

MONITORING THE WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2012-15

Purpose of the report

1. To provide Members with a progress report on the Workforce Strategy 2012-15 since the last report to this committee in July last year. This update is a report of related work in the six months, from July to December 2013.

Background

2. The Workforce Strategy 2012-15 was approved at a meeting of Cabinet in April 2012 and was launched to staff in May 2012. It is now over 18 months old.
3. It's premised on ensuring '*the council has the right people, with the right skills, in the right places, at the right time to deliver the right services to our customers*' and it sets out the strategic priorities for the development of the council's workforce, and how core competencies will be delivered through the following priority areas:

Skills and Behaviours Development – we want to encourage our managers to be visionary and ambitious, to lead, develop, and motivate their teams to deliver our services effectively in what are very challenging times. We want to be seen to be valuing flexibility, innovation, and sound decision-making and at all times excellent customer service.

Recruitment and Retention – we want to recruit and retain a workforce with the skills and values we need, to promote the council, as a “progressive employer” and identify, develop and motivate our staff. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity and to actively challenging and addressing accessibility barriers and eliminating any discrimination or harassment in the workplace.

Pay, Reward and Recognition – we want to provide a fair and flexible reward package within current financial constraints and ensure fair pay across all groups of employees. We will recognise great work and ideas through rewarding staff that do well and are high performers.

Wellbeing and Engagement – we want to be an organisation where risks are managed sensibly and proportionately to ensure the levels of accidents and incidents of occupational ill health are as low as possible. We will actively promote and manage our staff's wellbeing so that people feel cared for and valued by the organisation.

Performance and Change – we want to work in an organisation that can transform quickly and effectively, that is highly productive and focussed on achievement, one which values and engages with employees and has a culture that is collaborative, innovative, inclusive and creative.

Governance Arrangements

4. The Workforce Strategy Steering Group oversees the delivery of the Workforce Strategy action plan, and is chaired by the Assistant Director for Customers and Employees. The group which is made up of senior managers from across the council meets every two months to set and review progress against an agreed action plan.

Progress July – December 2013

Skills and Behaviours Development

5. The 'From Service to City' programme concluded in July 2013 and a formal evaluation of the programme showed high levels of satisfaction and learning by participants. Members will recall that the Report of the Evaluation was brought before this committee in September 2013.
6. Phase Two of the programme was launched in October 2013 and to date we have run three Master Classes (in October, November and December) and an extended Corporate Leadership Group session on Innovation, all of which have been well received by participants.
7. Plans to set up a city wide mentoring and coaching scheme to support participants, which will include partners from the voluntary, community and private sectors are well underway, and will be launched under the umbrella of Yorkshire Accord in the Spring. City of York council will be hosting an information giving event on February 3rd for other employers in the city about the scheme.

8. As part of the council's desire for a more "joined up" approach to Skills Behaviours Development, the Council Management Team took a decision in September to consolidate all the council's training budgets from April 2014, through the Workforce Development Unit.
9. Meanwhile, work on the development of a behavioural competency framework is going well with over 300 managers trained in the new framework. The new framework will be formally launched in April 2014 to coincide with the new iTrent module on Performance Management.
10. The Council has run "Springboard", a development programme aimed at women at junior and middle management roles. The first programme concluded just before Christmas with very positive feedback and the second programme starts on January 21st.

Recruitment and Retention

11. The council's first Resourcing Strategy has been drafted for Council Management Team later this month and it includes a blue print for the development of our own Graduate Internship Programme. It will mean that City of York council has a number of entry level internships reserved for graduates in the city.

Wellbeing and Engagement

Wellbeing and Engagement

12. The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team has worked closely with partners in the voluntary and community sectors to run a Wellbeing Week in October 2013, which was well received by staff.
13. Human Resources has also developed guidance for managers to support staff who have problems with substance misuse which includes alcohol misuse.
14. Both Human Resources and the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team have continued to post health and wellbeing messages to staff through the year including recent messages to raise awareness about the dangers of drink driving.
15. A report on the major headline figures from the 2013 Staff Survey went to Council Management Team in August 2013 and this committee received the same presentation in November. Each department has developed its own action plan to respond to the survey results, and these will be received by Council Management Team later this month.

16. Human Resources rolled out a new discounts scheme to staff in September 2013, designed to help staff make their salary go further, it combines both local and national discounts in shops, bars and restaurants.

Pay and Reward

Pay and Reward

17. The council adopted the Living Wage from April 2013 and became an accredited Living Wage employer in November during Living Wage Week.
18. Staff on LGS pay received a 1% pay award in August, backdated to April, the first rise in 4 years.

Performance and Change

Management of Change

19. As well as developing stronger links with major employers across the city, meetings with Human Resources Directors are continuing on a number of topics of interest across the different sectors. The last meeting took place in December on the topic of Equality and Diversity the next meeting will take place on Staff Health and Wellbeing.
20. At a regional level, Human Resources is helping to lead other Local Government Yorkshire & Humber authorities on a collaborative project on Talent and Performance Management, developing a common set of shared principles. As part of this we have developed a nine box talent matrix for assessing employees' performance and motivation.

Equalities

21. The Staff Equalities Experts group is working with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to host a half day event to mark Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month at the University of York St John in February and two other events to mark International Women's Day on March 7th and 12th respectively.
22. Human Resources has evaluated its own performance against the Equality Framework for Local Government in advance of the mock inspection this month and the actual inspection in May. Early results show good progress in a number of areas notably in reducing incidences of bullying and harassment, our commitment to equal pay through a formal audit, the introduction of the Living Wage, running Springboard, the women-only development programme, the work of the Staff Equality Experts, the introduction of new equality training for

staff, and embedding equality and diversity objectives into the new behavioural competency framework.

New Priorities

23. In our last update to this Committee, we reported on the three priority areas for 2014-15,

- **Managing Change** - helping the organisation through transition and change, building resilience and helping to create a flexible and robust workforce. We are now engaged with managers and trade unions to develop a new framework which will help the organisation manage change more quickly and are rolling out a programme of Resilience Training for staff and managers from April 2014.
- **Managing Performance** - this includes making sure we are recognising and developing our most talented staff, ensuring that staff understand and model the right behaviours and that we are dealing effectively with poor performance including poor attendance at work. It includes the development of a talent management strategy which links strong delivery to reward structures, so that we are rewarding those staff who contribute the most, and remove any obstacles which prevent managers from doing good performance management.
- **Skills Development** - developing skills which help to future-proof services, skills such as business development, financial management and commercial acumen. Helping staff to future-proof their careers, by investing in their training and development, and demonstrating their employability to other employers both within and outside the public sector.

In response to these demands, we are currently reviewing our policy on change management to replace it with something which is more fit for purpose, which gives managers greater discretion to decide what is best for their own service area.

We are also drafting a Talent Management Strategy for Council Management Team in late January which will help managers identify both poor and high performers using a formula which tests for “on the job” performance, staff motivation and their desire for development and looks at how their staff’s behaviour at work helps or hinders their service delivery.

And finally, we have added to the core learning and development offer which now has 67 courses, and are defining the offer for April when training budgets are consolidated.

Implications

24. **Financial** – there are none for this report, all costs are managed within existing budgets.
25. **Human Resources** – as described in the report.
26. **Equalities** – as described in the report
27. There are no specific legal, crime and disorder, IT or property implications.

Risk Management

28. Failure to produce a Workforce Strategy and monitor the outcomes of its action plan could result in:
 - a. Failure to prepare the workforce to deliver future transformation and efficiency programmes and to be able to respond to current spending and government policy change;
 - b. Inability to achieve the 'Core Capabilities' priorities in the Council Plan 2011-15;
 - c. Failure to meet equalities legislation;
 - d. Failure to respond to changing customer service needs;
 - e. Failure to meet Excellent status under the Equality Framework for Local Government.

Recommendations

29. Members are asked to:
 - a. note progress made against the Workforce Strategy in the six months, July to December 2013;
 - b. agree a six monthly update in July 2014 which will include a review of achievements and details of the agreed priorities going forward during the life of this Strategy.

Reason: To ensure Members are kept informed of progress against the Workforce Strategy 2012-15.

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Annexes - None