

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

Report By: Head of Human Resources

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To receive an update on progress against the Council's Human Resources (HR) Strategy for the year end 31st March 2004.

Background

- 2 The Human Resources Strategy was agreed in 2002, with baseline and improvement targets derived from the Staff Opinion Survey 2001, local and Best Value performance indicators and the Human Resources Best Value Improvement Plan.
- 3 This report contains progress against targets for those indicators measured against end of year 2003/4 employment data.
- 4 The agreed format for 'exception' reporting on any indicator is + or – 10%. However, as small percentage point improvements in HR data can be meaningful, the full report is attached at Appendix A, with highlights picked out in this report.
- 5 The Human Resources Strategy will need to be fully reviewed in light of the joint Employers Organisation/Office of the Deputy Prime Minister requirement for all local authorities to have in place a pay and workforce strategy by March 2005.

Considerations

- 6 The following sets out the highlights under each of the six priority areas in the Human Resources Strategy:
- 7 Achieving Management Excellence
 - A set of competencies focusing on the skills, abilities and behaviours to increase the effectiveness of managers has been developed. A pilot of the competency framework took place in 2003. Roll out to 170 Key Managers is planned for Autumn 2004;
 - A programme of performance management seminars for managers has taken place, with over 60% of managers attending so far. The seminars included an introduction to self-assessment performance management techniques for managers and employees.
- 8 Promoting Equal Opportunities
 - The percentage of senior management posts filled by women is 42.4% against 22.7% in 2001/2, due to a number of senior female appointments;

Further information on the subject of this report is available from David Johnson (Head of Human Resources) on 01432 383055

- The percentage of employees declaring a disability is 0.59% against 1.25% in 2001/2 (community percentage 7.8%). This fall can be attributed to organisational changes (outsourcing);
- The percentage of employees declaring ethnic minority status is 0.51% against 0.73% in 2001/2, and 1.47% in 2002/3 (community percentage 0.8%). This reduction is largely due to organisational changes (outsourcing);
- Statistics on % successful applicants declaring ethnic minority status are not currently available due to redirection of resources to job evaluation. However, the % of recruits declaring ethnic minority status is 1.47%, and those declaring a disability is 1.05%.

9 Improving Recruitment and Retention, Making Best Use of Skills and Potential

- Voluntary leavers (turnover) are at 10.06% against 13% in 2001/2 and 9.6% on 2002/3;
- Attendance at corporate induction is at 73% against 23% in 2001/2 and 45% in 2002/3;
- Leavers in year one of employment is 5.09% against 5.75% in 2002/3;
- Staff Review and Development discussions completed is 71% against 80% in 2003/4. This is the first year of implementing the Performance Management Framework where all SRDs are due to be completed between February and May;
- 46 work placements have been arranged including four Aston University undergraduates (due to leave in June/July 2004) and one Aston MBA student. Two more undergraduates have been successfully recruited and start at the end of July 2004. The total work placement activity is likely to be greater, as not all service areas notify Human Resources that they are providing a placement;
- The Council is participating in a regional pilot for 3 funded 'older' modern apprenticeships (over 25) specifically in customer care.

10 Promoting Flexible Working

- A new section on *Work Styles* is being included in the 2004 Staff Opinion Survey. A pilot involving twelve employees home-working is underway in Revenues and Benefits.

11 Ensuring a Safe, Supportive Working Environment

- Reportable incidents were 12 against 13 in 2002/3. The number of violent incidents recorded was 257 in 2003/4 against 342 in 2001/2 and 148 in 2002/3. The majority are in Pupil Referral Units, and Social Care establishments, with 6 relating to external customers. The Health and Safety Committee has made proposals, which actively deal with providing further support and training for relevant staff.

- Days lost to sickness absence per FTE were 7.16 in 2003/4, against 9.32 in 2001/2 and 8.6 in 2002/3. Ill-health retirements as a percentage of the workforce were 0.03% against 0.16% in 2002/3 (0.35% in 2001/2). This reduction has been partly due to the effectiveness of the occupational health and counselling services, and the Council-wide introduction of the Fast Track Physiotherapy Service following the pilot in Social Care;
- Accident numbers reported to the Health and Safety Committee have increased as a result of improved reporting. The largest category being slips and trips on external walkways and paths leading to council workplaces. Property Services have set in place a programme of re-surfacing;
- An additional four-day Institute of occupational Health and Safety course will be publicised and run this autumn for service managers and officers in charge. The Safety Policy and Guidance is under review with the Safety Committee, and will further clarify managers' responsibilities in respect of Health and Safety.

Recommendation

THAT the Committee considers whether there any issues it wishes to be brought to Cabinet's attention.

Background Papers

- None