

# East Herts Council Report

## Human Resources Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 24 November 2021

**Report by:** Head of Human Resources and Organistional Development.

**Report title:** Human Resourcs and Organisational Developement Strategy 2021 to 2025

**Ward(s) affected:** None

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### Summary

- The current East Herts Council HR/OD Strategy, written in 2015 and expired in 2019 requires updating, this has been delayed in 2020 by the pandemic but also to allow East Herts Together to consult staff and work together to develop the strategy and more recently it has also considered supporting of the Transformation programme.
- Therefore, a new HR and OD Strategy for 2021 to 2025 has been drafted to respond to current needs and further develop East Herts Council as excellent employer which supports and develops staff. Key to this new HR and OD strategy is the development of Staff and Management Competencies which can be seen in the HR and Payroll Update Report. This report provides information on the contexts which have been taken into account when devising an updated strategy and the core aims and objectives that have been set out.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE:**

- A. The Human Resources Committee provides any comments and recommendations on the draft East Herts HR and OD Strategy for 2021 to 2025.**
- B. The Human Resources Committee approves the HR and OD Strategy 2021 to 2025, subject to any changes agreed at the Committee.**
- C. The Head of HR and OD should produce an annual work plan to ensure the delivery of HR Strategy with clear measures set out. A 2022 annual plan will be produced for the next HRC before being considered by LT, EHT and then considered for approval by HRC.**

### **1.0 Proposal(s)**

1.1 The proposals are set out in the recommendations above. The HR and OD Strategy have been consulted upon with staff to shape it and to support the desired culture and to continue to develop East Herts Council as a sound employer and an employer of choice.

1.2 The East Herts Together group and the staff consultation set out for the following to be addressed in the Strategy:

- Reflects the Council's Staff Values, (embedding and fostering a value based culture)
- Supports corporate SEED priorities
- Supports creativity, innovation and efficiencies
- Supports effective performance management and development
- Promotes wellbeing
- Celebrates employee success
- Supports change regarding blended working and new working practices
- Reflects current ways of working and flexibility

1.3 Along with the Corporate SEED Priorities and the

transformation programme these have been considered and the new HR and OD Strategy has been set out to support these aims and priorities.

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 Upon starting at East Herts Council the new Head of HR and OD identified the need to update the full suite of HR policies and in particular, the key formal policies to incorporate further best practice and improve these key management tools. A new HR and OD strategy was also required with clear staff and management competencies which underpin our values. This work was then delayed in order to establish the East Herts Together (E.H.T) Group who have worked with HR, LT and Unison to develop the policies and serve as a further cross service group to engage with and consult with to ensure the policies and employment practice are fit for purpose and user friendly. The HR and OD Strategy has now been developed for HRC approval following EHT development and LT approval.

2.2 The previous OD Strategy had the following six themes:

1. Supporting transformational change and innovation
2. Sustaining and improving a skilled, flexible and motivated workforce
3. Building strong leadership and management
4. Planning for the future workforce and being an employer of choice
5. Promoting positive performance
6. Promoting equality and diversity

2.3 The new four year strategy seeks to build upon these themes and take East Herts Council further towards achieving these themes as well as seeking further improvement and supporting more flexible ways of working.

2.4 The Council's Corporate Plan (2020/21 – 2023/24) was agreed

in January 2020 and set out a range of actions and objectives against 4 overall, 'SEED' priorities. These are refreshed each year in terms of annual actions towards meeting the SEED Priorities. The East Herts Together Group made up of a cross service team of Managers and Staff meets regularly as working group to develop our employment and staff practices/ways of working to be:

- One team with a clear and recognisable organisational culture that everybody understands and adheres to.
- A consistent set of employment tools and practices which are truly embedded.
- A 4 year HR and OD Strategy that supports the corporate priorities and strengthens the one team approach.
- Values and behaviours are supported by consistent management practice, staff and management competencies, strong management training and underpinned by clear and appropriate policies.
- Focused on providing excellent customer service to our residents and all whom we work with.

The HR strategy aims to support the accomplishment of the above through:

- recruiting, retaining and developing a quality workforce to deliver quality services;
- supporting our managers to manage high standards of performance;
- developing the competencies required by the Council to successfully deliver the above and support the Corporate Priorities, the annual corporate action plan as well as the Transformation Programme.

2.5 The strategy has been considered by LT on 9/11/21 and was approved subject to reducing a number of actions to ensure realistic as well as developing an annual action plan once the strategy is finalised and approved. The strategy has also been

discussed at East Herts Together who support the strategy and made an addition to the measures to include maintaining an effective working relationship with our recognised Trade Union Unison.

### **3.0 Summary of Strategy**

#### 3.1 Key HR Strategic Aims

- Develop the Council's culture (in line with Values), staffing offer and management capability to ensure that staff see the Council as an employer of choice/recommend it as a great place to work,
- Support Flexibility and Continuous Improvement
- Develop and embed core competencies for both staff and managers to ensure expectations are clear and key behaviours developed consistently
- Develop the Council's Employer Brand
- Be seen as an integral and contributory part of achieving the Council's priorities and delivery of services
- Work with LT and staff to review the effectiveness and fitness for purpose of the current staffing structure and ways of working and make recommendations as appropriate;
- Continue to invest in all staff by supporting effective staff development and appraisal and improving communication across the Council and its centres;
- Support the organisation in the provision of a quality service to all its residents and customers;

- Ensure the efficient use of human and financial resources to reflect the changing priorities of the Council;
- Create a flexible organisation which encourages the maximum ownership of the Council's strategic aims and objectives by the staff and through this their commitment to achieving them;
- Support the Council's role as a fair and reasonable employer;
- Ensure human resource management is integrated into the strategic planning process.

## 3.2 Objectives

There are nine objective areas and each has a number of actions to deliver where we will review, maintain and develop as appropriate:

### 3.2.1 Organisation and Work Design

To encourage and adopt appropriate management and staffing structures and ways of organising work, which achieve the Council's objectives and make the best use of employees' skills and interests while maximising career development opportunities.

### 3.2.2 Employee Resourcing

Recruit, motivate and retain the highest quality staff with the skills and competences required to deliver the Council's strategic and service area objectives.

### 3.2.3 Pay, Benefits and Reward Management

Pay and broader rewards system which is relevant to the

Council's needs, affordable, transparent and perceived to be fair.

#### 3.2.4 Performance Management

Actively and consistently manage performance to deliver quality services and achieve the Council's planned outcomes

#### 3.2.5 Learning and Development

Develop a learning organisation which provides the support and resources for staff to perform to high standards and realise their full potential.

#### 3.2.6 Employee Engagement

Encourage staff ownership of, and pride in, the Council's goals and achievements. Ensure staff are clear on where they fit in the golden thread and engage them to improve the way services are delivered and ensure that they engage with residents/clients to achieve this.

#### 3.2.7 Diversity

Create and maintain a workplace where every individual feels valued and respected for what they can offer, and where the diversity of the people we serve is reflected in our staff group.

#### 3.2.8 Wellbeing, Health and Welfare

Actively support and promote the health and well-being of staff.

#### 3.2.9 Employment Administration

Comply with law and best practice in the employment of staff and avoidance of destructive workplace conflict.

### 3.3 Measuring the effectiveness of HR Strategy

The HR Team will measure effectiveness through the following measures which will be used on the annual action plans as appropriate. HRC members are welcome to express further measures or KPIs that would like:

- Produce for LT and HRC approval a HR Strategy Annual Action Plan which sets out key actions for the year and how we will measure annual progress.
- Regularly collect quantitative and qualitative data to measure the impact and effectiveness of our HR strategy and practices and the return on our investment in Human Resources staffing and other resources.
- Seek to demonstrate the link between HR indicators of success and achievement of corporate goals and outcomes.
- Use cost-effective means to collect benchmarking data with which to measure performance against comparative organisations and obtain best practice ideas for improving our Human Resources processes.
- Strive for awards and publicity as opportunities to accredit and promote achievements.
- Periodically review the kind of information that the Leadership Team and HRC, LJP, Full Council and Executive require to measure the impact of our HR strategy on organisational performance.



- Continue to maintain an effective working relationship with the recognised Trade Union Unison.

## **4.0 Implications/Consultations**

### **Community Safety**

No

### **Data Protection**

No

### **Equalities**

The Strategy have been updated in line with equalities legislation and with consideration to the Council's Equality Strategy. The Strategy includes supporting and developing equalities/diversity.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

Not specifically but blended working with support this further

### **Financial**

No, existing budgets will be used

### **Health and Safety**

H&S join up is covered re wellbeing

### **Human Resources**

Yes as set out this is an employment matter and the report has been produced by HR

### **Human Rights**

No

### **Legal**

No, however LT have approved and this includes the Head of Legal.

### **Specific Wards**

No

## **5.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

5.1 The developed HR and OD Strategy for 2021 to 2025 is attached as Appendix 1.

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