

East Herts Council Report

HR Committee

Date of Meeting: 15 February 2022

Report by: Head of HR and OD

Report title: Human Resources Management Statistics for Quarter 3 (October - December 2021)

Ward(s) affected: None

Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HR Committee:

- (a) To consider the Human Resources Management Statistics for Quarter 3 (October - December 2021) and provide any comments to the HR Officer/Head of HR and OD.

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 Members are invited to consider the Human Resources (HR) Management Statistics for Quarter 3 (October – December 2021).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 This report outlines the current performance against the annual HR targets as approved by the HR Committee and available benchmarking data.

3.0 Report

3.1 Vacancy Data and Recruitment

- 3.1.1 There were 39 vacancies at the end of Quarter 3 (31 December 2021).
- 3.1.2 Five of the 39 posts have been appointed and recruitment

has progressed¹ for 7 out of the remaining 34 vacancies (21%).

3.1.3 During Quarter 3, seventeen posts were advertised. Nine of the 17 posts (53%) have resulted in appointments. For the remaining posts further options are being considered and further advertising of roles where necessary.

3.1.4 Twenty three of the 39 posts (59%) are being considered as savings and are being held due to reviews of the service structure as part of the transformation project. These vacancies are being covered by agency staff where required. 5 posts are in Revenue and Benefits, 2 in Communications, Strategy and Policy, 3 in Strategic Finance and Property, 1 in Housing and Health, 1 in Democratic services, 9 in planning, 1 in Operations, and 1 in Executive Support.

3.2 Employee Turnover

3.2.1 There were 9 leavers in Quarter 3 (October – December 2021) giving a turnover rate for the quarter of 2.8%. Based on the number of leavers so far in Quarters 1, 2 and 3 it is estimated that the turnover rate for the annual period 2021/22 will be **13.1%**. This has reduced and fallen by 1% since quarter 2 (21/22) and is now lower than the local government average (14% for 2018/19 for Local Authority districts in the UK).

¹ Posts were either out to advert, at shortlisting, interview or pre-employment check stages, or an unconditional offer had been made but the candidate has not yet started.

Figure 1 - Leavers and Turnover throughout 2020/21

| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Number of Leavers 2020/21 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 13 |
| Turnover rate 2020/21 | 1.2% | 1.8% | 1.5% | 3.9% |
| Number of Leavers 2021/22 | 12 | 11 | 9 | |
| Turnover rate 2021/22 | 3.6% | 3.4% | 2.8% | |

3.1.1 Reasons for leaving in Quarter 3 included 2 staff leaving to relocate, 2 to retirement, 1 for personal reasons, 1 for promotion and 1 for permanent home working. Sadly, we lost one member of staff to death in service and one member of staff to ill health retirement. We expect the turnover rate to reduce throughout the year following the recent increase in retirements and lifestyle changes due to COVID 19.

3.3 Sickiness Absence

ALL absence

ALL Absence – Quarter 3

3.3.1 At the end of Quarter 3, the total number of sickness days taken was 526.15 full time equivalent (FTE) days. Of these, 337.88 FTE days (64%) were due to short term sickness and 188.27 FTE days (36%) were due to long term sickness. The percentage of time lost due to short term sickness is 1.8% and the percentage of time lost due to long term sickness is 1% which equates to a total percentage lost time of 2.8%.

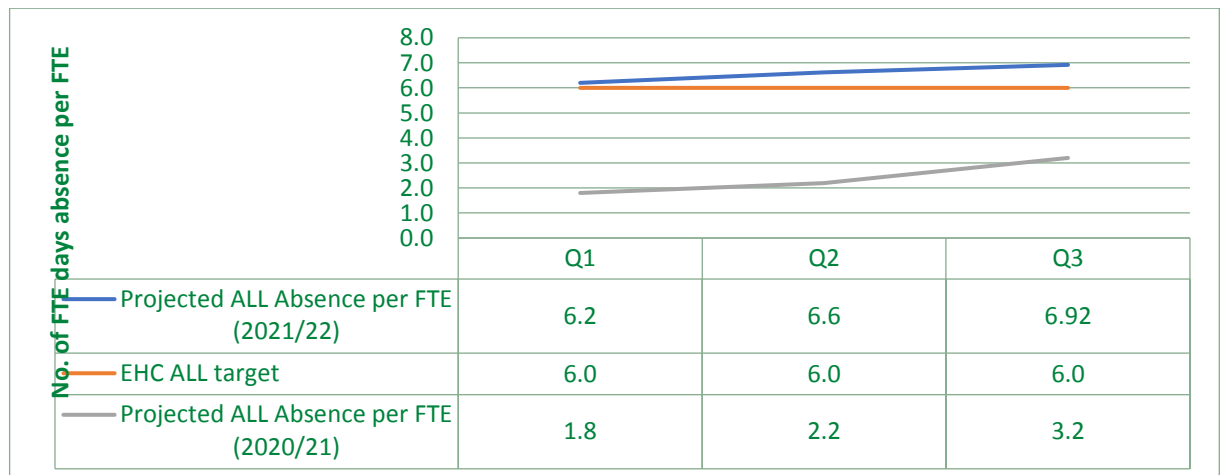
3.3.2 At the end of Quarter 3, the number of FTE days absent

per FTE was an average of 5.19 days.

ALL Absence - Annual period 2021/22

3.3.3 Figure 2 below shows that, based on absences for the year so far (i.e. absences as at the end of December 2021), projected sickness absence for the annual period 2021/22 is estimated to be **6.92 days per FTE**. This is slightly above the council's annual target of 6 days. As outlined in turnover there has been an ill health retirement following 12 months of sickness so this has impacted the year as well as number of mental health and COVID related absences which the pandemic has impacted. Other councils are also reported increased sickness absences for similar reasons.

Figure 2 - Projected annual absence for 2021/22



Short term absence

3.3.4 Absences of less than four weeks are considered to be short term sickness absence.

Short term absence - Quarter 3

3.3.5 Ninety nine employees (30.5% of the total headcount) had short term sickness absence during Quarter 3

totalling 337.88 FTE days. This represents a percentage lost time rate of 1.8%.

3.3.6 At the end of Quarter 3, the number of short term FTE days absent per FTE was an average of 2.91 days.

Short term absence - Annual period 2021/22

3.3.7 Figure 3 below shows that, based on short term absences for the year so far (as at the end of December 2021), it is estimated that short term sickness absence for the annual period 2021/22 will be **3.9 days per FTE**. This is below the council's short term target of 4 days.

Figure 3 - Projected annual SHORT TERM absence for 2021/22



Long Term absence

3.3.8 Absences in excess of 4 weeks/28 consecutive calendar days are considered to be long term sickness absence.

Long term absence - Quarter 3

3.3.9 Eight employees (2.5% of the total headcount) had long term sickness absence during Quarter 3 totalling 188.27 FTE days. This represents a percentage time lost rate of 1%.

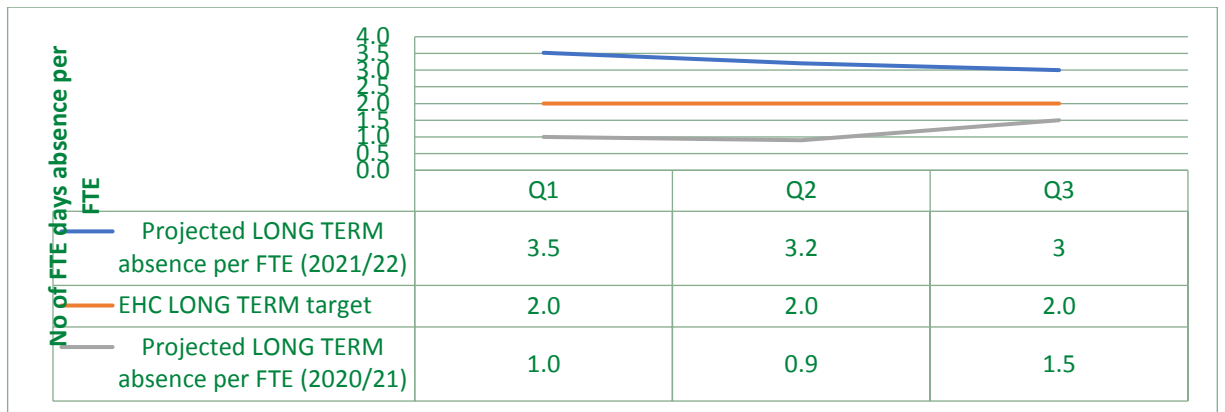
3.3.10 The eight employees have been offered support through referrals to Occupational Health/taking medical advice from Specialists where appropriate. The reasons for long term absence were for mental health (1 employee), acute medical conditions (2 employees), stress (1 employee) Pregnancy (2 employee) and minor illnesses (2 employees). Four employees have now returned to work and 1 employee has returned on a phased return. Two employees have left the council to retire. The employee who remains absent is now on maternity leave.

3.3.11 At the end of Quarter 3, the number of long term FTE days absent per FTE was 2.27 days.

LONG TERM absence - Annual period 2021/22

3.3.12 Figure 4 below shows that, based on long term absences for the year so far (i.e. as at the end of December 2021), it is estimated that long term sickness absence for the annual period 2021/22 will be **3 days per FTE**. This is above the council's long term target of 2 days. With the reduction of Long-term sickness cases this will hopefully reduce and is being well managed through the absence procedures.

Figure 4 Projected annual LONG TERM absence for 2021/22



3.4 Learning and Development

3.4.1 In Quarter 3, eight in-house corporate learning and development events were held over twelve sessions and two hundred and thirty employees participated. Please note these figures do not include the in-house e-learning courses delivered through the Skills Build platform. These will be included in the Annual Learning and Development report.

3.4.2 The roll out of the in-house Corporate Sustainability and Climate Change Training continued. David Thorogood, Environmental Sustainability Co-Ordinator, led the presentations. In Quarter 3, two sessions were delivered virtually through Zoom and twenty six employees attended the event.

3.4.3 Helen Farrell, who was the HR & OD Co-ordinator, delivered Coping with Change sessions as part of the East Herts Transformation Programme. In quarter 3, two sessions were delivered virtually though zoom and fifty four employees attended.

3.4.4 The Information Governance and Data Protection Manager, Tyron Suddes delivered training to employees on updates to the Data Protection Policy. Three sessions were held in quarter 3, and one hundred and seventeen employees attended.

3.4.5 Our Corporate Induction took place in November 2021. The event was delivered virtually through Zoom by the trainee HR Officer and included revised and updated content.

3.4.6 In Quarter 3, First Aid face to face training was delivered, over 3 days by Pegasus training. Five employees attended and are now qualified as first aiders, with all three caretakers now trained increasing resilience and coverage.

3.4.7 RIPA and CPIA training was delivered in February virtually through zoom by PFL Training. Fourteen employees attended in total.

3.4.8 Employees continue to complete the annual mandatory training programme through SkillsBuild, the council's e-learning platform. The following courses went live from December 2021 for all employees to complete:

- Safeguarding 2021/22
- Fire safety 2021/22
- Email Etiquette and email management
- Data Protection 2021/22
- Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace 2021/22

3.4.9 A fire safety course has been developed in response to the blended working. The course is designed to remind all employees of their duties and responsibilities to familiarise themselves with the fire evacuation procedures, routes of escape, assembly points and general fire safety.

3.4.10 The email etiquette course has now been launched on skills build. This course has been devised to help manage and use emails more effectively.

3.4.11 The following learning and development events are planned to be delivered in Quarter 4:

- Accessibility Training
- Procurement Training
- ModGov Report writing

3.4.12 The new HR and OD manager has started with the council and will be co-ordinating L&D and working with our training providers to ensure key training is delivered in a safe way.

3.4.13 The following is a summary of the learning and development events that were held in Quarter 3:

| Event/Course | No of Participants | Number of sessions held |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| First Aid at work (3 day qualifier) | 5 | 1 |
| Data Protection Policy Training | 117 | 3 |
| Coping with Change | 54 | 2 |
| Mediation | 8 | 1 |
| Corporate Sustainability and Climate Change Training | 26 | 2 |
| RIPA | 6 | 1 |
| Corporate Induction | 6 | 1 |
| CPIA | 8 | 1 |
| Total | 230 | 12 |

3.4 Equalities Monitoring Indicators

3.4.1 The table below shows a summary of employee equalities data at the end of Quarter 3 (i.e. 31 December 2021).

| | Comparison to population | EHC Percentage |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | | |

| | data | |
|--|---------------------|-------|
| Disability | | |
| Leadership Team with a disability | 5% CENSUS 2011 | 0% |
| Employees with a disability | 5% CENSUS 2011 | 3.8% |
| Ethnicity | | |
| Leadership Team members from BAME groups | 4.5% CENSUS 2011 | 10% |
| Employees from BAME groups | 4.5% CENSUS 2011 | 8.2% |
| Gender | | |
| Leadership Team members who are female | 51% NOMIS 2019 | 40% |
| Employees who are female | 51% NOMIS 2019 | 74.4% |
| Sexual Orientation (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual) | | |
| Leadership Team | 2.1% ONS 2018 | 20% |
| Employees | 2.1% ONS 2018 | 1.9% |

The Leadership Team comprises the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and all Heads of Service.

4.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

As detailed in the report

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

No

5.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

None

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