**Annex B**

**Analysis of Key Corporate Risk 10 – Reduction in workforce/ capacity may lead to a risk in service delivery.**

1.  This Annex provides a more detailed analysis of KCR10: Reduction in workforce/ capacity may lead to a risk in service delivery.

2.  It is crucial that the council remains able to retain essential skills and also to be able to recruit to posts where necessary, during the current periods of uncertainty caused by the current financial climate and transformational change. The health, wellbeing and motivation of the workforce is therefore key in addition to skills and capacity to deliver.

3.  The council is committed to work with the trade unions and staff to ensure where there is organisational change and a potential reduction in posts that we actively seek to find suitable alternative employment in order to mitigate compulsory redundancy. This may include staff volunteering to go and other staff being reskilled to fill those vacant roles.

4.  Additional temporary resource has been identified within HR to manage this process and have a joined up approach across the council to ensure we mitigate compulsory redundancy wherever possible.

**Risk Details**

5.  The risk details are:

    - The necessity to deliver savings has resulted in a reduced workforce requiring new and specialist skills
        - o This continues to be an area of focus across the council as we progress with further reductions in posts to make the necessary budget savings. We will where possible mitigate compulsory redundancies through the HR processes, as a council we need to ensure we retain skilled staff and consider how we can re-skill staff potentially using the apprentice levy to support this.
    - Recruitment and retention difficulties as the council may be seen as a less attractive option than the private sector
        - o There are specific roles in which the council struggles to attract however that is a wider issue across the sector, such as social care workers. It is hoped with the more agile

working arrangements that we may be able to attract from a wider recruitment pool than what was there previously as a result of changes to working environment.

- o More flexible and agile working arrangements, similar to those experienced in the private sector will attract more candidates to vacant posts.
- o The more flexible and agile working is expected to retain staff.

- Lack of succession planning
  - o This is a risk as the organisation is small.  We are looking at developing career pathways in certain areas to develop staff and retain them with the opportunity to progress through the grades.
  - o Developing our leaders is an area of priority across the council which will building on a foundation of skills needed to work in the council.

- HR Policies may not be consistent with new ways of working (e.g. remuneration policy)
  - o We are continually reviewing our HR policies to ensure they are fit for purpose and working closely with the trade unions. There is limited flexibility in some of the pay policies due to the budgetary constraints within local government.

- Uncertainty around long term funding from central government.
  - o This links to budget savings and potential impact on posts. When you recruit to temporary roles, linked to funding, there is always the impact of people in those roles who may not like the uncertainty, however some people actually prefer shorter term contracts and therefore we do fill temporary posts.
  - o Funding in local government is a national issue and staff working in or thinking of working in are often aware of this. Our HR policies and practices as described throughout this documents ensures that where possible we mitigate any compulsory redundancies linked to changes in staffing structures.

- Staff with EU citizenship may leave
  - o Whilst this is listed as a risk for the council to be aware of there is no indication form staff with EU citizenship that they will be leaving.

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- Adjustment to the new ways of working as a result of Covid-19 e.g. home working, use of PPE, increased lone working due to need to social distance
  - The staff have come a long way in the past 12 months and have made significant changes to their working practices. This is a credit to all staff and their ability to continue to deliver the services to our residents. This is an achievement and something that the council is proud of.
  - The adverse effects of working remotely and lone working etc. should not be underestimated and we are doing a significant amount of work on our Health & Wellbeing agenda which will support our staff.
  - The advantages to more flexible and agile working are to be embraced, working with staff and trade unions to identify future working practices and working environments that support this.
- Additional workload due to Covid-19
  - We are aware of the additional workload that many staff have had due to the pandemic and this increased workload may continue in some areas for the foreseeable future.
  - Workforce fatigue is an area that we need to focus on and link this to the Health & Well Being agenda.
  - Staff were temporarily redeployed across the council during the pandemic and additional resource was brought into areas where this was required, such as Public Health.
- Recruitment and retention difficulties across social care (adults and Childrens) as a result of Covid and the competition for qualified staff across Health and Social care.
  - As mentioned above this is a key area of where we are struggling to attract staff.  It is a highly competitive market and qualified staff are moving freely between authorities. The People Directorate are doing a significant amount of work looking at the workforce retention and attraction.
- Reduction in posts due to budget savings required as a result of Covid-19
  - This links to bullet point 1
- Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable unable to work
  - Staff in this group have had to shield for a considerable amount of time over the past year, and if their role has been

unable to be carried out from home then they have not worked. Please note their pay was unaffected, however these individuals were keen to work. In some instances we may have given them work to do, however about 8 people have been unable to work. As this has only been a small number the risk to service provision is low. Managers have worked closely with these individuals and supported them. As soon as they have been able to return the necessary risk assessments have been put in place and they have returned safely.

- Staff having to home school and provide childcare
  - o This has required staff and services to be more flexible in their approach to work and the times that they have been available for work. There has been a considerable amount of flexibility ensuring that staff have been able to balance their childcare commitments with the service demands.

## Implications

6. The potential implications for the Council include:

- Increased workloads for staff
- Impact on morale and as a result, staff turnover
- Inability to maintain service standards
- Impact on vulnerable customer groups
- Reputational damage
- Single points of failure throughout the business
- Lack of long term funding announcements from central government may impact on staff retention as it creates uncertainty for temporary posts funded by external funding
- Potential recruitment issues if staff with EU citizenship leave and are difficult to replace

7. Additional implications now identified:

- Impact on the health & wellbeing of staff has been and will be significant.
  - ➢ Remote working (working from home) can have a negative impact on wellbeing.

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➢ Work life balance – unable to spate work from home due to work being carried out within the home
➢ Juggling childcare and working hours
➢ Supporting home schooling for children
➢ Remote working and flexible practices has had a positive impact on staff health& well being, some staff have thrived on the ability to juggling work life balance more flexibly
➢ Impact on mental health, both good and bad

## Controls

8. The controls in place include:

- Organisational Development Plan
  ➢ The OD plans sets out the focus of the council's commitment to its staff, in which there are 7 themes.
- Stress Risk Assessments
  ➢ Stress risk assessments are used where we are aware staff are experiencing high levels of stress and should be used where we know there are high workloads to identify is any measures can be identified to mitigate the risk
- PDRs
  ➢ PDR's (appraisals) are used to set objectives and give the opportunity for staff and managers to speak about performance and progress.
- Comprehensive Occupational Health provision including counselling
  ➢ Where staff have medical issues, physical or mental, we are able to refer to OH and the employee assistance programme to provide advice and guidance. This should allow us to retain the member of staff in the workplace or return them to work as soon as possible.
- HR policies e.g. whistleblowing, dignity at work
  ➢ HR Polices are key to ensure that staff are treated fairly and consistently. Providing guidance for managers and staff in dealing with HR issues.
- Development of coaching/ mentoring culture to improve engagement with staff
  ➢ This is an area which has been on hold for the last year, but an area to consider better use of going forward. This would

link into the health & wellbeing agenda for the council for its staff.

- Corporate Cost Control Group monitoring of absence and performance reporting
  - ➤ By regularly monitoring spend across the workforce trends can be identified.  Where there is an identification of a specific issue then some focussed work and time from HR and managers goes into that area.
- Apprenticeship task group
  - ➤ This group looks at ways we can increase access to the apprenticeships both as internal staff accessing for development and new start apprenticeships.  This links to the development of staff and therefore the retention of staff in the council.
- Agency and Interim Staffing Policies
  - ➤ There is control over the use of agency and temporary staff. There is always a time where this is needed to ensure that service delivery is maintained.  During covid there has been an increased use of agency arrangements, to cover many of the roles in public health to support the delivery of testing across the city.
- Absence Management Policies
  - ➤ These polices and process are key to ensure that our staff who are unwell to attend work are correctly supported, with the intention to support the individual to return to work a soon as possible.
- Substance Misuse Policy
- The council has signed up to a pledge to become a Time to Change Employer with a focus on mental health.
  - ➤ The council has prioritised the health & wellbeing of staff and especially mental health.  This was prior to covid but even more so now as a result of increased isolation across the nation.
- A Workplace Health & Wellbeing Group has been established, prior to Covid this was led by Public Health.  This was paused for some time due to the covid response but has been re-established with staff & trade union representation and is chaired by the Head of HR, with Public Health & Health & Safety in attendance.

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- A staff health & wellbeing survey has been undertaken & this is being followed up by staff focus groups.
- Increase in regulatory compliance to protect the workforce e.g. Health and Safety regulations, working time directives
- Increase in Living wage
- Engagement with staff that had concerns about the EU settlement Scheme for European Citizens and offer of support through York Learning, Registrars and Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Joint Health and Safety Board and regular review of support for staff
- Vacancy Control Group
  - Additional controls over vacancies to be recruited to as a result of budgetary savings and to mitigate any compulsory redundancies.
  - Additional controls on temporary vacancies to control costs.
- Informal and formal meetings with the Trade Unions
  - An excellent working relationship with the trade unions and increased communication with them through informal meetings.
  - Formal trade union meetings  DCNC and CCNC continue (Directorate Consultative/Negotiating  committee and Corporate Consultation/Negotiating committee)

9. As well as the above list there has been significant additional controls being put in place since the start of covid to ensure staff are supported and ultimately to retain staff to provide key services to the council.  These include:

- Covid secure workplaces
  - In line with government guidance, workplaces across the council implemented measures that ensured they were covid secure.  Some of the buildings were open from the start of the pandemic others opened as restrictions lifted during 2020.
  - H&S support managers and premise managers to ensure controls are in place.
  - Staff are able to return to workplaces following approval by the Office Readiness group.  This is to ensure the correct support is in place when staff are returning, monitoring

numbers and ensuring cleaning regimes are in place in areas that are used.

- Provision of PPE
  - ➢ Very early in the pandemic PPE was sourced led by Public Health. PPE guidance was provided and where required following the risk assessment staff were provided with PPE. Staff have continued to be provided with PPE in line with their role and risk assessment.
- Risk Assessments
  - ➢ Risk assessments are key to ensuring a safe work environment in which staff can do their job. Guidance and updated risk assessments were provided for staff and managers to complete.
  - ➢ These risk assessments were updated following every government change throughout the pandemic.
- HR & Resourcing Workstream group and Office Readiness Group were established and chaired by Head of HR.
  - ➢ Attendance was from each Directorate, Public Health, Health & Safety, HR and Trade Unions.
  - ➢ These meetings have provided a great opportunity to share best practice, disseminate information and obtain intelligence from representatives.
  - ➢ We have been able to agree messaging and get decisions quickly that impact on the workforce.
- Increased staff communications
  - ➢ Daily and now twice a week communications from the Chief Operating Officer provide staff with key information including signposting to help with Health & Well Being.
- Regular staff information sessions
  - ➢ These sessions are led by the Chief Operating Officer and key staff from Public Health, HR & IT have provided updates to staff and the opportunity for staff to ask questions direct.
  - ➢ Over 500 staff have participated in these sessions and they continue to run.
- Provision of IT equipment and other workstation equipment to staff
  - ➢ This provision of equipment to staff to support them working more flexibly including home working. This commenced immediately in March 2020 to ensure the council could continue to provide services to residents.

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- ➢ Provision of mobile phones to front line staff in waste services is allowing the organisation the opportunity to engage with these staff.
- Continue wellbeing surveys.
  - ➢ We have carried out two surveys now, publishing results and auctioning recommendations form the survey.
- Health & Well Being
  - ➢ Health & Well Being line for staff to talk direct to HR
  - ➢ Buddy System
  - ➢ Sign posting of key information in weekly messages
  - ➢ Launch of Keeping Well 2021 to support the councils drive in Health & Well Being.  The launch included access to free wellbeing sessions such as Yoga and Sleep Well.  These were provided through York Learning and supported through money from the Lottery Committee.
- Day One Absence system
  - ➢ The day one absence system has provided real time information to HR throughout the pandemic.  This has been vital in our local track and trace with public health.  Being able to speak immediately to any member of staff who reports absence with covid related symptoms.
- Close working with Public Health
  - ➢ This is through the internal track and trace process, guidance and advice, integration of public health in HR led meetings.
- Provision of symptom free testing and Vaccinations
  - ➢ Led by Public Health with the aim to keep the workforce available and protect vulnerable residents
- Workplace Readiness
  - ➢ Looking at new ways of working, learning form the more agile working patterns we have used in 2020 and identifying the best fit for the organisation going into 2021/2020 and coming out of covid.  A great opportunity to get the balance right and use of workplaces in a more efficient manner to suit the service delivery.