

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER FOR PERSONNEL AND PERFORMANCE

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES IN PERSONNEL AND PERFORMANCE

1. The report seeks to update Members on various issues relating to the Personnel and Performance portfolio since the last report to Council.

Implementation of the Pay Strategy for school support staff

2. The change to salary rates reported at the last County Council meeting, which arise from the job evaluation exercise for school support staff, continue to be applied. There will be 4,000 employees on the new rates of pay following October's pay run. Those remaining fall into 3 categories: those moving into pay protection; those with complex employment histories which require a manual calculation: and those whose posts were established after September 2008 where an evaluation has yet to be completed.
3. Of the 632 appeals where information was submitted by the given deadline; 307 have been evaluated and 235 have been considered at stage 1 by the Appeals panel. To facilitate the appeals' process, further panel members have been trained to increase capacity to ensure that appeals are considered as quickly as possible. Employees have the opportunity for a second stage appeal where they can attend the panel and 59 employees to date have indicated their wish to progress to the second stage of the appeal process. Plans are in place to ensure that the 2nd stage panels are held in schools to minimise any disruption.
4. To date, in excess of 1150 offer letters have been issued to employees in relation to back pay and equal pay pre April 2011 and offers will continue to be made on a rolling programme to affected employees over the coming months. There have been 3 signing events for those willing to accept the offers made and further events are planned in the coming weeks. The signing events are planned to take place at venues across the county to minimise the travel required for affected employees. This is the same model as used previously for centrally employed staff and has been commended by ACAS as a model of good practice. Contingency arrangements have been made for the production of cheques during the implementation of the new Business Management System to ensure that the signing events continue uninterrupted.

Wellbeing and Attendance Management

5. Data for the second quarter of 2011/12, i.e. quarter 2, 1st July 2011 to 30th September 2011, is currently being collated subject to validation and a full set of updated performance information will be published during the second week in November.
6. On the implementation of the new Business Management System (BMS), on 29th November 2011, historical absence data will not transfer over from the Cyborg system to the new SAP system. This will impact short term on trend analysis but measures will be put in place to ensure continuity of data capture at the point of switchover. It is anticipated that performance information for quarter 3 of the current financial year i.e. 1st October to 31st December 2011, will be available in late January 2012.
7. As the phasing of the new system in schools is separate; reports and trend analysis for schools will be continue to be available in their current format for both quarter 3 and quarter 4 of 2011/12.
8. Once implemented, the new system will enable managers to take more proactive responsibility for managing attendance by providing them with direct access to sickness absence trigger level reports and other “real time” data on absence in their service direct though their personal “dashboard”.
9. Enabling employees to take personal responsibility for improving their own health, safety and wellbeing to build their resilience at work is a key principle of the council’s Wellbeing and Attendance Management Strategy.
10. Following a pilot exercise of the Workplace Health Champion model (originally developed by the NHS) in the Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection department, this is now being rolled out across the Council during the autumn. This will involve up to 15 employee volunteers receiving one day of training leading to the Royal Institute of Public Health level 1 qualification in understanding Health improvement. This training has been delivered in partnership with Nottingham City Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council, who already successfully operate this model, offering a cost efficient model of delivery which enables sharing of ideas and use of resources.
11. Once trained, the Health Champions will spend an hour a week supporting their peers and colleagues in the work environment by providing and promoting up to date information on health and wellbeing; signposting local health and wellbeing services and helping individuals to identify what might affect their health and enabling them to make relevant lifestyle changes.
12. The mandatory Attendance Management training provision has been recently updated and re-launched to maintain its relevance for managers; enabling them learn how to handle health or wellbeing problems in a proactive way, so that the underlying issues can be identified and the employee directed towards appropriate support to help them stay in or return to work. An audit is also being undertaken to check that all new managers have undertaken the training and that existing managers have undertaken refresher training at appropriate intervals.

13. To coincide with the National Stress Awareness Day on 2nd November 2011, the Council's Stress Management e-Learning package is also being re-launched. This is accessible through the intranet and enables managers and Head teachers to identify potential sources of stress in the working environment and to action plan to prevent and manage it effectively.

Business Support Centre

14. As part of the implementation of the new Business Management System; the Authority is setting up a Business Support Centre to integrate a range of transactional support services. The Centre will initially be based at Oak House, Ruddington, and will be made up of three core business units -

Employee transactional services – payroll; recruitment and CRB checks; learning and development administration and pensions administration.

Financial transactional services - income and credit control; accounting and clearing house and accounts payable functions (from April 2012)).

Competency centre - providing support to system users, development and maintenance of the system.

15. An interim structure has been established which will operate from go-live through to the end of March 2012. Posts have been appointed to in order to ensure sufficient level of support to the organisation and system implementation during and after the go-live period. During this time, experience of operating and stabilising the system's operation will enable the design of a future structure which will take account of the savings to be delivered from this programme of work. This will reflect the vision of moving towards more flexible multi skilled transactional teams whilst retaining areas of key expertise.
16. From go-live the Competency Centre will provide support to employees and managers using the system across the organisation via a single telephone number and email. Face to face support will be provided via a key-user network of more than 60 users of the system which has been established across key locations within the County. These are employees from across the organisation who will support colleagues with first line enquiries and who will receive additional training in order to do so. They will also be able to signpost their colleagues to other sources of support if they are unable to resolve an issue.

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