Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL
Working for a better future

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

Report to:	**Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**
Date:	**25 May 2023**
Subject:	**People Management Update – Quarter 4**

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 4.

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 4 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, with a particular focus on the outcomes of the culture and leadership stocktake.

2. HR Management Information

a. Employments

The number of employments increased by eight in Quarter 4 (5667) and overall has increased by 125 (2.26%) since Quarter 4 2021-22.

b. Voluntary turnover

The 12-month voluntary turnover percentage has decreased in Quarter 4 (Q4) and is now at the lowest level for the last 12 months. The Q4 2022/23 figure is 9.65%. Although turnover at around 10% is considered to be a 'healthy' level of turnover, there are some areas experiencing higher levels. These include Children's social work and care, legal

services and IMT which face high competition from other organisations looking for skilled professionals.

c. Agency spend

There has been a decrease (-£210,582) in spend for this latest quarter with the total spend for 2022-2023 currently at £6.8 million. This is a 12.75% increase from 2021-2022, when the total agency spend was £6.06 million.

The highest spend continues to be in Children's Services, Adult Care and Legal Services (Resources). The new agency contract with Matrix went live on 30 January 2023 which aims to create financial savings on agency fees over the contract term. Rigorous contract review meetings will be held to ensure key performance measures are met.

d. Sickness absence

At the end of Q4, the LCC (Lincolnshire County Council) days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) figure for Directorates stands at 7.77 days. The figure has been reducing over this financial year and is nearing the 7.5 days target.

The three areas with the highest levels of sickness have each had reductions in the last quarter: Adult Care and Community Wellbeing (from 11.40 in Q3 to 10.01 in Q4) and Children's Services (from 9.62 in Q3 to 8.94 in Q4). These areas remain above the 7.5 target. Since the last report, the sickness level in Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue (LFR) has reduced below the target and is now 6.85 days lost per FTE.

Mental health related absence remains the highest cause of days lost; however, this has reduced over the quarter (from 5299 days in Q3 to 3492 days in Q4). Cold, Flu and virus-related absence has also reduced from 3740 in Q3 to 2557 days in Q4.

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. Culture and Leadership

The findings of the culture and leadership stocktake have now been published. The work incorporated four workstreams, involved 70 change volunteers and heard from circa. 700 employees and will form the basis of the next phase of work with the co-production of new corporate values and behaviours with our employees.

A summary of the responses is detailed below:

Learning and Innovation
- It is positive how services encourage learning and development, as well as the commitment to the investment and expansion of apprenticeships.
- Successes need to be celebrated and communicated more widely so everyone can see and learn from good practices.
- Further development is required on how we learn lessons when things do not go well and the balance this has with being held to account for decisions or actions we take.
- More clarity on being 'One Council' to enable us work more effectively across Directorates.
- The appetite for innovation and change across services varies and we need support in how this balances against 'business as usual' activity.

Goals and Performance
- It is recognised that the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) is more visible as a group through regular briefings and communications.
- The revised appraisal process and smarter working policy has been seen as enabling managers and employees to be more flexible and effective in the way their roles and responsibilities are managed.
- Further development is required on the Council's vision, as is the need to be more consistent in the application of supervision and one-to one meetings by some services with employees.
- There is inconsistency in the way poor performance is challenged and managed by leaders.

Teamwork
- There is a positive view that teams understand their objectives and work effectively within their Directorates. However, there is further development needed between Directorates on operating as 'One Council'.
- Senior leader partnerships with other sectors and organisations are seen as positive but tension was noted with some Districts.
- A recognition that some senior leaders need a better understanding of effective working relationships within a political environment.
- Further work is required on understanding LFR's scope within the operation of 'One Council'.

- Some Resources' functions need support to ensure they meet the needs of their customers.

Vision and Values
- Staff briefings in articulating aims and objectives are a positive development, however there is some clarity and understanding needed on LCC's Corporate aims.
- Vision and values are not always seen as central to the way in which LCC operates and are not always modelled by some leaders and employees. The culture needs to support the ability to 'speak up' against poor behaviours.
- There is a perception that some senior leaders do not understand the challenges faced by employees working on the front line.

Support and Compassion
- It is recognised that there is high support and compassion amongst colleagues/peers, supported by a positive focus on health, wellbeing and smarter working.
- Technology has helped colleagues to work more effectively together, and the virtual staff briefings are a good example.
- Whilst many leaders demonstrate compassion, support and positive behaviours, it is not consistent, and this needs further development.
- Additional development, coaching, and mentoring could help make the Council's culture more compassionate.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
- LCC's leadership of the EDI agenda has improved, with equality being valued by senior leaders, praise for staff networks, the new EDI role and greater involvement of members. However, there is more work needed by the Council on improving equality, diversity and inclusion.
- More education, knowledge and development is needed so that all employees take personal responsibility. There should also be support for employees who challenge negative stereotypes or discrimination.

Actions

1. Share the summary results and intended actions with employees through staff briefings and internal communications.

2. Our values and behaviours will be reviewed with the aim of ensuring everyone takes personal responsibility to understand and role model the right values and behaviour. Employees will be engaged in co-producing this.

3. The actions outlined in the 2023 Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report will meet our commitments in this area.

4. Based on the revised values and behaviours a leadership development programme is developed focusing on the following:

     i. One Council: negotiating and balancing corporate and directorate priorities.

     ii. New Leaders/Managers: supporting you and your team/colleagues.

     iii. Updating Employee Induction: to better support you to work effectively in Lincolnshire County Council.

     iv. Senior Leaders: effective working relationships with Members

4. Conclusion

The Board is invited to review the HRMI data from Quarter 4 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 2022 Quarter 4 2022/23

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.

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