



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 18 September 2018</b>	<b>Matter for Information and Decision</b>
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**Report Title:** **People & Performance Update (September 2018)**

**Report Author(s):** **Karen Pollard (Head of People & Performance)**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	This report sets out the current agenda for the People and Performance Section and seeks endorsement of the proposal to close the Council Offices in between Christmas and New Year.
<b>Report Summary:</b>	The People and Performance Section introduce policies for employees that provide a positive working environment that promotes best practice. This report sets out the key projects and gives details about new areas of work.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	<p><b>A. That the work programme of the People and Performance Section be noted.</b></p> <p><b>B. The proposal for closing the Council Offices over Christmas and New Year (as set out at paragraph 3 of the report) be endorsed.</b></p>
<b>Responsible Strategic Director, Head of Service and Officer Contact(s):</b>	<p>Anne Court (Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2602 <a href="mailto:anne.court1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk">anne.court1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Karen Pollard (Head of People &amp; Performance) (0116) 257 2727 <a href="mailto:karen.pollard@oadby-wigston.gov.uk">karen.pollard@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Corporate Priorities:</b>	Effective Service Provision (CP2) Wellbeing for All (CP5)
<b>Vision and Values:</b>	Accountability (V1)
<b>Report Implications:-</b>	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from the report.
Financial:	Any impact on the pay bill relating to the introduction of the new pay spines will be included in the budget at the appropriate time.
Corporate Risk Management:	No corporate risk(s) identified.
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from the report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from the report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from the report.
<b>Statutory Officers' Comments:-</b>	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.

Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
<b>Consultees:</b>	All eligible employees have been consulted about the closure of the Council Offices between Christmas and New Year. There was an 85% response rate to the survey: 102 employees supported the change whilst 4 voted to remain with the current arrangements.
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None.
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1.</b> List Human Resources Policies and Renewal Dates

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The People and Performance Section covers work such as Human Resources, Communications, Public Relations and Health and Safety.
- 1.2. This report sets out some of the main initiatives in the work programme this year.

## **2. The Work Programme**

### **2.1 Apprenticeship Scheme**

This Council has been taking on apprentices for a number of years under the scheme and has a good success rate of retention and development. In April 2017, the Government introduced into the scheme a mandatory apprentice levy. Any employer with a pay bill of over £3 million is required to pay the apprenticeship levy. The amount to be paid is calculated at 0.5% of difference between the pay bill over £3million and the total pay bill. Last year the Council's levy payment was £6,700.

This fund can then be accessed by employers to fund training and development opportunities for its apprentices, but cannot be used to pay salaries. The apprenticeships so far have concentrated on Business Administration roles. During 2018/19 there will be a focus on recruiting apprenticeships into roles that will lead to qualifying into a profession where there are skills gaps.

### **2.2 New Pay Spines**

In December 2017, the National Employers for Local Government Services confirmed the final pay offering agreed with trade unions for the period of 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020. Part of these negotiations was to introduce new pay spines for lower level bands to give a minimum hourly rate of £9 per hour from 1 April 2019. It has been announced that the pay award is 2% for each of the next two years. With the higher pay settlement for this Council's bands one to five, the total pay bill from 1 April is likely to be more than 2%.

The Council is currently working through the options so the full impact of these changes is still not clear. As the Council has paid the Real Living Wage since 2013, which is currently £8.75 per hour, this will reduce the impact of the increase. The introduction of the new pay spines and the agreed pay increase of 2% will assist the Council in rewarding staff appropriately and help us to compete for the best candidates within the labour market. The proposals are supported by the unions.

### **2.3 Learning and Development**

All appraisals have been completed for this year. The Team will produce a Learning and Development Plan to meet the needs that have been identified by staff. The cost of this has to be from within existing budgets. The Council invested in an e-learning package called Learning Pool in August last year. There are now 20 courses available on Learning Pool and more are being developed. This is a preferred method of learning for staff and the completion of mandatory courses is one of the Team's key performance indicators. Training needs are also met by offering a range of learning such as shadowing, face to face training and short distance learning courses. Coaching is also available for employee development.

#### 2.4 **New Staff Wellbeing Group**

This new Group was launched at the end of June 2018. The Group is made up of a representative from each service area. The aim of the group is to canvass ideas and wishes from the wider Council and to make suggestions to improve the working environment for the staff. Through the group, staff have asked if the Council could close completely between Christmas and New Year. At present the Council Offices are closed on the statutory Bank Holidays of Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day with a floating day during that period which is allocated depending how Christmas and New Year falls.

### **3. Christmas Closing**

3.1 Throughout the summer, the viability of this has been explored with the senior management. A staff survey was circulated to confirm this as preferred route and if so, how this could be implemented. The survey generated a high response rate of 85% in favour of Christmas closing (106 responses with only 4 voting to remain as is). The overwhelming response was that staff are prepared to work an extra 30 minutes per week throughout the year, so that overall there is no loss of working hours to the Council.

3.2 Other councils in Leicestershire have been closing over Christmas for some time, under various arrangements which include remaining on a 37 hour and no reduction to the annual leave scheme. The Depot staff have agreed they will continue to provide all waste and grounds maintenance services during the closure and there will be access to the homelessness team during this period. A comprehensive out of hours call service will also be in place for emergencies and on call senior managers will be available.

3.3 There are many reasons why this is considered to be beneficial, a few of these being:

- **Healthy staff** - By having a fixed period of closure will give a much needed health boost and ensure staff take a break during the festive session with their families.
- **Improved productivity** - The break will lead to improved productivity as it gives staff time to take their mind off work instead of sitting at their desk wishing they were at home with family and friends, with no need to arrange cover over the Christmas period. This is good for staff morale and entering the New Year in a positive frame of mind.
- **Customers and suppliers** - From past experience, even last year, with the inclement weather between Christmas and New Year there is very little contact with the Council over this period with our customers and suppliers both at the front office of our customer service centre and with the back offices.
- **Savings** - There will be some savings associated with closing the buildings for a number of days in a row, such as energy costs, and in the current financial climate, all savings help.

3.4 The proposed additional closure days for 2018/19 will be Thursday 27, Friday 28 and

Monday 31 December. This year will act as a trial period.

#### **4. Updates and New Areas of Work**

##### **4.1 Increasing Involvement of Staff through Consultation**

Survey Monkey has been used this year to consult with staff on other initiatives to improve their health and well-being whilst at work and thereby our service provision, for example, uses of the mezzanine floor area at the main Council Offices for improved rest and break out facilities and an informal meeting area.

This method of consultation does generate a good response and it will be used in the future for satisfaction surveys. The People and Performance Section will use it to measure satisfaction levels of their services. This will be carried out in September 2018. Other staff surveys which are imminent is the external Investors in People survey as part of the 3 year package to measure trends in overall staff satisfaction.

##### **4.2 Policies**

There are a number of policies that set out the culture and practices of the organisation. Following an audit of the Council's policies, there are a number of Human Resources policies that need to be reviewed. Where minor amendments or redundant policies are made a summary of those amendments and to which policy will be reported to this Committee. Where fundamental amendments and new policies are required, a copy of these policies will be brought to this Committee. These have been scheduled in for future meetings of this committee and will be reviewed by the end of this financial year. A copy of all Human Resources policies is attached at **Appendix 1**.

##### **4.3 Health and Safety**

The Health and Safety Officer has to submit an annual report summarising the previous year's work. This was presented at May's Policy, Finance and Development Committee. The purpose of the role is to ensure that the Council meets its obligation under the legislation and puts practices and policies in place to keep staff and users of Council premises and facilities, safe. This year's focus is on accident prevention, lone working arrangements, risk assessment training and developing health and safety training courses on Learning Pool.

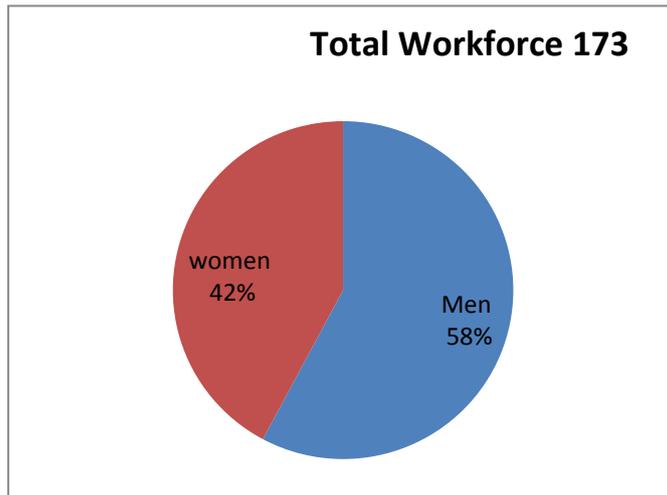
##### **4.4 Communications and Public Relations**

The role is to work with staff and members to promote the profile of the Council through media channels. A new social media policy is being developed and will set out the how staff can use social media at home and at work. The Council's aims to increase the amount of positive news stories. The target is to double the daily output of our social media. There will be a training workshop which will be delivered by the in house team for staff to improve their skills in using social media and writing press releases.

##### **4.5 Gender Pay Gap**

From 2017, any organisation that employs 250 or more people must publish and report specific data about their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women, expressed relative to men's earnings. Oadby and Wigston have decided to calculate the gender gap and it is 5.12% for the mean (average) compared to 17.4% for the whole economy. The median (middle) gender pay gap is 11.12% compared to 18.4% against the whole economy. The figure is low for this Council because we have an in house waste service and those workers are predominately male.

The Council employs 100 men and 73 women.



Mean (average) hourly rate

Men £12.37  
Female £11.74

**The percentage gender pay gap is  
5.12%**

Median (middle) hourly rate

Men £11.62  
Female £10.33

**The percentage gender gap is  
11.12%**