

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Our People Promise – Developing Our Employer Offer</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup> June 2018</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director Finance &amp; Resources</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Alison McManamon</b>	<b>Tel: 01273 290511</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b><a href="mailto:Alison.mcmanamon@brighton-hove.gov.uk">Alison.mcmanamon@brighton-hove.gov.uk</a></b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the development of the council's People Promise, a programme of work to develop a clear offer to current and future staff that will retain and attract the workforce we need to serve the city, both now and into the future.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the Committee approve the on-going programme of work to improve our employer offer, and provide member endorsement for Our People Promise as our employer brand.

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The council is one of the largest employers in Brighton and Hove with approximately 4,300 staff directly employed, and a further 4,600 in schools.
- 3.2 The council's need to create a reputation as an exemplar employer in the city is important to ensure:
- we are able to recruit and retain the staff needed to deliver services and meet the diverse needs of the city's residents and visitors
  - the council is a high performing organisation;
  - an inclusive working environment where there is equality of opportunity is in place; and
  - there is a culture that supports staff to be their best.
- 3.3 Reduced budgets mean that we will increasingly achieve results by collaborating with our partners, sharing services, and enabling citizens and as an employer we need to ensure we are developing our staff to meet these challenges. With a more diverse workforce we have the potential to engage better with a wider range of communities.

3.4 Whilst there are a number of positive indicators related to our employer performance (such as some improving staff survey results and a negative gender pay gap), our workforce data shows that there remain issues that need to be addressed. These have been further analysed through staff focus groups and facilitated sessions with the Executive Leadership Team.

3.5 The key issues are as follows:

- Feedback from the staff survey that tells us it is important:
  - To have a clearer sense of direction;
  - For staff to feel more valued;
  - To manage change more effectively; and
  - To challenge silo working.
- An above average sickness rate for 2017/18 of 10.57 days against a target of 9.7 days and a significant proportion of sickness attributable to mental health issues (see appendix 1).
- Recruitment and retention issues in some roles across the council (e.g. social work and planning) and evidence to show this has links to our pay and benefits package.
- Our workforce equalities profile is not reflective of the community we serve, and whilst some improvements have been made these have been slow and have not kept pace with the changing make-up of our community (see appendix 2).
- We have an ageing workforce who may require additional health and wellbeing support, and we find it more difficult to attract younger staff through our recruitment processes (see appendix 3).

3.6 The LGA peer review (April 2017) acknowledged the important role that our Trade Unions play in the future of the organisation, but the need to improve relationships was recognised by all. The development of Our People Promise through co-creation (see paragraph 3.9) is key to this. We are working jointly with our Trade Unions on shared aims such as improving the wellbeing of our workforce, and increasing the informal resolution of disputes through early intervention and the use of mediation.

3.7 By drawing together a planned programme of work to address these issues we will match the ambitions outlined in paragraph 3.2.

3.8 In addition, to provide clarity and effective communication of our employer offer we have developed a branding that reflects our commitment to staff, and runs parallel to the council's Customer Promise. Our People Promise (see below) is based on 5 key commitments to staff and will provide a structure for communicating the changes we are making:



- 3.9 A key under-pinning for this work has been its co-creation with staff and other stakeholders to ensure we are creating something sustainable and meaningful, rather than a 'top down' programme that staff may struggle to buy into. Stakeholders here include officers from the front-line and 'back office', managers, representatives from both trade unions and the Workers Forums, and representatives from the communications and public health teams.
- 3.10 Significant changes have already been delivered, and some examples are as follows:
- Rated appraisal supported by 360 degree feedback for senior managers providing clearer performance management processes;
  - Organisational Development training for key managers and Business Partners to support better change management;
  - A workplace mediation offer to encourage informal resolution of issues and reduce formal grievances and disputes;
  - A new market supplement policy that has addressed some of our recruitment and retention issues in key roles (e.g.in Building Control, Social Work);
  - Establishment of a staff wellbeing steering group and the completion of a well workforce survey to inform future wellbeing support for staff;
  - Provision of mental health training for HR advisors (training for managers to follow);
  - Implementation of First Care which has supported improvements in the completion of return to work processes and provided immediate access to medical advice for staff;
  - Community engagement on recruitment to key roles to encourage applications from diverse groups (this started with the Field Officer roles and will be used in future recruitment processes).
- 3.11 Supporting the health and wellbeing of our workforce has been progressed as a particular priority in response to our staff survey result in this area with 89% of our workforce seeing this as an important area, and only 53% providing a positive response to statement: 'I believe the organisation cares about employee health and wellbeing'.
- 3.12 The wellbeing survey has identified the following areas as most important to our staff and these areas will therefore be prioritised:
- NHS health checks
  - Pensions advice
  - Physical activity
  - Addressing mental health and stress (all more than 60%)
  - The physical working environment
- 3.13 The success of Our People Promise will be measured by a number of indicators as outlined in 3.16 below, but additional benefits are also being realised such as:
- an increase in the number of grievances resolved informally over the last year following the roll-out of mediation from 35% in 16/17 to 40% in 17/18;

- An increase in the rate of return to work interviews recorded as completed following the implementation of First Care from 62% to 89%.
- 3.14 Further activity is planned for the near future, and some key examples are as follows:
- A new staff benefits portal that will offer a range of discounts for shopping, holidays and days out, financial advice and many other benefits all available on an easy to access portal;
  - Re-launch of the council's volunteering policy offering support for staff to get involved in volunteering as part of our approach to wellbeing;
  - A package of support for staff that have caring responsibilities.
- 3.15 Whilst there has been significant progress there is still much to do to and there are many other projects that are either underway or planned as detailed in the project plan (see appendix 4).
- 3.16 The success of Our People Promise (see appendix 5) will be reported to Committee periodically, and measured through:
- An improvement in our well workforce survey results (January 2019);
  - An improvement in our staff survey results (April / May 2019);
  - A reduction in our sickness rates;
  - A reduction in our agency spend;
  - An improvement in our workforce diversity profile.

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Our People Promise is supported by modernisation funding (see financial implications), HR resource, and support from other teams across the council. The possibility of engaging external support was considered, but this option would be more costly and less sustainable. In addition, our commitment to co-creation with staff is seen as vital to its success. Our People Promise is not intended as a one-off piece of work, rather a programme that will continue and iterate in response to new challenges that emerge over time.
- 4.2 The option of leaving our employer offer as it is currently does not address the issues identified in section 3.5, and would have a detrimental impact on the delivery of other modernisation work streams.
- 4.3 It is therefore concluded that this work should be progressed with existing resources, supplemented as necessary with regard to specific projects by modernisation funding. Any additional funding is subject to a business case and ongoing governance by the Corporate Modernisation Delivery Board and Members Modernisation Oversight Group.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Engagement has taken place with staff via focus groups, our recognised Trade Unions, our workers forums and the council's leadership teams.

- 5.2 Further engagement is currently being planned to help us understand the views of prospective staff and applicants so that we can further shape our offer and reputation as an employer.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 To support the council as a high performing organisation it is vital that we are a great employer, and that we build our reputation to ensure we can attract and retain the right staff.

## 7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 During 2018/19 the development of 'Our People Promise' will be supported by up to £200K modernisation funding within the available funding envelope approved by full Council in February 2018. Any support will be subject to approval of a business case by the Corporate Modernisation Delivery Board (CMDDB) as required by full Council. The business case will identify the performance measures and indicators by which success will be monitored, and are summarised in appendix 5. There are no other financial implications arising from this work which will be supported from existing resources across the organisation.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Nigel Manvell*

*Date: 14/05/18*

### Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The Council is under a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination (Public Sector Equality Duty). The implementation of 'Our People Promise', would be evidence of BHCC's compliance with that duty.

*Lawyer Consulted: Carol Haynes*

*Date: 24/5/18*

### Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 Our People Promise will support the council to deliver its commitments and obligations to be a fair employer, and to have a workforce that reflects the community we serve.

*Sarah Tighe-Ford*

### Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 None identified

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. 2018/19 Sickness Data
2. Workforce Equalities Profile
3. Workforce Age Profile
4. Our People Promise project plan
5. Measures document