

 Employment Committee 20.3.19		Urgent Item 2
Title	People Strategy Update	
For further information about this report please contact	Tracy Dolphin - HR Manager Tracy.dolphin@warwickdc.gov.uk Tel: 01926456350	
Wards of the District directly affected	None	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	December 2018	
Background Papers	None	

Contrary to the policy framework:	Yes/No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	Yes/No
Key Decision?	Yes/No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes/No
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	Yes/No (If No state why below)

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	27.2.19	Chris Elliott/Andrew Jones/Bill Hunt
Chief Executive	27.2.19	Chris Elliott
Section 151 Officer	27.2.19	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	27.2.19	Andy Jones
Finance	27.2.19	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	4.3.19	Andrew Mobbs
Consultation & Community Engagement		
This is the People Strategy Update for the last quarter and describes highlights discussed at SMT and People Strategy Steering Group prior to Employment Committee. Unions are also consulted to provide any comments.		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report is an update on progress made on the People Strategy Action Plan as discussed at the People Strategy Steering group (PSSG) and policy updates.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That Employment Committee note the report and feedback any comments.
- 2.2 That Employment Committee agrees that as part of the legislative update to the Maternity Policy, the requirement to pay back 12 weeks Occupational Maternity half pay unless returning to work for a minimum of three months is waived in future.
- 2.3 That Employment Committee confirms its support to remove the requirement to determine applications for early retirement and recommends this change to the Constitution to Council.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The purpose of the People Strategy is to support the Council's Fit for the Future programme of work. Its aim is to ensure that the approaches to resourcing, learning and development, cultural change and organisational development are designed to deliver the workforce that the Council requires. The People Strategy Action Plan underpins the People Strategy and reports progress to SMT, CMT, People Strategy Steering Group and Employment Committee.
- 3.2 At Council on 23 January 2019 the new employee Code of Conduct was approved but the Chief Executive recognised that Councillors wished to have further discussion on the following aspect of the code: "This Code applies to all Council staff. This Code does not form part of your contract of employment with the Council, and the Council reserves the right to amend it at any time." In summary the concerns were about the ability to change elements within the Code of Conduct without consultation and the overall effect on the contracts of employment which could put the Council at risk if it came to a dismissal or indeed a tribunal. As a result of this discussion the agreed conclusions were that the Code of Conduct does sit outside that of the Contract of Employment, however in each case the employee is bound to the Code of Conduct and they accept that when they are employed by WDC. As a result of that acceptance they become directly linked and that should there be a breach of the Code of Conduct then this would result in proceedings as a breach of contract as necessary.

It was accepted that some of the wording within the current contract issued needed to be improved to make it clearer and this very minor amendment will be initiated by the time Employment Committee meets in March 2019.

In terms of the concerns about consultation, for every minor change to the Code of Conduct, this is neither necessary nor practical, however where there is a significant or compelling change to the Code of Conduct (such as hours, grades, pensions, significant terms and conditions) then normal consultations (with staff and unions etc) will take place as is the norm. In the case of all changes, the expectation is that these would be over seen by the Employment Committee. The consultation process when required is in place and is robust.

There is no risk to neither WDC nor the employee and that the process is robust enough to provide protection to all parties involved.

This was also considered at the Members/Trades Unions Joint Consultation & Safety Panel on 8 March 2019 who endorsed this position, as set out in their minutes elsewhere on the agenda.

- 3.3 The Local Government Maternity Leave scheme includes the provision to receive 12 weeks' Occupational Maternity Pay at half pay subject to pledging to return to work for at least 3 months.

It is proposed that Warwick District Council waives the requirement to return to work to receive the additional 12 weeks half pay as it has little impact on retention and it can cause problems in relation to service planning and continuity of provision should a member of staff elect to return to work for the 12 weeks only (The half pay is more than the statutory payment of £145.18 or 90% of your average weekly earnings, whichever is lower, for 33 weeks).

This amendment also supports the aim of the Council to support family friendly policies and as a benefit in our recruitment processes.

- 3.4 At Employment Committee, in January 2015, it set out within the report that requests/costs for early or flexible requirement were not required to be approved, however there was no recommendation (and resultant decision) to confirm amend this policy. Therefore, this report seeks to confirm the approach that was supported and ensure the amendment is duly recorded.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

4.1 **Policy Framework**

Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects. The actions from the People Strategy are one of those key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/

sports activities Cohesive and active communities	space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Impacts of Proposal		
The proposal considers areas to support health and well-being together with engagement and communications	Link to our customers and the recognition of how we impact on our communities through our people.	The proposal considers areas to support employment e.g. apprenticeships
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers' needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money
Impacts of Proposal		
The themes from the strategy support training engagement and skills. Policies are updated to reflect ongoing legislation and the changes in the organisation.	Constant improvement in our through digital provision. Monitoring of MI information to review data trends	Value for money in how we attract procure training and deliver through different channels.

4.2 Supporting Strategies

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies and the relevant ones for this proposal are explained here.

4.2.1 People Strategy

The People Strategy outlines the future needs of our workforce to enable us to attract, recruit and retain the right people; provide the development they need to allow them to grow and progress; manage potential and plan for the future. The way in which we lead and support our people is key to the successful delivery of quality services.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

5.1 Should there be initiatives identified beyond the existing budgets then a case can be made for further funding to support.

6. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED**

6.1 None considered

7. **RISKS**

7.1 There is significant risk to the delivery of the Council's FFF programme by not reviewing the areas highlighted in the People Strategy.

8. **BACKGROUND**

8.1 The People Strategy Steering Group comprises of Councillors: Phillips, Mrs Bunker, Naimo and Mrs Falp and supported by the Chief Executive, Heads of Service from Culture, Neighbourhood Services, Housing, the HR Manager and HR Senior Officers.

8.2 The Steering Group meets quarterly prior to the Employment Committee and reviews successful work completion, plans in progress and areas to highlight for discussion.

8.3 Investors in People assessment report received in September 2018 concluded that Warwick District Council had achieved the Silver accreditation (an improvement from Bronze in 2015). The areas identified within the report continue to be communicated and progressed as part of the People Strategy and the associated Action Plan. Updates will be provided through the Workforce Steering Group, SMT, People Strategy Steering Group and Employment Committee.

8.4 Other areas of success/highlights within the agreed People Strategy themes for the last quarter are:

8.4.1 **Leadership and Organisational Development**

The Investors in People accreditation identifies organisations as 'Developed', 'Established', 'Advanced', and 'High Performing'. As part of our continuous improvement the organisation has initiated scoping work to define what 'High Performance Leadership' is to WDC, the attribute/behaviours aligned and how this links to other organisational change initiatives where there will be an impact on the culture of the organisation.

8.4.2 **Workforce Planning and Performance**

Update of the priorities of the Workforce Steering Group:

- 'Agile working' in conjunction with the Staff Voice Group
- Training associated with supporting strategies to manage 'Long Term Sickness' as part of the new Long Term sickness and Ill health capability policy.
- Managers Forum Review

Facilitated network meetings with both the new Apprentices and Managers has been delivered as part of a review of the learning points from the Apprenticeship programme initiated September 2018.

The data for the Pay Policy and Gender Pay gap (as at 31st March 2018) is provided in a separate report.

8.4.3 Equality & Diversity

Social Media, Discrimination & the Law workshops continue to be delivered within the Council. We are progressing our partnership work with WCC to review the achievements against the 2016 – 2020 objectives and any further actions.

42 staff attended 'Understanding Autism' training linked to understanding this area from both managing staff and interface with customers. Further awareness sessions are planned around Dementia and Drug and Alcohol awareness.

8.3.4 Learning & Development

Training update in Quarter 3: 442 delegates received training through 25 events totalling 287 training days. These include Managing Change, Understanding Autism, Recruitment & Selection, HR for non HR Managers and Time Management.

Following the funding from Public Health we now have 71 staff qualified staff as Mental Health First Aiders. 27 have completed the full 2 day course and 44 the 'lite' half day course.

As part of our quality control relating to Appraisal 'meetings' and associated performance management, Service Areas Managers have interviewed for a second year, a selection of staff from across the organisation, chosen at random. The feedback report confirms that all who were interviewed had an active role in the process and had discussed previous year's objective and those for the new year. We will continue to use this process for monitoring purposes to ensure our processes are fit for purpose.

8.3.5 Communications, Involvement and Engagement

From identifying issues around capacity, to ensure we are fully resourced to manage the increasing challenges of different communication mediums and how we engage with them; we have appointed an additional marketing and communications officer for 6 months. This will support internal and cultural engagement and initiatives connected to the proposed HQ relocation.

The Marketing and Communications Strategy has been approved by senior management as an approved framework for delivering the council's communication. The action plan associated with this will be developed further so that it supports the council's emerging business strategy and this will be presented to the council's Executive later in the year.

Standards committee in February approved an amendment to the "Internet Acceptable Usage Policy", as well as a "Social Media Guide" for elected members which will provide clarity around councillors' use of social media to engage with residents in their ward. Members of Standards committee received social media training which is available to all members and found it to be very worthwhile. Tailored and more in-depth training is being offered by the media team to those members who would like support in setting up their own accounts.

We have signed up to the Consultation Institute to enable the media team to help them to support service areas undertaking consultation. The institute

provides access to training and best practice, to ensure we are delivering our consultation appropriately.

The team promoted the district council at the District Council Network's annual conference, held in Leamington on 7/8 February. We promoted the council's services and key projects on an exhibition stand during the two days of the conference, receiving very positive feedback about the council's services.

The council's health and well-being scheme (Bupa) was promoted with an intranet update and an assortment of fresh fruit was placed in the Space for staff to help themselves to, as a way of supporting the "nutrition" theme of our health and well-being calendar. It was very well received by staff. A calendar of activity is being developed to promote the themes relevant to Health and Well-being as the council supports the district-wide "year of well-being" being led by Coventry & Warwickshire.

Our work perks initiative continued with 'Jellies' provided free of charge for all staff to enjoy.

Staff Voice raised money for local charities with their lunchtime tombola in February. They also used this as an opportunity to talk to staff about the group and to highlight areas they are currently researching with their teams, which include staff perceptions about agile working and their response to the recent Health and Wellbeing and Work Perks initiatives. Staff Voice minutes are being highlighted on the intranet home page as a way to promote their activity.

8.3.6 Employee Well-being, Reward and Recognition

Following the launch of the Health and Well-being (Bupa) Cash Plan membership scheme in June 2018 for employees a total of 251 (211 in Qtr. 1/21 in Qtr. 2 and 19 in Qtr. 3) have enrolled to date. This is 50% of our establishment.

To 31st January 2019 the cost of the scheme to WDC is £7,597.04 and claims totalling £11,698.09 have been paid out to our staff. This includes £4,048.70 for Dental treatment, £2,446.99 for Optical (including contact lenses) £657.15 Prescription costs and £3,220.25 Therapy Benefits.

Since we launched the motivational 'Bupa Boost App' 33 staff have utilised the 'app' to achieve their goals. This includes 16,834,284 steps and 8462 goals logged which range from relaxation, mindfulness and fitness to overall nutrition which are set by individuals for their own motivation.

The first Boost Corporate Step Challenge was completed by 10 staff who together logged the 6,918,000 steps from London to New York. This is on top of the challenges staff set themselves or in groups.

The Health & Wellbeing Intranet Page has been updated in conjunction with the Health Officers Group to share monthly messages about health and wellbeing.

Following our successful requirement campaign, 8 ESO's have been trained by our new occupational health provider. Promotional material has been developed to ensure staff are aware of the support and signposting this group can provide.