

## **CABINET REPORT**

**20 December 2022**

### **WORKFORCE REPORT AND STAFFING DATA Q2 2022/2023 JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2022**

**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 communities. The very nature of the services we provide, is people intensive. Our residents and our communities are reliant on the professionalism of our workforce to deliver high quality services and the future ambitions of the council.
- 3 This report provides an update on the key strategic workforce priority areas for Quarter 2 and a refreshed workforce profile at Appendix 1.

#### **Quarter 2 – Strategic Workforce Priorities**

Developing the Workforce of the Future

Workforce Planning

Resourcing Strategy

Cost of Living

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

#### **Quarter 2 – Key Activity**

Apprenticeships

Health and Safety

Occupational Health

#### **Developing the Workforce of the Future**

#### **Workforce Planning**

- 4 Workforce planning is a continual process used to align the needs and priorities of the organisation, with those of its workforce to ensure it can meet all Council objectives in the delivery and development of services for our residents.
- 5 Workforce planning promotes greater awareness of the importance of sound human resources planning throughout all levels of the organisation and must consider a range of workforce demographics such as an ageing workforce, increasing the diversity of our workforce and the need to grow our own talent, nurture the talent already within and take account of other workforce developments such as the move towards increased agile working.
- 6 Workforce Planning also provides a better basis for planning employee development and should be a key part of the Council's 12.3.2. conversations ensuring that the Council makes optimum use of everyone's skills and knowledge whilst identifying key areas for both team and individual development.
- 7 Workforce planning is a collaborative exercise between HR and the business, so to support this, the HR Business Partnering team have developed a workforce planning tool to help support and facilitate conversations with their Directorates to prompt and encourage strategic thinking about future workforce requirements and the associated benefits.
- 8 The approach has been developed to focus on challenges and issues, helping operations to prepare for the longer term, understand where the business area is, where it needs to be to deliver its service plans, what the gap is and solutions to bridge the gap which includes a focus on talent management and the potential likelihood of talent acquisition.
- 9 Key organisational benefits from effective workforce planning include reducing costs by helping to anticipate shortages or surpluses with the opportunity to correct imbalances before they become unmanageable and expensive for the organisation.
- 10 The latest research suggests that organisations who effectively workforce plan experience on average of 10% better business outcomes.
- 11 A guide and three questionnaires have been developed that follow the same process but with different questions targeted for each of the timeframes detailed below and these are aimed at Tiers 1, 2 and 3 within the management structure, as follows:

**Operational Workforce Planning** for all service managers which looks at the next 6/12 months ahead (all those under Head of Service, Tier 3 and below), supported by the HR Business Partnering and Advisory Team.

**Strategic Workforce Planning** - medium to long term to be undertaken by Heads of Service/Deputy/Directors of services (Tier 2

and below), considering the operational workforce plans from their direct reports and the next 1 – 2 years, supported by the HR Business Partnering and Advisory Team.

**Cross Organisational Workforce Planning** – long term (3-5 years) owned by SLT (Tier 1) and supported by the Director of HR & OD.

- 12 A pilot programme has been undertaken and the process is underway across all Directorates and in the future will work alongside the wider service planning arrangements within the Council.

### **Resourcing Strategy**

- 13 Strategic Resourcing considers the integration of resourcing and business plans and should take into consideration the full resourcing function and corporate strategies for **workforce planning**, talent management, talent attraction and retention and the process of recruitment and selection.
- 14 Attracting and retaining talent is one of the key future challenges for organisations. With the changing environment of today, politically, externally, and internally it is one of rapid change and uncertainty. Changing economic direction, rapid technology advances and increased pressures to do more with less are just some of the factors leading to increased pressure on the organisation to ensure that required talent is in place to effectively respond to changing business priorities.
- 15 With predictions of shortages in the public sector workforce for the next seven years, unprecedented shortfalls in the social care sector, teaching and professional services and with the continued impact of Brexit and the COVID pandemic we are in an unknown position. This is a national crisis and a national challenge.
- 16 The focus of the council must be on identifying the talents and skills needed to meet business requirements; where and how to fill current gaps and how to fulfil our future talent needs: what future talent does the business require and more importantly where will these employees come from?
- 17 We need to proactively take back control of the way we bring our people into the organisation, driving and influencing our future workforce rather than be almost entirely reliant on current arrangements which are not fit for purpose. The current operating model is fragmented with significant parts of the recruitment process provided externally, severely restricting the council's ability to make any changes or service improvements in response to market demands.
- 18 The resourcing strategy will identify and focus on our unique offering, our Unique Selling Point (USP), and communicate this through our Employer Brand to attract a diverse audience, targeting unknown resources to attract talent from the private sector, youth, people living outside of Oxfordshire, returners,

changers and most importantly promoting the opportunities to grow our own talent.

- 19 Our strategy does not solely rely on attracting new talent, it works in balance to retain our current workforce. Truly engaging our current employees, managing our talent, offering realistic internal opportunities, utilising training and development as an identified progression tool, open flexible working arrangements and reward and recognition strategies that are transparent and fair are all key to retaining our workforce in today's climate.
- 20 In our current situation there is no short-term solution. There must be radical change to address the situation, implementing the core basics and building the foundations for our future workforce.
- 21 A fundamental part of the resourcing strategy addresses the need to significantly reduce the council's agency spend by identifying and establishing clear and sustainable commercial routes to market to source both our temporary and permanent workforce requirements.
- 22 It is acknowledged that there will always be a need for a contingent workforce within the council and a balance of permanent and temporary resource must be maintained. To address this there is a key workstream to focus on developing and procuring commercial, outsourcing contracts that are fit for corporate and directorate requirement. with the objective of reducing agency spend across the Council.
- 23 The programme of change required needs support and interaction at all levels and is outlined in detail within the draft resourcing strategy (appendix 1). The transformation requires several interdependencies as the process flows through various departmental responsibilities and accountabilities and includes the following recommendations.

**Workforce planning strategy-** defining the requirement, understanding supply and demand, clearly identifying skills gaps, implementing strategic workforce interventions such as talent programmes, succession planning, academies, and defined career paths.

**Resourcing model redesign** - move away from the current outsourcing model to a fully functioning corporate central service with an "in-house" resourcing team focused on "direct hire", supported by a commercial outsourcing structure fit for directorate and business requirement.

**Resourcing function redesign** - move away from the current outsourcing model and replace with an in-house/hybrid resourcing model providing recruiting outputs required to support and add value to the business based on evidenced outcomes and supported by robust policies.

**Digital Transformation** - Implement a standalone Applicant Tracking System (ATS) system with full functionality for automated processes

through the full 360 process, from requisition approval to new starter set up providing a reporting function and digital dashboard that contributes to and drives data driven resourcing. Recapture of the vacancy landing page, career microsite and candidate journey.

### **Attraction methodology redesign**

**Employee Value Proposition (EVP)** - Redesign, development, and implementation of our EVP under four key pillars clearly identifying the key drivers for our current workforce and our target audience and communicated through our Employer Brand.

**Employer Brand** - design, development, and implementation of our Employer Brand as “one offering, one Oxfordshire council” defining “our purpose” and ensuring we effectively influence all touch points through the employee lifecycle to become an employer of choice.

**Recruitment Marketing Strategy** - Define a clear commercial recruitment marketing strategy incorporating the social media element to complement our Employer Brand and influence, target and attract our required audience.

**Retention** - redefine our current development opportunities and upskill our current talent through our internal Organisational Development and Learning and Development offering such as talent management programmes, leadership programs and apprenticeships and realistic promotion opportunities.

- 24 The strategy is moving forward with programme management documentation prepared to support the delivery of the various workstreams outlined in the strategy document.
- 25 The programme of change and transformation incorporates six projects that will run in parallel to deliver the objectives and benefits associated with the strategy as follows:
  - Project 1 – Resourcing Function
  - Project 2 – Resourcing Model
  - Project 3 – Process, Policy and Design
  - Project 4 – Digital Transformation
  - Project 5 – Employee Value Proposition
  - Project 6 – Employer Brand
- 26 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will run through all of the projects and members of the staff networks will be invited to join all of the project workstreams.

## The Pay Award

- 27 The pay award for 2022/23 remained in negotiation and once the pay offer was made (£1,925 to be applied to all pay scales), the trade unions would need to consult with their members. Based on projected dates it was considered unlikely that the pay award would reach salaries until December 2022 some 9 months after it became effective, and this has proven to be the case.
- 28 The flat pay offer (rather than a % increase) was designed to ensure that the lowest pay scales in local government would see the biggest uplift in pay. This was especially important as the lowest pay scales had seen an erosion in value in recent years and had become equivalent to the National Living Wage, a position that Local Government had never intended to be in. The flat pay offer when converted to a percentage uplift provided staff within pay scales 1 – 3 with a pay uplift in excess of 10 % tapering to an increase of 2.86% for those paid at the top of Grade 18.

## Cost of Living

- 29 In Quarter 2 and in light of the growing concerns regarding the cost of living crisis, the HR team commenced a piece of work to look at options to provide some extra support for our lowest paid members of staff. The costs of petrol and diesel were particularly concerning especially for those staff who were required as part of their job role to undertake high rates of business mileage and were some of our lowest paid members of staff in the organisation.
- 30 A range of options were presented to the senior leadership team for consideration which focussed on our lowest paid members of staff. The senior leadership team opted to make a 'one off' payment to the lowest paid staff incurring the highest level of business mileage. The payment was split into bands and scaled accordingly to pay grade and number of miles travelled set by a reference period, with the highest payment being £1,250 and the lowest payment £200.
- 31 The council has also implemented a staff benefits platform and a financial wellbeing service. The benefits platform provides a range of instant discounts to help save money across a range of major retailers, supermarkets, travel, dining out, entertainment and more. The financial wellbeing scheme provides financial advice and debt management, pay day advances to help staff with unexpected costs part way through the month enabling draw down on salary already earned to help with emergencies and support better budgeting. The scheme also offers responsible borrowing rates, salary deducted savings accounts and the Help to Save scheme which enables any staff member in receipt of working tax credits (approximately 20% of the national workforce) to obtain a bonus of up to £1,200 on their savings over 4 years.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 32 We have taken out corporate membership of Inclusive Employers; a non-affiliated organisation providing best practice advice and guidance on EDI matters, training and development, benchmarking and networking. The membership provides unlimited access to all staff and members at OCC. About - Inclusive Employers. Inclusive Employers were commissioned to undertake a comprehensive review of our EDI training and development offer and to make recommendations for improvements. The report was well received and work is now taking place to implement the recommendations and develop learning pathways for all staff, all people managers, all leaders, HR and Policy staff and our BAME colleagues to support with career development.
- 33 The people managers pathway will be included in the essential core skills for managers programme. It is planned for this programme will also have ILM accreditation.
- 34 Opportunities for all staff to gain English and Maths Level 2 qualifications (equivalent to GCSE) continue to be promoted and to be successful.
- 35 To date 18 people have successfully completed L2 English and 16 have completed L2 Maths. Fifty one people are currently studying for maths, English or both and of these 42 are female and 9 are male. We have 48 active enrolments on the maths course and 31 on English. In addition we are working with the provider of the L2 qualifications to develop a refresher course for people who have already achieved GCSE maths and English but lack confidence in their skills which is potentially holding them back from career progression.

## Quarter 2 – Key Activities

### Apprenticeships

- 36 At the end of Q2 there were 271 Apprentices on programme, 63 of these were in schools. 79% of these are permanent staff undertaking an apprenticeship as CPD or career progression.
- 37 During Q2 22/23 there were a total of 30 new apprenticeship enrolments compared to 58 for the same period last year. Despite having less enrolments the actual spend has risen from £173,052 in Q2 2021/2022 to £207,914 in Q2 2022/23.
- 38 The committed spend for the Q2 2022/23 for new enrolments is £276,097. There has been a reduction with enrolments to apprenticeship posts this quarter as many areas who had planned within their structures to recruit apprentices have removed them as part of savings targets required within the budget planning process. However, a number of CPD apprenticeships for current staff in Facilities are in the pipeline but have been slightly delayed as the programme is new to the council and whilst the best provider for the programme can be procured. Environment and Place are also planning to enrol

a number of apprentices as part of their transformation programme in Civil Engineering, Transport/Town Planning and Business Administration and these are anticipated to progress in Quarter 4.

- 39 We are also currently in the process of enrolling 10 staff within Facilities management these are all CPD enrolments and have been delayed whilst ensuring we have procured the best provider as this is a new programme.
- 39 The Apprenticeship Hub continue to support all colleagues with identifying additional and appropriate apprenticeship opportunities. An organisation wide webinar was launched in Q2 with a focus of Data Apprenticeships which had a very healthy attendance. Leadership and Management is another area that will be focused on in Q3 to support with formal qualification and attainment of management qualifications for staff.
- 40 During Q2 22/23 there were 16 Completions and 6 withdrawals.
- 41 The Apprenticeship Hub is continuing to review all withdrawal data to assess where trends are occurring and how the strategy for 2022/2023 can be supported to minimise all withdrawals. We are continuing to undertake monthly reviews with all training providers to manage on programme progression of learners, and with managers to minimise withdrawals with early intervention.
- 42 Final applications for incentive funding allocated to any new apprenticeship start during COVID have now been submitted. Total funding received for these incentive payments in 2021/2022 was approximately £40,000 and it is estimated that we will receive a further £35,000 during 2022/2023. All COVID-19 apprenticeship incentive payments have or will be transferred back to the recruiting service.
- 43 Work continues with Adults and Children to develop a fit for purpose Social Care academy to support new career pathways at all levels, with the aim to attract, develop and retain Social Workers and Occupational Therapists. Five new Social Workers have been enrolled in Quarter 2.
- 44 With the presence and work of the Apprenticeship Hub becoming further embedded within the organisation we are further expanding on apprenticeship opportunities in all Directorates. Facilities, Climate Action group and Legal are three areas that are currently being reviewed with multiple apprenticeship posts being included within new structures.
- 45 In Quarter 2 the review of the apprenticeship procurement process has been completed with support from the Procurement and Legal teams. This piece of work is critical to the streamlining and efficiency of awarding contracts with an in-house designed framework.
- 46 A project created to formalise work experience opportunities within Oxfordshire County Council has also begun. The project is designed to evaluate potential work experience placements within the organisation whilst engaging with

schools across the county. The second phase is now underway to develop an accessible application process for school learners, whilst also ensuring clarity for service areas and teams. The purpose of this work is to further strengthen the appeal to school leavers to join the council and strengthen links with the community whilst promoting career and employment opportunities at the council for young people.

#### Apprenticeships and the Oxfordshire Virtual School

- 47 The Oxfordshire Virtual School works with care leavers from ages 16 to 25 years, providing support, education and information to achieve independence and employment. It has been agreed that the Apprenticeship Hub will start to provide some individual support with initial advice and guidance on apprenticeship opportunities with candidates that are seeking employment and learning opportunities, not only with the Council but also throughout the County. The purpose will be to create individual rapport with the learners who may have Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP's), challenging behaviours or learning difficulties to find exciting and meaningful apprenticeship opportunities for their personal career development.
- 48 The support will involve meeting with the learners on an individual basis to identify career interest, appropriate programmes and the most supportive providers available. The support will then continue in the form of working with potential employers, training providers and other services within the Council to achieve the best opportunities and outcomes available.

#### **Corporate Health and Safety**

##### Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

- 49 To date 2472 DSE Workstation Assessments have been completed. Where staff require more detailed assessment or significant adjustments are required then this may require referral to Occupational Health or the Health and Safety Team. Managers should ensure all staff have a suitable workstation including when working from home. Additional equipment e.g. screens, keyboards and chairs can be supplied. For more information [How to set up your home workstation](#)

##### New Training – Personal Safety and Lone Working for Social Care Staff

- 50 As part of our promotion of personal safety and lone working we have recently launched new training for all social care staff. The course content has been developed in conjunction with the Principle Social Workers and reflects scenarios social care staff may face. This 3hr course provides an overview and understanding of the practical issues around personal safety while lone working and will cover how to plan and implement a safe home visit, what causes conflict and de-escalation techniques.
- 51 Interest for this training is high and the initial 6 dates Oct – Feb have been fully booked and further dates have been added.

### Essential Corporate H&S Training

- 52 All staff are required to complete the essential corporate H&S Training as a minimum. This training is auto assigned to learning profiles and forms part of Induction. Staff are emailed regular reminders to complete the training by the specified deadline.
- 53 As of October, 505 out of 831 (63%) line managers have completed the managers training and 3454 or 3735) 92% of all staff have completed the introduction to H&S eLearning.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

- 54 A total of 235 referrals were made to PAM Occupational Health in Q2 representing a decrease of 16% from the previous quarter. As per the previous two quarters, the age range of 51 – 60 accounted for the highest proportion of referrals made. The majority of referrals came from Children’s Services, Adult Social care and Schools.
- 55 The top three reasons for referral to Occupational Health in Q2 are noted below along with the top reasons in each category.

<b>1. Anxiety, Stress, Depression and Other Psychiatric illnesses</b>	
Stress	17
Anxiety	11
Depression	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>2. Musculoskeletal</b>	
Inflammatory conditions	4
Lower body	11
Upper body	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3. Covid</b>	
Long Covid	10
Post Covid	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

### Employee Assistance Programme

- 56 Calls made to VITA our Employee Assistance Programme provider include:-
- 50 calls for emotional support
  - 18 for legal information
  - 8 for information and advice
  - 2 calls were made for career coaching

- 57 Of the 50 calls to the emotional support line, the main reasons for the calls are categorised below. As individuals often present with more than one reason, the number of issues exceeds the calls made.

Personal reasons – 49  
Work/career - 9  
Family – 8

- 58 The highest users of the service in order are Children's services, Adult Social Care and Schools.

#### Wellbeing initiatives.

- 59 Webinars that have taken place over Q2 include the following: long covid, financial webinar, heart health, NHS checks, EAP awareness including line managers sessions, trauma sessions, neurodiversity in the workplace.

#### **Q2 Staffing Data (1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022)**

- 60 Appendix 1 of this report provides staffing data relating to the workforce profile including sickness absence, turnover, apprenticeship numbers and agency spend.
- 61 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**

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

#### **Sustainability Implications**

- 63 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **Risk Management**

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

### **CLAIRE TAYLOR**

Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources

**Annex:** Appendix 1 - Workforce Profile Q2  
Appendix 2 – Resourcing Strategy

**Background papers:** Nil

**Contact Officer:** Karen Edwards, Director Human Resources

**December 2022**