

HR Team Current and Future Events April 2008

1 Changes to the HR Team

1.1 New Head of Service – People & Organisational Development

Emma Freeman will start work on 6th May as Head of people and Organisational Development with East Herts Council on a 2 year secondment from the County Council where she is employed as a Lead HR Business Partner.

This will be Emma's first HR role in local government. She is a seasoned HR professional with experience of delivering strategic and operational HR services across three private sector organisations. Most recently, Emma operated at board level as Head of HR for RICS (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors).

Line managed by Philip Hamberger, Emma will also retain professional links with the County Council's HR service, Herts HR.

1.2 Other Staffing News

Health & Safety

Peter Dickinson the Health and Safety Officer will be leaving the HR Team on 1st of May to join the newly formed Risk Management / Assessment Unit. He will take all the Health and Safety work with him but will handover his HR Administration work to the HR Assistant or Administrator.

HR Officer

Jaleh Nahvi joined the team as HR Officer on 3rd March 2008. The return to having three HR Officers within the team has meant that it is now possible once again for each directorate to have its own HR contact.

HR Assistant.

An advert was put out in April 2008 for a new HR Assistant (30hrs a week). This role will support the HR Officers. Interviews are scheduled for week commencing 21st April 2008.

2 Shared Service

HR met with Welwyn Hatfield and Hertsmere's HR Teams to explore shared service. The three districts have currently identified Recruitment, Training, Investigations (Grievance, Disciplinary and Appeals) Mediation and Policy work as areas where opportunities are available for shared service now and in the future. The Districts also discussed the creation of a shared Recruitment Bank of appointable applicants and casual staff. East Herts have identified Recruitment, Policy work, Investigations, Training and Payroll as areas they

could take on. Representatives from each district will be feeding back in June with more detailed information on how this can be achieved. The districts are also exploring the best way to maximise the benefit of all using the same Occupational Health Provider.

3 Recruitment

HR have been exploring the possibility outsourcing the Recruitment Service by joining Hertford County Council's Recruitment Contract with Manpower to deliver recruitment services up until the point of issuing contracts.

Research has also been done on how other local councils deliver their recruitment services and the possibilities for Shared Service with Welwyn Hatfield and Hertsmere

4 Payroll

East Herts Payroll have expressed an interest in taking on Watford Borough Council's Payroll and are awaiting a response.

Research has also been undertaken on HR/Payroll systems which are fully interfacing and would enable more efficient working, for HR, Payroll and HR Statistical Reporting.

5 Equalities and Diversity

A timetable for Equality Impact Assessments for all current HR policies has been devised.

HR are working with the Community Development Team to devise a Equalities and Diversity Strategy for the Council which covers both the external and internal functions of the Council.

6 Health and Safety

6.1 Risk Assessments

A toolbox of generic Risk Assessments is being developed (see list below). This will assist managers in creating service specific Risk Assessments.

Generic Risk Assessments

- Generic Office Activities
- Driving at Work
- Work Experience Placements
- Expectant and Nursing Mothers

There are currently with Heads of Service for comments.

In addition to the toolbox two roles have been set up to support the Risk Assessment programme for each service

Safety Liaison Officer

This is a nominated champion who will be responsible for co-ordinating Risk Assessments and safety processes.

Competent Person

These are people with specific expertise (eg engineers) who can assist with Risk Assessments in which their skill allows them to assess the risk better than a lay person.

6.2 Stress

The new Stress Management Policy is out to consultation with the Unions

A Stress Management Program is currently underway for Directors and Heads of Service. This involves telephone interviews and offsite meetings in which participants are learn to recognise and manage their own stress.

6.3 Safety Audit

Zurich have been commissioned to undertake a full Safety Audit. This is due to commence in June.

6.4 Intranet

The Health and Safety pages on the intranet are being updated. The pages are now more user-friendly and include information for new starters