

2018/2019 WORKFORCE OUTTURN REPORT - Progress 2018/19 and Priorities for 2019/20

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- 1.1 During 2019/20 we will achieve an agreed West Sussex Workforce/People Strategy with an underpinning action plan to support the delivery of West Sussex's Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy; and most importantly to support our cultural challenges.
- 1.2 Prior to 2018 there was limited information and scrutiny in relation to the County Council's workforce. During 2018/19 significant effort has been made to identify and set out clearly our Workforce/People priorities and the relevant performance indicators to track the cultural change we are seeking organisationally.
- 1.3 During 2018/19 a great effort was made to engage with our staff through:
 - Our staff network groups (women in the workplace, disability, mental health, LGBT, BAME, carers);
 - The mental health group was a newly created group during 2018/19;
 - Elected representatives from the staff network groups via a Staff Culture Board that the Chief Executive chairs;
 - Our inaugural staff recognition awards ceremony;
 - Our inaugural annual Staff Conference;
 - Quarterly on-line pulse surveys;
 - The first comprehensive all-staff survey for 5 years;
 - Follow-up workshops after the staff survey to find out what exactly is concerning our staff and that they would like to change;
 - The launch of a 'staff app' (called Big Exchange) the first for a local authority – enabling us to engage more easily with our workforce and to break down traditional barriers to communication and engagement.
- 1.4 We now have a good grip on our workforce key performance indicators. Our actions in 2018/19, and our trend analysis shows, that despite the organisation being under pressure we have made positive strides and directional travel in:
 - Focus on performance; our values and staff engagement;
 - Employment of permanent staff, and reduction in agency workers/cost;
 - Increased numbers of apprenticeship and use of the apprenticeship levy
 - Numbers of staff grievances;
 - Numbers of long-term sickness instances that are now being managed;
 - Induction completion rates.

- 1.5 Areas for further scrutiny and attention in 2019/20, include:
- Ensuring inspiring and effective leadership – appropriate for today’s, and tomorrows, local government challenges
 - Appraisal completions rates to reach our 100% target
 - Actions to ensure we are a diverse and inclusive employer
 - Support for our staff to speak openly and without fear
 - Staff wellbeing support to help reduce sickness absence
 - Enabling our staff to undertake work differently and more efficiently e.g. using better technology, and addressing business processes that are slowing progress
- 1.6 Importantly we now have a firm evidence-base, including the Ofsted and Fire Service Inspection findings, from which to determine an agreed West Sussex Workforce/People Strategy with an underpinning action plan that places culture at the heart of the organisation. We want every member of staff to understand and share our values, and to believe that this is a place where they can succeed and thrive.

2 INTRODUCTION:

- 2.1 There are three key areas of organisational challenge which need to be our focus to ensure the future success of our organisation on behalf of our residents:
- Culture;
 - Finance; and
 - Performance
- 2.2 **Our Cultural Challenge:**
- 2.3 By having the right culture within our organisation we will be more able to successfully respond to our financial and performance challenges. Our aspiration to have a ‘can do, does do’ culture has not yet been universally reached.
- 2.4 Both the Ofsted and Fire and Rescue Inspections in 2019 identified a number of cultural challenges which, for them to be prevalent, suggests that these matters have still to be ‘cracked’; and new ways of working sustained. These Inspection observations included:

Ofsted:

- Poor challenge and direction;
- Low impact corporate parenting arrangements;
- Poor quality assurance; supervision and social work practice;
- Children experiencing too many social workers; and challenges recruiting and retaining social workers.

Fire and Rescue:

- Inadequate risk management arrangements including systems for extracting and reviewing data to inform risk;
- Inadequate use of technology and resources;
- Too little emphasis on staff wellbeing;

- Too little day-to-day role modelling and communication of shared values.

2.5 Our cultural priorities for **2019/2020** are to:

- Strengthen the foundations of our governance, including:
 - Tackling non-compliance e.g. performance appraisal completion and mandatory induction completion;
 - Establishing efficient and effective decision making routes and ensuring these are clear to staff; and
 - Improving performance and risk management.
- Provide an enabling and empowering culture, including:
 - Picking up and addressing the following issues raised in the workshops following the all staff survey
 - My opinions ideas and creativity are valued and have an impact on the way we work;
 - It is safe to speak up and challenge;
 - I am treated with fairness and respect; and
 - Senior managers are sufficiently visible and accessible within the County Council.
- Understand the problems we are trying to solve, including:
 - Changing outcomes, based on good data analysis
 - Ensuring effective leadership and management
 - Ensuring ownership and accountability at all levels in the organisation.

2.6 **Our Financial Challenge:**

2.7 Achieving our Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 against both a backdrop of increasing demand and within the context of our performance and cultural challenges is essential for our success.

2.8 All successful organisations have the right culture. We aspire to have a culture that lives and breathes our values, where all of our people are able to work in an empowered, collaborative and innovative way to make a real and positive difference to all our communities; but cultural change takes time and focus. Building confidence in our workforce to share ideas and implement change at a faster pace will help the organisation, through transformation, to become more efficient and effective and thus in turn help to support the financial challenge we face as an organisation.

2.9 **Our Performance Challenge:**

2.10 The following are our organisational priorities for 2019/20:

- Children's Social Care (post-inspection)
- Fire and Rescue Services (post-inspection)
- Adult Social Care Improvement
- Whole Council Design
- Health and Social Care Integration.

3. OUR WORKFORCE/PEOPLE STRATEGY:

- 3.1 Our People Strategy will support and enable the very best from the workforce of the organisation and the identified priority areas for the strategy and action plan are:
- Culture and values – i.e. “the way we do things around here”
 - Inclusion
 - Change and Engagement
 - Performance and Skill
 - Talent and Resourcing
 - Safety, Health and Wellbeing.

4 PRIORITY 1: CULTURE AND VALUES:

- 4.1 During 2018/19 our intention was to:
- Launch a Corporate Management Team development programme;
 - Achieve Corporate Leadership Team stability; and
 - Promote staff recognition scheme and sharing of successes.

- 4.2 Based on **our analysis below our areas of concern and therefore priorities for 2019/20 are:**
- Ensuring impactful mind-set change work to help progress development of our executive, director and senior managers;
 - Increasing staff engagement in feedback routes like the quarterly pulse survey; and
 - Increasing staff positivity.

4.3 Corporate Management Development:

- 4.4 We undertook a Corporate Management Team learning needs diagnostics using the 21st Century Public Servant competencies as a benchmark and determined that our priority development requirements during 2019/20 needs first to be mind-set changes to support our cultural ambitions, including:
- Senior leadership ability to relate to others in a way that brings out the best in them, fosters teamwork, collaboration and involvement in decision making;
 - Senior leadership self-awareness and authenticity; and
 - Leadership energy is focussed on creative activity e.g. visibility, accessibility and accountability.
- 4.5 We are currently completing the diagnostic and delivery framework phase for our Corporate Management Team (Tiers 1-3 of senior leadership) development programme. We will work collaboratively with a range of commissioned learning and development partners, using a common framework of outcomes, to deliver our development programme. The programme will be delivered in departments, to support their individual challenges and facilitate the bedding in of the corporate leadership departmental structure.

4.6 **Leadership Team Stability:**

4.7 We would, as a rule, expect and want all our posts to be filled on a permanent basis, or with professional interims who have sought after strengths and experience often necessary during periods of substantial challenge and change. To leave posts unfilled, or not covered by individuals with insufficient experience can have a destabilising impact on the corporate leadership, change oversight and implementation. If posts are filled on a permanent or professional interim basis then we have a guaranteed level of leadership stability. Over and above that our 'stretch target' was for 95% of the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) to be permanent appointees. At the conclusion of 2018/19 two (11%) of the 17 CLT posts were not filled on a permanent basis (Children's Services and Property and Assets). This falls short by 6% (equivalent to one post) our 95% target. However, when account is taken of the CLT (Tier 1) restructure during 2018/19 (paragraph 4.8) this is a comparatively positive outcome.

4.8 During 2018/19 the CLT structure, plus a number of posts reporting-in to the CLT, was changed. The restructure, effective from May 2019, created three departments (People, Place and Resources) and a Chief Executive's Office. During 2018/19 three CLT members left (Education and Skills, Children's and Family Services, Economy, Planning and Place) and we made two new permanent appointments to the Director of Education and Skills and Director of Adult Services.

4.9 In 2019/20 Q1 we successfully appointed to the Director of Property and Assets; but were unsuccessful recruiting to the Executive Director of Resources on a permanent basis. By the end of 2019/20 Q1 we expect to make a permanent appointment to the Chief Fire Officer and Joint Strategic Director of Commissioning in July and to have two CLT roles covered on a long-term interim basis (Director of Children's Services, and Executive Director of Resources). This therefore means that we are not far short of our stretch target despite a CLT restructure.

4.10 **Staff Recognition:**

4.11 We held our inaugural staff recognition awards ceremony in 2018 supporting and bringing to life our corporate values and an inaugural annual Staff Conference focusing on the West Sussex Way and Rising to Our Challenge. We also continued to take the cultural 'pulse' of our staff through a short quarterly survey and we listen and act upon what that tells us.

4.12 **Staff Engagement and Positivity:**

- 4.13 Our target for staff participation in pulse surveys is 50%. This may seem low, but traditionally staff participation in internal surveys can be low. The 50% target is a reasonable one for us to aspire to currently. Unfortunately participation decreased to 20% in 2018-19 from 29% in 2017/18. The areas of lowest return are not surprisingly those directorates which are “hard to reach” as staff don’t have easy access to a computer. As part of our plan to increase communication and engagement with these staff groups we have:
- launched our ‘staff app’ called “The Big Exchange” in March 2019. Take up has been positive with 1,200 staff having signed up to date. In future we will increasingly drive completion of the pulse survey through this route;
 - improved arrangements to provide data for Directors so they can identify and act on services with low participation rates.
- 4.14 Our target is also to ensure that we have positive scores* reflecting the views of staff in at least 50% of the questions we ask in our quarterly pulse survey about how we work and how it feels to work in the organisation. The pulse survey questions are changed periodically to follow-up the impact of initiatives undertaken to address areas of concern previously highlighted. Currently we achieve positive scores in 71% of the questions we ask. As part of our plan to improve the culture relating to the 29% of questions where the scores were not positive we will:
- Continue to invest in leadership and management development; provide additional support for facilitated team discussions to enable more interaction with senior leaders and opportunity to enable issues to be discussed and planned changes to be agreed and tracked.

* A positive score is where the sum of the returns for ‘Sometimes’ and ‘Always’ is 75% or higher

5 PRIORITY 2: INCLUSION:

- 5.1 During 2018/19 our intention was to:
- Support the culture board and staff groups to undertake a visioning exercise to determine outcomes, plans and KPIs;
 - Undertake Timewise accreditation diagnostic and action planning; and
 - Ensure targeted action to address feedback from ENEI (Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion) assessment and non-disclosure.

- 5.2 Based on our analysis below **our areas of concern and therefore priorities for 2019/20 are:**
- Review of County Council’s diversity and inclusion policy, procedures, guidance; engagement with key stakeholders, including staff network groups and trade unions; and drawing up of an underpinning 3-year positive steps action plan and
 - Increase employee diversity disclosure levels through improving awareness and data capture processes.

5.3 **Culture Board and Staff Network Groups:**

5.4 We undertook a joint visioning workshop with all staff network groups which identified the need and desire for our staff groups to work more collaboratively as many of the issues are common to all and an additional staff network group on mental health was established. We also amalgamated a number of staff policies and guidance in to one 'Special Circumstances Policy' and this work was prompted and supported by the Culture Board and Staff Network Groups.

5.5 **Equality Standards:**

5.6 We undertook a number of diagnostic assessments using established benchmarking assessment tools:

- Timewise - the UK's leading flexible working consultancy specialising in flexibility as a positive talent strategy, and
- The Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI) – a benchmarking diagnostic that assesses our activity as an employer across all protected characteristics rather than a single identity

5.7 We are now developing our 3-year diversity and inclusion action plan, which will underpin the Council's Workforce/People Strategy. The outcome we are striving for is to improve inclusion for all employees, regardless of their identity or protected characteristics. For these reasons, we are considering whether it is better to concentrate on benchmarking our activity as an employer across all protected characteristics rather than a single identity; and our focus may move therefore to the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI) diagnostic and action planning tool where the County Council was awarded a Talent Inclusion Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) Bronze Award, this month. The diagnostic report we receive following this assessment will help inform our workforce/people action plan.

5.8 **Non-disclosed diversity detail for staff:**

5.9 This is a particular challenge because provisions for separate recruitment and staffing record systems to link is not currently in place, and will take time and cost to remedy. In the meantime our staff records are not being replenished as staff leave and others start.

6 PRIORITY 3: CHANGE AND ENGAGEMENT:

6.1 During 2018/19 our intention was to:

- Review of all-staff survey detail (available September 2018) and realign our People focused outcomes, plans and KPIs in light of this detail;
- Improve our business change approach within the organisation including considering a new organisational change policy/approach that underpins and contributes to addressing the 'West Sussex Way – Rising To Our Challenge'; and

- Improve our performance assessment and reporting of workforce organisational performance and change.

6.2 Based on our analysis below **our areas of concern and priorities for 2019/20 are:**

- Determining with staff and their managers what actions we can all do to:
 - Make staff feel more positive about whether they are treated with fairness and respect. This is particularly tied up with organisational change and changes that affect individuals and a feeling that ideas and suggestions are not respected; or that there is unfairness in the way people are treated in restructures.
 - Be clearer about where accountability lies, who makes decisions and why and how they are made
 - Staff feeling valued as their ideas and creativity are valued and have an impact on the way we work.
 - Enable staff to feel safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done; and
- Identify common tools and descriptors for affecting and assessing workforce organisational performance and change and determining and achieving agreed benefits (financial, performance etc); and
- Engaging departments and directorate management teams in key workforce/people issues and improvements, underpinned by performance data.

6.3 **Review of 2018 all-Staff Survey:**

- 6.4 We carried out an all-staff survey (the first for 5 years). This sort of information was not available to us previously. We then undertook follow-up workshops with staff. These told us that:
- 94% of staff are positive about working relationships with colleagues; and 78% feel there is flexibility to work in a way that suits them;
 - Perceptions of feeling informed about what the council is doing are notably above the Local Government benchmark group;
 - 29% of staff felt negatively or neutrally about whether they are treated with fairness and respect;
 - There was a lot of neutrality towards senior management as well as a perception (up to 66%) that they are disconnected from the organisation. In particular staff wanted to be clear who made decisions, to be able to contribute before decisions are made; and to understand why decisions are made;
 - Staff need to feel more valued and rewarded as well as feeling that they genuinely have an opportunity to innovate; and
 - 33% of staff felt safe to speak up/challenge the way things are done.
- 6.5 Action we have taken since the all staff survey results came out, includes running additional staff workshops where it became clearer from both the survey and workshops that staff would feel more positive if they felt:

- o Their opinions ideas and creativity are valued and have an impact on the way we work;
 - o It is safe to speak up and challenge;
 - o They are treated with fairness and respect; and
 - o Senior managers are sufficiently visible and accessible within the County Council.
- 6.6 As part of our plan to address these concerns (which aligns with the feedback we receive in the regular pulse survey) we will, in addition to the action highlighted:
- o Act swiftly to fill all the CLT posts on a permanent or interim basis – enabling the new Executive Leadership team (Chief Executive; 3 x Executives Directors and Chief Fire Officer) to work effectively to address the organisation’s most pressing challenges i.e. concerns identified through the Ofsted and Fire and Rescue Inspections; Adults’ Social Care improvement, our financial challenges and our cultural challenges.
 - o Ensure the Executive Leadership team is visible, accessible and approachable.
- 6.7 **Review of regular quarterly staff pulse survey:**
- 6.8 Following the all-staff survey we amended some of the questions in our quarterly pulse survey to allow us to track the areas of particular concern, namely:
- o Visibility and accessibility of senior leaders;
 - o Staff feeling able to speak up and challenge;
 - o Splitting out (a) being trusted to do the job from (b) being treated with fairness and respect;
 - o Being asked for ideas and suggestions for improvements; and
 - o Having the resources to complete our work effectively and being satisfied with the total benefits package.
- 6.9 The results from the last pulse survey showed that the area requiring greatest work still is the visibility and accessibility of Directors, followed by being able to contribute my views before changes are made which affect me. These areas are both linked, as the feedback we got from the focus groups following the survey, is that staff want to be able to have access to the “decision makers” so that they can contribute and collaborate regarding changes affecting them. There is a blurred line between ideas and challenges, innovation and questioning is often seen as an individual being difficult. When staff do contribute ideas they currently do not feel that are kept in the picture or included in the conversation.
- 6.10 **Improve organisational and business change processes:**
- 6.11 We have made some progress alongside and with the Transformation Team (focussing on Whole Council Design) to identify common tools and descriptors for effecting and assessing change and determining and achieving agreed benefits (financial, performance etc).

6.12 **Improve performance assessment and reporting on organisational performance and change:**

6.13 We have reported quarterly on our people and workforce via the TPM report, presenting key workforce/people performance indicators with a more detailed analysis for the year end progress, in this report, and the focus for the subsequent year namely 2019/10.

6.14 In 2019/20 we will be producing workforce KPI dashboards for departments and directorates and these will track trends, highlight areas of potential concerns and enable focused interventions and performance assessment where necessary. We have started this already at a more strategic level by highlighting the Children Social Services, Adult Social Services and Fire and Rescue Services KPIs in this summary report given the priorities these three directorates are for our organisation.

7 PRIORITY 4: PERFORMANCE AND SKILL:

7.1 During 2018/19 our intention was to:

- Review our appraisals and performance management tools;
- Undertake targeted intervention including training and development;
- Review all employee relations cases to identify stuck, complex and lengthy cases to ensure clear action plans are put in place for prompt resolution. Plus focus on building the skills, knowledge and capability of the HR teams and establishing sound performance management and case management practice; and
- Increase manager awareness and support to managers to resolve concerns promptly and where possible informally.

7.2 Based on our analysis below **our areas of concern and priorities therefore for 2019/20 are:**

- Ensuring managers undertake, record and return performance appraisal assessments for their staff;
- Supporting managers to address concerns about staff performance with confidence and in a timely way; also with humility and in accordance with the Council's values including:
 - probationary periods
 - targeted interventions including training and development
 - handling of employee relations cases
 - refreshed employee conduct, standards and expectations
 - simplified formal action procedures for when employees' employment is a risk as a result of conduct, performance and wellness concerns;
- Ensuring fewer non-attendance or late cancellations for training;
- Considering a suite of mandatory training for all managers and how to ensure this is welcomed and implemented within the organisation;
- Continuing to revise our employment policies and procedures to support fair and efficient handling of employee relations cases.

7.3 Review of Appraisal and Performance Management tools:

7.4 The Appraisal process requires managers to set and agree 4-6 objectives to be achieved by their direct reports. Performance in achieving these objectives and in behaving in accordance with the Council's values and professional conduct codes is monitored at regular 'check-in' meetings on a quarterly basis as part of our approach to continuous performance management. A performance assessment is determined at the end of year review and this information is captured corporately and used to identify high/low performing individuals/areas.

7.5 For the beginning of the 2019/20 appraisal year we made the criteria much clearer for incremental progression through grades (where they apply), and simplified documentation and guidance. Linked to this we have clarified that pay increments going forward will only be paid subject to a 'good' or 'exceptional' performance appraisal overall rating.

7.6 Manager performance completing and returning appraisal summary information on time:

7.7 Our target is to have 100% of our managers returning appraisal rating data on time. Performance increased to 73% in 2018/19, compared to 65% in 2017/2018. We had low response rates by the deadline from Children's Social Services (54%). As part of our plan to address this we are currently:

- following-up with managers, via their Directors, to ensure completed appraisal summaries not returned are captured. We will be able to report at the mid-year point how many ultimately submitted the information compared to the 65.9% in 2017/18;
- concentrating our efforts to improve performance in: Children's Services, Adults' Services and Fire and Rescue Services;
- balancing our efforts on identifying ways to record which managers are setting objectives for 2019/20 as well as providing evidence that they undertook an appraisal for 2018/19
- identifying all staff for whom the end of year assessment was 'unsatisfactory' or 'improvement needed' and working with managers to support and track either the formal or informal action needed next.

7.8 We have made a firm link between performance and pay increments moving forwards. This is a significant move. Provision in 2019/2020 for automatic pay increment payments, unless overridden by a specific instruction not to, will end and pay increments will only be paid when and after we have received confirmation from the manager that the staff member's performance is assessed overall as 'good' or 'exceptional'.

7.9 Supporting managers to address staff performance:

- 7.10 Moving forwards our target is to have 95% of staff assessed as 'good' or 'exceptional' through appraisal ratings in their role modelling of our organisational values. 81.3% staff in 2017/18 were assessed as 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'exceptional' by their manager. Based on the data submitted by the deadline 81.1 % of staff in 2018/19 were assessed as 'good' or 'exceptional'. We will continue to collate and assess responses and provide an update at mid-year point.
- 7.11 Of those staff who had an appraisal recorded by the deadline, 18.7% were identified as 'improvement needed' or 'performing unsatisfactorily'. This represents 607 staff (557 for 'improvement needed' and 50 for 'performing unsatisfactorily'). Focusing on the priority service areas for 2019/20 these appraisal returns included:
- 25% (188 staff) of the appraisal returns for Children Social Services
 - 27.2% (181 staff) of the appraisal returns for Adult Social Services
 - 21.8% (79 staff) of the appraisal returns for Fire and Rescue Services.
- 7.12 Our priority is to support managers to address concerns about staff performance i.e. those staff rated 'unsatisfactory' or 'improvement needed' with confidence and in a timely way; also with humility and in accordance with the Council's values.
- 7.13 **Probationary Periods:**
- 7.14 Processes for probation reviews, and ways to monitor their implementation, will be implemented in 2019/20 quarter 2.
- 7.15 **Staff Productivity:**
- 7.16 There has been some interest in considering additional ways to assess staff 'productivity' (as a particular aspect of performance). Productivity measures typically require data on: time spent; and 'output' produced. We do not currently operate a time management recording system, so there is no data to assess time spent on producing a specified output.
- 7.17 With the exception, for example, of sickness absence which does have an element of time recording within its' measure; there is limited scope for other additional and universal staff productivity-like measures. This is because many of our work/roles are: complex; assessment orientated and outcome (rather than output) based. These types of roles do not tend to lend themselves to productivity measures.
- 7.18 **Targeted Interventions (including training and development):**
- 7.19 We:
- Started the roll-out of new updated appraisal training, starting with the Corporate Management Team leaders who actively sought support.
 - Substantially improved staff induction completion rates from 47% in 2017/18 to 73% in (Q3 and Q4 of 2018/19) which helped significantly to improve the rolling 2018/19 full-year performance increase to 59%.
 - Are working closely with the Children's Senior Leadership Team and Principal Social Worker and Children's Services Improvement leads to

ensure targeted practice improvement training and support is provided and recorded.

- Have a number of new training courses that launched in Adult Social Services last year including risk enablement and an expansion of our motivational interviewing and strengths based approaches to support our practice approach.
- Are currently working with the Fire and Rescue Services, to transfer the new recruit whole time firefighter training, into an apprenticeship, which we will deliver and then be able to draw down on the apprenticeship levy to fund.

7.20 The number of short notice cancellations or non-attendance at training has not improved. Managers and employees who do not attend training sessions are contacted to make them aware of the non-attendance, the impact this has and the cost to the organisation. A highlight report is sent to the relevant managers, Directors and Executive Directors so increased awareness and scrutiny happens ensuring fewer non-attendance or late cancellations for training.

7.21 **Handling of employee relations cases:**

7.22 Managers are increasingly tackling and initiating difficult conversations to address issues/problems at an early stage and this has resulted in fewer formal employee relations cases. The only exceptions are formal performance management cases which have increased slightly from 44 in 2017/18 to 50 in 2018/19; and formal management of long term sickness which has doubled from 92 cases in 2017/18 to 189 in 2018/19. These trends may not continue in 2019/20 as there are many factors that determine caseloads.

7.23 We have introduced a revised interim disciplinary policy and procedure which ensures clear and strengthened provisions for impartiality in decision making and will be making further improvements in 2019/20.

7.24 Simplified formal action procedures for when employees' employment is a risk as a result of conduct, performance and wellness concerns: We will be refreshing and simplifying our guidance and procedures so this helps all parties if formal action is needed. The aim always is to try to avoid the need for these processes if possible but on occasions this cannot be avoided.

7.25 We have also reviewed and revised the procedure and guidance for Staff Appeals and the Chief Executive attends these meetings now in a non-decision making capacity. During 2018/19 there were no appeals to the Staff Appeals Panel for any employee relations cases, including appeals relating to dismissal arising from redundancy.

7.26 **Employee Conduct Standards and Expectations:**

7.27 An updated explanation will be introduced in 2019/20 Q2; and brought to the attention of all new starters and existing staff as part of annual compulsory refresher training.

8 PRIORITY 5: TALENT AND RESOURCING:

8.1 During 2018/19 our intention was to:

- Focus on supporting Children's and Adult's Social Services to recruit and retain staff; and on learning and development interventions for line managers to promote consistency and quality;
- Improve our approach to recruitment through introduction of a clear recruitment brand, enhanced positive online presence, increased presence at recruitment fairs, and the delivery of effective recruitment campaigns;
- Developing a 3 year plan for Apprenticeships;
- Determine targets and KPIs including sustainable supply lines for 'hard to fill' posts and/or where positive action is needed to address imbalances in the workforce;
- Identifying areas that are reliant on agency workers and developing action plans to reduce the reliance; and
- Completing review of the detail we have on our employed and non-employed workforce and improving reporting of this.

8.2 Based on our analysis below **our areas of concern and priorities therefore for 2019/20 are:**

- To widen and deepen recruitment and positive news campaigns for Children's and Adults Social Services and continue to monitor the impact of our concerted effort to recruit and retain permanent and agency workers and to minimise turnover of permanent staff within both Services;
- Build on the success we have had in reducing the vacancy gap for Social Workers and Occupational Therapists in Adults' Services and recruit to the additional improvement and social worker roles that have recently been created;
- To maximise Apprenticeship Levy pot spend including through the Levy Transfer arrangements, ensuring all possible Council spend for qualifications is drawn down from the levy pot, implementation of the 3 years apprenticeship action plan;
- Undertake benchmarking on vacancy gaps for our most difficult to recruit to posts, including Social Workers, and establish new KPIs for the service based on industry best practice; and.
- Re-let our contingent workforce contract, which will deliver additional savings, greater flexibility and management information.

8.3 **Children's Social Services:**

8.4 In the latter half of 2017/18, 37 additional established posts were added to the establishment and immediate efforts were taken to recruit on a permanent or agency worker basis to fill those posts, and others created by usual staff turnover. This included the implementation of a flat rate £3k discretionary recruitment and retention payment, for qualified Children's social workers with a 12 month linked repayment term i.e. to November 2019 for the majority of staff. Our expectation then, was that we would continue this offer on a yearly basis for four further years. At the end of 2018/19 11.3% of the Children's Social Services Directorate workforce was an agency worker rather than permanent employee.

8.5 A further review took place in March 2019 within the context of a review of the wider organisation's discretionary arrangements for recruitment and retention support. This took account of improvement in recruiting and retaining within Children's Social Services (since November) and options to be even more impactful were considered.

8.6 In May 2019 (2019/20 Q1) an enhanced discretionary recruitment and retention offer was made to qualified children's social workers that included: a single payment equivalent to 20% of a single years' salary with a retention period of 18 months; access to interest-free loans and car parking was made. Well over 80% accepted this offer during May of which: 59% expressed interest in interest free loan arrangements; 99% in car parking arrangements; and 48% in taking a pool car home overnight. Additionally efforts were doubled again in the engagement of agency social workers pending permanent recruitment – and this has helped considerably to lower the vacancy gap and also caseloads for individual social workers.

8.7 Post Ofsted it was not unexpected that there were negatively orientated contributions to news/press coverage. Particular effort is being given to determining an accurate account of our commitment, action and the impact we have had already on: our commitment to our staff, recruitment, retention, caseload numbers, professional practice development and support; and to countering any negative contributions with evidence to demonstrate otherwise.

8.8 At 13.6% staff turnover in 2018/19 was the highest in Children Social Services. This figure is near the top of our target range of 8-15% and compares to a turnover figure across all departments of 12.4%.

8.9 We are developing an "honest and realistic" attraction campaign, which clearly lays out our vision for our services and the journey we are on and helps to counter some of the negative publicity and commentary we have received over the past few weeks

8.10 **Adult Social Services:**

- 8.11 At the end of 2018/19 14.3% of the Adult Social Services Directorate workforce was an agency worker rather than permanent employee. This reflects the positive decision by the business to mitigate the risk of redundancy costs associated with moving to a new operating model for our Provider Services and therefore recruiting temporary agency staff.
- 8.12 **Apprenticeships:**
- 8.13 The apprenticeship levy pot, which is available to employers to fund apprenticeships and professional qualifications (through apprenticeships), is calculated on size of the pay bill. There is also some 'rolling over' provision from previous years (maximum 2 years). In April 2018 the pot was £1.5m and this has increased to £3.3m. Our aim was, and continues to be, to:
- Maximise the use of the levy pot, which has clear spending requirements;
 - Ensure as much of our professional qualification training spend is drawn down from the levy pot and not a different source of funding that could be saved, or spent elsewhere; and
 - Maximise the number of apprenticeship opportunities, (including professional qualifications through apprenticeships).
- 8.14 The levy pot spend has increased from £10.6k in 2017/18 to £133.6k in 2018/19. There was a new provision to enable large employers like the County Council to transfer 10% of the value of their levy pot to external organisations and from April 2019 this has increased to 25%. In 2019/20 Q1 West Sussex County Council has marketed this offer externally and had interest for monies to be used in ways that support our West Sussex Plan outcomes, including: for the Nurse Associate apprenticeship, in nursing homes, care homes, learning disability service, community interest groups, engineering firms, dental practices, manufacturing, welding, electronics and graphic design. The successful organisations will have been advised in June and then, through a Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS) account the organisation will receive the transfer of funds to their account. Other organisations are approaching the County Council to learn about our work and replicate it.
- 8.15 The Council has reviewed its qualification spend to determine as much of that as possible that could be diverted to the levy pot spend. From April 2019 the apprenticeship pot will now be used to fund social worker apprenticeships in both Adults and Children Social Services and Occupational Therapists in Adults Social Services.
- 8.16 In April 2018 we had 56 current or active apprentices, 49 funded through the Levy. In April 2019 it was 106, with 95 funded through the levy. Take up remains lower than desired, particularly in Adults and Children's and in schools. A targeted campaign for social work apprenticeships is currently underway. A three year plan has been developed in conjunction with directorates, which is supported by an ongoing marketing campaign.

8.17 **Agency Workforce:**

8.18 Work was undertaken during 2018/19 to enable consideration in 2019/20 to ensure:

- Directors support the development and implementation of a consistently applied corporate policy and practice with regards to the hiring and management of Temporary Agency Workers (TAWs) across all categories of staffing (except schools);
- Definitions are established for different types of temporary resourcing; and process mapping (for each area) takes place so these are clearly identified and adhered to;
- A review of IR35 compliance (essentially the treatment of TAWs for tax and NI purposes) and new robust process mapping takes place to mitigate risk of falling foul of the Regulations;
- As much as possible we move any "off contract" TAWs and interims to "on contract" arrangements to achieve better value for money and oversight as a result;
- Introduction of a monthly Agency Dashboard for each Directorate summarising agency data against establishment, establishing projects within the council and identifying pressure points and key issues in each area. This will include the introduction of key market information; and
- Completion of an options appraisal for the future contract model to be implemented no later than September 2020.

8.19 In 2018/19 the cost of agency workers reduced by £1.2m and accounts now for 4.8% of the total workforce costs (permanent, agency workers through the Manpower contract and casual staff). This was 5.6% in 2017/18. This is despite our success in moving workers previously paid outside (off) these contract arrangements (and accounted for differently) in to the Manpower contract.

9 PRIORITY 6: SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING:

9.1 During 2018/19 our intention was to:

- Undertake a review and action planning following completion of 'critical friend' review in to our Health and Safety arrangements;
- Further consideration for how to assess whether all sickness absence is being captured/recorded; and
- Further analysis of the mental health related absences in Adult and Children Social Services.

9.2 Based on analysis the areas of concern and priorities for 2019/20 are therefore:

- Determining Council agreement and action for future Health and Safety target operating model and address the current fragmented approach;
- Taking assertive and timely action to complete and follow-up with action plan implementation of risk profiling and assessments ensuring prioritisation is given to Business Units and Teams in Children's Social Services, Adult Social Services, Highways Transport and Planning and

- Environment and Public Protection;
- Determining measures to prevent or reduce incidents of (a) inappropriate behaviour and (b) falls which are the highest incident categories for both non schools and schools services;
- Addressing sickness absence across the organisation including implementing increased scrutiny and support via sickness case management panels to ensure regular monitoring and tracking of sickness absence; reviewing the current Occupational Health service provision in order to explore opportunities to better enable effective management of absence; and identifying areas where sickness absence is being under reported;
- Determine a plan for addressing mental health and wellbeing to include mental health first aid. A mental health first aid dual pilot with WSFRS and Children's Social Workers; and
- Develop a governance structure and arrangements for Health & Safety in schools.

9.3 Critical review of Health and Safety:

- 9.4 Work was undertaken during 2018/19 to enable consideration now in 2019/20 to be taken to:
- Address the fragmented approach to Health and Safety by using risk profiling;
 - Review the current service delivery model to achieve a Health and Safety service which is more responsive to the changing needs of the Council (the 'vision'); and
 - Review the Health and Safety Policy Statement to ensure it is up to date as it is a legal requirement and a main contributor to demonstrating and communicating commitment to a safety management culture.
- 9.5 Since May 2018 significant work has been undertaken with a thorough review of intended Health and Safety outcomes (long, medium and short term) and a range of interventions undertaken to assess and improve current performance. These include (along with implementation status):
- **Green status:** The Internal Audit Report has been signed off by the Chief Executive. Key issues identified are being addressed as the interventions and outcomes strategy progresses.
 - **Amber status:** The health and safety 'Heat Map of Risk' identified a fragmented approach. High risk areas with no service assurance were identified and 'deep dives' undertaken on these areas. Action plans have been created and specific focused support is now being implemented to achieve compliance with these action plans. Deep dives will be undertaken on the areas shown on the heat map as medium and low risk service assurance in 2019/20.
 - **Green status:** A 'Critical friend' review report by Kent County Council was received July 2018. Key issues have already been identified and are being addressed.
 - **Red status:** A draft proposal for the re-design of the Capita Health and Safety service target operating model has been developed in

consultation with Capita but has not yet formally been agreed by the Council as the future service delivery model.

- **Green status:** Closer work has started on the joint and parallel approach to align Health and Safety risk management across the Council including collaboration with colleagues in Public Health.
- **Amber status:** A new corporate governance structure is now in place, Health and Safety policy is being reviewed; and a risk based approach is being adopted to identify priorities and focus effort on these areas whilst still ensuring lower risk areas remain safe. A further aid, and proposals, to ensure legislative compliance would be the development of an interactional online audit tool that enables instant visibility of live data to a wide audience and this is being progressed.
- **Green status:** Common plans and special plans are being phased out as risk profiling action plans are created and plans put in place to address the identified actions within directorates and business units.
- **Amber status:** Indicators and performance measures are currently in place for Capita to deliver the Health and Safety service. As the interventions and outcomes strategy is developed additional performance measures will be put in place for the Council.
- **Green status:** Initial work on training needs analysis has started and e-learning courses being commissioned through Learning and Development
- **Green status:** A communications and engagement plan has been developed and pages on 'The Point' have been refreshed.

9.6 **Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) reporting to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE):**

9.7 Only 9 of the 1,192 non-schools incidents in 2018/19 met the criteria to report to the HSE in accordance with RIDDOR compared with 11 in the previous year 2017/18. The HSE were happy with the action taken by the Council and decided that no intervention was needed.

9.8 The following top five causes account for 312 of the 1,192 incidents in a non-schools environment. Of these:

- 205 inappropriate behaviour
- 31 handling people
- 29 handling objects
- 24 trips
- 23 unknown cause

Unknown cause category was removed as a primary cause at the end of August 2018. All incident reports now need a specific primary cause to be selected in order to ensure appropriate action can be implemented by the organisation.

- 9.9 Research into the 205 inappropriate behaviour incidents (non- schools) indicates that these incidents are clustered around Adults and Children Social Services and the Library Service. Incidents involve members of staff working with customers/supporting people who have emotional, learning and behavioural difficulties or people with mental health issues or issues around drugs and/or alcohol as well as those in deprived circumstances e.g. homeless. Consideration will now be given to what measures are being taken to prevent/reduce such incidents in the future.
- 9.10 Research into the handling of people and objects incidents indicates the majority of these incidents come from Adults and Children Social Services. Incidents involve members of staff who provide support services to people who need assistance with moving. Specialist moving and handling equipment such as slings and hoists are used to assist with transfers. The trip incidents are caused generally due to lack of care or inattention in Council owned premises, public places and people being supported in homes. Consideration will now be given to what measures are being taken to prevent / reduce such incidents in the future.
- 9.11 **Assessing whether all sickness absence is recorded:**
- 9.12 There is concern that sickness absence is not effectively reported across the organisation. This includes the reasons for absence, as well as effectively recording all instances of absence. As part of the work to improve the management and monitoring of absences, the recording of absence will be reviewed within service areas, and activity will be undertaken to promote and clarify processes for recording and reporting absences.
- 9.13 **Review long term sickness absence and effective management:**
- 9.14 In 2017/18 there were 618 incidents (519 employees) of long term absence (i.e. of more than 21 calendar days) of which 92 were being formally managed. In 2018/19 there were 676 incidents (573 employees), latest KPI data says 189 cases were formally managed.
- 9.15 Irregular/repeated sickness absence is calculated using the number of spells of absence in a 52 week period and the number of days absent in the same period. Sickness absence management activity consideration should take place where an individual's absence reaches the level of either 4 absences of any length in 4 months, or 8 or more calendar days in 12 months. During 2017/18, there were 29 formal cases involving patterns of irregular attendance, this increased to 30 in 2018/19.
- 9.16 **Mental Health related absence in Adults and Children Social Services:**
- 9.17 We will introduce secondary trauma support for workers.
- 9.18 Children Social Services have been selected to take part in a 6 month trial of an approach known as Schwartz Rounds, which aim to support staff well-being, build empathy and compassion and improve the quality of care.

- 9.19 In collaboration with colleagues in Public Health plans are being put in place to procure a health and wellbeing needs assessment survey during 2019/20. The results will enable:
- Workplace health activities to be prioritised and targeted approach to those who most need them
 - Inform the development of a targeted council wide health and wellbeing strategy and focus group
 - Support the development of council wide health and wellbeing champions (outside of Public Health)

10 Appendix

- 10.1 Set out in the attached appendix are the detailed KPIs for the service which have been reported on during the year via the TPM.
- 10.2 Workforce KPIs Annual Outturn Report.