

SUBJECT:	Human Resources Update
RELEVANT MEMBERS:	Isobel Darby, Leader CDC; Nick Naylor, Leader SBDC
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Bob Smith, Chief Executive
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WARD/S AFFECTED	All

1. Purpose of Report

To update the Joint Staffing Committee on key employment data and HR projects.

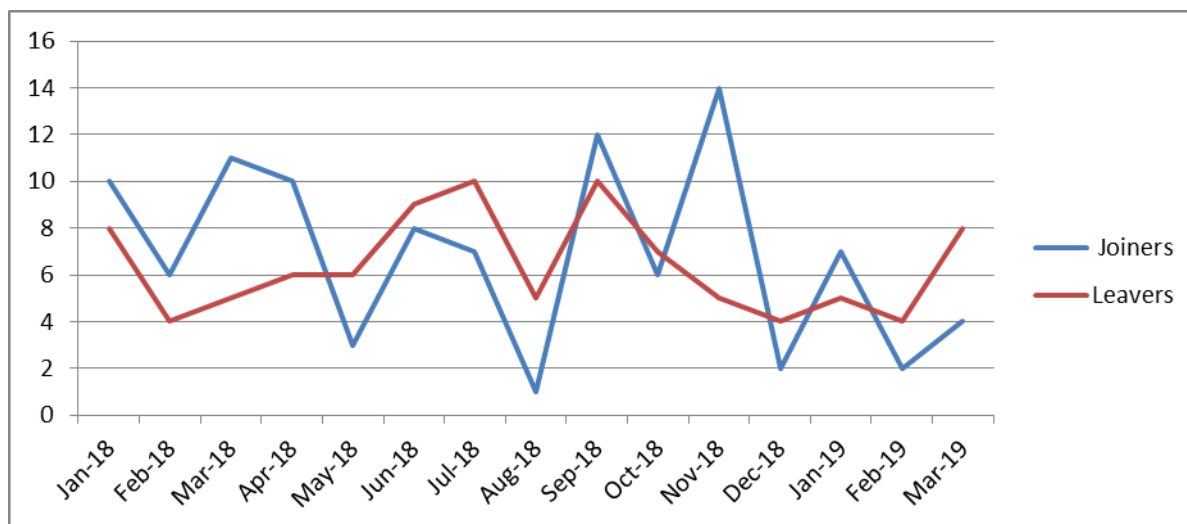
RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Joint Staffing Committee is asked to note the report.**

2. Content of Report

Below is a summary of data on joiners and leavers, recruitment, sickness absence and key projects. For a Workforce Overview please see Appendix 1.

2.1 Joiners and Leavers



2.1.1 The graph above shows the number of joiners and leavers each month. Up to March 2019 turnover was dispersed across the Councils, with no area giving particular cause for concern. The spike of joiners in November 2018 was attributable to the transfer in of Northgate staff to SBDC.

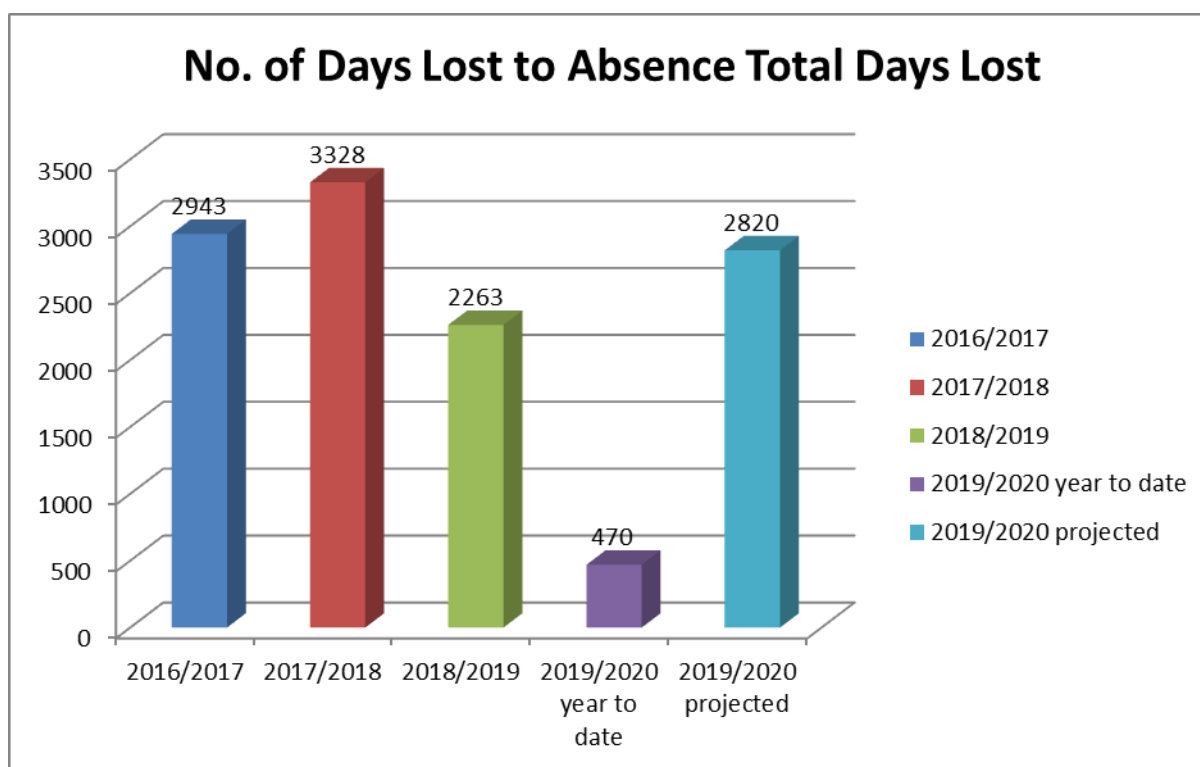
- 2.1.2 Since March the number of leavers has risen and we expect to see the impact of this in June onwards particularly in planning where 4 planning officers have resigned in May.
- 2.1.3 All leavers are invited to complete an exit questionnaire and can undertake an exit interview upon request. To date in 2019, the declared reasons for leaving include retirement, expiry of a fixed term contract, several geographical relocations and a change of career. Several of our leavers have also cited uncertainty around the unitary process as one of the reasons for leaving or the primary reason for leaving.
- 2.1.4 With respect to recruitment we have seen an increase in recruitment activity, especially internal moves. In addition, we are coordinating the recruitment of the MLG Programme Office roles. In April we conducted our first Face Time interview with an applicant in Sweden for an enforcement role.
- 2.1.5 A 'Vacancy Management Protocol' has been established between all the five Councils within Buckinghamshire. This is an agreement to seek to recruit to vacant posts internally first across all the Councils before an external recruitment process is followed. In the first 3 months of 2019 this proved a very successful process, 333 internal applicants have applied for roles advertised on the shared microsite; 33% of these have been interviewed and 10% have been offered. Every Council except WDC has received internal applicants from other councils. We have recruited an Executive PA, Enforcement Officer and an Environmental Health Technician through this process, and interviewed applicants for a Community Safety role.
- 2.1.6 The average time to hire (from advert to offer) is currently 26 days. While we have been able to fill some roles very quickly, there has been difficulty recruiting into three areas. Firstly, Building Control, where a role had to be advertised three times before attracting suitable applicants. Secondly, the Infrastructure Team, where the recruitment process had to be run three times as the first two offers we made were used to negotiate better terms upon which to remain with their current employers. We have since employed contractors to these roles whilst we undertake a reconfiguration of the team and job descriptions in order for us to pay at a competitive rate and go out to re-advert. This small re-structure will also help ensure we retain employees in that team who fulfil business critical roles.
- 2.1.7 Finally we have seen a recent increase in leavers in planning. For two roles we made offers to applicants from other councils who had applied through the internal process but both declined the offers as they were given incentives to remain in their existing councils. We are currently working with the Head of Planning to consider what further steps we can take to seek to fill these roles and what our contingency plans are.

2.2 Sickness Absence

2.2.1 The Councils have a key performance indicator for absence which is a maximum of 10 days per employee per year.

2.2.2 Short term absence is defined as “up to and including 20 working days absence” and long term absence is “over 20 working days absence”.

Sickness Table 1



2.2.3 The above chart shows the total number of days lost year on year. The year 2019/2020 has been broken down into the current actual figures for April and May (purple bar) and the projected figures (turquoise bar) should the current levels of absence continue for the whole financial year.

Sickness Table 2

No. of Days Lost per employee	
Year	Days Lost
2016/2017	9.3
2017/2018	10.88
2018/2019	7.51
2019/2020 - year to date	1.56
2019/2020 - projected	9.35

- 2.2.4 The above table shows the same absence data as table 1 but this time the data shows an average of how many working days have been lost per employee (Full time equivalent figures are used).
- 2.2.5 Sickness absence figures in 2018/19 fell. Short term absence levels rose again in April of this year but it reduced in May. The HR team and line managers continue to make a concerted effort to manage sickness absence to ensure a robust and consistent approach is taken and alongside this to promote Health and Well-Being initiatives.
- 2.2.6 Despite the rise in April it is worth noting however that 88% of employees had no sickness absence in April and May 2019.

2.3 HR Casework

- 2.3.1 During the first quarter of 2019 there have been 27 cases addressed under our Sickness Absence Policy, 1 managed under our Capability Process, 2 under the Disciplinary Policy and 1 under the Grievance and Resolution Policy. A number of these cases are ongoing.
- 2.3.2 During the second quarter to date there have been 25 cases addressed under our Sickness Absence Policy, 2 dismissals one of which was due to an unsuccessful probationary period and no new formal capability, disciplinary or grievance cases.
- 2.3.3 There are no trends to note with respect to casework.

2.4 Current Projects

- 2.4.1 Health and Well-Being: The Health and Wellbeing programme continues. We ran a week long campaign to promote Mental Health awareness in May to coincide with a national campaign. We continue to roll out workshops run by our OH provider.
- 2.4.2 Values and Behaviour Framework: Two of our UGR Champions represented the Councils at a workshop led by the unitary OD Workstream. They gave feedback on the draft outline of the OD strategy for the new council and were able to share the experience of having been through a culturally led transformation programme.

We continue to run workshops on the "customer focus" value which encourages individuals and teams to think about what they can do to improve the customer experience in their areas. Around 100 employees have attended the workshops so far and many new ideas have come out of these sessions.

- 2.4.3 Apprenticeships: We are currently in discussion with our colleagues in the other Councils to develop an Apprenticeship Programme for the new council which ensures we have an apprenticeship scheme which covers all service areas and all levels of apprenticeships.
- 2.4.4 Staff Survey: The 2018 Staff Survey closed on 7th January 2019. Since that date we have been keen to ensure we act promptly on the feedback and results. The Chief Executive had sent out several emails detailing the actions taken such as extending the times and days staff can access the Leisure Centre at preferential rates, ensuring team meetings and

1:1 meetings take place regularly, inviting the Richmond Fellowship to deliver workshops around 'Supportive Conversations'.

- 2.4.5 Development: The 3rd cohort of team leaders and supervisors are now undertaking the Managing Development Programme. In addition we have run a one-day refresher course on "Inclusive Leadership" for all managers who attended the original Management Development Programme.

We have re-launched the e-learning site, Learning Pool, which now contains updated materials and a vast library of "Mind Tool" resources.

After the successful workshops on "Promoting a Positive Attendance" the HR Advisers are about to launch a new workshop, "Manage to Motivate", aimed to help managers motivate and engage staff in times of change and uncertainty.

- 2.5.6 Unitary: All members of the HR Team are involved in the work of the unitary HR and OD Workstream. The scale of the transformation programme and the pressure of the timescales cannot be underestimated. Both the HR Manager and Senior Business Partner sit on the overarching HR and OD Workstream group. In addition the HR Manager is leading on the TUPE Project and the Senior Business Partner is leading on the Resourcing Project. The key projects which span the work required in the transition and beyond are as follows:-

- Organisational Development: Job design, structures, spans, layers of control, leadership requirements, learning and development, apprenticeships, outplacement support, staff engagement.
Current key priorities: Put in place outplacement support for Tier 1,2 and 3 directors and managers. To undertake some visionary work with Shadow Executive members, to design an induction for new staff from day 1, to understand the existing councils' approaches to engagement and health and well-being and design a single strategy, consolidate the Apprenticeship Levy Account.
- Resourcing: CEO Recruitment, Interim statutory roles, Resourcing Tier 2 & 3 posts.
Key priorities: To appoint a new CEO, to commence the recruitment process for Tier 2 posts and design and plan the resourcing process for Tiers 3. Undertake consultation with existing Tier 1, 2 and 3 postholders in the 5 councils.
- HR Systems & Data: HR Data Recording and Reporting arrangements, HR, payroll and finance systems.
Key Priorities: To provide data, information and reporting to support planning for the new council and the TUPE transfer, to develop interim HR/Payroll system(s) solutions to be in place from vesting day.
- Reward, Benefits, Policy: Develop T's and C's and reward mechanism for CEO, Tiers 2 and 3, develop T's and C's, benefits and policies for new staff employed from 1st April 2020, agree protocol for legacy t's and c's and policies.
- TUPE: Safe and legal transfer of staff, casual workers and agency workers to new council (14,500 people of which 12,500 are staffs including schools). Ensure all administrative work of a transferor and transferee are undertaken.
- Governance: HR Contracts e.g. OH contract, BCP's.

- TU Engagement: Inform, consult and negotiation processes on all of the above.

As the unitary work is developing at a pace the HR Manager will update verbally at the meeting on any further developments that arise since the writing of this report.

3. Consultation

N/A

4. Options

N/A

5 Corporate Implications

Good management of resources including employees leads to efficient and effective use of Council finances and improved delivery of Council services.

6 Links to Council Policy Objectives

Monitoring employee turnover, recruitment and sickness absences and ensuring all Council policies, procedures and practices are current, underpin the delivery of the Council's aims and management principles and ensure legislative compliance and best practice.

7 Next Steps

Continue to monitor and update Committee Members on a quarterly basis.

Background Papers:	Appendix 1
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