



Report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Report of: Eugene Walker, Executive Director of Resources

Subject: Work-based Development and Wellbeing

Author of Report: Mark Bennett, Director of Human Resources and Customer Services, 0114 2734081

Summary:

This report details the activity being undertaken by the organisation to support and sustain a healthy and well developed workforce.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	X
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Comment on progress against current activity and actions and to propose further interventions as appropriate to supporting the organisation to achieve its aims and objectives in relation to its workforce.

Background Papers:

List any background documents (e.g. research studies, reports) used to write the report. Remember that by listing documents people could request a copy.

Category of Report: OPEN

Report of the Executive Director of Resources **Work-based Development and Wellbeing**

1. Introduction/Context

- 1.1 This report is provided at the request of the Committee detailing actions undertaken by the organisation to support its workforce specifically in relation to development and wellbeing.
- 1.2 For purposes of clarity the detail in this report focuses directly on the Councils strategic approach in relation to the development of the internal workforce.
- 1.3 Developing and sustaining a healthy, diverse, engaged, skilled workforce requires a number of components. These are elements of an overall strategic approach to our workforce and key components of our evolving workforce strategy. Our Workforce Strategy framework is appended to this document (appendix 1). It should be noted that none of these elements stand alone and all are integral to the sustainability of our desired workforce ambitions.
- 1.4 Our strategy is informed both from an organisational perspective but also from engagement with our workforce. Key issues raised from the Manager Annual General Meeting and our workforce opinion survey relate to our ability to manage change effectively, ensure we have effective tools for employees to undertake their duties, staff morale in the face of diminishing budgets and employee reductions. Due to the diverse nature of services across our organisation, our employees now require greater skill sets in order to deliver our strategic priorities and therefore the HR Service and organisation must be supported to respond to these challenges.
- 1.5 Headlines from the last employee survey results show:
 - Response rates have fallen compared to October 2016
 - Overall morale scores are similar to the last survey
 - Ways of working scores (how we communicate, innovate and collaborate) are broadly the same as previously, however the measure for collaborate has fallen.
 - The results of the last two surveys suggest that improvements in how we manage change is a weakness of the organisation
 - A key area of strength is the relationships between staff and their manager and other colleagues
 - In terms of working environment, the ICT network, heating and ventilation, and mobile phones received the lowest scores.

The results at portfolio and service level vary and show different strengths and issues. Managers in respective service areas are working on individual action plans to drive improvement.

- 1.5 The Strategic Workforce Board has responsibility for the development of the Workforce Strategy and monitoring progress against this. Portfolio Workforce Boards are established in each respective area of the organisation which feed into this. The detailed actions within the workforce strategy are still evolving with a view to completion of the detail of the strategy by the end of the calendar year with an implementation programme running to 2020. Feedback is welcomed from the Committee to inform the detail of the workforce strategy.

2. **Workforce Strategy – Development and Wellbeing**

- 2.1 The framework of our Workforce Strategy is key to an agreed direction of travel and it is essential that this is well communicated and that our HR reporting information begins to align against this. Whilst our Workforce Strategy is still evolving there are a number of significant interventions which are already taking place across the organisation in relation to helping the organisation to achieve its ambitions and these are referenced below (timescales for outstanding action/intervention are referenced in appendix 2).
- 2.2 To enable our staff to be healthy and effective we have introduced, and are further developing, interventions to support this. This will ensure our people have the right skills and supportive infrastructure to deliver their roles and also ensure that there is appropriate intervention and support available for the inevitable times, (when dealing with a large and complex workforce), that health and wellbeing pressures will occur. Interventions are detailed below;
- 2.3 We have developed an **apprenticeship strategy** for the organisation which is focused on developing a workforce for the future with the skills to deliver against our priorities. This year (to April 18) we have 134 apprenticeship starts/conversions identified (this is a mix of new starts/existing employees). This allows for the attraction of new talent into the organisation and allows us to develop the skills of our existing workforce. All planned apprenticeships are in accordance with business planning requirements of the Portfolios to deliver the strategic outcomes of the organisation. The delivery of apprenticeships across our organisation is managed through a steering group which reports to the Strategic Workforce Board on a quarterly basis. An overview of progress is provided to EMT. We are currently investigating how we may further utilise the levy to support care leavers across our city. As this is the first time the Council has developed an overarching apprenticeship strategy previous data is not available however reporting information which includes apprenticeship

conversions to employment and how the strategy is supporting the organisations workforce profile is part of the governance reporting against the strategy.

- 2.4 **Personal Development Reviews.** In response to feedback from the organisation in relation to performance management and personal development reviews (PDR) we are piloting a new '**Time to Sit down and Talk**' programme across the organisation. Traditionally the PDR has been an annual process, with a six monthly review, however completion rates recorded against the PDR on the Development Hub have been historically low (275 full completions recorded 16/17). This does not mean that PDRs have not been undertaken across the organisation but that managers are using alternative PDR methods and recording mechanisms. This prompted the HR Service to open up a discussion with the Portfolios who in turn requested a leaner PDR and recording process which is now being piloted and matches the approach undertaken by a number of large organisations have chosen to radically change their annual appraisal process in favour of less formal but more frequent discussions (timescales referenced in appendix 2).
- 2.5 **Leadership Development.** Effective leadership at all levels within the organisation is intrinsic to a healthy and developed workforce and the challenges of strategic leadership demand a number of qualities from setting the vision, role modelling, developing people, effective communication, acting as change agents and taking action in times of ambiguity and crisis. These leadership traits are not optional for individuals in such roles and our challenge is how we develop these. We are developing our '**Leading Together**' Programme to promote leadership across organisational and system boundaries (timescales referenced in appendix 3). It will bring together a collection of materials and programme of activity that will be tailored to meet the needs of individual leaders. As part of this programme the HR Service, Learning & Development and the Performance & Research Team have developed a 180 Degree Skills Questionnaire which will allow leaders to assess their strengths and weaknesses. This enables personal development plans to be focused upon priority areas and the Council can invest appropriate in training and support where required. The questionnaire will be piloted in a Portfolio Leadership Team prior to organisational release. Other solutions being considered within the programme by the Learning and Development Service include 1 to 1 Mentoring and Coaching; Shared Project Work; Job Shadowing & Rotation; Protected Learning Time Events; Regional Development Gatherings and Web-Based Forums. Development activity is currently being undertaken by the Directors Group.
- 2.6 There is a need for **Management Development** and ongoing support for new managers. There is a requirement for more than just training such as access

to mentors and networks of peers. Some managers and aspiring managers have attended a variety of training opportunities such as the ILM, Graduate Development Programme, short open programmes, e learning and Portfolio commissioned programmes. There needs to be a consistent approach, therefore, in order to build a confident and capable management and leadership cohort that has the core skills to take Sheffield City Council forward. A 'bite-size' programme, '**Raising the Bar**' is being developed in order to develop managers over a relatively short time frame based on real organisation challenges. Parts of the programme shall be piloted towards the end of 2017/18 with a full programme of activities commencing at the start of 2018/19. The programme will include key elements of people management, financial awareness and change management.

2.7 **Development Pathways** will be a new model for learning and development where all employees will be encouraged to review, renew and extend their skills and knowledge. Development opportunities will be provided at all levels (Apprenticeship to Senior Leader) allowing employees to progress along their chosen skills pathway as appropriate. It is envisaged that some employees may need to develop their skills at a particular level of responsibility, whereas others may choose to develop the skills necessary for the next level of responsibility. Developing these skills will not necessarily guarantee promotion or progression but it will put employees in a position to take advantage of opportunities that may become available. The advantages of this approach to learning & development include widening the skills base of existing employees, development of the workforce for the future, cost reduction, retention of talent, enabling the Council to be an employer of choice. The HR Service, Learning & Development are currently reviewing their current offer in order to provide clarity to the development opportunities available at each level in the Council. The new development pathways model will be promoted and marketed to Sheffield City Council early 2018 with the new model for development proposed to be live from April 2018.

2.8 There is currently a significant amount of activity being undertaken across Sheffield to tackle digital exclusion and to help people and organisations go online. The HR Service, Learning & Development are exploring maximising these opportunities to enable Sheffield City Council staff to enhance their **digital knowledge and skills**. Discussions have been held with the Google Garage, Barclays Digital Eagles and Make Learn Share Ambassadors to explore Digital Skills training opportunities. Two pilot areas were identified to undertake Digital Skills training. Currently software access restrictions have delayed the launch of the pilot, however, all staff in the two areas are receiving training from the HR Service, Learning & Development to enable them to use the specialist software required for their roles.

- 2.9 **Essential Training.** Sheffield City Council is committed to equipping staff with the knowledge and skills required to undertake their roles competently and confidently. In turn, staff are expected to take responsibility for developing and using these skills and participating in the lifelong learning process. An important part of this learning involves all staff undertaking a range of essential learning, thereby minimising risk to individuals and the organisation. Every member of staff has a responsibility to ensure they, and in turn, the organisation remains compliant with required standards. Currently there is some confusion within the organisation as to which learning activities are essential to all staff, which are essential to specific groups and the frequency of training updates. As a result we have 22 mandatory learning programmes which often means that the employee may be months into their employment before they have had the opportunity to complete the core mandatory programme. The HR Service, Learning & Development are currently remodelling the **essential training** requirements in order to provide a clearer programme of essential learning which should improve compliance with the programme and in turn successful employee development. At present time the consultation process is determining a reduction to 10 modules for employees within this programme without losing any of the essential core content, along with a reduction in the number of essential manager programmes.
- 2.10 The wellbeing of our workforce is essential to it performing its duties effectively and therefore we have a target **absence rate** of 9.5 days per year. This remains a challenging target and has not yet been achieved however absence rates continue to reduce quarter on quarter and in Q1 17/18 our quarterly absence figure was 2.75 days, and 2.85 days in quarter 2 - a reduction from 3 days for the same quarter the previous year (specific data is referenced in appendix 3). We recognise the importance of managing the health and wellbeing of our workforce and recognise that in comparison to other cities our absence rates are relatively high (it should be noted however that different cities record absence rates differently) and therefore to enable this change the HR Service have introduced additional supporting mechanisms for the management of sickness absence. This includes the provision of additional information to line managers on a weekly basis and dedicated advisory support.
- 2.11 We have reviewed our **Managing Attendance Procedure** to ensure that it is equally both supportive for the employee and enables managers to effectively manage sickness absence. Training for managers in relation to the new procedure is currently in place with the new procedure commencing in November 2017. This procedure operates alongside other initiatives such as Flexible Working, Dignity and Respect and Health and Safety policies to ensure an effective offer for our workforce.

- 2.12 The Councils '**Being Healthy at Work**' strategy is currently being consulted upon and reinforces the ambition in the Corporate Plan for Better Health and Wellbeing. The strategy sets out how we intend to drive and influence the delivery of wellbeing, shifting the focus from reacting to ill health to proactively supporting our employees' wellbeing. This links with Public Health England's 'Workplace health needs assessment' document. The strategy is a holistic approach to the physical, mental and social health of our employees and demonstrates our commitment to providing a healthy working environment and improving the quality of working lives of our employees.
- 2.13 The Health and Wellbeing elements of our overall strategy align clearly with the need for clear pathways and a manager development offer as effective management can clearly support and facilitate good health, wellbeing and improved productivity and performance of employees.
- 2.14 We have developed a number of **learning interventions** specifically linked to health and wellbeing. These include, healthy conversations, Managing Stress (e-learning and taught courses), Personal Stress Management, Mental Health Awareness, Mental Health First Aid, Mental Health in the Workplace, Managing and Supporting Employees through Change.
- 2.15 In conjunction with colleagues in Activity Sheffield and Facilities Management we developed an on-site **activity suite** in Moorfoot to support the Wellbeing aspects of intervention. This is coupled with a Calm Space to allow for 'break away' and reflection.
- 2.16 We have remodelled our internal Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service to allow senior consultants to lead on Portfolio matters. This is enabling more timely intervention of health and wellbeing matters to match our strategy of **intervention and prevention**. We have also remodelled our intranet site to ensure all initiatives are visible, promoted and detailed.
- 2.17 The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service are actively working to ensure national campaigns are promoted and **health programmes** are delivered to worksites across our organisation. To date this has included interventions such as 'Shape up for Business', 'Drink Wise Age Well', 'Know Your Numbers', 'Time to Talk' and 'Mental Health Awareness'.
- 2.18 As an organisation we have invested in an **employee assistance programme** to support our employees with access to counselling, debt and legal advice, and other wellbeing resources. We are also actively working with our occupational health provider (HML) on prevention and absence management initiatives.

3 What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

- 3.1 The interventions detailed in this document are important not only for our workforce but will ensure that the City receives its required services from the Council in the most effective and efficient way. The activity referenced in this document continues to evolve and is reviewed on a regular basis by HR Leadership.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to note and endorse the current approach which is being undertaken by the Council and is asked to propose any variation or additions to the interventions proposed.

Appendix 1: Components of the Workforce Strategy



Appendix 2: Outstanding Action Areas and Timelines

Action	Action Dates
Time to Sit Down and Talk Pilot Areas: Resources Leadership team, Finance and Commercial Services, Children and Families, Parks and Countryside, HR leadership and Learning and Development, Corporate Repairs and Maintenance	Current and completion by December 17
Time to Sit Down and Talk report to Strategic Workforce Board (outcome from pilot and recommended actions)	December 17
Report to EMT further to agreed actions from Strategic Workforce Board (for agreed future direction from April 17)	January 2018
Communications activity further to Council decision	January –March 2018
Leadership Development 180 questionnaire pilot	November 17
Leadership Development Solutions – mentoring and coaching, shared project work, job shadowing, learning time events, regional development gatherings, web-based forums, management networks	April 18 onwards
‘Raising the Bar’ pilot	Up to December 17
Full ‘Raising the Bar’ programme	From April 18
Learning and Development review of internal offer	By December 17
Development, promotion and live activity date of new offer	By April 18
Discussions with external organisations exploring digital skills initiatives	Live and ongoing
Roll out of internal digital offer to priority areas	Live and ongoing
Proposal for essential learning requirements to Strategic Workforce Board following internal consultation	November 17
Communication programme, updated employee induction and hub improvements following outcome of above	December 17 to March 18

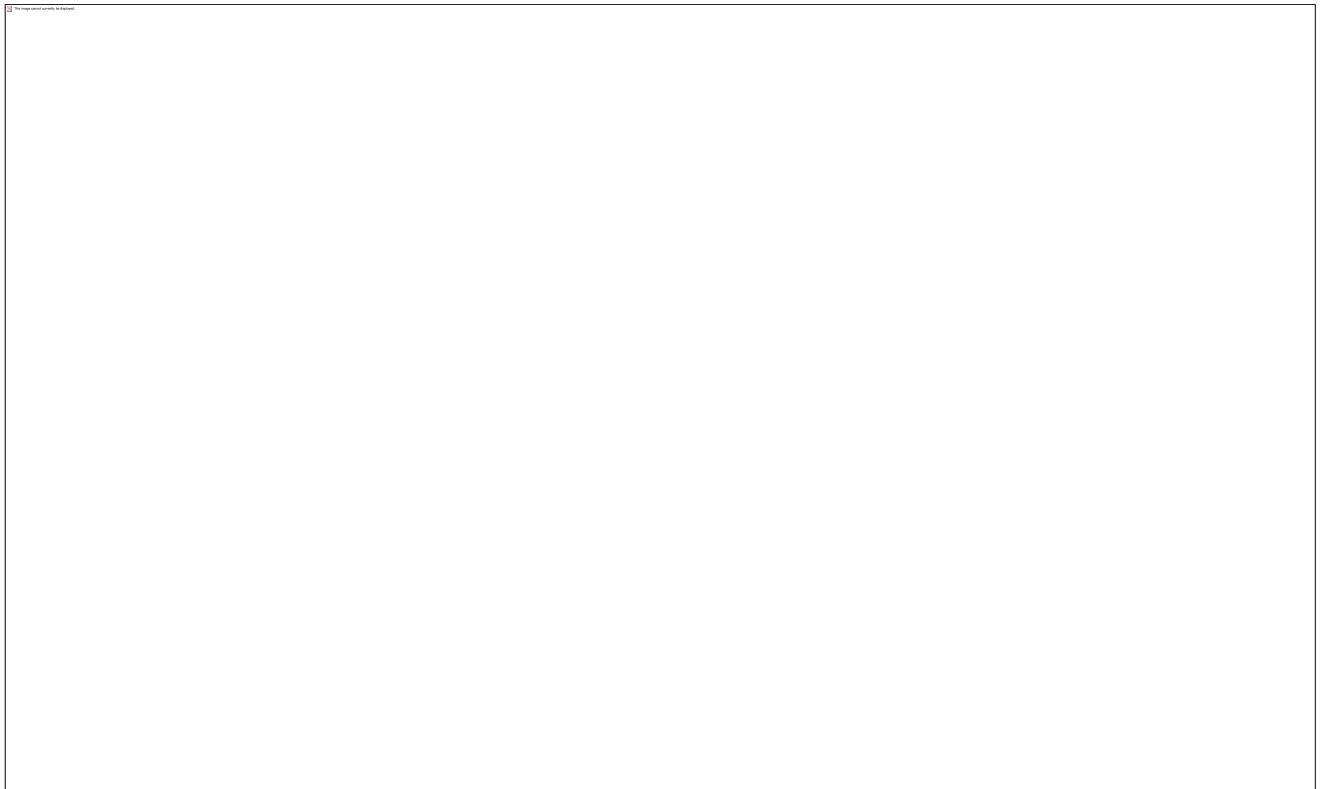
Appendix 3: Sickness absence information

Current Trends on Sickness

Our Council wide target for sickness during 2017/18 is 9.5 days per FTE. The last 6 years sickness levels are as follows;

Year	Days lost per FTE
11/12	11.60 days per FTE
12/13	12.34 days per FTE
13/14	11.45 days per FTE
14/15	12.22 days per FTE
15/16	12.62 days per FTE
16/17	12.16 days per FTE

Quarterly Comparison of Sickness – Organisational Level



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