

HR Committee – 9 January 2025

HR Update Report

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| Purpose | For information |
| Classification | Public |
| Executive Summary | The report provides an overview of the work undertaken within the HR Service over and above the re-active casework. |
| Recommendation(s) | That members note the ongoing work within the HR Service |
| Reasons for recommendation(s) | Much of the work supports the council ambition to be an Employer of Choice and the corporate LEAF values |
| Ward(s) | All |
| Portfolio Holder(s) | Councillor Jeremy Heron |
| Strategic Director(s) | Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Service |
| Officer Contact | Heleana Aylett Service Manager - Human Resources 02380 285662 Heleana.aylett@nfdc.gov.uk |

Introduction

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.
2. We also continue to provide Payroll and HR Advisory services to the National Park Authority. From 1st April this has been expanded to include Health and Safety advice.

Staff engagement survey

3. This year's staff engagement survey has now closed and we achieved a 59% response rate, significantly better than the 41% last time.

4. South East Employers have provided us with the overall results and also a breakdown of results for each service area. They have also made recommendations as to what we should include when we are considering the development of our People Strategy.
5. Members of the Leadership team have now been given the results for their own areas and are being asked to discuss these within their teams and provide feedback using a form developed so that the actions can be recorded.

Recruitment update

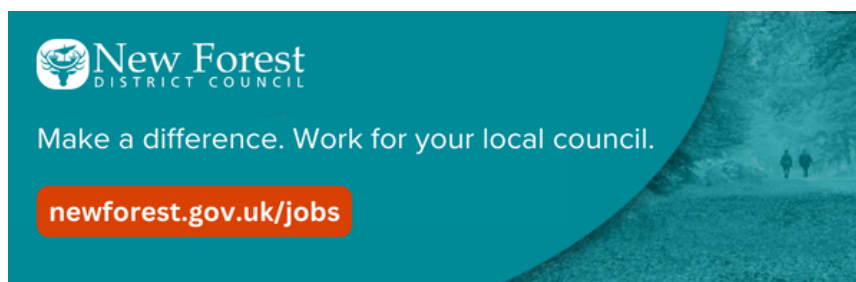
6. Recruitment audit

An internal audit by Hampshire County Council was undertaken in September/October. We received the results in December and are really pleased to confirm that all our recruitment processes are fully compliant. This is a great achievement by the HR Admin Team.

7. The Local Government National Recruitment Campaign

The campaign has been live in November '24 and January '25. We were pleased to take part in the campaign, adapting our branding to incorporate the national brand. For example we had a corporate email footer, and updated our refuse lorry advertising – these can be seen below. We also updated our employer of choice video and think this really shows off what a great place NFDC is to work, you can view the video here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGL7313ab3Y>. The LGA funded national advertising such as radio adverts which many colleagues heard on some of our regional stations. There was also a regional portal managed by SEE where those interested in our roles were directed to our site. We provided statistics to the LGA for the period in November '23 and January '24 and during this campaign, so that the impact in terms of number of applicants and hires can be assessed. We will feed back once we know the results.





Learning management system

8. The deadline for completion of eLearning was extended to 31st December. An update report will be shared with EMT in February to consider completion figures as well as the range of eLearning required for different staff groups and how we can enable the most effective route forward to ensure appropriate and suitable learning is provided to the relevant audiences.

Managers have continued to request further modules specific to their work areas, and our Team continue to develop these, either from existing Learning Pool libraries or bespoke tailor made modules. For example a specific asbestos module has been created and delivered for relevant handlers, ICT modules are in creation, and future modules are being discussed for Corporate Complaints, Climate Change, and Use of Card Payments.

Learning and development update

9. We now have 18 employees undertaking apprenticeships – a new all time high! This continues to be a mix of new apprentices and for existing employees to supplement their learning, and career development.

Hannah and Ros our Graduate Placement students are now well settled in; both are enjoying their roles and exposure to wider council matters, and they are really starting to make a difference to the teams and projects they work on. Both are also really getting stuck in to their studies.

In the last report, we detailed the Supported Internship Programme run by Hampshire County Council – we are pleased to report that the twins are working each Wednesday in the Grounds team, and although they are very quiet, they are making a contribution to the work of the team and are learning lots about the world of work and grounds maintenance.

Management development programme

10. Cohorts 1 and 2 are now complete – covering 40 of our middle managers. Cohort 3 is will run from April to July, and we'll take stock and report back once all are complete.

LGBT+ employee network

11. The LGBT+ Network continue to meet regularly, hosting drop ins for staff and growing their network and support to the workforce. The group have a chair, vice chair and secretary who support the group to agree discussion topics and focus for the drop in sessions.
12. The Network contributes directly to the EDI group providing valuable support in this area.

Amendment to the equality act 2010

13. As of October 2024 there was an amendment to the Equality Act 2010 resulting in a preventative duties on employers to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

The HR Advisory Team have recently reviewed our bullying and harassment policy and implemented a simpler, resolution focussed policy. Since October a risk assessment has been completed to identify any areas to support the workforce, which will be implemented throughout 2025. These include updated employee and manager training, an anonymous reporting tool to report incidents, guidance on personal relationships in the workplace and guidance on work organised social events involving alcohol.

EDI group

14. The EDI group continue to meet regularly, discussing various work issues, commenting on policy and contributing to supporting our inclusive culture.

The group have recently discussed guidance proposed by the HR team support colleagues observe religious practice which will be published in early 2025.

The next meeting scheduled for early 2025 will focus on reviewing the staff survey results, particularly how these link to the Councils Corporate Equality Objectives.

Buy and sell annual leave policy

15. Earlier in 2024 it was agreed by EMT the Council would implement a corporate buy and sell annual leave policy, to support our employee benefit offering and aspirations to be an employer of choice. The HR Team have developed the new policy in consultation with our employee groups and leadership team, which will be launched ahead of the April 2025 leave year.

The aim of this policy is to allow all colleagues more flexibility on their amount of leave to support their personal circumstances, whilst encouraging rest and time away from work to support employee wellbeing.

Corporate employee events

16. In the past couple of months, we have been pleased to support the running of the long service awards (celebrating the long service of those colleagues with over 20 years' service) and our recognition awards (celebrating long term training and employee suggestions). Both events were well attended and found really valuable by those colleagues that attended.

Corporate plan priorities

17. Much of the work undertaken by the HR Service supports the council's ambition to be an employer of choice.

Options appraisal

18. Not Applicable.

Consultation undertaken

19. Not Applicable.

Financial and resource implications

20. None.

Legal implications

21. None.

Risk assessment

22. There are no risks associated with the recommendation.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

23. None.

Equalities implications

24. None arising from the recommendations.

Crime and disorder implications

25. None.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

26. None.

Appendices

None

Background Papers:

None