

PAY AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Report By: Head of Human Resources

Wards Affected

None

Purpose

1. To note the progress on the Council's Pay and Workforce Development Strategy operating plan for 2005-6.

Financial Implications

2. None.

Background

3. The Council's Pay and Workforce Development Strategy 2005-8, last reported to the Committee in July, 2005, adopted the Employers Organisation's five themes as key areas that Council needed to address - Pay, Reward and Recognition, Resourcing, Developing Leadership Capacity, Developing the Skills and Capacity of the Workforce, and Organisational development. There was an added emphasis in the Council's Strategy on ensuring workable pay, reward and recognition structures to help recruit, motivate, and retain the employees the Council needs to deliver its services building on the implementation of Job Evaluation and Single Status. The Strategy aims to ensure the Council:
 - has the right people in the right places, with the right skills, to deliver the agenda and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan – improved services with greater efficiency and better customer focus;
 - is well-placed to respond to environmental and societal changes, and emerging technology;
 - meets its statutory obligations as an employer, and where possible exceeds those to demonstrate best and leading edge practice as the largest local employer;
 - becomes an employer of choice amongst those seeking employment and career opportunities.
4. An Operational Plan 2005-6 was devised to ensure specific actions were in place address the key Strategic themes. Highlights to date have included significant progress towards:
 - Modernising recruitment processes and agency staff provision to deliver savings in time and cost to the Council;

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- Development of a generic skills and careers pathway linked to pay progression;
 - Establishment of a Skills for Work Centre;
 - Improved Directorate consultation mechanisms;
 - Support post Job Evaluation leading to a 30% reduction in numbers of those employees in receipt of job evaluation protection;
 - Management Competencies are in place and are being rolled out;
 - Staff Review and Development has improved hugely – now well over three quarters of employees have a review at least annually. The SRD process is firmly linked to the Council's performance management cycle;
 - Improvements to communications have been implemented, for example, the Chief Executive and Leader now regularly hold Talking Point sessions for all employees;
 - Recognition of achievement proposals being developed;
 - Jobs Fair attended plus two careers evenings in schools, with more planned for January/February 2006;
 - The Council has signed up to achieving the Investor in People Standard, a light touch assessment has been carried out;
 - A programme of tailored Diversity awareness is in place, and a voluntary language register for employees established;
 - A new Directorate structure is taking shape, and is being fully communicated to employees as changes progress;
 - Improved response rate to Staff Opinion Survey;
 - Increased focus on managing attendance;
 - A successful Leadership Programme has been developed in conjunction with the seven Worcestershire Councils.
5. Employee opinions have improved across the vast majority of Staff Opinion Survey question areas. Employee turnover continues to be steady at just under 9% (8.05% for 12 months to end November 05). In 2004-5 the most commonly cited reason for leaving was insufficient pay or benefits (cited by 41% of respondents, and against 26% the previous year). Job content dissatisfaction, lack of job security and career prospects, lack of recognition, and management were also cited as prime reasons for leaving. However the Leaver Survey for the second quarter of 2005 reveals that 'change in domestic circumstances' as the most common primary reason for leaving. Career progression and pay were the most commonly cited attractions of a new organisation. The Pay and Workforce Development Strategy will address these issues through the identified actions for the operational plan 2006-7, and as part of the longer-term aims for 2008.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be noted subject to any comments the Committee might wish to make for Cabinet to consider.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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