

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2018

PRESENT

Councillor B. Rigby (in the Chair).

Councillors M. Cawdrey (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. P. Dixon, C. Hynes and J. Bennett.

In attendance

Angela Beadsworth	Head of Workforce and Core Strategy
Diane Eaton	Director of Integrated Services, Trafford Council & Pennine Care
Debbie Quinn	HR Business Partner
Catherine Hay	Workforce and Core Strategy Officer
Richard Fontana	Health and Safety Manager
Alexander Murray	Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Hyman and D. Jarman.

26. SAMANTHA BROUSAS

The Committee noted the unfortunate passing of Samantha Brousas and passed on their condolences to her family and friends.

27. MINUTES

The Director of Integrated Services, Trafford Council & Pennine Care provided the Committee with a detailed overview of the 3 Conversations Model that the Council had adopted. The Director of Integrated Services explained that when the 2012 Care act came into force in 2015 Councils were enabled to explore more proportioned responses to people contacting adult social care. Previously people had to complete a full assessment when contacting the Council which was very time consuming and generated large amounts of paper work. When searching for an alternative approach Trafford found a company called Partners for Change who had developed the 3 conversations model. The model had received approval from the Government and Trafford commissioned the service in 2016. The 3 conversation model was more flexible than the previous model and required less paper work.

The first of the 3 conversations was "what has happened today" which gave social workers a chance to listen to the person and hear what they wanted. Most people only required this conversation with no further interventions. The second conversation was based around people within crisis. The aim of this conversation was to find out what was happening and to offer solutions to the issues at hand. This reduced the need to give a full assessment and take people into care. The council had approved having a corporate credit card to be used to purchase items that can help people deal with their crisis e.g. replacing broken washing machine.

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The Third conversation was for those who needed long term care and support, and required people to complete a full assessment.

In 2017 trials were run to compare this model against the previous service and found that it led to less people requiring long term care and an improvement in staff members moral. The model had created a more fluid approach which allowed social workers more control over the way that they worked. Trafford were in the process of spreading this approach across services and were looking at how to take the approach to a full scale delivery model which would include adjusting the front door, paper work, and processes.

The Chairman asked how implementation of the model would affect staffing, agency spend etc. The Director of Integrated Services responded there was a national shortage of social care workers and the 3 conversation model made Trafford a more attractive place to work. The model had been shown to make staff happier as they were more in control of their work and it was hoped that this would reduce the number of vacancies within Trafford and reduce levels of agency staff needed.

Committee Members asked a series of questions including; whether Trafford were maximising being a leader in deploying the model, the impact on retention of staff and carers, and whether the presentation would be of benefit for all Councillors to see. The Director of Integrated Services answered the Committees questions and offered to send case studies to Members outside of the meeting. In addition the Committee agreed that the presentation should be shown to all Councillors prior to a Council meeting.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- 2) That the update on the 3 conversations model be noted.
- 3) That the Director of Integrated Services sends case studies about the model to Committee members.
- 4) That the presentation be shown in a session prior to a full Council meeting.

28. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Workforce and Core Strategy Officer presented the Pay Policy Statement report to the Committee. As the report had been circulated with the agenda the Workforce and Core Strategy Officer highlighted the key changes that had been made since the previous year. Part 10.5 of the report had been changed in relation to the pay ratios between the Chief Executive and median workers which was 7:1 and the ratio of the average chief officer to lowest paid employee which was 5:1.

There was an additional section in the statement which covered the gender pay gap within the Council. This was included for the first time as the 2017/18 municipal year was the first time that all Councils had performed the analysis. The

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figures showed that overall there was a 10.7% mean and 18% median pay gap in favour of men. The Workforce and Core Strategy Officer informed the Committee that in large part this gap was because Trafford had a 76% female workforce and the majority of lower paid jobs were done by women.

When the lowest paid staff members were taken out the gap greatly reduce to 2.44% and when the band 2 – 5 jobs taken out of the comparison the difference reduced 1%. When analysed in quartiles it had been found that there was very little difference between men and women. The Opposition Spokesperson was interested that there was still a difference once adjustments were made and noticed that the difference increased for employees aged above 40. The Workforce and Core Strategy Officer responded that the Council were not sure the gap increased for staff above 40 and assured the Committee that HR would continue to scrutinise the data and bring their findings to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee agree all the recommendations of the report.
2. That further analysis of the gender pay gap be brought to the Committee when available.

29. REVISED ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

The Head of Workforce and Core Strategy informed the Committee that the alcohol and drug policy review was part of the Councils ongoing review of policies and that next would be the attendance management policy. The review had changed the wording and terminology of the policy to ensure that it was more helpful to staff. The policy had also been updated to cover prescriptive drugs and others substances that may cause issues.

The policy had been changed so staff did not always have to approach their line manager and could contact HR instead if they wished. The Committee were told that the focus of the policy was to be upon support of people rather than disciplinary. The policy also clarified the expectations for staff about drinking at work and would help increase the awareness of managers to the possible signs of issues. The changes had been developed in conjunction with Union representatives and the Unions supported the policy.

The Committee were in full support of the changes that had been made to the policy and the change of focus from disciplinary to supportive. The Committee were interested to see if the impact of the new policy and whether it would increase peoples' willingness to come forward.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.

30. SICKNESS ABSENCE

The Health and Safety Manager informed the Committee that the Council's target of 9 days per employee/per annum was achieved at the end of 2015/16 but a subsequent stretch target of 8.5 days per employee per annum was not achieved

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and absence levels began to rise. A number of policies and strategies had been put in place in order to further reduce the levels of sickness. The most notable of the policies was the health and wellbeing strategy. The strategy had led to a wide number of events and activities being arranged to support the improved wellbeing of staff. The council has also modernised its approach to supporting managers to effectively manage absence through workshops and improved absence management data.

The Health and Safety Manager had conducted an in depth review of absence and retention of staff within Social Care in CFW, which culminated in 24 recommendations for improvement within the services and across the council. The review identified that management support and encouragement of staff to attend the absence management workshops was key. The Health and Safety Manager had also recommended that short term absence could be tackled through improved hygiene and infection control strategies with the Trafford Infection Control team. A number of absences were caused by mental health issues and it was believed that the health and wellbeing strategy would offer a large amount of support for staff in these areas.

The review also looked at retention of staff and found that the Council needed to review benefits packages and look at encouraging staff diversification by offering employees opportunities to work in different areas and develop new skills. The Health and Safety Manager noted that the feedback received from staff on the three conversations model had been extremely positive.

There were many reforms going on within the Council and the review had identified that many staff were anxious about changes to their roles. One of the recommendations was to hold more workshops and sessions to help staff understand their position. Issues were raised by staff about the opportunity to attend wellbeing sessions and events due to the timing or location and the Council were looking to offer more sessions to address this. All of the recommendations from the review were to be taken to form work streams which would look at how to implement them.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the Health and Safety Manager be thanked for attending the meeting.

31. AGENCY SPEND Q3 2017/18

The HR business partner delivered the report to the Committee. In the last quarter there had been a reduction compared to the previous year. The main area of spend was still the Children Families and Wellbeing directorate. This was mostly to cover vacancies and absences of staff members who performed statutory responsibilities. It was expected that there would be a large reduction in agency spend due to the closure of Cecil Road. One of the high level positions that had been filled by an agency worker was also coming to an end. The HR business partner then went through each directorate and explained to the Committee the reasons for the agency spend.

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Committee members enquired as to whether there was any work being done across Greater Manchester to set wages for staff. The officers responded that setting wages across GM had been considered but it would take a big piece of work to be achieved. The issue was that whilst setting a price could increase efficiency it would be hard for Councils to agree to not increase wages when it would save them money compared to using agency staff. The Head of Workforce and Core Strategy informed the Committee that the Council were to review pay structures in order to take into account the new structure of teams and new ways of working.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the update be noted.

32. WORKFORCE UPDATE

The Head of Workforce and Core Strategy presented the update to the Committee. It was the third time that the update had been brought to the Committee and work was continually ongoing to develop it to improve the information presented. The update was split into three areas which seemed to work well. The Committee were told that HR were continuing to develop the data and analysis. The Head of Workforce and Core Strategy asked the Committees to provide their feedback and to requests items for future meetings.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

33. QUARTERLY REPORT ON EXEMPTIONS TO THE SICKNESS POLICY

The HR business partner informed the Committee that since the last meeting there had been 3 extensions to sick pay 2 in CFW and 1 in EGEI, all were related to server sickness.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

34. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Chairman thanked the Councillors and Officers for their work during the 2017/18 municipal year.

The meeting commenced at 12.30 pm and finished at 1.34 pm