

East Herts Council Report

Human Resources Committee

Date of Meeting: 26 May 2021

Report by: Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Report title: Learning and Development Review 2020/21

Ward(s) affected: None

Summary

RECOMMENDATION FOR HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE:

(a) To consider the Learning and Development Review for 2020/2021 and provide any comments.

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 The committee is asked to consider the learning and development undertaken in 2020/21 and provide comments to the Head of HR and OD.

2.0 Background

2.1 The 2020/21 learning and development programme focussed on delivering a range of learning and development opportunities designed to meet corporate and individual needs in the most cost effective way.

2.2 The development needs were identified corporately, through individual PDR's and corporate projects.

2.3 Development opportunities were delivered by virtual facilitated

events, virtual mentoring, virtual coaching, webinars and e-learning due to the restrictions caused by COVID-19.

3.0 Report

3.1 Training budgets at the Council have been historically split into four main areas:

- Central/Corporate training budget
- Service training and development budget
- Professional training budget
- Health and Safety

	Budget 2020/21	Spend 2020/21	Budget 2021/22
Central/Corporate	£ 20,000	£11,197	£20,000
Service Training & Development	£ 60,860	£31,608	£50,620
Professional Training	£ 20,000	£9,126	£20,000
Health & Safety	£ 3,000	£1,019	£ 3,000
Total L & D Budget	£103,860	£52,950	£93,620

The total spend for learning and development corporately in 2020/21 was £52,950 an underspend of £50,910.

The central/corporate budget, service training and development budgets and health and safety budget were underspent due to the impact of the pandemic:

- Booked Face to Face events were initially cancelled to comply with the COVID restrictions.
- Training opportunities were initially limited as training providers adapted and changed their training delivery to virtual, e-learning or webinars.
- Practical (hands on) training was put on hold due to social

- distancing restrictions.
- More internal courses were designed and delivered virtually through Zoom reducing the cost to the council.

The professional budget was underspent; three trainee professional qualifications were funded through the apprenticeship levy instead of being funded from the central professional budget. The total Apprenticeship Levy spend in 2021/21 was £15,338 which funded apprenticeship and trainee qualifications.

The average development cost per employee in 2020/21 was £158 (excluding apprentices) based on the headcount of 335 in April 2020.

3.2 Central Training Budget

The OD & HR Co-Ordinator continues to review any spending costs associated with the central training budget. The officer negotiates with training providers and contractors to improve the costs being charged for all events. The OD & HR Co-Ordinator consults with other local council's to arrange shared training to minimise costs, share learning and build relationships. The OD & HR Co-ordinator has continued to work with the Heads of Services and Senior Manager, designing and delivering internal events when appropriate and applicable. These events can be face to face, virtual or e-learning.

The 2020/21 Learning and Development programme was delivered by external facilitators, internal presenters, webinars and e-learning. These events are funded from the corporate training budget.

Employees are informed of training opportunities via email, individuals are approached directly when they have requested specific training in their PDR or there is training specific to their roles.

In 2020/21 216 delegates attended or participated in some form of face to face corporate or health and safety training (detail of the Health and Safety Training is included in the annual Health and Safety Report).

The table below shows the breakdown of the 29 events:

Event/Course	No of participants	Type/ Number of sessions held
Customer Service Complaints Process	8	2
Supplier GDPR Assurance Training	5	1
Members enquiry service	18	2
Introduction to wellbeing	8	1
Able Futures webinar	3	1
Mindfulness	6	1
Dementia Friend	6	1
Corporate Induction	22	4
Pre-Retirement Course	39	2
PDR Training for Managers	35	6
Asbestos Awareness	12	1
Project Risk Management	14	1
Legionella Risk Management	11	1
Sustainability and Climate Change	24	4
PACE Refresher	5	1
Total	216	29

The revised 2020/21 mandatory training programme

commenced in December 2020 and it was delivered through SkillsBuild the Council's e-learning platform. All employees, agency staff and new starters were asked to complete the e-learning courses. In total 889 'completed' training episodes were recorded between March 2020 and April 2021.

Course	Participants
Display screen equipment (DSE)	New starters
Micollab	New starters
Diversity and inclusion in the workplace 20/21	New starters and all employees as part of the annual mandatory programme
Data Protection Briefing	New starters and all employees as part of the annual mandatory programme
Annual Health and Safety Refresher 20/21	New starters and all employees as part of the annual mandatory programme
Safeguarding 2020/21	New starters and all employees as part of the annual mandatory programme
Lone Working 2020/21	For lone working officers
Working arrangements – Protecting you and others from coronavirus	Available to all employees

The OD & HR Co-Ordinator works with the Leadership Team, Senior Officers and East Herts Together to develop the e-learning programme to ensure the programme continues to

grow and is fit for purpose. The e-learning platform is funded from the central training budget.

3.3 Service Training and Development

The total service training and development budget for 2020/210 was £60,860, which was divided amongst the services for additional training and development. This budget is predominantly used for service specific training, one day conferences, seminars, training and team building events.

The budget breaks down to £182 per employee based on the employee head count on 1 April 2020 (335). The training and development budgets were managed by each Head of Service in 2020/21. In 2021/22 the training and development budget, revised to £50,620, will be managed centrally by the HR & OD Service. This will enable the training needs to be recorded and analysed to ensure all training needs and budgets costs are being met in the most appropriate way with sufficient spread for employees and the council.

3.4 Professional Training

The professional training budget was set at £20,000 for 2020/21 and was underspent by £10,874. The total budget was not spent as three trainee qualifications were eligible for funding through the Apprenticeship Levy, redirecting the costs.

The Council sponsored employees undertaking various vocational qualifications, which included:

- 2 x MSC Town Planning
- MSC Environmental Health
- BSc (Hons) Building Surveying

In addition to the corporate professional development budget the Shared Revenues and Benefits Services continued to sponsor four Officers towards gaining their IRRV qualification.

The qualifications were funded in 2019/20 and exams, costing £150, were funded in 2020/21. The exams were delayed due to the pandemic and they will be held in June 2021. The IRRV qualification and exam fees were funded from the Shared Revenues and Benefits Services' professional budget.

All employees funded for professional qualifications sign training agreements in line with the revised Organisational Development Policy; which allows the council to reclaim a percentage of funding if an employee leaves the Council within two years. The training agreements are held centrally in Human Resources.

The professional training budget for 2020/21 remains at £20,000.

3.5 Apprentices

The Council sponsored four apprenticeships and three trainees in 2020/21 from the Apprenticeship Levy:

- 2 x Town Planning – Level 3
- 2 x Business Administration Level 3
- 1 x Accountancy – Level 3 & 5
- 1 x Chartered Town Planner Degree – Level 7
- 1 x HR Consultant/Partner – Level 5

One new apprentice Customer Service Apprentice (Level 2) was employed in April 2021 and HR & OD Service will continue to work with managers and training providers to develop the Council's Apprenticeship Programme within the current limitations of COVID-19.

4.0 An overview of Learning and Development 2021/22

- 4.1 The learning and development needs for this year are being collated from the PDR's and the OD & HR Co-Ordinator will work

members of the Leadership Team to ensure the learning meets the needs of the council to deliver its priorities.

4.2 The OD & HR Co-Ordinator will continue to support corporate projects such as sustainability, elections, safeguarding, and East Herts Together by designing and delivering training and presentations to help embed the projects throughout the Council, ensuring the best use of project budgets and resources.

4.3 The courses available on the e-learning platform will continue to be developed ensuring they are up to date and further courses will be designed and developed for Officers and Members to help implement policies and projects.

The OD & HR Co-Ordinator designs, creates and uploads the e-learning courses so each course is bespoke.

The Data Protection Briefing e-learning course was sold on to a college bringing in an income of £969. The OD & HR Co-Ordinator assisted in the rebranding of the course, setting up users, dealing with any signing on issues and producing completion reports for the college.

4.4 The OD & HR Co-Ordinator continues to work with all our training providers to review the way learning is delivered within the current COVID-19 guidelines so employees have a variety of development opportunities available to them.

Training will be delivered on line, virtually and face to face as we continue to develop and engage with staff. The range of delivery will give officers more options to access different training events and opportunities.

4.5 The Training and Development Policy has been revised and has been renamed; Organisational Development Policy this has ensured the policy is fit for purpose in 2021. The revised policy

is being considered for approval by HR Committee at this meeting.

- 4.6 In 2021/22 the organisational development intra-net pages will be reviewed to provide further information on the opportunities available to all employees.
- 4.7 The Council's Apprenticeship Programme will continue to be developed and reviewed. The OD & HR Co-Ordinator will support the apprentices and managers during their apprenticeship and will work with the Leadership Team to review the programme taking into consideration the limitations of on-the-job training due to the current restrictions and the opportunities available through the Agile Working Scheme.
- 4.8 The OD & HR Co-Ordinator will continue to review and revise the Corporate Induction programme to ensure it reflects the council and the services provided. The course was moved to a virtual environment during 2020/21 and received positive feedback from the participants.
- 4.9 The OD & HR Co-Ordinator will continue explore options to share and develop learning with the Town and Parish Council's and other organisations where appropriate.

5.0 Risks

5.1 None

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 None

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

Yes, to ensure the development opportunities are accessible to all and staff receive training on equalities.

Environmental Sustainability

Yes, the learning and development provision supports the sustainability project.

Financial

Yes, the budget data has been provided by the Finance Team.

Health and Safety

Yes as set out in this report and the report has been produced by HR with includes the H&S Officer.

Human Resources

Yes as set out in this report and the report has been produced by HR.

Human Rights

No

Legal

Yes, the learning and development provision supports legal updates and compliance.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

None

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