

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 2 February 2021

Portfolio: Corporate Services (Cllr S Kane)

Subject: People Strategy Update

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- 1. To review the progress of the work being delivered.**

Report:

Context

1. As the Committee is aware, the People Strategy and Plan sets out clear actions and timescales over a two-year period to support the Council to deliver its strategic objectives. It is divided into 6 workstreams;

- Attracting, on boarding and retaining the best talent
- Developing our leadership
- Embracing change to support EFDC evolution
- Creating a culture of engagement and wellbeing
- Developing our skills and behaviours to make EFDC a great place to work
- Achieving organisational goals through a high performing and flexible workforce

At the core is transforming the People Team to become an enabler for the organisation.

The Strategy sets out the ambition for our workforce – the right people with the right skills, highly motivated high performing and business efficient.

2. This report provides an update on the work being delivered under 2 workstreams; Attracting, on boarding and retaining the best talent and creating a culture of engagement and wellbeing.

Attracting, on boarding and retaining the best talent

3. As part of this workstream the People Team are delivering new automated recruitment processes through iRecruit (in iTrent our HR/Payroll system) on a phased approach. This includes the way we recruit, how we attract and induct candidates, and retaining the great talent we already have. Set out below are a number of initiatives that have been developed.
4. Our Employee Value Proposition (EVP) has been developed. An EVP is a unique set of benefits that an employee receives in return for the skills, capabilities, and experience they bring to the Council. It encompasses the central reasons that people are proud and motivated to work here also in attracting candidates to the Council, such as an inspiring vision or distinctive culture. Included in our EVP are:

- Adopting new ways of working, flexibility, work/life balance
 - Increased focus on employee wellbeing
 - Ambitions service plans, providing exciting, challenging work and stretch/development opportunities
5. Our recruitment processes are changing, removing many barriers associated with local government recruitment such as lengthy application forms and paper heavy processes. Our new processes will launch on 6 January 2021 and include:
- A new careers landing page called 'A Place of Opportunity' (see appendix 1)
 - Applying for roles via a CV and supporting statement (rather than an application form)
 - Candidates ability to set up job alerts for themselves, send to friends, share information to their own social media sites
 - Hiring panels can view applications in real time rather than all at/after the closing date
 - Candidates can book an interview time themselves and amend within a time period
6. Future development phases of the process include:
- Onboarding Guidance for Managers (due in Q4 20/21)
 - Candidate onboarding will be automated (due in Q1 21/22)
 - Development of e-forms such as declarations for Code of Conduct, Health & Safety etc will follow
 - A review of the processes and work done to date (due in Q2 21/22)
 - Refresher training for hiring managers (due in Q3 21/22)

Creating a Culture of Engagement and Wellbeing

7. All sections of our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which is known to our employees as Perkbox have been launched. There are 4 platforms in Perkbox:
- Perkbox Benefits
 - Perks Medical
 - Perks Insights – Engagement
 - Perks Insights – Recognition
8. Since launching Perkbox on the 1 September 83% of employees have logged on to the platform which is 476 out of 574 employees and we have 107 employees signed up to Perks Medical.
9. Perkbox insights survey launched on the 2 November and so far, we have sent 3 surveys out. Each survey is private and confidential which enables employees to give constructive, valuable and honest feedback. In total, 257 employees completed the survey and left 161 comments.
10. The Insight – Engagement platform has a bank of 50 questions which have been developed by Perkbox and the People Team. Employees using Perkbox receive an email biweekly at a regular time which started on 2 November 2020. There are 10 questions which they are asked to answer which roughly takes 2-5 minutes to complete and an option to leave more detailed comments. Every 13th employee the questions change, which helps us build a heatmap of the organisation which will take approximately 3-6 months to complete This will enable the People Team to get a picture of any issues across the Council.
11. So far, the main themes from the initial 3 surveys are:
- Lack of communication between the organisation;
 - Little visibility of our Senior leaders in the business at this time; and
 - New policies supporting home working has made a good impact on home life balance.

As the feedback is anonymous it cannot be presented on a team or service basis. The full results are still being analysed and are due to be presented to employees in January 2021, working with the PR Team to deliver the messages effectively.

12. The full results and actions will be reported at the next Committee in April 2021. In the meantime, if any Committee member would like to attend a session on Perkbox functionality this can be arranged.
13. Recognition was our last platform to launch on 1 December 2020, so far 56 employees have been recognised by their colleagues which has been greatly received.
14. Our Wellbeing Resources for our employees continue to development. Communications in December 2020 introduced our Mental Health First Aiders to the Council along with tips for surviving a very different Christmas. The Winter Wellbeing Guidance was also included.
15. To help managers and employees converse about an individual's wellbeing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Risk Assessment has been produced and launched on the intranet. A copy of the assessment is provided at Appendix 2. Alongside the Assessment is Guidance for use by both employees and managers.

Reason for decision:

No decision required.

Options considered and rejected:

Not applicable as report is for noting.

Consultation undertaken:

Not applicable as report is for noting.

Resource implications:

Within current resources.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Not applicable as report is for noting.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

Not applicable.

Consultation Undertaken:

The Trade Unions are informed and consulted as required.

Background Papers:

Not applicable.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management:

Risk is assessed as part of the individual project development.

Equality:

Equality impact is assessed as part of the individual project development.