

CABINET REPORT

15 March 2022

WORKFORCE REPORT AND STAFFING DATA Q3 2021/2022 OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2021

Report by Corporate Director

Customers, Organisational Development and 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. Whilst agile and hybrid working continued to be encouraged, during Q3 some staff and teams had started to utilise offices both for business as usual activities and for team collaboration events. However, with the onset of the Omicron variant towards the end of Q3, the Government asked all those who could, to revert to working from home. The threat of the Omicron variant saw Gold and Silver command meetings reinstated, the activation of plans to support the NHS in staffing the booster vaccination centres and the redeployment of Council staff in support of essential services as appropriate.
4. This report provides an update for Quarter 3 on key HR activities along with a refreshed workforce profile at Appendix 1.

Quarter 3 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

- Q3 Staffing Data (1st October 2021 – 31st December 2021)

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, 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 and our managers in response to any changes to COVID, for example the latest position on the vaccination regulations for those staff working in CQC registered premises. 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 any change in the guidance around COVID. It is recognised that the restrictions relating to COVID are diminishing and the focus will turn to supporting the workforce to adjust to the 'new normal' supported by the work being undertaken in the agile workstream of Delivering the Future Together
8. Informal meetings continue to take place every 4 weeks with the trade unions. These meetings continue to have a COVID focus with an update from Public Health but also offer the opportunity for a regular dialogue on any matters that are of concern. 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 Activities:

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

9. Work continues and good progress has been made on the workforce action plan aligned to the Including Everyone: Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework.
10. The Gender Pay gap report (attached at Appendix 2) was approved by Full Council in February 2022 and will be published on both the Government and Council's websites in due course. The Mean percentage difference has reduced from 3.18% in 2020 to 1.8% in 2021, meaning men earn 31p per hour more than women. However, there is now no median pay difference; an improvement from 2020 when men earned 20p per hour more than women. Plans are in place to

support women in the lower pay quartile to increase their career opportunities via apprenticeship schemes and being offered support to gain qualifications equivalent to GCSE in English and maths.

11. The Council produced the first draft ethnicity pay gap report last year and continues to work on improving data quality with the aim later this year to produce and publish a similar report to that of the Gender Pay Gap report.
12. On-going communications are in place to encourage staff to update their equality data to reduce the percentage of non-disclosures across the organisation. The rate of non-reporting has reduced to 7.1% down from 7.7% in 2020.
13. A new Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination policy (previously Dignity at Work policy) has been written and launched following consultation work undertaken with the BAME network and trade unions. The revised policy provides clear and consistent communication to staff about our approach to tackle bullying and harassment in the workplace including how to report any instances and how these will be investigated.
14. Our Reverse Mentoring Programme; Mentoring for Diversity pilot is now complete with a final review meeting taking place in early Jan 22. Feedback from the pilot review is being used to enhance the training programme for both mentors and mentees and will be rolled out to a 2nd cohort in Q1 2022-23
15. A comprehensive review of the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training material has taken place which identifies a number of areas that require improvement and updating to ensure that we offer the best quality provision for our staff and managers. An action plan will be developed for work to start in 2022-2023.

Managing for Performance – 12.3.2.

16. 12.3.2. is the council's framework for managing for performance and has been a key focus of Phase 1 of the Delivering the Future Together programme.
17. A modular programme of training commenced in Q1 (2021/2022) to train all managers on how to carry out quality one to one meetings with approximately 100 managers completing the programme in Q2. In Phase 2 a further 300 managers commenced the programme and are expected to complete the training in Q4. Attendance and engagement with the programme has been consistently high throughout the roll-out of the modules.
18. Planning is underway to commence a third phase of the programme in Quarter 1 (2022/2023) for all remaining managers and supervisors, estimated to be a further 500 staff. This 3rd phase of training will be designed to be proportionate to the management responsibilities of specific individuals with a lighter version of the training provided to supervisors with very part-time / non-office based staff, for example, caterers, cleaners, school-crossing patrols, retained fire fighters.

Apprenticeships

19. At the end of Quarter 3 there were 247 Apprentices on programme, 62 of these were in schools. 80 % of these are permanent staff undertaking an apprenticeship as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or career progression.
20. Between Quarter 1 and Quarter 3 2021/2022 there were a total of 122 new apprenticeship enrolments compared to 70 for the same period in 2020/2021.
21. The committed spend for the first three quarters of 2021/2022 is £882,772. By the end of Q4 it is estimated that there will be a committed spend of approximately £1,300,000.00 with new enrolment numbers reaching 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. Committed spend is usually at its highest in September this is due to the majority of enrolments for higher level and degree apprenticeships which cost on average of £18,000-£27,000 per candidate.
22. Quarter 3 data shows fewer enrolments compared to the previous quarters. This reduction in enrolments is largely due to the popular September enrolment period being completed and represented in Quarter 2 data. It is also typical to see a reduction in enrolments in Quarter 3 due to the Christmas period. It should be noted that apprenticeship data can be skewed as a result of the way in which data is recorded, with enrolments only being counted when the learner is on the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS). Enrolments were positive in Quarter 3 but there were delays in these being updated by the apprenticeship providers onto the DAS and therefore numbers will increase in Quarter 4 as a result.
23. During 2020/2021 there were a total of 63 Completions and 5 withdrawals. During the first 3 quarters of 2021/2022 there were 50 Completions and 10 withdrawals.

Delivering the Future Together (DTFT) Programme (Q3 2021/2022)

24. 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.
25. The DTFT Champion Network continue to support and bring life to the values and behaviours in addition to sharing and collaborating on Phase 2 projects of the Delivering the Future programme. The DTFT Champion Network now consists of over 180 DTFT Champions across all Directorates within OCC following a further recruitment campaign in November 2020. A visible and proactive approach has been adopted by the Programme Board responding to feedback from the DTFT Champion Network, which is subsequently shared at team meetings.

26. Four of the five key projects under Phase 2 of DTFT will have a completed project plan, listing all activities, ownership and timeline by the end of January/early February 2022.

27. By way of a reminder 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 & 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.

28. PricewaterhouseCoopers ("PWC") have been commissioned to undertake a piece of work to look at a property and asset strategy that will enable the transition to an agile operating model. The work commenced on 13th December 2021 and is due to end in March 2022. Both the outcome and working in parallel to this will be the link to people and technology that will ultimately inform the full project plan for the Agile project.

29. Phase 2 of Delivering the Future Together will be launched across OCC in January 2021 to all staff. Through the DTFT Programme Board, a collaborative approach in the design of phase 2 continues to be taken by all leaders and managers across the Council.. Open and transparent dialogue is also in place with Trade Unions with regular briefings taking place.

Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Covid-19 Update

30. Following the roll out of the booster vaccination programme during December and early January, the government has announced easing of some restrictions in response to spread of omicron.

31. Many of the Council's activities provide essential services and have continued to be delivered throughout the pandemic with robust risk mitigations in place. With an improving outlook, the Health and Safety Team are supporting managers to review risk assessments in line with current guidance. For higher

risk services in particular those caring for vulnerable persons, Infection Prevention Control Procedures will be maintained in line with national guidance.

32. There are no longer any restrictions on building capacity limits and managers are asked to consider arrangements for working in the office based on local needs and priorities whilst continuing to promote the benefits of agile working. Some local control measures remain in place to help reduce the spread of coronavirus with particular emphasis by Facilities Management on improving ventilation and regular cleaning.

Vaccination Update

33. The Secretary for Health and Social Care, Sajid Javid has announced that the government will launch a consultation on “ending” the mandate for COVID vaccination as a condition of employment for health and social care workers, and that subject to the responses, the regulations would be revoked.
34. Vaccination became mandatory for staff working in care homes in England in November 2021 and the policy was due to be extended to all patient-facing health and care staff, including those working in the NHS, in April 2022. This mainly impacted Council staff working in Adult Services but also included others including Children’s Services and Community Safety where there is already a very high level of vaccination amongst the staff cohort.
35. The Council will be considering the likelihood of revocation of the requirement and will inform all affected staff accordingly once confirmation is published.

General Health and Safety

36. The Health and Safety Team performs a wide range of duties designed to protect the health, safety and well-being of all employees and others affected by Council services. A key part of this is ensuring a policy and procedure framework is in place, provide managers with competent advice on all health and safety related matters, inspecting services and workplaces to monitor compliance and investigating accidents and incidents.
37. The Health and Safety Team has recently completed monitoring inspections of the Council run Children’s Residential Services. These inspections provide assurance that health and safety management is effective and performance standards are being met, they also provide essential evidence as part of OfSTED inspections. Overall, the service was able to demonstrate a high compliance across the homes visited. Actions identified were mainly attributable to building related issues which have been reported to Facilities Management.

Occupational Health

38. Referrals to Occupational Health rose by 7.9% over the last quarter, with a total of 227 referrals made. 63 of the referrals made were for employees that had a period of greater than four weeks absence from work.
39. There were 86 referrals for stress/anxiety/depression and other psychiatric illness accounting for approximately 38% of all referrals. This percentage is equal to the previous quarter. In total in Quarter 3 there were 132 Occupational Health referrals from across all Directorates and 62 from Schools.

The top two reasons for referral:

- 1) Stress/anxiety/depression and other psychiatric illness
- 2) Musculoskeletal

Employee Assistance Programme

40. Over the last quarter, 121 calls were made to Vita – equating to 4.77% utilisation rate.

Type of Employee Assistance Support provided	No of calls
Emotional Support	83
Information and Advice	11
Legal and Information	8
Management Support	1

Wellbeing

41. The Council provides a range of wellbeing initiatives and the following webinars are planned for the next quarter.
- Managing Anger, Worry and Burnout
 - Two steps to Happiness
 - Managing and alleviating isolation and loneliness
 - Promoting good sleep
 - Back Care
 - Supporting Mental Wellbeing at Work (Manager Course)

Sickness Absences

42. New ways of reporting and recording absence at the Council has resulted in improvements to the accuracy of the absence data and may in part be attributable to the increasing rates of sickness absence.

43. HR has commenced an Absence Management Project. The aims and objectives of the project include reducing absence throughout the organisation, refreshing policy and procedure and upskilling managers knowledge of both the process and resources available to them to support employees. The project will run for 6 months initially and will evaluate findings on a regular basis to inform next steps. Early indications have shown the need for the absence management procedure to be updated and the need for management training specifically in 'return to work' meetings and absence review. The project lead will provide regular updates and briefings to the Trade Unions and regular dialogue and consultation will take place regarding any policy or procedural changes considered necessary.

Organisational Change and Redundancies

44. During Q2 the HR Business Partners and Advisory team have continued to support several organisational change programmes.

45. In the Directorate of Commercial Development, Assets and Investment, there were a total of 3 redundancies in Quarter 3 as a result of change programmes. The new Joint Property Team structure went live on 1st January 2022. From a possible 44 potential redundancies, there were a total of 10, with 2 taking place in Quarter 3. There was also a redundancy within Community Safety as a consequence of changes within the Technical Communications Team.

46. The consultation for Business Support Adults Services has concluded and the new structure was implemented on 1st January 2022. Two redundancies arose from this change in Quarter 3.

Q3 Staffing Data (1st October– 31st December 2021)

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

48. 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

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

Sustainability Implications

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

Risk Management

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

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Annex: Appendix 1 - Workforce Profile Q3
Appendix 2 – Gender Pay Gap report

Background papers: Nil

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February 2022