

Cabinet Member Response to the Recommendations of the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee following its review of People Services: Council Workforce Update including Benchmarking, Recruitment, Retention, Reward and Performance Management on 12 December 2023

At its meeting on 12 December 2023, the committee considered a report on People Services: Council Workforce Update including Benchmarking, Recruitment, Retention, Reward and Performance Management.

A written response to the recommendations of the committee has now been provided by the Cabinet Member.

The recommendations of the committee are detailed below and the response from the Cabinet Member is also provided.

Item 4 - People Services: Council Workforce Update including Benchmarking, Recruitment, Retention, Reward and Performance Management

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Resources, HR and Property (Deputy Leader):

- i. A future report or briefing note to the committee at an appropriate time be provided to consider the following:
 - a. The mean and mode age of employees in reference to Age Profile, to be provided and a further breakdown of age profile by service area.
 - b. In relation to gender, a further breakdown to be provided for each service area.
 - c. A breakdown of geographic data in terms of where our employees live, for those living outside of the county, where possible.
 - d. Consideration to be given to how the organisation is dealing with an aging workforce.
 - e. Benchmarking data on other similarly comparable authorities in this area of work to be provided as and when available.
 - f. Further data to be provided to breakdown which service areas vacant posts are held in, what the pay levels are and how long vacancies have been vacant for.
 - g. Exit interview data to be considered to develop a greater understanding of why employees have left the organisation.

- h. Details of the steps being taken to ensure that staff are more involved in change management at the authority.
- ii. Consideration to be given to the following mechanisms to further strengthen the recruitment and retention of employees:
 - a. Staying in touch with former employees for feedback to be gathered and a greater understanding of why they left the organisation and the concept of 'Stay Interviews' to be explored to identify any potential issues or barriers for employees considering leaving the authority.
 - b. A press release to promote the work the county council is doing with apprenticeships.
 - c. Closer working with local universities and employers to develop bespoke training programmes or courses where there is a job 'guaranteed' at the end of the course. Consider how this work is being delivered across other comparable authorities.
 - d. The formation of an Alumni or Forum of former employees who would be ambassadors for the organisation.
 - e. Greater work shadowing and mentoring opportunities for existing employees.

Response from Cabinet Member:

I am glad the Committee welcomed the report and presentation. I note there were no further recommendations for Item 5, Lancashire County Council's People Strategy. People Services will have an operating model in place from April 2024 and it is timely to include the recommendations listed in item 4. These are themed into a request for further workforce data/metrics and opportunities to strengthen recruitment and retention in the council.

In relation to workforce metrics, a number relate to age and gender, People Services will be undertaking a scoping piece of work to build strategies to work towards having a representative workforce and so this type of data will be incorporated into that planning. Some other metrics will align with People Services' developing strategies for improved recruitment and retention outcomes, and include exit data, and further drilling into number and type of vacancies. Change management readiness was also referenced, and this will be included as part of our review of related policies for restructure and reorganisation. Finally, we will explore further opportunities for meaningful benchmarking.

In relation to recruitment and retention, People Services do intend to develop further opportunities to promote and extend our job opportunities and apprenticeships with secondary and further education sectors and promote the council through a

developing employer brand and building networks that actively promote the council as an employer. People Services has acknowledged that whilst exit interview data is important, considering 'stay interviews' supports an earlier opportunity to consider risks and opportunities of future staff turnover. Finally, to support improving recruitment and retention outcomes People Services will begin to use data from workforce plans to help inform the priorities to focus on.