

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

9 SEPTEMBER 2019

PRESENT

Councillors A.M. Whyte (In the Chair), D. Acton, M. Cordingley, J. Holden, B. Rigby and R. Thompson.

In attendance

Sara Saleh	Corporate Director of People
Dominique Sykes	Principal Solicitor, Corporate and Commercial
Bev Norton	Head of HR Business Partners
Alexander Murray	Governance Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bennett, A. Akinola and P. Lally

8. MINUTES

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9. PEOPLE STRATEGY

The Corporate Director of People gave a brief overview of the plans to launch the people strategy, which was named “Epic You”, and reminded the Committee of the four pillars that supported the Trafford vision. The people strategy was to be launched on the 20th September 2019 and was to be synchronised with the launch of a staff survey. The survey would be used to benchmark against other employers and, as it was to be done annually, it would enable the Council to compare results year on year to identify improvement or deterioration.

Another part of Epic You was the refreshed Performance and Development Review (PDR) process. The revised process moved away from formal annual reviews to regular informal conversations between staff and managers, with the employee being at the heart of the process. The conversations were to finish with a discussion of the employees aspirations to gain an understanding of how they would like to develop within the organisation.

The Corporate Director then explained the Council’s new health and wellbeing strategy and how it focused upon 4 key areas. A Committee Member asked what muscular and skeletal wellbeing was and how the Council were to deliver it. The Corporate Director responded that there were a range of actions and measures that the Council were going to offer staff such as having standing desks, providing heavy lifting training, and developing a culture which encouraged staff to be active and to look after their joints.

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Another Member asked how the Council was going ensure that people were actually doing these things. The Corporate Director replied that the Council would gather and provide regular information in these areas. They agreed that the Council could not continually monitor individuals to ensure that they were doing what they said however, it was hoped that by offering staff the opportunity and encouraging people through the culture of the organisation that people would actually do them.

A Committee Member then asked how the Council was going to ensure that disabled staff members were included in these initiatives. The Corporate Director stated that an officers task and finish group, chaired by the Head of Workforce Strategy, had been established and that they would be working with the Chair of the Disabled Staff Group.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted by the Committee.

10. AGENCY SPEND QUARTER 1

The Corporate Director went through the statistics as laid out in the report circulated to the Committee which showed an increase in costs within Children's and Adults services. Over 50% of the Council's entire agency spend within the quarter had been upon qualified Social Workers and no other particular trends had been identified.

A Committee Member noted that there was a national shortage of social workers, that work was ongoing GM Level, and they asked what the Council could do to impact this locally. The Corporate Director stated that issue was getting people interested in being Social Workers. The Council were working with Trafford College to create a pathway for people to become social workers. Trafford were also looking to identify staff who would be interested in being trained and growing their own where possible. The Corporate director added that GM was looking to have a bank of staff which could be used by all of the authorities to reduce their dependency on agency workers. The Corporate Director was leading on this work form GM and it was hoped that Trafford would be chosen as the Council which would host the team.

Another Member noted that there was a piece of spend relating to One Trafford Response Consultancy and they asked what this was for. The Corporate Director was not aware of the specifics around this consultancy and she told the Committee that she would find out. The Member then noted that the role of Community Safety Officer was under Adults services and they asked why this did not come under the governance and Community Strategy Directorate. The Corporate Director stated that she would look into this for the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted by the Committee.
- 2) That information relating to consultancy for the One Trafford Response be provided to the Committee.

- 3) That the Committee be informed as to why the Community Safety Officer was within Adult Services.

11. WORKFORCE UPDATE

The Committee were informed that the first of the new format of staff engagement session was held at the Limelight in June 2019 and had been very successful. The annual Employee Recognition Awards had been launched and there were 5 new categories. There had been a wealth of submissions for all but two categories so the Council was extending the submission date.

The Corporate Director then went through the rest of the Workforce Update which included an outline of the Council's modernisation programme. The programme was to consist of ten sessions delivered by the end of the year with the first having been held in August.

Following the update one Committee Member asked which of the categories had not received many submissions. The Corporate Director responded that it was the Social Worker of the Year and the Apprentice of the Year categories.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

12. QUARTERLY REPORT ON EXEMPTIONS TO THE SICKNESS POLICY

The Corporate Director informed the Committee that there were four members of staff who were on long term sick leave. Two of those cases had been extended for up to three months more. The Committee were told that the Member of staff from procurement had been discharged from hospital following major reconstructive surgery.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

13. CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW: RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES

The Principal Solicitor gave a brief overview of the report on the Council's revised recruitment and employment procedures. The recommendation of the report was for the Committee to approve the changes and recommend the amendments to the Standards Committee and Council. The Committee were told that the review had been conducted by an external legal firm who had found a number of areas for improvement including; that the procedure be updated in line with legislation from 2015 and that the role of the Leader in deciding whether matters of concern are investigated be removed.

Following the overview Members were given the opportunity to ask questions. One Member asked for clarity regarding the amendment to the Leaders role. The Principal Solicitor explained that the change was only in relation to investigations following a dismissal which was designed to ensure that the process was independent.

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RESOLVED:

- 1) That the amendments to the Recruitment and Employment Procedures be agreed by the Committee.
- 2) That the Committee recommend the amendments to the Standard Committee and Council for approval and adoption.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and finished at 5.26 pm