed the Committee that the Employee Code of Conduct had been updated with the Council's new values, which were introduced in July 2019.

The Committee noted that the Code of Conduct was part of the Council's constitution and that incorporation of the values within the Code of Conduct would require Council approval after being considered by Personnel Committee.

It was reported that the inclusion of the values into the Council's Code of Conduct was central to ensuring all colleagues were aware of the expectations of the organisation in terms of standards of behaviour and performance when performing their duties both internally and externally.

It was noted that the new values were:

- We are Bold - We have the courage to speak up, challenge current systems and practices, and feel empowered to make appropriate and measured risks.
- We are Strong – We excel using our strengths and have the confidence to ask for help and support when we need to.

- We Care – Caring is what motivates us. We care about what we can achieve for Derby.
- We are One Team – We are great people working as one team: we get the best out of each other and together achieve great things for Derby.

It was reported that Personnel Committee had approved the inclusion of the ethics statement into the Code of Conduct in April 2019 and that subsequent to this, the Council had agreed a new set of values which were implemented across the organisation in July 2019.

The Committee resolved to approve the recommendations of the report detailed below:

- 1. To recommend to Full Council, the incorporation of the new values into the Employee Code of Conduct.**
- 2. Subject to Full Council approval, to undertake a Council wide communications strategy to raise awareness of the incorporation of the Council's new values in the Employee Code of Conduct.**

MINUTES END.