

HR UPDATE

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report gives an update on HR matters since the last HR Committee. These matters are in addition to the reactive caseload which includes job evaluations, restructuring advice, grievances, disciplinaries and sickness absence matters.
- 1.2 We also continue to provide Payroll and HR Advisory services to the National Park Authority.

2. INCLUSION WEEK

- 2.1 During the w/c 27th September we recognised National Inclusion Week and ran a daily programme of emails and webinars to promote different aspects of inclusivity across the workforce.
- 2.2 HR worked with the Digital Team to promote the benefits of inclusion amongst colleagues and teams. We also focused support for how to make services more inclusive for both employees and residents. Two webinars were run by our Digital Delivery Officer and a drop-in session for employees with the Digital and HR team.
- 2.3 This information remains available on Forestnet as a resource for all our employees.

3. KICKSTART PLACEMENTS

- 3.1 From our current Kickstart recruitment, we had three Kickstart placements underway.
- 3.2 One placement has now secured a permanent role with the Council in the Open Spaces team which they carried out their placement in, the other two are due to close this month. Both have been actively looking for permanent employment with us.
- 3.3 We are currently in the process of advertising for further Kickstart placements, which must commence by 17th December at the latest. We have submitted our applications and hope to get these live by mid-November, once DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) approved. These are as follows:
 - We have 2 previous roles which were not filled to readvertise – Workshops Claymeadow and Corporate Admin (Post team).
 - We have one new post, Housing Admin (between homelessness and Housing adaptations).
 - We have one replacement post – our Open Spaces Kickstarter has now secured permanent employment, so we are looking to replace with a new Kickstarter.
- 3.4 We are hopeful we can successfully fill these roles.

4. SHAREPOINT

- 4.1 The migration of all the employee records plus all the HR documents has been successfully completed.
- 4.2 The system went live on 18th October as anticipated and managers have access to employees' files through SharePoint.
- 4.3 We have run a series of on-line sessions for managers to attend if they had any questions, but the on-line video produced seems to have answered many of the queries.

5. RECRUITMENT

5.1 Current Position

As of 9th November, there will be 11 vacancies live:

- 2 x waste
- 5 x housing maintenance
- 1 x ICT
- 1 x Admin
- 2 x Homelessness

- 5.2 During September and October 2021 there were 38 new starters; 11 in office-based roles, and 27 in operational areas (Enforcement, Transport, Street scene, Open Spaces, Housing Maintenance, and the highest level of new starters were in Waste).
- 5.3 Compared to the same period in 2019 excluding Leisure roles, so a like for like comparison, there were 29 new starters. This is a 24% increase in recruitment.

6. WELLBEING CLASSES FREE TRIAL

- 6.1 Through our employee assistance programme, we have been offered the opportunity of a two-month free trial of several exercise and wellbeing classes.
- 6.2 These are currently available to all staff and members until the end of December.
- 6.3 Once the trial has ended, we will be able to review the take up and decide on future arrangements

7. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- 7.1 A priority for the coming year will be to consider employee benefits which we could offer to staff in order that we remain competitive and remain an attractive employer.
- 7.2 One of those benefits currently being considered is to offer Additional Voluntary Contributions relating to pension through a salary sacrifice scheme.
- 7.3 Any such scheme would need to be subject to the correct procurement process.
- 7.4 A progress report on this and other potential benefits will be brought to the next HR Committee in March 2022.

8. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

- 8.1 Following a procurement exercise, it can be confirmed that the provision of our employee assistance programme remains with Vita Health Group.
- 8.2 The employee assistance programme is available to all staff and Members and not only provides 24/7 confidential advice, but Vita also maintains a comprehensive platform of online resources and information that can be viewed and downloaded on a wide range of topics.
- 8.3 The two-year contract commenced on 1 October 2021 and already as mentioned in paragraph 6. above we have been able, via Vita, to offer trial Wellbeing classes to staff.
- 8.4 Access to this service therefore remains unchanged however, with the festive period rapidly approaching we will be reminding staff and Members of the facility.

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