

Overview and Scrutiny Human Resources Sub Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2019

Present:

Councillor Russell – in the Chair
Councillors Clay and Stanton

Also present:

Councillor Ollerhead, Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources
Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods
Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing

RGSC/HRSG/19/06 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2019 as a correct record.

RGSC/HRSG/19/07 Adults Workforce

The Sub Group considered the presentation provided by the Executive Director of Adult Social Services.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services referred to the main points and themes within the presentation which included: -

- An overview of what had been developed so far;
- What was planned;
- An overview of the senior structure;
- Information on the different teams working in the Manchester Local Care Organisation and within Manchester Health and Care Commissioning;
- Information on the teams retained within Manchester City Council;
- Information on the workforce profile;
- Data on the absence rate across the workforce and the work to reduce this;
- Data on performance management and capability conduct;
- Information on the use of resources;
- Spend and the work to reduce agency spend;
- Training and development information;
- B-Heard survey outcomes and response;
- A summary of the key areas of the Adult Improvement Plan; and
- A summary of the challenges, opportunities and good news.

Some of the key points that arose from the Sub Group's discussions were: -

- Further information on the recruitment of permanent staff was sought and how this would impact on the use of agency staff;

- What savings would be achieved by recruiting permanent staff compared to paying agency fees;
- What were the budget arrangements for the funding of the post of Deputy Director of Adult Social Services;
- Information was sought on performance reviews and supervision of staff;
- What was the percentage of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff above Grade 10 and what percentage of staff above Grade 10 were female;
- Information was sought on the arrangements for capability management of staff; and
- Further clarification was sought regarding the role of the Director of Homelessness.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services stated that the staff were the most valuable asset and she and her team were committed to supporting and developing them. She said that doing so, in collaboration with colleagues in Health, would allow for the recruitment and retention of a workforce that would drive improvements across a range of services and deliver the best outcomes for Manchester residents. She said she took personal responsibility to visit teams and meet with the Team Managers to understand issue and establish communications. She stated that both herself and the Executive Member were accessible to staff and every member of staff received regular communications from the senior management team.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services commented that the recruitment of permanent staff would reduce the expenditure on agency staff, however she commented that it was important to understand that delays in the recruitment of staff that were due to statutory legal checks meant that agency staff would still be required at times. She further commented that the recruitment of permanent staff would also contribute to addressing capacity issues and pressures experienced in teams. In response to a specific question the Executive Director of Adult Social Services stated that the role of Deputy the Deputy Director of Adult Social Services would be funded from existing budgets.

The Programme Lead (Health and Social Care Integration) commented that in some areas Team Managers had responsibility for over 20 staff and this presented a challenge to complete staff performance reviews and supervision, in addition to their other roles and responsibilities that they were expected to deliver, and plans were in place to address this. She further commented that all care packages would be reviewed to ensure workforce levels met the need, and this would also inform workforce planning.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services informed Members that 12 Team Managers had recently been recruited to the Neighbourhood Teams, and part of their role would be to ensure staff appraisals and reviews were completed in a timely manner and that practice was consistent across the city. In regard to BAME staff she said that 6% of staff above Grade 10 were BAME, with 72% of the Directorate's workforce being women.

The Head of Workforce Strategy commented that the recording and monitoring of About You discussions was being improved through the introduction of an improved tracking system. He stated that this system would be piloted before being rolled out

across the organisation. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services stated that Internal Audit had also reviewed the existing arrangements for supervision and an action plan had been agreed to strengthen this process.

The Head of HR Operations stated that it was acknowledged that capability was not managed well across the organisation. She added that every allegation of gross misconduct was reviewed in the first instance to check if it was a case of capability or conduct, and work was underway to ensure that informal monitoring of performance was recorded and reported appropriately and consistently as this was not currently captured.

The Head of HR Operations further commented that monitoring of attendance was being reviewed corporately to understand what resources could be utilised to support staff to return to their role or where appropriate, move into another post, supported by training. She further commented that the recruitment of staff would alleviate some of the pressures experienced in teams.

In regard to a specific question regarding premiums paid for agency staff and savings achieved if agency staff were not used The Programme Lead (Health and Social Care Integration) stated that She would confirm this after the meeting. She commented that staff did receive a payment for working unsocial hours and that staffing at unsocial hours was from a mixture of permanent and agency staff, adding that the Care Quality Commission were satisfied with how agency staff had been deployed.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services informed the Members that the recently appointed Director of Homelessness would be reviewing all homeless services, in conjunction with the Audit Department to ensure the service was delivering the best possible support for some of the most vulnerable citizens in Manchester. She described that this was a strategic post and he would be working with a range of partners, both internal and external to review the provision for homeless people.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing stated that the decision had been taken to recruit the post of a full time, Director of Homelessness that reported to the Executive Director of Adult Social Services. She confirmed that the Director of Homelessness was an external appointment and he did not report to the Combined Authority. She further commented that there was a commitment to a rolling programme of Social Worker recruitment to address the issue of delays in starting following successful selection due to the pre-employment checks that were required. She further expressed her gratitude to the staff in the HR department who had supported the department around staffing and recruitment.

Decision

To note the presentation.

RGSC/HRSG/19/08 Apprenticeships

The Sub Group considered the presentation that had been submitted for consideration that provided information on the following areas of activity: -

- An overview of the apprenticeship system;
- Data on the apprentice sign ups by Directorate 2018/19;
- Feedback following the National Apprenticeship Week;
- Demographic breakdown of 2018/19 sign ups;
- Levy expenditure to date;
- Highlights from year two;
- Headlines for 2019/20;
- Actions proposed to ensure continued improvement;
- Strengthening the approach with schools;
- Targets for 2019/20 by Directorate;
- Describing the opportunities across Health and Social Care; and
- How apprenticeships are being used to create opportunities for Our Children.

Some of the key points that arose from the Sub Group's discussions were: -

- What was being done to address the challenges experienced with schools and the take up of apprentices;
- Were all of Our Children currently on apprenticeships recruited directly;
- Did we work with the Manchester College to deliver apprenticeships;
- What Social Value was being achieved via apprenticeships; and
- How were apprenticeships advertised.

The Head of Workforce Strategy confirmed that all of Our Children on an apprenticeship programme had been directly recruited, adding that options for the possible development of a pre-apprenticeship/traineeship programme aimed at Our Children, with a link into apprenticeship roles were currently ongoing with the Independent Living Service.

The Head of Workforce Strategy confirmed that the service did work in partnership with the Manchester College to deliver apprenticeships, and this was one of a range of providers. He described that the Levy had been used to scale up the apprenticeship offer at an entry level and develop innovative approaches to higher level programmes.

The Head of Workforce Strategy stated that the majority of Council entry level apprenticeships undertaken by external candidates had been recruited through partnership working with a range of partners, such as Big Life and the Department of Work and Pensions He said that working with these and other partners allowed for conversations to be had with prospective applicants about the training, progression and career opportunities within the Council. He added that conversations were being had with the Communications Team to showcase this message and promote the Council as an attractive employer.

The Interim Director of HROD supported this comment and added that providing meaningful learning and development would help promote the Council as an employer of choice and help with the recruitment and retention of staff.

The Head of Workforce Strategy stated that Manchester was not unique in the relationship and uptake from schools, however conversations were ongoing with Rochdale Council as they were an authority that had a good uptake of apprenticeships from schools.

In response to a Member's request for a breakdown of apprentices by level based on the indices of multiple deprivation, the Head of Workforce Strategy said that this would be provided. He further advised that examples and information in relation to Social Value and apprenticeships would be provided to the Sub Group following the meeting.

Decision

1. To note the presentation.
2. To request that a breakdown of apprentices by level based on the indices of multiple deprivation be circulated to the Sub Group.
3. To request that examples and information in relation to Social Value and apprenticeships be circulated to the Sub Group.

RGSC/HRSG/19/09 Update on the recruitment to vacant senior officer posts

The Sub Group received a verbal update report on the progress that had been made with the recruitment to vacant senior officer posts of the Director of HROD and the Director of ICT.

The Interim Director of HROD informed the Members that a panel would convene on the 8 August to consider the candidates for the post of Director of HROD. She said the candidates would also undergo an assessment that would include the involvement of a number of partners in recognition of the important function of this role. She stated that subject to a candidate being appointed the individual would be in post in approximately three months.

In regard to the post of Director of ICT, the Interim Director of HROD stated that discussions were currently ongoing to agree the future remit of this post to ensure it was fit for purpose going forward. She said that the post would then go out to advert and it was anticipated that the shortlisted candidates would be interviewed in September 2019.

The Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources responded to a question from a Member by stating that it was anticipated that this strategic role would not be split across two posts.

Decision

To note the update.

RGSC/HRSG/19/10 Update on Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) Workforce Review

The Sub Group considered the report of the Head of Workforce Strategy that provided an update on work to review the Council's policy and procedures as they related to race equality. This work was being progressed in the context of data on employee disciplinary cases considered by the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee at its February 2019 meeting.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included: -

- Providing an overview of the Our Manchester Approach to Workforce Equality, Diversity & Inclusion;
- The work undertaken to review Our Manchester Approaches to Ensuring Race Equality; and
- Emerging Key Lines of Enquiry.

Some of the key points that arose from the Sub Group's discussions were: -

- Would Senior Management be interviewed as part of the independent analysis of Council policies and practices;
- How were the staff appointed to undertake the independent analysis chosen;
- Welcoming the inclusion of the definitions of Institutional Racism, noting the importance of recognising these;
- What was being done to enable and increase the progression and promotion of employees from protected groups, in particular BAME and disabled employees, to support diversity at all levels of the organisation; and
- Further analysis of the numbers and factors that contributed to disciplinary cases against BAME staff.

The Head of Workforce Strategy advised that Senior Management would be interviewed as part of the independent analysis of Council policies and practices, commenting that Service Leads and Equalities Champions would be consulted with. He advised that the staff appointed to undertake the independent analysis had been chosen due to their skills and ability to deliver this work, adding that all of the information they collected would be treated with the upmost confidentiality when they returned to their substantive posts within the Health Service.

The Head of Workforce Strategy acknowledged the comments made by a Member regarding the lack of BAME staff at a senior level and commented that it was recognised that more needed to be done to address this. He said that work was ongoing to engage with BAME staff so as to understand the barriers and challenges experienced to progression so that practical and proactive strategies could be developed and co-designed with staff. He stated that it was important that time was taken to undertake this exercise to deliver the required outcomes.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods stated that he was confident that the staff appointed to undertake the review were capable of delivering this work. He said

they were approaching this project in an objective manner and engaging with a range of staff at all levels of the organisation, including front line staff.

The Chair commented that the Sub Group would welcome the opportunity to consider the report at an appropriate time following conclusion of the review.

Decision

To note the report.

RGSC/HRSG/19/11 Work Programme

The Sub Group were invited to consider and agree the work programme.

Decision

To agree the work programme.