

CABINET REPORT
21 December 2021

WORKFORCE REPORT AND STAFFING DATA Q2 2021/2022
JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2021

**Report by Corporate Director Customers,
Organisational Development & Resources**

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report.

Executive Summary

2. Our workforce is the most valuable asset the council deploys. It is our people that make a difference to our residents and our communities. The very nature of the work, and the services we provide, is people intensive. Our residents are reliant on the professionalism of our workforce to deliver high quality services and the future ambitions of the Council.
3. During Q2 and as social distancing rules relaxed, staff have started to return to the workplace albeit not on a full time or mandatory basis as staff continue to be encouraged to work in an agile or hybrid way.
4. This report provides an update for Quarter 2 on key HR activities along with a refreshed workforce profile at Appendix 1.

Quarter 2 overview of activity.

- General Overview of the HR, OD and Corporate Health and Safety Team
- Organisational Development Activities
 - Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion
 - Managing for Performance 12:3:2
 - Apprenticeships
 - Delivering the Future Together Programme
- Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Organisational Change and Redundancies
- Q2 Staffing Data (1st July – 30th September 2021)
- Equality and Inclusion
- Sustainability Implications
- Risk Management

General Overview of the HR, OD and Corporate Health and Safety Team

5. The HR, OD and Corporate Health and Safety team is a team of professionals with a range of people expertise including HR Business Partnering and Advisory, Employee Relations, Resourcing, HR Business Systems, Reward, Organisational Development, Learning and Development and Health, Safety and Wellbeing.
6. The team continues to work in an agile and hybrid way utilising office space as required for specific meetings and collaborative events and where the nature of the work being carried out is better suited to face to face meetings. Some team members regularly work across a range of sites and this continues as part of their normal working routine as necessary.
7. The team continues to respond to both strategic and business as usual activities whilst maintaining advice, guidance and support for the workforce in response to COVID including the reduction in social distancing measures, a return to the workplace and the introduction of the vaccination regulations for those staff working in CQC registered premises.
8. We continue to update and maintain the COVID FAQ's as necessary and a weekly manager's briefing continues to be produced with a wealth of information and top tips for managers relating to business as usual and in response to common queries arising from the change in guidance around COVID.
9. Informal meetings continue to take place every 4 weeks with the trade unions. These meetings continue to have a COVID focus but also offer the opportunity for a regular dialogue on any matters that are of concern. A recent meeting had a particular focus on staff who may be suffering from long Covid. These are well attended by all trade unions and allow us to deal promptly with emerging issues whilst sharing information, maintaining good communication and enabling positive collaboration across Oxfordshire.

Organisational Development (OD) Activities

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

10. Work continues on the workforce action plan aligned to the Including Everyone: Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework with 5 of the 9 actions now complete. These include:
 - creating more opportunities for staff, particularly those in underrepresented groups in our management cohort, to have shadowing and mentoring opportunities so that everyone can reach their full potential
 - introducing a mentoring for diversity scheme. (see below for details)

- having produced a draft ethnicity pay gap report for the first time last year, we have worked to understand and tackle the barriers to accessing career progression and more senior roles for those from diverse backgrounds, including those from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background or those with a disability.
 - Providing clear and consistent communication to staff about our approach to tackle bullying and harassment through our new Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination policy (previously the Dignity at Work policy). This includes how staff can report any instances and how these will be investigated.
 - Our Reverse Mentoring Programme; Mentoring for Diversity pilot is now complete with the final review to take place during Q3. Of the 15 trained mentors from the BAME Network, 14 completed the programme.
 - Feedback from the final training session was very encouraging with many positive comments received such as *“my Mentee described how he was more confident and open to talking to his team about Race; this was really poignant”*, and *“I have a strong feeling that I have an ally. At the beginning I didn’t know to what degree or how receptive my mentee would be to discussions or ideas. My stand-out moment was just realising that!”*
11. A second cohort of mentors will be trained in Q1 (2022/23)
 12. All the mentors from the BAME Network have had the opportunity to individually discuss with the Organisational Development (OD) lead for the programme next steps and development opportunities; all our mentors have indicated that they are interested in continuing with the programme. Some pairings have agreed to continue either with a formal mentoring arrangement or on a more ad-hoc basis. Many of the BAME Network have expressed an interest in undertaking further development to become a qualified coach. A development programme will be planned for 2022/23.
 13. Work is in progress to provide increased OD support to all the inclusion networks to allow the networks to focus on their objectives and to provide an improved focus and voice for the work the networks undertake on behalf of the organisation.
 14. An external review has taken place of the EDI training offer; actions for improvement will be taken forward from Q3 (2021/22).

Managing for Performance – 12.3.2.

15. 12.3.2. is the council’s framework for managing for performance. As part of the Delivering the Future Together programme and the new values and behaviours, 12.3.2. is a key area of focus. 12 is the recommended number of one to one meetings employees should have in a 12 month period, 3 being the number of extended one to ones a year to set and review objectives and discuss personal

development opportunities and 2 being the minimum number of team meetings that include discussions around corporate priorities and how they relate to service plans and individual objectives. Our new values and behaviours are embedded into all one to one discussions.

16. A programme of training commenced in Q1 to train all managers on how to carry out quality one to one meetings with approx. 100 managers completing the programme in Q2 and a further 300 managers commencing the programme in the same quarter. In Q1 (2022/23), a third roll-out will commence for all remaining managers and supervisors, estimated to be approx. a further 300 staff. In addition, a training programme will commence in Q4 (2021/22) for newly recruited managers to ensure they receive the same consistent message around managing for performance.

Apprenticeships

17. At the end of Q2 there were 276 Apprentices on programme, 67 of these were in schools. 80 % of these are permanent staff undertaking an apprenticeship as CPD or career progression.
18. During Q1 and Q2 (2021/22) there were a total of 94 new apprenticeship enrolments compared to the same time period last year when there were 43. The committed spend for these first two quarters is £650,272. By the end of Q4 it is estimated that there will be a committed spend for 2021/22 of approximately £1,300,000.00 with new enrolment numbers around 150 - 160. To note that committed spend on enrolments is across the duration of the apprenticeship and these range from 1 - 5 years in duration subject to the apprenticeship standard.
19. During 2020/21 there were 48 Completions and 4 withdrawals. During Q1 and Q2 of 2021/22 there were 16 Completions and 2 withdrawals.
20. There has been an increase on levy spend year on year since 2017 and we anticipate this will increase again in 2021/22 based on the number of candidates enrolled in Q1 and Q2. With the added benefit from additional resource within the new Apprenticeship hub we are looking to introduce new programmes across a variety of service areas and enrol further cohorts onto the Leadership and Management, Business Improvement, Project Management and Learning Mentor programmes.
21. During the COVID 19 pandemic the Education and Skills Funding Agency introduced incentive payments for all employers who employed new apprentices into the organisation. The payments are per new employee and range from £1,500 - £3,000 per candidate. To date this has resulted in a total of £29,000 being received in total which has been transferred to the individual services employing the apprentice/s. From 1st October 2021 – 31st January 2022, the incentive has changed and is £3,000 per new apprentice employed.

Delivering the Future Together (DTFT) Programme

22. The Delivering the Future Together (DTFT) programme is our internal programme for change. The programme is about supporting, engaging, enabling and developing our people. The launch of new/refreshed values and behaviours took place on 9 June 2021 following widespread employee engagement in 2020. The refreshed values are: (1) Always learning; (2) Be kind and care; (3) Equality and Integrity in all we do; (4) Taking responsibility; and (5) Daring to do it differently. These five values underpin the DTFT programme.
23. The DTFT Champion Network supports bringing to life the values and behaviours in addition to sharing and collaborating on key activities under the Delivering the Future programme. The DTFT Champion Network now consists of over 160 DTFT Champions across all Directorates within OCC. The DTFT Champions have a 12-month schedule of topics to explore at team meetings and to-date these have included our values of 'always learning' and 'be kind and care'.
24. Phase 2 of DTFT has now been fully scoped and each one is led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The five key projects are:

Agile – creating effective ways of working between home, office and mobile that put the communities of Oxfordshire at the heart of our business, creating a work-life balance and doing work differently focussing on performance and outcomes;

Leadership and Management – growing our leadership and management approach, across all levels, that develops an individual's ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute towards the success of OCC;

Recognising great people – instilling a culture and approach where great examples of living OCC values are regularly commented on and celebrated, together with life and career events;

Recruitment and Onboarding – recruiting great people, effectively and efficiently, who understand and align with OCC values and setting them for success to thrive and flourish; and

Communications and Engagement – reviewing and developing OCC's approach to regular two-way feedback through a variety of channels to improve engagement and understanding, including regular temperature checks through employee surveys with consideration to an employer accreditation scheme.

25. Project plans and resources are to be finalised and delivery of these will be throughout 2022.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Vaccination of staff for COVID-19

26. From 11 November, all those who work in or professionally visit CQC Registered Care Homes must now have had both (2x) vaccinations against COVID-19, this excludes the booster. This will apply mainly to adult social care settings but may also include some children's dual-registered

(CQC/Ofsted) care homes e.g. disabled children and other visiting professionals.

27. All staff affected have been written to informing them of the requirements and overall the council has a very high level of compliance. For the small number of staff who have not been vaccinated, each case will be reviewed individually taking into account their specific circumstances and reasons. For roles where COVID Vaccination will be essential, this is now included as part of the recruitment process to ensure all applicants comply with the necessary requirements.

Flu Vaccination of frontline health and social care staff

28. Those persons in at risk groups (e.g. aged 50+ or those with health conditions) will be offered flu vaccination as part of the national immunisation programme via their GP/NHS. Additionally, the Council offers flu vaccination for its 'frontline health and social care workers'.
29. Approx. 400 priority flu vaccination vouchers have been offered across adult and children's social care.

COVID-19 Update

30. Council buildings and services are 'open' for business. Some occupancy capacity limits may apply whereas in some buildings this has been increased. Risk Assessments are in place with ventilation and cleaning being the main areas of focus to reduce the risk of transmission. Staff are still encouraged to adopt agile working and utilise virtual workstyles. Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) / Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protocols remain in place for some higher risk tasks in social care.

Health and Safety Monitoring

31. With the easing of COVID restrictions the Health and Safety Team have restarted the Corporate Health and Safety Monitoring Programme which includes service audits and inspections. Services where audits are currently in progress include:
- Children's Residential Services
 - Community Support Services
 - Household Waste Recycling Centres
 - Libraries
32. Audits will cover health and safety management, premises and facilities and specific service risks. Findings from audits are reported to management together with any actions which are assigned to the responsible person.

Wellbeing

Absence Recording

33. From February 2021, the Council was able to change the way absence can be recorded through the IBC. Previously an entirely employee self-service activity, the change has resulted in managers also being able to record absence in the system should an employee be unable to do so, due to, for example, hospitalisation. Prior to this change, absence was often being entered retrospectively by the employee on their return to work and as a result absence data was not as robust or accurate as it should be.
34. With managers able to enter sickness absence into the system on behalf of the employee, as anticipated, we are seeing both an increase in the level of absence recorded and more real time recording. Q2 is the first full quarter that we are seeing an impact on the data. The % of working time lost has increased from 2.74% in Q1 (2021/22) to 3.35% in Q2 (2021/22). This will continue to be monitored and managers encouraged to utilise occupational health (OH) services and ensure that staff are aware of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

Absence relating to Stress/Anxiety/Depression

35. Sickness absence arising as a result of stress/anxiety and depression accounts for 29% of all sickness absence. This has remained fairly constant throughout 2020/21 but is a significant increase on pre-Covid trends where stress related absences accounted for approximately 19% of all sickness absence. The number of Directorate based staff reporting absence resulting from stress/anxiety /depression has increased to 181 in Q2 (2021/22) from 154 in Q1 (2021/22).
36. Occupational Health (OH) referrals for stress/anxiety/depression and other psychiatric illness remains constant with an average of 70 referrals per quarter for this absence category and over a year, approximately 38% of all referrals to OH are for these conditions. Given the increase in absence rates, this would suggest that referrals to OH for stress/anxiety and depression are perhaps not as swift as they could be. The HR team will remind managers of the importance of referring to OH and HRBPs will raise this at Directorate Leadership Teams.

Long term sickness absence

37. Long term sickness absence is denoted as continuous absence of 20 days or more. In Q2, there was an increase of 20 employees who met this threshold compared to Q1. Whilst 45% of those who were off long term sick in Q1 remained off sick in Q2, 42% returned to work and 14% of staff left the Council.
38. Whilst there was an increase of new long term sickness cases in Q2, OH referrals for long term absence reduced by 1.26%. The HR team will remind managers the importance of referring staff to OH quickly to ensure they can be supported.

39. The spread of OH referrals for long term absence were 52% for Adults and Children's (a near equal split), 20% from Schools, 11% from Commercial Development, Assets and Investment, 11% from Environment and Place, 4% from Customers, Organisational Development and Resources and 2% from Public Health

Covid Related Absence

40. Of 5087 staff, 172 (3.38%) reported an absence due to a Covid related sickness during Q2 which is an increase on Q1. However, of these, 101 were absent for between 1-3 days which may have been directly linked to either the side effects resulting from the vaccine or because the impact of the vaccination programme is reducing the level and impact of the illness experienced.

Employee Assistance Programme - VITA

41. The Council provides all employees with an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which provides access to a trained counsellor and 6 sessions of counselling if this is recommended at the point of assessment. Staff do not require a management referral to access these services and can self-refer. Other advice and guidance services are also provided as part of the EAP service.
42. The following tables provides the first year statistics for VITA (Sept 2020 – Oct 2021) broken into personal and work related calls.

Reason for Call (Personal)	Number
Personal Calls	292
Legal	47
Information and Advice	29
Manager's Hotline	6
Career Coaching	4
Total	378

43. Just under 30% of personal calls made to Vita were for work reasons of which;

Reason for Call (Work Related)	Number
Work Stress	50
Covid Concerns	12

Grievance/Disciplinary/Suspension	9
Bullying and Harassment	7
Concerns over work	7
Total	85

44. Most employees were made aware of the services available from Vita by their line managers which is positive.

- 80% of all calls were made by female staff but this is proportionate to our gender workforce split.
- 36% made by staff from Children's services
- 23% made by staff from Adult services
- 16% made by staff from Environment and Place and Commercial Development, Assets and Investment.

45. Vita also provides a Manager's advice hotline which was only utilised 6 times, a utilisation rate of 3.4% compared to an industry average of 5.3%. Further work will be undertaken to promote this aspect of the EAP with managers.

Neurodiversity Group

46. Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. It highlights that people naturally think about things differently. We have different interests and motivations and are naturally better at some things and poorer at others. Most people are neurotypical, meaning that the brain functions and processes information in the way society expects.
47. However, it is estimated that around 1 in 7 people (more than 15 per cent of people in the UK) are neurodivergent, meaning that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently. Neurodivergence includes:
- Attention Deficit Disorders
 - Autism
 - Dyscalculia
 - Dyslexia
 - Dyspraxia
 - Epilepsy
 - Tourette's syndrome
48. The Council recently established a Neurodiversity group for staff. The group continues to grow and now has over 30 members. ICT are working with the Wellbeing team to improve the experience for staff that require specialist software to support them in the workplace. The group offers those staff who consider themselves neurodivergent, or want to support someone who is neurodivergent, support and adjustment can be accessed.

Wellbeing Webinars

49. The following Wellbeing webinars will be run over the next 3 months.

- Managing Anger, worry and burnout
- 2 steps to happiness
- Managing and alleviating isolation and loneliness
- Promoting good sleep
- Menopause
- Cancer in the Workplace.
- Volunteering Opportunities
- Men's Health
- Back Care
- Mental Health
- Supporting mental wellbeing at work - managers course
- DSE Set Up
- 2 steps to happiness

Organisational Change and Redundancies

50. During Q2 the HR Business Partners and Advisory team have continued to support several organisational change programmes.
51. Consultation of phase 2 and 3 of the joint Property, Investment and Facilities Management change programme concluded in Q2 and is moving forward to the implementation phase.
52. It is anticipated that consultation on the new senior structure in Environment and Place will commence in Q3 or Q4.
53. A consultation on a restructure of business support in adult social care concluded on 27th August 2021. The new structure will achieve greater levels of self-service from employees, managers and teams across the service, with tasks being done at the appropriate level across the organisation. This will ensure that resource is used in the most efficient way, which aligns with the council's transformation approach. Five redundancies may result if suitable redeployment cannot be identified.
54. A consultation on the introduction of 7 day working for Occupational Therapists, Coordinators, Practice Supervisors and the Team Manager working within the Reablement Outreach Team (ROT) concluded on 23rd August 2021. The Hospital Discharge Operating Policy, 2020 Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) states that all discharge to assess services should operate a 7-day service without exception, to ensure integrated relationships between health and social care partners and better outcomes for the individual. This integrated working will aid the flow of people into Home First across the whole week and to remove pressure points immediately before and after weekends. ROT staff are an essential part of the Home First initiative and will be working on supporting hospital discharge and admission prevention from the

community, whilst promoting sustainable independence and wellbeing. The new arrangements are effective from 4th October 2021.

55. In Q2 (2021/22) there were a total of 2 redundancies at the Council, arising from the organisational change programme taking place in the Directorate of Commercial Development, Assets and Investment.

Q2 Staffing Data (1st July – 30th September 2021)

56. Appendix 1 of this report provides staffing data relating to the workforce profile including sickness absence, turnover, apprenticeship numbers and agency spend.
57. Workforce data and trends are published in more detail on the Council's intranet. This includes a breakdown of staffing numbers and trends over the past five quarters by Directorates and Schools, including temporary and part time employees, turnover and sickness rates along with diversity and salary profiles. This data provides information by service and includes the spend and use of agency workers.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

58. Equality and inclusion implications are considered across all our workstreams as identified in the section above.

Sustainability Implications

59. There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

60. There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

CLAIRE TAYLOR

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Annex: Appendix 1 - Workforce Profile Q2

Background papers: Nil

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November 2021