

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO DEPUTY LEADER

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| 1. Meeting: | Deputy Leader Meeting |
| 2. Date: | 9th September, 2013 |
| 3. Title: | Workforce Strategy Review 2012-13 |
| 4. Directorate: | Resources |

5. Summary

This report provides an overview of the impact of HR policies, procedures and activities on the Council workforce during 2012-13.

6. Recommendations

Deputy Leader is asked to note:

- **Continued high level of employee engagement/involvement**
- **Key HR activity**
- **£6.7m Reduction in workforce costs**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

The budget challenges facing the Council (and the need to achieve reductions in workforce costs) have required organisational redesign, changes to working practices and changes to Human Resources (HR) policies. Successful management of workforce costs (£6.7m reduction in 2012/13) has kept the number of compulsory redundancies to a minimum and reduced the impact of budget cuts on the delivery of front line services.

During the last year the Council liP Gold status was reassessed and employees were asked to participate in the Employee Opinion Survey. Despite major changes across the Council over the last few years the number of grievances lodged by employees continues to be well below benchmarks whilst employee engagement and involvement remains positive and similar to the high levels of the previous survey (see appendix 1 for statistics).

A continued focus on key workforce activity has helped to maintain an engaged workforce, whilst successfully achieving organisational change. The following is a summary of workforce activity in the last year, by the themes of the Workforce Strategy.

7.2 Theme: Ensuring we have a modern & thriving Council

Numerous reorganisations took place across the council to reduce layers and increase spans of control where appropriate, TUPE transfers (both in and out) and voluntary severance schemes. These included Integrated Youth Support Services, Music Service, Housing & Contact Centre Cultural Services, Business Support, Legal Services, Academy Schools, Connexions Service and Public Health.

Following the successful bid to provide HR & Payroll transactional services to Doncaster MBC over 50 staff transferred to the Council on 1st April 2012 and the £500k income target was achieved.

In partnership with Asset Management and ICT project management support was provided to Doncaster MBC to facilitate a move to their new Civic Offices and move to flexible work styles. Our work in this area was also recognised nationally with a showcase event held at New York Stadium to share our expertise with public sector organisations from across the country.

The Service Level Agreement with the NHS occupational health service was managed in order to maintain existing service and the low cost and continue to offer the face to face counselling service provided by Rotherham Counselling Services.

Colleagues in Financial Services successfully upgraded the Councils financial system, a comprehensive review of HR policies and processes began and a revised HR self service platform was launched, allowing access over the internet.

The interim assessment for liP maintained our Gold level and preparations for the full assessment in 2013 (now informed awarded Gold again) began.

Sickness levels fell by nearly ½ a day per employee generating over £600k productivity savings (Gershon efficiency saving calculation).

7.3 Theme: Developing leadership capacity through change

Director Group meetings commenced, with issues considered such as core offer, Pulse findings and response, prioritisation of Leadership programme places, health & wellbeing etc.

Member development was supported through carrying out Personal Development Plans, developing the Member skills profile and learning & development intranet site. One to one ICT

training support (including e-casework and IPad usage) was well used by Members. The partnership with South Yorkshire councils enabled seminars to be offered in key skill areas such as social media, reading faster.

The Secretariat team was trained in order for Member training to be captured on the training management system enabling better reporting of activity to Members.

The employee survey was run in October 2012 and reported to SLT & Members and the results shared with employees. The survey response rate was 44% (45% previous survey). Detailed Directorate reports were produced and action areas highlighted in workforce position statements provided to management teams.

Worker representative groups continued to be supported but on a more virtual model.

The Change site on the intranet was revised following employee feed back, to include updates on service reviews and resources to support managers and employees going through change.

Our employee recognition scheme was refreshed to incorporate the Partnership Ambassador Awards and the annual awards ceremony took place in the Council Chamber in April.

7.4 Theme: Developing our employees skills for the future

A third round of participants started on the City Region Leadership Programme and a graduation event was held in December for the last cohort of successful managers. Evaluation of the programme highlighted improvements which via membership of the steering panel HR were able to influence.

Our core management development qualification programmes continued with the addition of new level 5 programmes for higher graded managers – “change manager” and “innovation manager” (commenced September). Very positive feed back has been received on these new themed courses.

Further themed training for managers in Business Improvement Techniques and Change Management were run (offered free of charge to Directorates, due to substantial external funding).

In conjunction with South Yorkshire Police and Sheffield City Council a shared coaching/mentoring scheme began (legacy project from first round of City Region programme).

In partnership with Doncaster MBC a Dynamic Purchasing System (provider framework) for training was launched. This captures all the regularly commissioned training the Council buys from external trainers. The aim is to achieve lower course costs via joint commissioning and a more competitive tendering approach.

The Skills Gain programme (for literacy & numeracy development) continued with new maths and English courses commencing and using an informal lunchtime drop-in approach as well as more formal programmes, such as business communications.

New modules were added to the e-learning library, e.g. maternity leave, Connect to Support, Web authoring, Doncaster fire Safety, sickness management, equalities & diversity with almost half (2763) of all registered users (5745) accessing the platform at some point during the year.

7.5 Theme: Managing talent and attracting new talent as appropriate

The recruitment management system was upgraded (also now adopted by Doncaster MBC) including new functions and added manager guides. Guidance on internal restructuring recruitment was developed and issued and the management of the advertising contract continued.

Analysis of equality data on the composition of workforce, pre and post-downsizing activity, and of new starters and leavers did not show any adverse trend. Monitoring of agency spend showed a further reduction of £1.8m, reinforcing the impact of successful recruitment to critical jobs.

Apprenticeships and work placements increased in number again this year (figures in Appendix 1), Work commenced with NAS on the Deprived Communities project seeking placements, apprentices etc from deprived communities. A number of Rotherham schools were supported by attending careers and enterprise activities. Our achievements were acknowledged by the Shaw Trust granting 'referral organisation status' for our employability initiatives.

Employees leaving through voluntary severance were provided with support through rapid response arrangements with Rotherham Job Centre Plus, which provides advice and support in accessing free training, guidance on money management, how to set up in business and options for voluntary working.

7.6 Theme: Ensuring we have a fairly rewarded workforce

The integrity of the Councils single status grading structure continued to be managed through the corporate pay and grading panel with only six grading appeals all connected to the reintegration of 2010 Limited.

Promotion of salary sacrifice schemes (e.g. cars and childcare vouchers) resulted in increased take up generating savings for both employees and the Council (£120k). To help employees pay stretch further an employee benefits platform, Wider Wallet, was launched giving access to discounts on a range of products and services.

To ensure employees were kept up to date on changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme briefing sessions and awareness raising activity took place including the promotion of additional voluntary contribution's which resulted in increased take up.

8. Finance

Workforce costs fell by £6.7m (5% of pay bill) in the year due to redundancy, overtime, mileage and agency reductions. Workforce development activity continued, but with reduced budget.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Government continues to target Public Sector spending for reduction limiting the scope to retain, recruit and motivate employees.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The way we do business: Right people, right skills, right place, right time, reducing bureaucracy and getting better value for money.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- a) Corporate Workforce Strategy
- b) HR & Payroll statistical reports
- c) CIFPA HR Benchmarking Club

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HR Statistical Information

Ensuring We Have a Modern Thriving Council

- 248 Voluntary Severances (workforce reduced 15% since 2010)
- Grievances 5.2 per 1,000 FTE (CIPFA 7.5)
- Disciplinary 33.9 per 1,000 FTE (CIPFA 21.7)
- Dismissals 82 in 2011/12, 52 in 2012/13
- Positive employee perception of work-life balance 70% (CIPD 58%)
- Sickness down from 7.96 days in 2011/12 to 7.51 days 2012/13 (CIPD 5,000+ staff 8.1 days)
- Sickness absence attributable to mental health conditions 24% of absences (HSE nationally 40%)

Developing Leadership Capacity through change

- Employee perception of senior management 41% (ORC 35%)
- Employee perception of management of change 42% (Civil Service 29%)
- City Region Leadership Programme numbers: 3 in 2011, 3 in 2012.
- Top 5% earners BAME 1.36% (target 2.3%)
- Top 5% women 51.6% (target 50%)
- Top 5% with disability 5.14% (target 4.6%)
- Employee engagement 67%
- Employee suggestions: 92 in 2011/12 and 56 to Chief Executive on budget savings. 49 in 2012/13.
- The Joint Worker Group event – 40/50 attendees each year. 40/60 attendees at Rotherham Women's Equality conference

Developing our Employees skills for the future

- 71% Positive employee perception of line managers (employee survey 2012)
- Manager training attendance:
Level 2 subsidised awards in key topics: 53 (12/13)
Level 3 CMI certificate: 53 (12/13)
New level 5 CMI (12/13): Change manager 9, Innovations manager 12
- Buddies scheme sign ups: 9 (12/13)
- Employee perception of getting the learning & development to do their job well reduced- 2012 61% from 67% in 2008 (Civil Service 46%)
- 80% of the workforce have a qualification above level 2 (March 2013) up 4% since 2011
- 69% of managers hold a management qualification (March 2013)
- 78% of employees indicate having a PDR (employee survey 2012)
- 28% employees feel there are opportunities for career development (NHS 30%)
- Mandatory e-learning training completions: 1236 (11/12), 1629 (12/13)
Numbers booked on Directions (generic employee skills) training: 63 (11/12), 361 (12/13)
- New distance learning sign ups 2012: 34
- Skills Gain achievers 2012: 36

Managing talent and attracting new talent as appropriate

- New joiner engagement 83%
- Recruitment & Selection training attendance: 46 on 1 day course & 115 on e-learning
- Further £1.8m (60%) reduction in agency spend in last year
- Apprenticeship numbers: 26 (10/11), 41 (11/12), 54 (12/13)
- Disabled people in the workforce 4.46% (target of 4%)
- Looked after children placements: 10 (11/12), 7 (12/13)
- Access all Areas Placements: 71 (11/12), 91 (12/13)

Ensuring we have a Fairly Rewarded Workforce

- 148 cars ordered through the salary sacrifice scheme saved the Council £75k. Car parking salary sacrifice saved the Council £8k and Childcare salary sacrifice scheme achieved savings to the Council £60k
- Reduction in workforce recurrent annual saving £25m (£22m voluntary severance plus £3m deletion of vacant posts) i.e. 15% of the total wage bill
- Satisfaction with the total Pay & Benefits package 52%, up 5% 2012 survey (NHS 39%)