

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 16 th September 2021
Report Subject	Employment and Workforce Quarterly Update
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council (Governance) and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Report Author	Senior Manager, Human Resources & Organisational Development
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide Members with a review of the organisational workforce data for the first quarter for 2021/22. This report provides details of the following:

- Headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
- Organisation Age Profile (Non –Schools and Schools)
- Employee Turnover and Stability (Including Redundancies and Early Retirements)
- Attendance
- Performance Monitoring (Appraisals)
- Resource Management (Agency Workers)
- Equality and Diversity
- Achievements made by Human Resources within the quarter

The format of this report and the accompanying Workforce Information Dashboard reports are intended to focus on organisational performance and trends. The dashboards are a visual presentation of data, showing the current status and historical trends of the Council's performance against key performance indicators.

This report provides a brief narrative on the overall performance against a number of indicators. A more detailed explanation is provided on an exceptional basis where performance is falling below organisational performance indicators or where there has been a significant movement, either upwards or downwards, in the reported trends. The narrative will include an explanation for the movement in trend and details of any proposed actions to improve or maintain performance.

The performance information is provided for the whole organisation but split to show Schools and Non-Schools data separately.

On a periodic basis, this report will highlight key achievements or projects undertaken in support of the People Strategy and/or Council Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members comment on Workforce Information Report for quarter one 2021/22 to 30 June 2021.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE WORKFORCE INFORMATION REPORT
1.01	<p>Headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE)</p> <p>The headcount and FTE figures during quarter one shows a marginal increase in FTE across the Council since April 2021. Non-schools show an increase of 6 FTE, and Schools show an overall increase of 8 FTE.</p>
1.02	<p>Age Profiling</p> <p>Age profiling the organisation, departments and teams is an important part of understanding the age demographics of our workforce and where we may need to focus attention. Why do we use age profiling?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to identify work areas with a high average age • to help plan for retirements and how we will recruit or retain staff • to highlight patterns and trends across our workforce • to support workforce planning. <p>Understanding our workforce profile, enables the Council to assess supply and potential problem areas within a given service/portfolio and aids succession planning by identifying any skill gaps that may arise. Without an analysis of age profile (and skills profile), no workable long term planning can be made.</p>

	<p>The age profile of our workforce is consistent with other local authorities.</p>
1.03	<p>Employee Turnover and Stability (Including Redundancies and Early Retirements)</p> <p>The turnover percentage for this quarter is 1.75%. This compares favourably to previous years as Q1 2019 was 2.33% and Q1 2020 was 1.02%. Whilst Q1 2020 was lower than years either side we are mindful that this reflects the impact of the pandemic and a broader slow-down in the employment market at that time. Portfolio figures reflect a similar trend.</p> <p>On this basis historical trend data suggests a projected out-turn of 10%, which is in line with the previous two years and well below the national average of 15% employment turnover. That being said, employment market trends during the pandemic have shifted so we can't be complacent and will need to monitor employee turnover and emerging trends robustly.</p> <p>Human Resource colleagues actively encourage the use of exit interviews so portfolios can monitor and understand reasons for leaving. Reasons for leaving include not having a clear understanding of what to expect to in their role and/or of the Council as an employer. The feedback obtained from exit interviews also assists Human Resources to review the effectiveness of the various recruitment methods used across the Council and justify making changes as appropriate to improve recruitment and retention.</p>
1.04	<p>Attendance</p> <p>The cumulative full time equivalent (FTE) days lost for quarter one is 2.33, which is a significant improvement compared to quarter one 20/21 at 6.46 days lost per FTE</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has seen a change in the way that all workgroups undertake their work. For a substantial number, this has seen them working from home, for others, they remain in work supported by a range of measures including but not limited to the establishment of 'bubbles', provision of appropriate PPE and/or maintaining physical distancing. All of these changes have had a positive effect on some illnesses such as infection rates.</p> <p>Attendance continues to be managed very closely, with regular reporting on the number of employees affected by COVID related absences, including those identified as a contact of a positive (index) case who are required to isolate irrespective of whether they are able to attend work (depending on the role occupied, some employees are able to work from home or be temporarily deployed to alternative duties).</p>
1.05	<p>Performance Monitoring (Appraisals)</p> <p>Many of our employees have and continue to work differently in what are often challenging circumstances. Some employees have been be unable to work due to the nature of their work or the lack of facilities to work from home. There have been particular challenges for many with the closure of</p>

	<p>schools and other services most notably those with caring responsibilities for children or other dependents.</p> <p>Employees still need a framework in which they can provide and receive feedback and continue to learn and grow and you will recall that in 2020/21 we introduced an alternative approach to our normal performance appraisals in the form of a structured one to one which provided for a welfare check, an honest discussion about what has been achieved during the preceding six months, and how they have coped. Followed by what can realistically be achieved in the coming 12 months and the normal career conversation. We are not holding statistics on completion levels at this stage but are confident that many have been completed. Looking forward to 2022, we will update and refresh the model to include a greater emphasis on values, and well-being.</p>
1.06	<p>Resource Management (Agency Workers)</p> <p>The cumulative agency spend for the quarter is £795,000. The largest agency spend is within Streetscene and Transportation at £410,000 (52%). The second largest spend is within Social Services at £181,000 (23%). Both of these services have been at the forefront of the response to the pandemic, which has required to changes to working practices, including the use of ‘bubbles’ to keep our workforce safe which has impacted on the number of additional, temporary resources required to supplement the service.</p> <p>The cumulative ‘Off-contract’ spend for the quarter is £122,000, which equates to 15% of the overall agency spend. This shows that the use of agency workers is continuing to be used more appropriately across the organisation. The main reasons for ‘off-contract’ spend is where there is a need to fill specialist, hard to fill roles such as Social Workers.</p> <p>There were a total of 122 active agency placements on 30 June. At the time of running the report 100 placements exceeded the 12 week Agency Worker Regulations threshold. Of those that exceeded the threshold, the majority (59) were within Streetscene and Transportation.</p> <p>As portfolios move into recovery, HR Business Partners continue to work closely with them to bring placements to an end and where it will support service delivery, offer workers direct employment. An exercise in Streetscene and Transportation is already underway which seeks to convert a large number of agency placements to direct employment to minimise agency spend, provide continuity of service and job security.</p>
1.07	<p>Equality and Diversity Workforce Monitoring</p> <p>Workforce diversity monitoring is an important means of demonstrating, implementing and promoting equality of opportunity. Ongoing promotion and monitoring is carried out to gather information on the diversity of our workforce including potential recruits as well as existing employees. The Council collects diversity information based on current UK equality legislation which aims to prevent discrimination on grounds of age, disability,</p>

	<p>gender, race, sexual orientation, religion and other protected characteristics. Information gathered can if analysed regularly, help us to identify barriers that prevent access to employment and career development for certain groups of people, and to develop solutions, such as positive action plans or alternative policies and practices.</p>
1.08	<p>Achievements - Apprenticeships</p> <p>Apprenticeships are a key part of our development toolkit and COVID-19 prevented us from running our usual programme last year. The good news is that due to the easing of restrictions, during quarter one, we were able to launch our apprenticeship programme for 2021/22.</p> <p>The Flintshire apprenticeship scheme provides opportunities across a range of disciplines and has been a priority for the Council for many years. Despite COVID-19 most of the apprentices on our programme remained on the programme which is a testament to the apprentices, the managers and teams supporting them. The contracts of our existing apprentices were extended to enable them to finish their studies (also affected by the pandemic) and to give them the best opportunity of securing employment either with us or other employers once restrictions were eased and employment opportunities became available.</p> <p>This year's cohort, includes following disciplines:</p> <p>Graduate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified Internal Audit (CIA) or Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy CIPFA) • Environmental Health <p>Higher level Apprentice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web Design/Marketing <p>Trade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanic • Joiner • Electrician • Heating Engineer • Plasterer <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Administration • Customer Services • Finance (AAT) • Streetscene/Local Environmental Services (General Operative placements) <p>The campaign attracted 242 applications, of which 129 candidates were short-listed and attended for first stage interview with HR.</p> <p>78 candidates attended for second stage interviews. These interviews took place concurrently across a number of days via Webex and were recorded.</p>

	<p>This new arrangement allowed all recruiting managers to be involved without the candidates having to attend multiple interviews.</p> <p>The outcome of the recruitment and selection process was that a new cohort of 29 successful candidates who been offered and accepted an apprenticeship commencing in September 2021.</p> <p>On-boarding commenced week commencing 6 September 2021.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None arising directly from this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	None as the dashboard reports appended to this report details existing actual out-turns in the various measures.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None arising directly from this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix One: Dashboard – Workforce Information Report - Quarter One 2021/22.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None arising directly from this report.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Sharon Carney, Senior Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development.</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 702139</p> <p>E-mail: sharon_carney@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

Headcount and FTE

This will provide information on the current levels of the Council's workforce.

Age Profiling

The purpose of providing the Organisational Age Profile is to enable the Council to provide a guide to the future number of potential retirements and succession plan by identifying any skill gaps that may arise. Without an analysis of age profile, no workable long term planning can be made.

Employee Turnover and Stability (Including Redundancies and Early Retirements)

This information will provide the awareness of trends in turnover rates within the Council for potential measure to be put in place for high turnover rates, if applicable.

Attendance

Attendance remains a high priority in the Council and will provide detailed information on the areas for improvement for absence/attendance. Stage 1 and Stage 2 capability hearings are the formal stages of the Attendance Management policy where sanctions including dismissal take place.

Performance Management (Appraisals)

Reporting on performance appraisals and development will enable more effective monitoring of potential training needs for future planning.

Resource Management

This information will include the usage of agency workers within the Council.

Equality and Diversity Workforce Monitoring

Information will be provided to inform what measures, if any, need to be implemented to prevent inequalities within the Council.

Red Book

JNC for Local Authority Craft & Associated Employees

Green Book

JNC National Agreement for the former APT&C and Manual employees