

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Staffing Committee

Date of Meeting:	7 January 2010
Report of:	Paul Bradshaw, Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development
Subject/Title:	HR Update
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Keegan

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To update the Committee on progress with Human Resource issues.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the report.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure Members are kept up to date with HR developments.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 No specific wards affected.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

- 6.1 No significant implications.

7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 7.1 No direct implications arising from this report.

8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 8.1 No direct implications arising from this report.

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 No direct implications arising from this report.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 No significant risks identified.

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 HEALTH & SAFETY

11.1.1 HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

11.1.2 Twenty seven Policy and Guidance documents are available on CEntranet. Latest additions are:

• Control of Noise at Work	• Display Screen Equipment
• Driving At Work	• Driving Minibuses
• Exposure to Blood, Body Fluids and Blood Borne Viruses	• Manual Handling Risk Assessment proforma
• Safe Moving & Handling	• First Aid

11.1.3 These policies have been prepared by referencing legislation (where available) and using best practice examples from across the four former Authorities. Tier 3 Managers have been informed of each new policy and requested to disseminate as appropriate to their teams. Newly agreed policies will be publicised in forthcoming Health & Safety Newsletters.

11.1.4 Further documents are undergoing development and consultation:

• Working with Young Persons	• Events Safety
• Working with Contractors	• Violence & Aggression

11.1.5 Draft Documents for Consideration

11.1.6 Approval of two documents is requested. These were discussed at the Corporate Health & Safety Forum on 26.10.09 and conclude the consultation process at this meeting.

- Lone Working
- Manual Handling (Non Schools)

A resume of each document is as follows:

11.1.7 **Lone Working**

- Lone workers are those employees who work on their own (without close or direct supervision) or alone with clients - either away from the workplace or when the workplace is empty of most other employees.
- A suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be undertaken of the risks to the health and safety of employees whilst at work and this includes all activities undertaken by lone workers. Additional consideration must be given to ensuring the availability of support measures – for example an arrangement that enables the main base / contact person to be aware of the details of the visit – e.g. location, order of visits (if more than one), expected duration at each location and anticipated return time etc.

11.1.8 **Manual Handling Policy (Non Schools)**

- Manual handling operations and moving and handling are terms to describe transporting or supporting of a load including, lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying, or moving thereof by hand or bodily force and account for nearly one third of all workplace accidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- This policy applies to all employees and covers all environments. A separate policy for the safer moving and handling in schools is available on the Corporate Health and Safety Team CEntranet pages.
- It is the aim of this policy to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment, equipment and systems of work for all employees and to provide such information, training and supervision as may be necessary to enable them to undertake their duties.

11.1.9 Comments are requested upon the **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy** – which commences the consultation process at this meeting.

- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations require employers to make arrangements to control the exposure of their employees to all substances which may affect their health. Exposure must be prevented or, where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled. The Policy is supported by a COSHH risk assessment proforma – to assist Managers in the assessment of hazardous substances being used by the Council.

11.1.10 **Engaging with the Health & Safety Executive**

11.1.11 The HSE Inspector continued her quarterly planned visits (to discuss strategic issues) in January 2010. The meeting went well – the Inspector remains pleased with the Council's management of Hand

Arm Vibration and will not be reviewing Council procedures again until January 2011. During the meeting the Waste Transfer Station Manager at Pym's Lane was commended for running the facility so well.

- 11.1.12 At the forthcoming meeting (13.04.10) the Inspector has requested discussing 'Hard Facilities Management' arrangements, along with Waste & Recycling and with special emphasis on 'Task and Finish'. The Committee will be informed of the outcome of the April meeting.

11.1.13 DEVELOPMENT OF CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY PROGRAMMES

11.1.14 Corporate Safety Audit Programme

- 11.1.15 The CH&S Team are in the process of implementing a Corporate Safety Audit Programme, to enable measurement of the progress of the health and safety management within the Directorates and their associated Services. Directorates have been separated into 18 Services which will be audited within a cycle of 5 Years.

- 11.1.16 Initially, a Self-Audit Questionnaire will be sent out to all 18 Services (this will be repeated annually) with a follow-up of each of reports on receipt, with a time limited action report. This will assist in setting the timetable for the first five year cycle, (risk priority rated). The process of self auditing will rely on each Service's operational areas completing their routine 'Safety Inspection Checklist', or similar, every six months as recommended in CH&S guidance, available on CEntranet.

- 11.1.17 HR & OD have volunteered to assist in a pilot exercise which will be completed prior to financial year end. The first year of the programme cycle will be rolled-out after April 2010.

11.1.18 Corporate Noise Programme

- 11.1.19 Developments for addressing a Corporate Noise Programme continued during Quarter 3. Potential noise areas across the Authority have been identified and trials of measuring noise levels generated by existing work equipment have been undertaken (involving several operatives from the Refuse section) and a school music department.

- 11.1.20 The Noise Programme (currently being prepared) and due to commence in April 2010, will focus on undertaking noise measurements in identified areas of concern.

11.1.21 Lone Working

11.1.22 Although it was anticipated that this programme would commence during summer 2010, a recent requirement to address issues around dealing with dangerous persons, has brought this matter forward.

11.1.23 The draft Lone Working Policy (for approval – see Item 2.1) has been discussed by the Dangerous Persons Register group and at the CH&S Forum (February 2010) and contributes as one of several ‘tools’ available to employees who operate in a lone working capacity.

11.1.24 A Lone Working e-learning module is now available (£6 per module) for Managers and employees. It is anticipated that Conflict Resolution training will be available as part of the 2010 – 2011 CH&S Training Programme (details to follow).

11.1.25 The Dangerous Persons Register Group, chaired by the Customer Services Manager, is working towards identifying a corporate solution for recording serious violent and aggressive incidents.

11.1.26 ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT DATA

11.1.27 During the first three Quarters (01.04.09 – 31.12.09), **612** accident / incident reports were registered, of which **187** were RIDDOR* reportable to the Health & Safety Executive. (*Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995) – see Appendix 1 for further details.

	No. of Incidents	No. of RIDDORs
Quarter 1	371	58
Quarter 2	117	61
Quarter 3	124	68
Totals	612	187

11.1.28 The highest numbers of incidents received and recorded so far are in the People Directorate. This is to be expected due to the high number of public who use the services provided by this Directorate and the activities undertaken in particular Schools,

11.1.29 In the Places Directorate the two areas with high number of RIDDOR reportable incidents are Waste & Recycling Services and Tatton Park. Again this is to be expected due to the types of activities undertaken and the accident history of these areas. Tatton Park has a large number of public visitors so again, would statistically be expected to have an increased number of RIDDOR reportable incidents when compared to other services in the Places Directorate.

Waste & Recycling Services has historically had a high number of incidents due to the hazardous nature of tasks undertaken.

11.2 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

11.2.1 Employing Young People

11.2.2 Cheshire East Council has recently signed up to the Backing Young People national campaign. To support this commitment, work is now underway to recruit twenty five new Apprentices across the Council this year, to recruit three graduates from the national graduate development programme, to offer work experience to a number of young people at school / college across the borough, to offer short term internships to unemployed graduates and young people, to offer 6 month work placements to young unemployed people through the future jobs fund. This range of initiatives will help to demonstrate the Councils commitment to supporting young local people as well as bringing new talent into the organisation.

11.2.3 Employee Recognition Scheme

11.2.4 The recent employee survey highlighted that staff do not always feel valued and recognised for the work that they do. A task group was formed and staff have recently been consulted on what they feel is important in a corporate employee recognition scheme. As a result of this a scheme is currently being developed, based on recognising role models of aspire values for both individuals and teams. The aim is to launch this later in the spring.

11.2.5 Employee Performance Development System

11.2.6 A review of the employee performance development system (appraisal) has recently been undertaken. This was launched in Sept last year on a “launch and learn” basis. The basic design principles of clarity of expectation, support, growth, review, recognise and joint ownership this will remain unchanged. The supporting form-set and guidance will however be simplified. Managers will be asked to ensure that all individuals / teams have an agreed performance development plan in place by the end of June which will be reviewed six monthly, supported by regular one to one / supervision meetings.

11.2.7 Learning and Development Policy and Core Training

11.2.8 Work is underway to develop a learning and development policy for Cheshire East. Broadly this will confirm the Councils commitment to the development of its staff within the parameters of service priorities and available budgets. As part of this we are currently exploring signing up to the Skills Pledge. The Skills Pledge is a promise that the employer will work to realise the potential of all their employees by developing their basic skills and working towards relevant,

valuable qualifications. By making the Skills Pledge employers commit to train their workforce to at least NVQ Level 2. Potential benefits are improved organisational performance through economically valuable training and development.

- 11.2.9 Alongside of this a core training offering will be launched during April. This will broadly cover key generic areas such as personal effectiveness, leadership and management, project management and change, employee support and key skills and will be built on over the coming year.

11.2.10 Induction

- 11.2.11 A corporate induction programme is currently being developed to be launched during April. In summary this will consist of three elements:

- a welcome to CEC leaflet which will be sent out with a new employees contract prior to starting,
- an induction checklist which covers the corporate information / policies that new starters need to know
- a half day workshop within 3 months of starting to bring to life what working for CEC is all about

11.2.12 Investors in People

- 11.2.13 An informal Investors in People (IIP) “health check” has been undertaken involving more than 140 interviews with employees and managers across the Council to understand how well the Council is currently meeting the IIP standard. The health check highlights that collectively we have more work to do in embedding good practice across the Council over the next year. Actions are underway and further informal and formal reviews are planned over the year to ensure we retain IIP recognition.

11.3 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

11.3.1 Transformation Programme

- 11.3.2 Work across Directorates continues on the big 6 transformation programmes which continue to be supported by the Organisational Change Team. These key programmes of work are summarised as:

- Closer to Customers
- Children’s and Families
- Adults Social Care
- Health and Wellbeing
- Total Transport
- Working with Health

11.3.3 Lean Education

- 11.3.4 A programme of “Lean” systems thinking training is currently being rolled out for managers and members working in partnership with Professor Paul Walley from the Warwick Business School. The aim of the training is to help managers understand better the principles of Lean and to identify opportunities for improvement in their areas. Linked to this Professor Walley continues to provide valuable “critical friend” support to the work on transformation and building a culture of continuous improvement.

11.4 HR DELIVERY

- 11.4.1 The primary focus of work for the HR Delivery Team has continued to be supporting managers in implementing their new structures and dealing with the outcomes of decisions in relation to managing the workforce. This has included a high volume of collective and individual consultation together with written confirmation of the effect of change on their personal circumstances.
- 1.4.2 In many areas of the organisation, restructuring related to LGR is virtually complete. It is, however important to recognise that change is now practically a constant and that employees may continue to experience lack of certainty due to national policies and transformation / improvement programmes.

11.4.3 Supporting Workforce Change

- 11.4.4 To date, the HR Delivery Team has supported the resolution of 373 workforce reductions across the Council which should result in savings of more than £10m over a three year period. This being in addition to the 159 reductions in the legacy authorities on 31 March 2009.
- 11.4.5 In addition, since November 2009, a total of 107 employees have been placed on the Redeployment Register. This is either because their positions are already displaced within the structure or because they are “at risk” of becoming so.
- 11.4.6 Of the total number of employees placed on the Register, we have resolved the situation for 32 so far, or are close to resolving them, in that a number are currently in trial periods in alternative jobs which I expect to prove successful. Assuming this group is successfully redeployed we will have reduced our staffing spend by £942k. In addition to this I expect to find redeployment for a further 18 employees on the Register as final structures are clarified and implemented shortly. I will report further on progress with this group and others in due course.

- 11.4.7 The demand for redeployment and workforce change is expected to continue over the next twelve months and this has been addressed through the appointment of a temporary Redeployment Officer who will be dedicated to supporting managers and employees through this process.

11.4.8 Workforce Planning

- 11.4.9 As structures have become finalised, the HR Delivery Team has worked closely with managers to ensure that the Oracle system is updated to reflect these changes. This in turn, enables workforce information to be generated from which managers may better understand their current performance, and work to achieve the required improvements, in relation to a number of key areas such as absence management, turnover and achievement of national and local workforce indicator targets.

11.5 HR POLICY & REWARD

- 11.5.1 Work is ongoing to develop new HR policies and procedures for Cheshire East. The Cheshire East intranet site continues to be developed to enable managers and employees to access policies, procedures and other HR information.
- 11.5.2 A significant amount of job evaluation work continues to be undertaken to support organisational reviews in Services. HR Officers are working closely with trade union colleagues to grade jobs quickly and in accordance with the Council's job evaluation schemes.

12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

- 12.1 HR support, (including that outlined above), will help the Council through its Services to meet its aims and objectives.

13.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Amanda Rudham
Designation: HR Policy Manager
Tel No: 01270 686327
Email: amanda.rudham@cheshireeast.gov.uk