

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment and Staffing Committee held on
Friday, 15 October 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Henry Batchelor – Chair
Councillor Dawn Percival – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Dr. Claire Daunton Sally Ann Hart
Mark Howell Heather Williams
John Williams

Officers: Patrick Adams Senior Democratic Services Officer
Jonathan Corbett HR Advisor
Laurence Damary-Homan Democratic Services Officer
Lindsey Smith HR Business Partner

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no Apologies for Absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021 were agreed as correct record.

4. Retention and Turnover Report: Quarter 1 (Q1) 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021

The HR Advisor presented the report on the analysis of the turnover of staff between 1 April 2021 and 30 June 2021. He reported that there had been a 3.9% rate of voluntary leavers for this quarter, which was above the target rate of 3.25%.

Career Progression

The report showed that a significant proportion of voluntary turnover was down to individuals seeking more career progression. The HR advisor noted that the annual PDR cycle gave employees an option to discuss potential options for progression, that there were regular training courses offered to staff and that any employee had the ability to request access to specific training courses. The success of the apprenticeship schemes in place were also noted.

The Lead Cabinet Member for Staffing, Councillor John Williams, recognised that the progression of staff within the organisation was an issue and consequently agreed to look into the matter further. Councillor Williams stated that the impact of the recent cost of living increase would not come into effect until the third quarter.

It was noted by the Committee that the rate contact-centre staff moving into different

roles had previously been high and, when questioned, the HR Advisor stated that he would have to look into statistics to confirm if this was still the case.

Agency Staff

Members requested that the percentage of agency staff in a given department be presented alongside the number of agency staff departures. This was noted by the HR Advisor.

Impact of COVID-19 on Statistic Comparison

The Committee noted that COVID-19 had significant impacts on turnover and consequently statistics from the affected period would not provide an ideal set of data for comparison. The HR advisor stated that historic turnover data could be provided to give a more accurate point of comparison for future turnover analysis.

Casual Worker Bank Initiative

The Committee noted and commended the success of the Casual Worker Bank Initiative.

The Committee **noted** the report.

5. Sickness Absence 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021

The HR Business Partner presented the report on sickness absence for the period 1 April to 30 June 2021.

It was noted that the colour coding on page 37 of the agenda pack was misleading as the colour used for sickness of staff in previous quarters was the same colour as staff who had been off sick for “stress, depression and mental health”. The Committee requested that the next Sickness Absence report rectify this.

Flexible Working

The Committee noted that flexible working has been beneficial to staff but enquired as to whether data was available on the impact of flexible and homeworking on mental wellbeing. The HR Business Partner agreed to further explore the issue.

Members noted that flexible working was not available to all staff due to the nature of some roles. The Committee wished to explore options that could help staff who do not have access to flexible working. Despite a lack of specific schemes to help these staff, HR Business partner noted that the shift patterns of some non-flexible roles suited many individuals, that managers were in regular contact with their staff and, wherever possible, would look to grant time off for staff in order to ensure their health needs were met. The Committee requested that these members of staff be kept in mind and that the Council provide all the support possible to staff who could not work flexibly.

Flu Vaccines

Members enquired about the situation regarding flu vaccines for staff. The HR Business Partner confirmed that a flu vaccine rollout was ongoing and that all members of staff were eligible to receive a vaccine if they chose to do so.

The Committee **noted** the report.

6. Disability Confident Task & Finish Group

The Committee received an email from Councillor Sarah Cheung-Johnson, the lead of

the Disability Confident Task & Finish Group, questioning whether the scheme needed to continue now that Level 2 had been reached. Councillor Mark Howell proposed that a paper on the subject be presented to the Committee at the next meeting. This was seconded by the Chair and **agreed** by affirmation.

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting will be held on Friday 14 January at 10:00 a.m.

The Meeting ended at 10.50 a.m.
