CABINET – 17 NOVEMBER 2020

Workforce Report and Staffing Data Q2 2020/2021

Report by the Corporate Director Customers & Organisational Development

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 Council's future ambitions.

3. As reported in Q1, many of our staff continue to work from home during the pandemic whilst some services have returned to council buildings in limited circumstances. Arrangements for individual staff to work from a council building based on wellbeing needs, continue to be risk assessed and actioned where appropriate.

4. This report is retrospective to Q2, however the very recent introduction of further national restrictions will require a review of current working arrangements for those staff who have been working from council buildings due to personal and wellbeing needs. A review and refresh of wellbeing provision is underway to ensure it remains fit for purpose and addresses the ongoing impact of the pandemic on staff.

5. This report provides an update on key HR activities during Quarter 2 (1st July – 30th September 2020) along with a refreshed workforce profile at Appendix 1 and absence data including COVID related absence data which is provided at Appendix 2.

Human Resources – Quarter 2 overview of activity.

- General Overview of HR activity

- Organisational Development

- Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

- Organisational Change activities

- Resourcing

- Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- Quarter 2 Workforce Data Update

General Overview of HR activity

6.   The HR team continues to work flexibly and predominantly from home with no impact on the delivery of services. During Quarter 2, the team has continued to respond to COVID 19 but we have seen a significant increase in business as usual activity. We continue to adapt the delivery of our services and the advice we provide in response to the challenges our workforce experience as a result of the pandemic.

7.   The team is made up of a range of specialists including H R Business Partners and Advisory, Reward, Resourcing, Business Systems and Data Analytics, Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing and Organisational Development (OD). The range of knowledge, skills and experience across the team has been instrumental in providing an effective response to the pandemic and this continues to be the case as we move forward and respond to the new and various challenges the pandemic brings whilst ensuring that we move forward to deliver and support council ambitions.

8.   We continue to update FAQ's as national advice and guidance changes and in response to new topics that emerge as the pandemic continues. A weekly manager's briefing continues to be produced providing a wealth of information and top tips for managers on areas such as looking after the wellbeing of employees and sharing good practice.

9.   Regular informal meetings with the trade unions continue to work well and maintain good communication and collaboration.

Organisational Development

10.   Key areas of work for Organisational Development (OD) include working in collaboration with IT colleagues to form a joint OCC/CDC working group known as 'Teams Accelerator'. This group supports the rapid adoption of key Microsoft Teams skills. Many employees had not used or had very limited experience of the Teams application before lockdown. The group therefore focused its first phase on promoting and developing 'Essential' Teams skills and behaviours. This work has included the production of simple 'Tips Sheets' promoted through a campaign of intranet headlines, refreshed and developed intranet content, and very well received lunchtime live 'drop in' sessions open to all employees.

11.   The recent digital audit indicates most employees now feel confident using MS Teams although for many this may just mean Teams meetings. The next step is to support the organisation to exploit the full functionality of Teams and in particular the use of Teams 'Chat' to replace Skype for Business, as well as collaborative document production. The work of this group will align and integrate with the Agile Working project as it defines how the organisation might work in the future.

12.   Learning & Development activities have continued to deliver training opportunities during COVID. Although face-to-face courses are not generally

possible, we have worked with training providers to re-scope and re-develop specifications for courses to be delivered virtually.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

13. Colleagues from HR and OD are working together on the HR aspects of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion work that is taking place across the council.

14. A workforce action plan has been developed and is aligned to the recently agreed 'Including Everyone' Framework.

15. Activity currently being undertaken includes:

- Creating more opportunities for staff, particularly those in underrepresented groups, to have shadowing and mentoring opportunities so that everyone can reach their full potential.

- The introduction of a reverse mentoring for diversity scheme. This will initially be a programme for senior leaders but will be rolled out to service and team leaders following the review of the pilot scheme due to be completed in summer 2021.

- Supporting the work to maintain our Armed Forces Gold Award, improve our position in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and work towards achieving level 3 in the Disability Confidence Scheme, moving up from level 2. In addition, we will agree how we can get external verification of our progress around race equality.

- Delivering the actions in the Equality in Employment 2020 report which includes:

  o providing clear and consistent communication about why we collect equalities information and how we use it is key to help improve confidence to disclose and in turn will help us improve employment opportunities and experiences

  o Explore progression and any barriers for BAME applicants in the recruitment process through in-depth analysis of recruitment data

  o Investigate what attracts younger people to work for OCC, their experiences, and explore reasons for leaving via an improved exit interview process.

- Developing a clear set of expectations for staff and managers that recognises the importance of staff networks, mentors and champions. This will include recognising the time commitments that come with these roles and the support required from managers for staff taking on these additional responsibilities.

- Providing clear and consistent communication to staff about our approach to tackle bullying and harassment through our Dignity at Work policy. This will include how staff can report any instances and how these will be investigated.

- Plans to develop and roll out unconscious bias training for all staff ensuring this is embedded into our management processes including recruitment, performance management and induction

16. Work will commence to start producing an Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting. Whilst pay gap reporting is a crude tool of measurement, the information it provides enables a light to be shone on other areas that require focus such as recruitment, retention, development opportunities and progression.

Organisational Change Programmes

17. The HR Business Partners and Advisory team have continued to support several projects where changes to staffing structures are needed. Support provided has included preparation of consultation documentation, designing processes to move from old to new structures, arranging and attending one to one meetings with all staff in scope of change, consulting with Trade Unions, ensuring changes meet legislative requirements, responding to questions asked through the consultation process and arranging selection and redundancy processes where these are necessary. Colleagues from Reward support the organisational change programmes through the provision of Job Evaluation panels and advice.

18. Programmes currently underway include:

Finance Functions

19. This project is part of an ongoing review of social care system activity, and implements a new social care team structure incorporating Financial Assessments, Money Management, Income & Debt Recovery, Payments and System Data; drawing existing activity together to carry out system tasks and generate accurate and timely payments to providers. Consultation is complete and transition activity is now underway ready for the go live date on 23rd November 2020.

Provision Cycle

20. The key objectives of the Provision Cycle (Commissioning, Procurement and Contract Management) review are to ensure that the future functions are able to deliver a strategic approach to managing the authority's expenditure that aligns to leading practice with enhanced commercial capability through a scalable model capable of handling additional activity as required.

21. The design takes into account the commitment to joint working expressed by both authorities and consequently some posts within the proposed structures are joint posts, either with CDC or with the CCG.

22. Two separate consultation exercises are underway as part of the Provision Cycle, the 'hub' and the Health, Education and Social Care 'spoke' transformed commissioning arrangements.

The Hub

23. Proposals will establish a consolidated Procurement and Contract Management Hub working across OCC and CDC which will drive the

professionalisation and consistency with which procurement and contract management activities are delivered as well as reducing fragmentation and duplication of effort. It will aid organisational wide decision making in relation to key areas of expenditure and develop a single repository of contract and spend data and used to inform effective decision making in relation to third party spend. Consultation on the Hub concluded on 30th September 2020 with implementation of the new structure underway with the new structure going live on 4th January 2021.

Health, Education and Social Care (HESC) Spoke

24.   The key objectives of the transformed commissioning arrangements are to provide more strategic commissioning across the Council and CCG, removing duplication of effort across the system. It will aim to shape services by working with the market to become more resilient, providing higher quality services and improving outcomes for local people whilst supporting the development of the Integrated Care Partnership.

25.   Collective consultation is underway and is due to conclude on 13th November 2020.

Children's Family Safeguarding Model

26.   Consultation is complete and the transition and implementation phases are underway.

27.   The service is introducing the concept of Change Ambassadors to support the transition and implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model. Change Ambassadors are not a stand-alone role but will be sought from within the existing staff cohort from those with a keen interest in supporting the transition and implementation work. The Change Ambassador will work closely with the Principal Social Workers and the Staff Engagement Manager to maintain consistent momentum and communication and to enable colleagues to work collaboratively and creatively, sharing ideas and solutions to drive further improvements whilst embedding new ways of working across the service. Change Ambassadors will be sought by way of expression of interest and an informal interview if required.

HR Resourcing

28.   The HR Resourcing team supports hiring managers with critical areas of recruitment activity to offer targeted strategic and advisory support. This small team has a wide and varied reach across the organisation.

29.   The following provides some key highlights of the resourcing work undertaken in Q2 some of which will come to fruition in Q3.
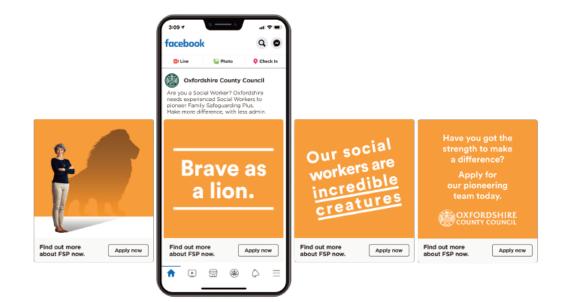
Children's Social Worker Recruitment Campaign

30.   We have developed and launched a digital first recruitment campaign to recruit more Children's Social Workers to support the new 'Family Safeguarding social work delivery model.

31.   Research tells us that we have (at best) about 1.7 seconds to grab people's attention as they scroll on social media. It's this fight for attention that has guided our creative recruitment work for this campaign. The average Facebook user scrolls five miles a year on their phone. So, attention is fleeting, and competition is fierce.

32.   We've engaged a media agency and facilitated focus groups with social work teams to help shape the concepts and strapline for this service. Feedback was positive from the sessions and staff felt strongly that the council knows, and very much values, its social workers. The final concept is below:

> *Social carers have incredible strengths. They're a different breed. They find more motivation when others would quit. More courage when others would walk away. More strength when others lose the will.*
>
> *Our social workers are incredible creatures.*

33.   The campaign includes internal recruitment, agency temp to perm conversions, direct external recruitment and agency search support. We engaged with a recruitment agency who facilitated a live webinar for potential candidates hosted in August. A microsite has been developed to help market the roles and provide a quick route for candidates to engage with the council and express an interest in working with us.

34.   A social media campaign was launched on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter.

35.   We had 47 applications and made 24 offers so far (internal and external: direct x 11, external agency x 1, internal x 12).

36.   BBC Radio Oxford are running a campaign to help promote and connect local job seekers with over a million pounds worth of work in Oxfordshire. We have engaged with the team running the campaign and our job vacancies are being promoted for free in bulletins live on air. They will also appear on the BBC Radio Oxford website. This will go live in October 2020.

Covid 19 Interim Roles

37.   We have allocated dedicated support to help source candidates for newly created interim posts within Public Health to support with Covid 19 work that has been funded by central government grants. The roles include Infection Control Nurses, Senior Public Health Analysts, Senior Public Health Protection Advisors and Public Health Consultants. These are new and niche roles where demand for candidates is fierce. Regular meetings with Public Health managers, researching equivalent roles available nationally, benchmarked market pay rates, promoted roles on social media and NHS Jobs, engaged with key agencies and helped improve the quality of job descriptions. Nearly 100 candidates have been reviewed so far and a number of bookings agreed.

38.   We have also supported Community Protection Services with recruiting to several new temporary Covid 19 Compliance Support Officer roles. We helped improve the job description and position title to help with attracting suitable candidates. Over 50 candidates were submitted for review and 3 positions have now been filled within just a few weeks.

Support with urgent onboarding requirements within Adult Social Care

39.   Following a request from Adult Social Care - we processed pre employment checks, onboarded and started a new Team Manager for the Hospital team within a week of the initial request. This post was required urgently to support case work.

Growth Recruitment Campaign

40.   The team have been supporting the Growth teams with planning a complex recruitment campaign for a large number of vacancies covering different specialisms (such as Project and Programme Managers and technical roles such as Transport Planners). We have supported with designing job descriptions, developing creative advert copy, market rate/reward package research and recruitment timeline planning.

41.   A microsite has been developed to help market the new roles and we have worked with a media agency to develop a talent pool. This approach was proposed to help hold candidates interested in working for us so that hiring can be staggered to ensure onboarding is handled in a sensible way. Over 300 candidates have been approached so far. We are continuing to support with recruitment advice, interview process planning, remote onboarding and managing agencies working on interim roles.

Senior Auditor Recruitment Campaign

42. Historically auditor posts have been very hard to fill on both a temporary and permanent basis. We recently worked with the Audit Manager to recruit to a Senior Auditor role. Alongside advertising this role on the OCC website, we posted to LinkedIn and engaged with agencies specialising in recruiting to this type of role. The introductory fee was negotiated by the Resourcing team. Quality CV's were received very quickly, and an offer was made. A new starter is scheduled to join in November 2020.

Provision Cycle Hub

43. In line with the organisational change programme, we are currently supporting the Procurement Team through the Provision Cycle Hub restructure. We have undertaken recruitment planning aligned to internal consultation and ring-fencing processes so that we can recruit to any remaining roles. As part of this, we have put together recruitment action plans, reviewed job descriptions and conducted market rate research.

44. We have also recently assisted with the recruitment of an interim Head of Procurement, this involved identifying key agencies, facilitating briefing sessions, liaising with the Corporate Director and agencies to arrange interviews and providing advice and support with onboarding of the successful candidate. From the point of submission, the successful candidate was interviewed alongside other candidates and offered within 4 days and started with us 10 days later.

Review of resourcing support required in Adult Social Care

45. A review of the current recruitment support arrangements for Adult Social Care has been completed. A paper is being drafted proposing changes to improve the provision to include support with coordinating recruitment activity across the county, developing manager recruitment expertise, joining up recruitment initiatives across Children's and Adults Services and employer branding.

Improvements to our job description template

46. We have worked with IT to improve the accessibility of our job description template. We are also about to pilot a new process for creating links to job descriptions using Microsoft Sway that will help to reduce the time taken to post job adverts. It also includes an in-built accessibility checker and is easier for candidates to view on a variety of devices such as phones and tablets. Colleagues in Communications are helping to create a branded template for the Microsoft Sway job description.

Newly qualified social worker recruitment campaign

47. The last NQSW assessment day resulted in 4 more hires, who are starting the next induction academy at the start of November 2020. We also had 4 overseas social workers join us, which was particularly challenging due to Covid 19 and quarantining requirements, but they are now settled in their teams and 2 more are waiting to join soon.

48. The team has also supported other teams within Children's Services such as the Youth Justice and Exploitation Service and CIC with creating new & compelling job advert copy and advertising vacancies on social media.

49. We have recently coordinated the recruitment of the Head of Communications, Marketing & Engagement and the Director of Law & Governance.

50. Currently work is underway to support the recruitment campaigns for the Deputy Director for Health, Education & Social Care Commissioning; Head of Procurement & Contract Management and Service Manager for Libraries & Heritage.

51. Guidance has also been provided for senior managers recruiting to the Head of IT and Head of Youth Justice roles.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

52. The Corporate Health and Safety (H&S) team has remained focussed on supporting the organisation to deliver services in a COVID-Secure way to maintain the safety of staff and service users.

53. With winter approaching and a backdrop of increasing cases, measures taken to mitigate the transmission of coronavirus is of critical importance to keep schools and frontline services open.

54. The launch of the new NHS COVID-19 App and Increased Test and Trace capacity has resulted in better identification of individuals with coronavirus or those who are at particular risk of catching it. This allows us to quickly take steps to control transmission within the workplace which may include taking measures such as advising close contacts of positive cases to isolate and prevent the spread of the virus.

55. There are significant amounts of guidance for individuals and employers which is regularly changing, this can be difficult for managers to quickly navigate to asses and determine steps to be taken in the event of a positive case or workplace outbreak.

56. The Health and Safety team have produced the following an Action Card to assist managers where there is a case of coronavirus COVID-19 amongst their staff. It will not cover all scenarios but provides a framework and signposting for managers to follow.

57. Services are also being reminded to review business continuity plans to ensure arrangements are in place in the event of any service disruption or outbreaks.

58. In addition to supporting the recovery of services the H&S Team is conducting proactive monitoring of services to ensure compliance with COVID-Secure risk assessments. This is important to ensure safe systems of work are robust and control measures remain effective. In addition, it is worth noting an increase in regulatory activity of COVID-Secure compliance by enforcing authorities including Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Environmental

Health Officers (EHO). To date several of our schools have been inspected by the HSE and found to be compliant and risks well managed.

<u>Wellbeing</u>

59.   The new Employee Assistance Programme provided by Vita launched on 1st September 2020 and continues to be promoted through line managers briefings and attendance at team meetings.

60.   Work is progressing on a 'faces initiative' which will enable us to do a quick temperature check on staff wellbeing. On the intranet, staff will be able to answer the simple question 'how are you feeling today' and click on one of three faces, good, average or poor. Feedback will be immediate enabling swift intervention and signposting to appropriate services.

Quarter 2 Staffing Data (1st July – 30 September 2020)

Introduction

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

62.   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.

Quarter 2 Workforce Data Update

Staffing

63.   Staffing numbers have shown a small increase between Q1 (5052) (4108.33 FTE) and Q2 (5070), (4139.52 FTE) which includes our retained fire service but excludes schools.

64.   Overall staffing numbers have remained relatively stable in the last year however comparing Q2 19/20 to Q2 20/21 there is an overall increased headcount of 49 and an overall increased FTE of 31.19.

65.   The workforce gender split remains consistent with two thirds women and one third men. The age profile highlights a slightly older workforce with 53.8% aged 45 years and over however overall, the age profile for the council is reasonably well dispersed across all age bands.

66.   Included in this report is the staff ethnicity profile which shows that further work is required to identify the reasons why we do not hold ethnicity data for over 6% of our workforce. This area of work is detailed in the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion section of this paper.

Absence Data

- o Appendix 2, Chart 1 provides a snapshot of OCC absence data as at week ending 2nd October 2020 detailing non-Covid absence and Covid related absence including isolation working and isolation non-working.

- o Appendix 2, Chart 2 shows the weekly absence rate compared to the same period last year for all Directorates and OCC Schools. Overall absence rates in 2020 are significantly lower than in 2019.

- o Appendix 2, Chart 3 provides LG Inform data showing a comparison of Covid and non-Covid absence data for English County Local Authorities as at week ending 2nd October 2020.

Turnover

67. The Council's Directorate rolling turnover rate for the last 12 months is 10.1%. Across the whole workforce (including schools), the 12 month rolling turnover rate increases to 11.3%.

68. Turnover in Q2 has increased to 2.8% compared to 1.9% in Q1 but is still less than Q2 19/20.

Spend on agency workers

69. Agency workers are a critical part of the council's workforce. They can provide a cost effective and flexible solution to cover temporary work demands. The Council has a managed service contract with Comensura which focuses on the provision of temporary agency and interim workers through a central electronic portal to an approved supply chain of compliant tiered agencies.

70. A managed service provides the following benefits:

- Improves oversight of agency spend and trends and helps to improve demand management and the consideration of alternative resourcing solutions
- Secures the most competitive terms with agencies
- Grows the supply chain to respond to temporary orders quickly
- Reduces the time managers spend liaising with agencies and negotiating terms of business
- Ensures all suppliers understand and comply with council vetting requirements

71. Demand for agency workers is sometimes due to the need to cover hard to fill vacancies and in these circumstances, can be more costly than direct employment. Measures continue to be taken through recruitment initiatives to keep this number to a minimum.

72. The total spend on agency workers via the Comensura contract for Q2 has increased by £145,314 (compared to Q1) to £3,356,454. Nearly half of the cost in Q2 was to cover a vacancy. There were 94 new bookings this quarter

of which 63 (67%) were to cover a vacancy and 9 (9.57%) were to cover covid19 related absences. At the end of Q2 there were 174 active bookings.

73.   Off contract spend (agency usage outside of the Comensura contract) has increased by £40k to £608,216 in Q2. The majority of the off contract spend is within Planning and Growth and relates to expenditure to a company within the MHA framework that provides specialist contractors at a competitive rate equal to Comensura.

74.   The combined agency spend (Comensura and off contract) is £3,964,670 for Q2 – an increase of £186,068 on Q1, but lower than previous quarters and for Q2 of the previous year.

75.   The Comensura contract savings for Q2 are reported as £198,230, bringing the total savings for the year to date to £394,709.

Conclusion

76.   HR will continue to develop the HR data in this report and review and adjust the targets in line with sector norms. This report will continue to be provided quarterly along with a summary of key HR activities.

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Annexes:
Annex 1: Workforce data
Annex 2: Absence data

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02 November 2020