

PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HR Team update

6th March 2025

Report of the Senior HR Business Partners

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Committee with information on initiatives and work that takes place as a result of case work.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Committee notes the initiatives that have been put in place.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 HR deal with a wide variety of case work including sickness absence, grievance, disciplinary, flexible working requests, restructures and flexible retirement.

The operational HR team consists of 1.75 FTE Senior Business Partners, 1 FTE Business Partner and 2 FTE HR Advisors.

- 1.2 Below is a summary of the support that we provide:

- Working with managers to support the restructuring of their service areas. This begins with workforce planning, identifying roles at risk vs suitable alternative roles, advising when selection matrix should be used. Identifying any EDI considerations such as disability related absence or pregnancy/maternity. New roles require job descriptions that are evaluated by the team. Supporting the managers and employees with collective and individual consultation meetings including all the pension and redundancy calculations that are required for the meetings, scripts, letters follow meetings. Working with trade union representatives and following the notification of redundancies where required to the government. Reviewing consultation feedback and completing frequently asked questions for employees. Supporting with reports for approval of restructures, and then the delivery of a new structure, and writing any settlement agreements, and liaising with a legal service when required.
- Support and advise managers on the employee lifecycle, ensuring a consistent and fair approach across the organisation. This includes; advising on recruitment, probation, disciplinarys, grievances, mediation, exit interviews, performance improvement, pay and

regrades, sickness, ill health, occupational health, physio, counselling, retirements, annual conversations, support with annual learning and development plans, service planning, wellbeing action plans, maternity and paternity.

- Application of the wellbeing strategy from an HR perspective. We have a network of counsellors, physio, Occupational Health, mental health first aiders and signpost to other organisations to support all employees.

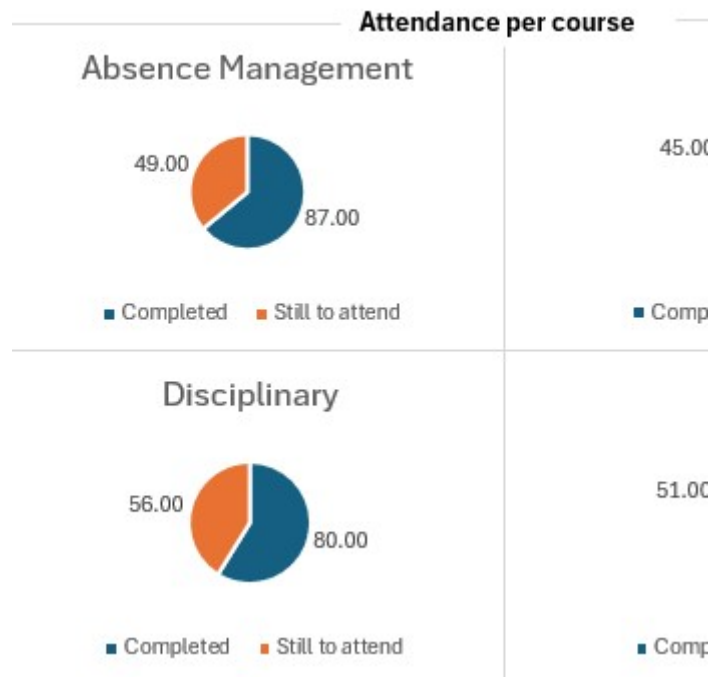
- 1.3 Through the work that we do each case, and situation is different, and learnings and improvements can be taken from each individual case.

We regularly discuss cases and advice given in the HR team and monitor the recommendations, to ensure consistency. Where practical we will update managers guidance and take steps such as asking a manager, to look at their own procedures and supporting the managers through coaching.

- 1.4 When recommendations are wider than service specific, we update guidance in relation to policies and procedures and look at specific knowledge courses to add to our learning zone training courses.

Following feedback during casework, and in order to deliver our service priorities we have:

- Introduced manager guidance on dealing with HAVs and occupational health for managers
- Re-introduced a paid for physio referral for up to 4 sessions, to support people to return to work quicker or help them to remain in work and avoid long NHS wait times
- Identified the need for group preventative physio sessions in manual roles to avoid musculoskeletal injuries, and working with our physio to address this.
- Re-introduced face to face paid for local counselling sessions due to recent case work needs, and the benefit of early intervention to support employees.
- Paid phased return to work supported up to 4 weeks, to encourage and support employees to return to work following periods of absence
- Promoted more widely the health and fitness referral that we offer to staff a paid 6 week use of Salt Ayre facilities.
- Identified an opportunity to work with the established team at Salt Ayre Leisure Centre for all employees to be able to access the healthy weight management programme
- Support managers with updated policy and procedure changes, due to the number of recent policy changes that have been changes in the last 18 months.
- Developed and delivered manager essential workshops for all managers on Sickness Absence, Disciplinary, Grievance, Probation and Appointment Review and Recruitment. This is the first time that we have created bespoke training in line with our own policies and procedures, and created an in-house comprehensive training package that was rolled out to help managers feel confident and competent in carrying out their role as a manager in the most frequently used HR policies and procedures.



- In addition to delivering this new training, videos have been recorded for new managers who can access the key learnings of the training, and the face to face and online training sessions will continue to be run on an annual basis.
- Identified the need and organised externally ran investigation training and presentation training skills to develop the HR team and other managers in increasing knowledge and skills in these areas.
- We are in the process of creating manager guidance for dealing with AWOL cases due to the rise in cases and to expediate the process.
- In addition to providing HR support and guidance the team are in the process of creating a site for managers to access all information. This will be called Enabled Manager, and will contain, policies, procedures, guidance, frequently asked questions, template letters, manager scripts, report templates. This is to provide managers with a toolkit of information that will support the application of policies and be accessible at any time of day or night. The site will also contain any useful updates to documents. It will enable managers with being able to mange the lifecycle of their employee, delivering HR through the line.
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2.0 Conclusion

- 2.1 The HR operational team continue to be proactive, review casework learnings, update policies and guidance and recommendations that can support managers and employees going forward.
- 2.2 HR continue to develop managers knowledge on resources available to them and their employees, and support delivery of the People Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Council is committed to good standards of employment practice.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising from this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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