



Open Report on behalf of Andrew Crookham, Executive Director - Resources

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
Date:	25 August 2022
Subject:	People Management Update – Quarter 1

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the HR Management Information (HRMI) and on corporate People Strategy projects for Quarter 1.

Actions Required:

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is asked to seek assurance on HR Management Information and review the progress on 2021 - 24 People Strategy projects.

1. Background

This report provides a summary of the HR management information data from 2022 Quarter 1 which can be seen in the summary data dashboard in Appendix A.

The report also includes a high-level summary of the 2021 - 24 People Strategy projects.

2. HR Management Information

a. Employments

The number of employments increased by 77 (1.4%) in Quarter 1 (5619) and overall has increased by 172 (3.2%) over 12 months.

Over the last 12 months, the number of employments in Adult Care and Community Wellbeing has increased due to the movement of Public Protection into the Directorate from Resources. Other areas have also increased; Children's Services (2.1%), Corporate (6.7%), and Place (8.4%). Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue (-2.0%) and Commercial areas (-5.5%) have reduced.

b. Voluntary turnover

Current figures have returned to pre-pandemic levels and indicate the upturn is stabilising. The Quarter 1 2022 figure is 9.92%. There is still concern particularly where the national competition for recruiting skilled professionals is greater such as social work and care, legal, IMT (Information Management and Technology) and procurement. The Council's image and reputation as an employer of choice remains a priority.

c. Agency spend

The total agency spend in 2020-2021 was £4.89 million and was £2.2 million less than the previous year. In 2021-2022, the total agency spend was £6.06 million. There has been a drop in spend for this latest quarter across all directorates, however this is 30% higher than the same quarter last year.

The highest spend continues to be in Adult Care, Children's Services and Legal Services (Resources). As part of the People Strategy, alongside additional recruitment campaigns and attraction payments, we are exploring longer-term solutions to significantly invest in growing our own through apprenticeship routes.

d. Sickness absence

At the end of Quarter 1, the LCC (Lincolnshire County Council) days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) figure for Directorates stands at 8.69.

The number of absences attributed to Cold, Flu and viruses has reduced in Quarter 1 following a peak in March, however there are more than twice the number of days lost compared to the same period last year due to Covid-19 cases.

All absence over the previous 12 months has been affected by the number of Covid-19 cases over the summer months in 2021 when absences due to colds and viruses would usually be low. If the cases over the summer in 2022 continue to be high, then this will impact on the sickness figure for the following 12 months making a reduction to the target figure of 7.5 days per FTE unlikely.

The previously reported elevated level of mental health related absence has continued to reduce in Quarter 4 and Quarter 1.

In Quarter 1 the highest levels of absence have been in Adult Care and Community Wellbeing and Children's Services. Most absences are for cold and flu viruses (including Covid-19).

e. Indicators of Council Performance

As part of the Local Government Association (LGA) benchmarking, key Council HR metrics can be compared to other councils. The latest LGA benchmarking figures available, attached

at Appendix B, are for Quarter 4. The benchmarking covers labour turnover and sickness absence rates.

Lincolnshire saw the biggest growth in labour turnover figures for Quarter 4 (when compared to other councils in the benchmarking exercise). The growth in turnover during Quarter 4 demonstrates that the Council was correct in pro-actively deciding to introduce measures in January 2022 to assist services. It is anticipated that Quarter 1 will see a reduction when compared to other councils.

With respect to sickness absence, Lincolnshire’s figures are below the national average.

3. People Strategy

The People Strategy was launched in June 2021 to meet the Corporate Plan ambition on being an ‘employer of choice’. There is a focus on nine core areas for development over the next three years:



a) Attracting and Retaining Talent

- Attraction and Retention Framework

The main area of focus at the present time is the County Council’s ability to manage the challenges around attraction and retention.

Following the introduction of a new Attraction and Retention Framework, services are making use of the short, medium, and long-term solutions available to them to improve their attraction and retention of staff. This includes recruitment and retention incentive payments and additional apprenticeship posts through our 'Grow our Own' model. This has recently seen the Council commit to a significant investment in Trainee Social Workers, with

15 individuals commencing from September 2022 and to match this year on year for the next three years.

- Apprenticeships

As of 1 June 2022, the total number of apprentices is 307 on roll, with a levy allocation of £2,231,677. 71.3% of apprenticeship training provision is being delivered by local providers. The Council is supporting 20 apprentices through the levy transfer scheme currently and the priority groups for our next levy transfer offer is under consideration.

- Re-Procurement of Temporary Agency Staffing Contract

We are currently undertaking a re-procurement of the Council's contracts for temporary agency workers. The current contracts with Comensura (for general staff) and Retinue (for social care staff) have been extended and expire on 4 December 2022.

b) Health and Wellbeing

Support for employee mental health remains a priority. We are monitoring the use of the new mental health first aider provision which launched in October. There have been 21 contacts to the service with 86% of cases due to personal and 14% due to work issues. We are continuing to run resilience workshops which have been attended by 800 employees and managers so far.

In addition to their usual service, the Employee Support and Counselling Team are providing 'wellbeing check ins' for staff and are developing peer support groups to help colleagues experiencing grief and loss. There is a new offer of assessment, priority referral to mainstream services and trauma support in development by specialist mental health practitioners.

Following the One You Lincolnshire fitness challenge, employees have had the opportunity to sign up for a Health MOT trial to access advice and support to help them develop healthy habits and make positive lifestyle changes. 21 employees took part in the six-week trial.

c) Communication and Engagement

- Employee Survey 2021

The employee survey, which was completed in November and December 2021, indicated that employee recognition was an area for improvement. Using the Let's Talk Lincolnshire engagement platform, the workforce has provided several ideas on the best ways to recognise personal and team achievements. The most popular idea was to create a toolkit which would enable managers to pick from resources to give local, timely recognition.

d) Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Following the appointment of a HR equality, diversity and inclusion lead in April 2022, a new annual report is being developed covering the Council's statutory public sector equality duty including:

- the diversity characteristics of the Council's workforce
- the diversity of applicants applying for and being successful in securing roles through recruitment
- the impact of key policies including disciplinary, capability and grievance
- the profile of employees leaving the organisation
- activities which take place to support the engagement and inclusion of our employees
- responses to our employee survey and exit survey
- how the Council engages with the communities of Lincolnshire
- how the Council's services and information are made accessible

The report will identify actions to:

- improve our understanding of the experiences of future and current employees
- improve the experience and inclusivity for all employees
- contribute to our aim to be an employer of choice
- contribute to our recruitment and retention strategy

e) Culture and Leadership

- Diagnostic / Stocktake

The Council's programme of a culture and leadership diagnostic is now underway to assess the views of leaders and the workforce on the 'how we do things around here' test.

As part of the diagnostic over 70 employees have volunteered to form part of the Culture Change Team and individuals are assisting with four workstreams:

- i. Interviews with senior leaders (including the Corporate Leadership Team)
- ii. Focus groups with members of the workforce
- iii. Leadership survey open to the whole workforce
- iv. Information dashboard

The leadership survey is complete and the senior leader interviews and focus groups are taking place. The work will continue until September 2022 with a report published by November 2022. The report will be shared with the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and then the whole workforce.

This overall work will enable us to understand, for example, whether we are a learning organisation; how empowering are our leaders and how well they demonstrate distributed

leadership to improve our agility and performance. This will inform what action we need to take as an organisation.

4. Conclusion

The Board is invited to review the HRMI data from Quarter 1 2022/23 and seek assurance on HR Management Information and the progress on People Strategy projects.

5. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not Applicable

6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Quarterly HRMI data Quarter 1 2022/23
Appendix B	LGA Benchmarking data Quarter 4 2021/22

7. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
People Strategy 2021-2024	Copy can be requested via tony.kavanagh@lincolnshire.gov.uk

This report was written by Tony Kavanagh (Assistant Director – HR and Organisational Support) and Lucy Shevill (Strategic HR Business Partner) both of whom can be contacted via e-mail at tony.kavanagh@lincolnshire.gov.uk and lucyk.shevill@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

This page is intentionally left blank