



## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

18<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018

### THE COUNCIL'S HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICE

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE DEPUTY LEADER (COUNCILLOR MAUREEN WEBBER)

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#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview of the Human Resource departments operations over the last twelve months.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members note the information contained within the report.

#### 3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To update Members on the services provided across the Council by its Human Resource department.

#### 4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As set out in our Corporate Plan, the Council's Vision is to have "a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all". The Plan sets out four principles which apply to everything we do:

- i) Provide essential services well
- ii) Help people and communities help themselves
- iii) Build a sustainable County Borough
- iv) Live within our means.

It also clearly focuses on three priorities:

- i) Economy - Building a strong economy
- ii) People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone
- iii) Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work

- 4.2 Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Council has a duty to meet national Well-being goals and improve the Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural well-being of the area. Through our corporate priorities set out in our Corporate Plan, the Council is well placed to meet our statutory requirements. These requirements are being embedded into our existing processes so that we do not create additional bureaucracy.
- 4.3 The development of the Corporate Plan is set against a background of ongoing austerity measures from Central Government that inevitably has had an impact on service provision and an associated reduction in staff numbers. Therefore to support the Corporate Plan, which incorporates the Future Generation (Wales) Act, a workforce plan for the Council has been developed to ensure that those staff that remain are appropriately rewarded for the role they undertake through pay and training opportunities, whilst ensuring that mechanisms are in place to support their well-being.
- 4.4 The Council's Workforce Plan subsequently helped to inform the strategic direction for HR and as a consequence, the Council's Human Resources Strategy was developed which consists of two strategic pillars to support the Council to achieve its vision, underpinned by five key themes for action.

### **Strategic pillars to support the Council Vision:**

#### **People and Performance:**

This pillar is about having the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time and developing and retaining a skilled, high performance, resilient, healthy and agile workforce that will deliver effective results for residents.

#### **Organisational Environment:**

This pillar is about enabling an organisational working environment for staff to thrive and develop, fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, sharing of knowledge, early intervention to prevent problems and genuine employee and service user involvement.

The strategic pillars are underpinned by five key themes for action:

- i) Developing a flexible and agile workforce that shares organisational knowledge;
- ii) Recruiting and retaining the best talent to create a diverse workforce;
- iii) Leadership and management development;
- iv) Enabling a high performing engaged and committed workforce;
- v) Supporting health and well-being to maximise attendance.

4.5 To support these themes for action, the HR Service is constructed of the following strategic areas:

- i) Senior Management Team;
- ii) Employee Relations;
- iii) Organisational Development;
- iv) Equalities, Diversity & Armed Forces

4.6 Within these strategic areas, there are a number of operational areas that are designed to support the overall HR strategy. These teams work tirelessly to support Members, managers and staff to deliver services across the Council.

4.7 To better understand the work of these teams, the remaining elements of this report will look to provide Members with an overview of the work undertaken over the last 12 months by these teams, highlighting where relevant future work programmes.

## **5. THE HUMAN RESOURCE TEAMS**

### **5.1 EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING TEAM (EET)**

The function is dedicated to enhancing career and work opportunities for all people, ages ranging from 11- 60+. The team provide support and advice by delivering a range of programmes to improve employability and employment prospects. Over the last twelve months the team has worked on the following schemes.

**Apprenticeships** - the Council's corporate apprenticeship scheme commenced in September 2012. To date the team have recruited 186 apprentices in various service areas, for example, Highways, Admin, Procurement, Civil Engineering, Building Control, Child & Social Care. The scheme has gone from strength to strength and is highly praised and commended by Welsh Government and other authorities.

The team also currently support Merthyr Council with their apprenticeship scheme and have recently received communication from Caerphilly Council to meet to discuss supporting them with setting up an Apprenticeship scheme. This year the Council are finalists in the National Training Awards Cymru - "Employer of the Year" for our apprenticeship scheme. The team have just completed recruiting for Cohort 7 and received over 1,000 application forms.

## Apprentice Overview

<b>Cohort</b>	<b>No. Apprentices</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Further Education</b>	<b>Other (Discipline or Health issues)</b>
2012	33	27	3	2
2013	11	11	0	0
2014	17	17	0	0
2015	29	26	0	3
2016	39	37	2	0
2017	34			
2017	23			

Due to the high level and calibre of applications received during 2018, the team have supported a number of service areas to recruit into temporary posts.

**Graduate programme** – the graduate programme commenced in 2004, starting with 4 project graduates every two years. In 2016 Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) identified specific service areas that had difficulties in recruiting into certain posts, or had identified through work force planning, potential future skills gaps. As a consequence, 10 graduates commenced employment with the council in 2016 with 7 sustaining employment with the Council with the other 3 gaining employment with other organisations. In 2017 a further 9 graduates were recruited followed by 13 graduates for 2018. All graduates enrol on a project management level 4 qualification, delivered by Cardiff Met University.

**Work Experience** - the team coordinate all work experience requests across the Council. From January to August 2018 over 200 requests were received with 140 placements being sourced.

**Careers and the Working World Programme** – the programme is delivered to all secondary schools in RCT and two special schools. The programme receives excellent feedback and works with pupils on attendance, work ethic, punctuality, dress code and interview skills. All these aspects are held in high regard by employers as part of the feedback received.

**Health & Safety Vetting** – all work experience placements for year 10 and 12 pupils are vetted by the team. Over 800 vetted employers are on the database and all schools have access to the database. Rhondda Cynon Taf has been praised for this service and are the only authority in Wales to provide this service for our young people. We have also shared this provision with Communities 1<sup>st</sup> plus and other service areas within the Council.

**Gatsby Project** – funding has been secured from Welsh Government to mirror the successful pilot that was delivered in England around careers information, advice and guidance to all secondary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf. An advert is currently out to recruit a senior member of staff from schools to support this project.

**City Deal** - over the last 18 months the ETT Manager has been heavily involved in developing a 'skills for the future programme' with the project team. The manager sits on a number of steering groups and has just secured additional funding from the project team to liaise with Bridgend, Merthyr and Caerphilly council and discuss the various programmes/projects we deliver to our schools.

**Career Fairs** – the EET team organise two Career's Fairs a year in September and March. Over 1,000 people regularly attend the events with 70 plus employers and key stakeholders exhibiting.

**Traineeship – Step in the Right Direction programme** – the EET team deliver this project that gives a two year paid traineeship programme for Children Looked After (CLA) aged 16-25 living in and leaving care in RCT. Between April 2017 and September 2018, the team helped place 16 trainees in service areas such as Highways, Community and Children's Services, Day Services, Catering Services, Parks and Countryside, Leisure Services and Finance. During this time 8 Trainees who have completed training with 3 Trainees securing employment.

**Care2Work Programme** – the Care2Work programme seeks to provide CLA, care leavers and those with care and support needs with encouragement and support to identify and access a range of training and employment opportunities. In terms of the programme:

- i) 52 Referrals from April 2017 to September 2018
- ii) 33 Participants who completed training during this time
- iii) 29 Participants who achieved a qualification during this time
- iv) 6 Participants who secured employment during this time

In regard to the Care2Work programme current projects include:

- Cater2Work – Project working in partnership with Catering Services, funded from April 2018 – April 2019 to run the canteen in Ty Trevithick where young people can access training, achieve qualifications and undertake work experience.
- Construction Project – Project starting in September 2018, working in partnership with Morgan Sindell where a group of young people will have the opportunity to experience construction skills in plastering, tiling, carpentry and plumbing in the renovation of the toilet and café area at Maesnewydd Garden Centre in Aberdare.

- Preparation for Employment Courses – From April 2017 – September 2018 Care2Work have delivered four preparation for employment courses to CLA aged 16-25. The course includes CV writing, application form support, interview techniques, team building, information on career routes and confidence building.

## 5.2 HEALTH & SAFETY

This function supports the Council identify and manage health and safety risks involved or created by its (the Council) work activities. The team achieves this by providing advice and guidance to managers and staff, in particular the team:

- i) Develops corporate health and safety policies;
- ii) Provides health and safety advice and guidance;
- iii) Undertakes health and safety monitoring, including inspections, investigations and audits;
- iv) Advises on and in certain instances, provides health and safety training;
- v) Collates incident and accident data and produces reports thereon to identify trends;
- vi) Liaises with the enforcing authority (HSE) including acting as responsible person for the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

The team also fulfils the role of 'competent person' as required under the Management of Health and Safety (H&S) at Work Regulations. Over the last twelve months the team has undertaken the following work programmes.

**Policy development** - revised all other health and safety policies except Stress at Work – which will require more consideration to take account of new HSE guidance. The team also produced 2 new policies on Fire Safety and Control of Legionella.

**Traffic Management** - Re-written documentation for schools to include guide on risk assessment, providing example risk assessment and example traffic management plans. Visited majority of secondary schools, and a selection of welsh medium primary and special schools to provide advice and guidance on managing traffic safety. The remaining secondary schools will have been visited in the previous year. All major Council depots have similarly been visited with reports submitted. Traffic safety has been one of the teams key priorities for a number of years now but actions have been intensified largely as a result of the accident at a Bridgend school where a pupil was tragically killed by a reversing minibus.

**Fire Safety** – the team have produced and circulated a new policy. The team also undertook approximately 20 audits of schools producing individual reports for the relevant Head Teacher. The audit programme is on-going with a target of 2 schools / month. Previously the team have audited all leisure centres and theatres.

**Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)** – an audit is currently being undertaken of the management of HAVS across the Council. The Audit has started in Highways and Parks and will then be rolled out to other service areas.

**Consultation with Trade Unions** - formal quarterly meetings with the Trade Unions have been established to consult and inform them of H&S performance / plans / actions and to give an opportunity for the Unions to raise and discuss any concerns they have.

**H&S Training** – the team have delivered 15 training sessions following specific requests from service areas, topics have included, risk assessment, accident reporting and investigating, governor awareness. Plans are in place in conjunction with the Education Department for two separate course on H&S for Site Managers / Caretakers and H&S Safety Awareness for (Primary) Heads. A pilot of the first course is scheduled to run during October half term with the Head Teacher training planned for February next year.

### **5.3 PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT**

This function delivers and facilitates a range of development programmes for the Council including the Mercury programme, ILM programmes (including leadership and coaching and mentoring), delivery of section specific training programmes to support identified needs, provision of psychometric assessments to support assessment centres (for example for Head Teachers), delivery of elected Member training sessions and collation of data, and delivery of ICT training across the Council. Over the last twelve months the team has:

**Delivered the ILM Level Qualification Delivery in Leadership & Management, Coaching and Mentoring** - 113 staff have completed the qualification is aimed at developing people who are practicing team leaders, supervisors or first line managers. The team also delivers the course for other employers such as the Vale of Glamorgan, Neath Port Talbot and Cwm Taf.

**Delivered Mercury Course (middle management programme GR8 - GR12)** - 36 staff will have attended by Sept 19 and the course covers a range of subject areas and looks to develop management skills including leadership, performance culture and change.

**Aspire (management development programme GR13 - GR15)** - 46 staff attended have attended the course which is aimed at managers who aspire to a future role as a Head of Service within the Council.

**Transform** – the course is aimed at staff who are looking to progress to a Chief Officer level.

**Manager Briefings** – the team have provide several briefings to managers on a variety of key topics e.g. managing absence, armed forces covenant, allies, GDPR with over 525 attending each session.

**Team Development** – the team have developed bespoke team development programmes based upon the specific need of the client e.g. improving team morale, dealing with conflict improving communication, following change.

**Safeguarding and Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)** – the team have delivered face to face sessions for harder to reach staff and deployed the eLearning modules for other staff. During this time, 2944 staff have been trained in VAWDASV and 7,036 staff on safeguarding.

**Psychometrics** – the team deliver a range of psychometrics either to support development, communication, management development, resilience or recruitment both on an individual or team level. These include MBTI, Emotional Intelligence, Saville aptitude testing and approximately 490 tests were completed during the last year.

**RCT Staff Benefits** – the team have developed a wide-ranging suite of benefits for RCT staff members including RCT Staff Benefits Website, discount card & app. Schemes such as tusker Cars, technology, bike schemes and additional leave. To date 47% of staff are active users of the schemes.

**Manager Mental Health Training** - funding from the Welsh Union Learning Fund (WULF) has been secured in partnership with our unions to deliver 16 sessions mental Health awareness to over 320 managers within RCT. The aim will be to provide further levels of training for managers on managing staff with mental health including having those difficult conversations.

**Induction** – following a review of the Council's induction process, the team has amended the process to now include a new employee induction model, a new corporate welcome event is being developed; a new mandatory managers induction has been developed with new induction will be linked to the probation sign off process.



**Essential Skills** – the team have also secured funding through the Welsh Union Learning Fund to provide essential digital skills assessment and development.

**Elected Member training and Development** – finally the team provide the induction, training and development for all 75 Elected Members. Performance Development Reviews have recently been undertaken for the elected Members which has led to a training plan being developed.

Finally a training board has been established and developed the training compendium across the Council to reduce external spend on training wherever possible.

## **5.4 WORKFORCE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

This function leads on Job Evaluation and has previously dealt with issues of Equal Value and Equal Pay claims. The team also provides advice and guidance on people performance, workforce planning and the management and development of the Councils E-Learning platform, the RCTSource. This function also provides advice on pay modelling across the organisation and is the lead on maintaining the Councils e-recruitment system. During the last 12 months the team have undertaken the following work programmes.

### **Staff Consultation**

The Council has completed 2 staff consultation exercises to date with the 3<sup>rd</sup> to be launched in October 2018.

- i) Phase 1 focussed on leadership, in particular on effective communication and visibility & accessibility of senior managers and chief officers.
- ii) Phase 2 focussed on staff performance management, training and career development.
- iii) Phase 3 will focus on the quality improvement process and how we can deliver improved services.

### **Performance Review**

The Council introduced a revised performance review approach in 2016 for Chief Officers and GR15 staff. Evaluation of the new approach found that the review process was effective in facilitating good quality conversations around the key review areas. In November 2018, the process will be rolled out to approximately 750 employees on grades 11 – 14 with the roll out continuing through the grades over the coming years.

## **RCT Source**

The RCT Source is the Council's web-based e-learning and development environment that can be accessed at work or at home and is designed to support performance, development and wellbeing of staff in terms of finding key information. Employees can access a range of mandatory training/information modules as well as useful guides and toolkits to support them in their roles. During the past 12 months the main projects that have been delivered via the Source are:-

- i) An Education platform for schools which replaced the obsolete Moodle
- ii) Corporate Induction
- iii) Manager's Induction
- iv) Knowledge Test for Taxi Drivers
- v) Mental Health Awareness
- vi) Rolling out of mandatory modules to catering staff (non IT users)
- vii) Performance Review GR11 – GR14
- viii) Armed Forces Covenant

## **Sickness Dashboards**

Dashboards containing a wide range of sickness and compliance data are circulated monthly to SLT, Chief Officers and 250 Senior Managers. Poor performing areas are challenged by SLT and this, along with other initiatives in place, has proven to have an impact on reducing sickness across the Council.

## **5.5 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND ARMED FORCES**

The function supports the Council in meeting its commitment to legislation by advising on accessible services, monitoring of service users, equality impact assessment and discrimination. The team also have responsibility for leading on the Armed Forces Covenant. The team work with both partners and service users to address issues that affect access to Council services and look to eliminate barriers that exist for minority groups. The team work in partnership with organisations across Cwm Taf to promote equality and diversity. Over the last 12 months, the team has worked on following initiatives.

**Armed Forces – the team has:**

- i) Delivered managers briefings on Armed Forces Covenant alongside an internal armed forces group;
- ii) Supported the Armed Forces events Prowse, Festival of Remembrance and Pontypridd Remembrance service;
- iii) Obtained and coordinated Covenant Grant funding for Veteran Advice Service – post advertised Sept 2018;
- iv) Delivered an engagement day with Valley Veterans;

- v) Coordinated report re War Memorials and dealt with War Memorial queries;
- vi) Dealt with Veteran queries;
- vii) Arranged Silent Silhouettes project for Ynysangharad War Memorial Park (YWMP) and supported the grant project for Poppies in YWMP.

**Statutory duties for Equality Act – the team has:**

- i) Completed the Annual Report 16/17 alongside the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP). The plan will involve Public consultation which started on the 10<sup>th</sup> September (runs to 2<sup>nd</sup> November), with the document being completed by end of 2018;
- ii) Responded to EHRC compliance exercise regarding Public Sector Equality Duties – 2 phases complete;
- iii) Reviewed and provided advice on EIAs alongside advice on reasonable adjustments to HR teams and managers.

**Equality Objectives in SEP** – in regard to the SEP, the team has developed the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. The index has just been completed and the Council gets benchmarked on how inclusive we are as an organisation on LGBT equality. All of the LGBT work we do contributes to this e.g. LGBT History month events; Clwb Y Bont event, internal coffee morning with Perthcelyn and Allies, IDAHOT coffee morning; PRIDE – we coordinated the Proud Council presence for all Council's participating. The team has also set up a community LGBT group with Cllr Davies – Proud Valleys and are working on a Trans toolkit with Secondary schools.

**Training & Support – the team has:**

- i) Delivered managers briefing on Staff Networks;
- ii) Delivered training to Amgen, highways staff, residential care homes and as part of social services programme;
- iii) Coordinated the Disability Forum, Disability Officers group and Staff Networks – Perthcelyn, Allies and Carers and Disability;
- iv) Supporting Education Employment and Training team with school delivery;
- v) Supported Mercury Group on project re Equality monitoring;
- vi) Held time to talk mornings and supported individuals in learning curve;
- vii) Supported International Women's Day event in Heritage Park.

**External Groups** – the team is a member of a number of groups. For example the Equalities Adviser is the Vice Chair of Community Cohesion Group and attends Anti Stigma group for learning disability. The team are also a member of WITS Board.

**Holocaust Memorial Day** – the team organise and deliver the annual HMD event

**Gender Pay Objective** – the team has worked on and developed the Gender Pay Gap within the Council. The team also co-ordinates the work on the WAVE Project. The project continues and the current research project looks into whether barriers exist for senior women progressing their careers.

## 5.6 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & WELLBEING (OHWU)

This function supports the strategic wellbeing and attendance management approaches for the Council. The unit provides advice and guidance on health and wellbeing matters and undertakes health surveillance in line with statutory requirements.

The function supports the Councils absence management policy, provide ill-health pensions clinics, provide mental health and physiotherapy treatment services to help maintain attendance at work and encourage a speedier return. The team also leads on maintenance of the Corporate Health Standard and provide a range of health promotion activities such as “Know Your Numbers” blood pressure sessions and seasonal flu vaccinations. The unit also provides occupational health services for RCT & Merthyr Councils and to smaller businesses such as WJEC. The unit provide a number of strategies to support managers and staff in managing attendance at work which include:

**Managing My Life** – A flexible support programme of ½ day workshops, designed to be informative, provide practical tools and techniques that can assist with different aspects of an employee’s life e.g. managing stress, improving resilience & self-esteem.

**Occupational Health Appointments** - in the last year the occupational health team has:

- i) Provided 10,491 appointments for doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and counsellors;
- ii) Provided 110 Steroid Injections;
- iii) With the Employee Relations teams have undertaken 300 Case Reviews of long term sickness/ priorities cases each month.

**Health Promotions** – the unit deploy several national health promotion campaigns for these raise awareness in support to national health issues such as stroke, cancer support and diabetes. In terms of the Flu Campaign, then all staff are offered a flu vaccination every year and last year 1,200 vaccinations were administered to staff. The unit also undertakes the ‘Know your numbers- Blood Pressure’ check campaign and last year completed 600 blood pressures at the various work sites.

**Leisure Programmes** – the unit works on specific referrals into leisure services for National Exercise Referral Scheme and Joint Care programmes. A direct referral into these programmes has been developed for RCT employees to speed up support interventions. These schemes tackle specific conditions such as cardiac rehabilitation, joint conditions and obesity. They include assessment, exercise, education and monitoring.

The OHWB is also working actively on developing a number of projects as follows:

**WEFO - Building resilience, prosperity & Wellbeing Projects-Develop, Invest and Grow in RCT** - the OHWU in partnership with other RCT services have been working on a project to for support for a 3 year operation to contribute to ESF 1 Priority tackling poverty through sustainable employment. Project funding estimate £3.1 million. The project consists of two main elements:

- i) Investing in growth will support- micro, small and medium sized enterprises in RCT who do not have access to professional HR, Occupational Health and Equality support to improve wellbeing at work including provide workplace health programmes;
- ii) Staying well at work- Supporting employees with life limiting health conditions or disability.

**Challenge Funding – the OHWU have** bid for funding of up to £200k to support workplace health interventions from the DWP. If successful then the unit will look to use this money to support RCT employees by providing health interventions and support.

**Student Placements** - OHWU have been approved as a centre for student placements, as generally the recruitment pool of occupational health nurses is very small, which makes recruitment challenging and expensive. The placements are designed to highlight occupational health as a career option.

**Initiatives with University of Wales-** the unit are discussing with the chiropractic service at the university to look at options of referrals into their service.

## 5.7 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

This function sets the HR policy for the Council, provides operational day to day advice on the application of policy and the management of people matters together with assisting managers to address more complex HR issues particularly in relation to service change.

The Employment Relations function supports the Council through three main teams: (1) Chief Executives & Corporate Services; (2) Education & Inclusion Services (including schools); (3) Community, Children's & Frontline Services. The Health & Safety team also sit within the Employee Relations function. The teams advise in all areas of employee relations e.g. discipline, grievance, sickness along with recruitment advertising, and all aspects of terms and conditions. They implement proposals for organisational change and work to ensure that the Council's employment policies and processes comply with National and European law. Over the last twelve months work associated with the Employee Relations Teams is as follows.

**Service Reviews** – the ER teams have worked with managers, staff and the trade unions on the following changes:

- i) Consultation and TUPE transfer of Vision Products Newport to Denbighshire Council;
- ii) Creation of Resilient Families Service;
- iii) Transfer of Welfare Benefits service to CAB;
- iv) TUPE transfer of Safer Merthyr staff to the YOS service;
- v) Completion of Early Years restructure;
- vi) Review and restructure of Communities First to Communities for Work+;
- vii) Review and restructure of YEPS and Community Sport;
- viii) Re-structure of Meals on Wheels;
- ix) Parks and Countryside restructure;
- x) Transfer of 87 cleaning staff from 10 schools to Facilities Cleaning;
- xi) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Re-organisation – the schools team have worked with the Governing Bodies, Governor Support, School Improvement staff and the Headteachers to create the new schools of Ysgol Nantgwyn, Porth Community School, Tonyrefail Community School & Cwmaman Community School that came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018. The work involved numerous staff meetings with the trade unions and set out below is a breakdown of the work undertaken.
  - 354 Appointments (not including Casual or Centrally Employed Staff) broken down as 187 Teaching & 167 Support staff;
  - 145 Internal Teaching Appointments;
  - 154 Internal Support staff Appointments;
  - 111 Voluntary Early Retirement / Voluntary Redundancy applications processed;
  - 9 Redeployments undertaken.

**Recruitment & Selection** - alongside the day to day recruitment support given to managers, specifically there has been support within social care as follows:

- i) Current pilot programme with Employability group to recruit Intermediate Care staff
- ii) Supporting a mercury project to review recruitment methods
- iii) Conference held in January with follow up conference in October

The HR service has also moved towards more email based recruitment and appointment process.

**Employment Checks** – this involves checks on the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for key roles throughout the Council and for new starters. There is also a link to vetting staff via agency use. The Council also acts as an umbrella service to Cardiff Council which allows Cardiff to use the Council's on-line DBS system to check their staff. As part of this process then:

- i) DBS updates have been undertaken on Council's 28 swimming instructors;
- ii) DBS updates have been undertaken on School Crossing Patrols;
- iii) There is a rolling programme of DBS renewals within Community & Childrens Services as per the requirement of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). Currently this covers 800 social care staff, which will increase to around 1400 in near future

**Employee Relations Casework** – this involves the teams being asked by service areas and schools to investigate and support disciplinary, grievance, sickness and capability issues. Below is a snapshot of the work undertaken over the last twelve months.

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| i) Council disciplinary cases          | = 98 cases;  |
| ii) Council sickness case work         | = 330 cases; |
| iii) Schools disciplinary cases        | = 33 cases;  |
| iv) Schools grievance/ dignity at work | = 5 cases;   |
| v) Schools capability cases            | = 3 cases.   |

In addition to the above work, during 2017/18 academic year the schools team supported schools in terms of redundancy procedures as part of their budget reviews. This effected 10 Comprehensives Schools and 27 Primary Schools which resulted in 101 members of staff finishing by voluntary/compulsory redundancy or being redeployed;

**Sickness Team** - the team has been introduced as part of strengthening an early intervention strategy to help manage attendance. The aim of the team is to provide support for managers / Headteachers in challenging areas of sickness within the Council (hotspots), and to reduce overall levels of absence by changing the behaviours of managers, Headteachers and staff to sustain the reductions. The work of the team involves environmental assessments which are undertaken of all the areas of the affected service to identify potential stressors that directly or indirectly influence absence, e.g. RTW interviews, second stage meetings, effective data management, working practices, management support to escalate, vacancies, workload.

The team work to support and develop managers within that service to effect and sustain a reduction in sickness absence through whatever mechanisms are deemed appropriate, e.g. coaching, training, etc. The initial targeted area was 'Residential Homes for the Elderly' (HFE's) and the team have worked closely with managers, staff and the trade unions to get to the route of issues affecting this area. The sickness team were established in March 2018 when the average absence rate for 2016/17 within HFE's was 8.4%, in July 2018 the average absence rate has reduced to 6.6%.

**Policy Development/ Training** – in terms of this area, set out below is a brief summary of the work that has been undertaken.

- i) Review of all policies and employment documents both Council and Schools to meet the Welsh Language standards;
- ii) Successful Welsh Language Audit in respect of the updated employment documents and policies;
- iii) Specific School based policies at Consortium level across all of the five local authorities – revision of Consortium Capability, Pay and Performance Management policies;
- iv) Training at Consortium level including Senior Management Teams in Secondary Schools, NPQH, Emerging Leaders and Deputy Head training.

**Forthcoming ER Work Programme** – in addition to the ongoing day to day Employee Relations issues, some specific areas are detailed below:

- i) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools – work with Ysgol Garth Olwg to create the new 3-18 school by September 2019 which includes all recruitment;
- ii) Ensure compliance with the Regulation & Inspection Act (extending registration to the Dom Care sector);
- iii) Review Social Work management structures / roles;
- iv) Support implementation of Stay Well at Home Phase 2



- v) Support annual programme of recruitment of Children's Social Workers

## **6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no equality and diversity implications emanating from this update.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 There are no consultation implications emanating from this update

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications emanating from this update

## **9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND THE WELL BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 9.1 The Corporate Plan, which incorporates the requirements of the Future Generations Act, sets the Council's Vision to have "a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all".
- 9.2 As referenced in paragraph 4.3 above, to support the Corporate Plan, the Council's Human Resources Strategy consists of two strategic pillars to support the Council to achieve its vision, underpinned by five key themes for action. The work of the Council's Human Resources department is designed to support these initiatives.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 Members are asked to consider to consider the detail of the report in respect of the Human Resource service.

### **Other Information.**

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee:-** Overview & Scrutiny Committee.