

Risk Category: People

Risk: a) Lack of capacity and capability.

Risk Owner: Chief Executive

Gross Risk Score

20

What impact does this have?

- Problems with recruitment and retention.
- Inability to deliver services
- Loss of corporate memory.

What opportunities does this create?

- A motivated and skilled workforce.
- A resilient organisation

What controls do we already have in place?

To aid retention we have:

- Leadership Charter and survey in place to measure current leadership performance / capacity, the results of which are analysed and acted on
- Employee survey
- Flexible working practices
- Flexi scheme
- Comprehensive Health and Wellbeing programme
- Staff conference and staff awards
- Apprenticeships
- Annual IPA system linked to learning and development needs and access to a learning and development programme
- Joint Consultation Committee in place with the Trade Unions to discuss changes to working practices
- Exit interviews
- Schemes in place to access untapped potential such as employing care leavers, Project Search and reviewing the qualifications recorded as essential criteria for some roles

To aid recruitment we have:

- Greater.Jobs advertising portal built in collaboration with AGMA
- Nextstep Blackpool portal built in collaboration with NHS
- Targeted marketing campaigns and Golden Hellos in place for difficult to recruit to posts
- Market Supplement Policy

- Health and Social Care career academy has been launched
- Relocation Policy
- Grow your Own initiatives such as Apprenticeships, Step Up to Social Work
- A flexible approach to work-life balance which will be further enhanced by the move to hybrid working. This helps promote family-friendly policies across the Council but also helps with short-term issues such as rising fuel costs
- Differentiate how we plan service delivery based on the needs of the service such as the use of the flexi time scheme, annualised hours and compressed hours where appropriate

Net Risk Score

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What are we doing to further manage the risk?

Update the Workforce Strategy taking account of the feedback from the recent employee survey.

A Workforce Strategy is in place however this needs to be updated. A key source of information for the Workforce Strategy is the outcome of the employee survey. The employee survey was undertaken during 2021/22 and CLT have reviewed the outcomes from this and are pulling together a list of actions which can be taken to address the feedback received. Likewise, an internal audit of Health and Wellbeing was carried out in 2021/22 which will also be used to inform the strategy.

This information will then be used to inform the update of the Workforce Strategy with an updated version due to be implemented by March 2023.

Complete the exercise in relation to succession planning for senior roles and put in place a package of leadership / talent development to increase senior capacity.

A process is underway to identify succession planning arrangements for all members of the Senior Leadership Team. This exercise seeks to understand whether there are employees who would be ready now to move into a senior role should the opportunity arise, whether there are employees who could potentially take on a senior role with the appropriate leadership development and those services where there is no potential successor identified.

The outcome of this will be used to develop an Aspiring Leaders Programme which will be rolled out through 2022/2023 to help ensure that a 'pool' of appropriate employees is ready to progress when required. The programme will be co-designed with the Senior Leadership Team on 27 April 2022. A Leadership Sub Group is in place to oversee the development of this work and to ensure that appropriate succession arrangements are in place going forward.

In terms of all other employees, succession planning is built into the IPA process and this

should be used by managers to identify training and development opportunities for their teams. This should initially be focused on ensuring that staff have the training and skills to effectively deliver their role. However, consideration is also given to future progression to help ensure that team members who do want to progress are in a good position to do so when the opportunities arise.

Continue to focus on key recruitment issues such as in Adult and Children's Services which are being impacted by a national shortage of employees wanting to work in the sectors.

Considerable work has been undertaken in terms of Children's Services recruitment as this is a key area of difficulty and was also highlighted as a risk by OFSTED. Actions taken include:

- Reengineered the recruitment process to make it easier to apply for roles.
- Undertaken virtual recruitment events to encourage people to work at Blackpool.
- Links with Universities and use of their Job Boards to create opportunities for employment at Blackpool.
- Implemented an Earn as you Learn scheme which enables students to work in family support roles to gain experience and increase the chance of future employment at Blackpool.
- 'Golden Hellos' have been introduced for key hard to recruit to posts.
- The Relocation Policy has been rewritten to provide support not just for moving location but also for commuting.
- Accommodation support is provided through the provision of preferable rates in hotels / guest houses for ad hoc stays in Blackpool and also for renting properties in Blackpool.
- Next Step Blackpool microsite is in place as a marketing tool for children's social care careers in Blackpool.
- A Children's Services Workforce Board Chaired by the DCS has been established which looks at recruitment and retention issues.
- A preferred Agency provider is in place.
- Grow your own programmes are in place.
- A retention tracker is in place and the Principal Social Worker carries out all exit interviews to get a better understanding of why staff leave.

Targeted actions have also been carried out for Adult Services including:

- Participation in regional recruitment campaigns such as 'Care Heroes'.
- Links with the Health and Social Care Academy.
- Increased marketing to attract people who have caring experience into social care roles.
- Increased flexible working opportunities to make roles in the sector more attractive.
- Participated in the national 'Fast-Track' into social care campaign which was introduced as part of the pandemic response.
- Payment of the Foundation Living Wage to care providers who we commission

services from to help ensure that there is adequate capacity in the sector to support our residents.

In addition to the above, bespoke actions and steps have been taken to improve recruitment in both Children and Adult Social Care including:

- Blackpool was the first local authority to use the Apprenticeship Levy for social worker qualifications and has a new cohort each year.
- Participation in the 'Step-Up to Social Work' scheme to provide development opportunities for people who already work in care and support roles to qualify as social workers.
- Grow your own programme through Apprenticeships

It is recognised that in addition to Children and Adult Services a number of professions across the Council are struggling to recruit qualified and experienced staff such as in IT, Accountancy, Internal Audit, Public Protection and Property Surveyors. This is also true for entry level grades due to external factors such as the EU Exit and the National Living Wage. Therefore 'Grow your Own' training programmes are being used to develop suitable candidates into roles to bridge this gap.

An internal audit is included on the 2022/2023 Internal Audit Plan to do a 'deep dive' of recruitment across the Council to understand what barriers there are to recruitment and provide recommendations on what actions can be taken to improve this going forward.

What will these additional actions achieve?

By continuing to have a focus on recruitment, retention, learning and development and employee satisfaction, it helps ensure that the Council has a stable, sustainable, motivated workforce which has benefits for staff morale and also the quality of services which the Council delivers to its residents.

What barriers do we face?

In a busy work environment it can be difficult to find the time to prioritise learning and development and therefore this is the biggest challenge in ensuring that all employees have the same opportunities to develop and progress and robust succession planning is in place.

Do these actions contribute to the sustainability of the Council?

The pressure on Council services continues due to continued budget cuts and increased demands and this therefore places pressure on the Council's workforce. To continue to rise to the challenges faced by the Council it is important that a sustainable workforce is in place. This needs to take account of any gaps in skills and recruitment and retention issues which could impact on the quality of services the Council can deliver.

The workforce is the Council's most valuable resource and therefore it is essential that robust recruitment processes supported by arrangements for training, development and succession

planning to ensure that the workforce remains sustainable.

Do these actions impact on the Council's finances?

The inability to recruit and retain a skilled workforce can result in additional financial pressures for the Council as other more expensive options may be needed to bridge key gaps such as agency staff and consultants. In addition, there are increased risks of things going wrong if a skilled workforce is not in place which could have unintended consequences resulting in financial settlements through civil and / or criminal claims brought against the Council for failing to follow due process.

How does this contribute to the Council Plan?

Having the right people in the right posts is essential to ensure that successful delivery of all actions identified in the Council Plan.

Any additional changes to this strategic risk?

During the pandemic employees who were able to work from home have done so and robust Covid Secure measures have been in place for those employees who did need to attend the workplace. Government Guidance has since changed with a move towards 'Living with Covid' and the Council has taken a cautious approach to moving in this direction. However, with effect from 25 April 2022 the Covid Secure measures which were in place which reduced the ability for face to face meetings and training, and also the number of staff who could work in the office due to socially distanced desks, are being relaxed. Whilst much of the training continued online this will increase the opportunity for more face to face training places being available and also build on the bespoke learning and development which employees can benefit from by collaborating with colleagues in an office environment.

The return to the office will also enable employees to have more face to face support, coaching and mentoring from more senior colleagues and Managers.

Risk: b) Poor Employee Health and Wellbeing

Risk Owner: Chief Executive

Gross Risk Score

16

What impact does this have?

- Absenteeism, presenteeism and reduced productivity.
- High staff turnover.
- Increased costs re Agency backfill in 24/7 services.

What opportunities does this create?

- Develop a culture where health and wellbeing are at the forefront of employee support

What controls do we already have in place?

- Arrangements for managing work related pressure, supported by an online stress work tool, iPool module and face to face training
- Mandatory Managing Attendance iPool module in place for all Managers
- A range of training courses in place to help build individual resilience skills
- Absence management procedures and Manager and Employee guides in place
- Leadership Charter and survey conducted to ensure employees are well led
- Employee survey undertaken including a section on Health and Wellbeing to help determine future priorities
- A network of Council wide Health Champions and Mental Health First Aiders has been established
- Menopause training and network has been established
- Corporate Health and Wellbeing Group has been established chaired by the Director of Public Health
- Occupational Health Service in place which provides access to support services such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and physiotherapy
- My Wellbeing on the Hub detailing a wide range of health and wellbeing support which can be provided for employees
- Covid support pages on the Hub to deal with possible impacts of the pandemic

Net Risk Score

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What are we doing to further manage the risk?

Ensure that all managers complete the revised mandatory Attendance Management iPool course.

The majority of managers had completed the previous course but this has been revisited and as a result all managers are being encouraged to complete the new/updated Attendance Management training and current completion rates stand at approximately 70%. For those managers who do not complete the training, these will be picked up as part of the Mandatory Compliance backtrack exercise which is starting on 4 May 2022 which will require all staff to complete mandatory training within six weeks.

Establish a joint working group with the trade unions to consider employee health and wellbeing and how to improve attendance.

The Trade Unions have agreed to be part of the group and the Chair will be the Director of Strategy (Assistant Chief Executive). Draft Terms of Reference have been prepared and work is ongoing to prepare the relevant data which will help inform the future direction of the group. Once the data is collated the first meeting will be held.

Continue to liaise with health partners to establish a fast track route to the long Covid clinic for employees who may have been impacted.

It has been agreed with our health partners that if a member of staff is identified as having long Covid by their GP and referred to the Long Covid clinic they will be fast tracked through. Whilst this has been agreed in principle, work is underway to finalise the details of how this scheme will work.

Case conferencing with Occupational Health, Managers and HR for more complex cases.

A system is in place to hold case conferences for particularly complex cases in order to ensure the employee is supported and also to ensure that the Manager has/is complying with the Policy and all of the tools available.

Introduction of new HR system.

The Council will go live with a new HR system from 1 July 2022 and it is currently being configured to include alerts for Managers which will be sent when absences are open, closed, reached a certain number of days to help them to comply with the Attendance Policy.

What will these additional actions achieve?

By ensuring that the attendance management processes are robust and effectively support employees, whilst also being mindful of service delivery needs, this will help contribute to the wider health and wellbeing package already in place.

What barriers do we face?

Whilst HR set the policies and procedures for attendance management the actual process is undertaken by managers. Therefore, there is a reliance on managers following due process to effectively manage attendance and support employees.

Do these actions contribute to the sustainability of the Council?

By taking a proactive approach to employee health and wellbeing this helps ensure that the workforce feels valued and is resilient. This in turn improves attendance, reduces costs and help to ensure service delivery.

Do these actions impact on the Council's finances?

Staff sickness has an impact on the resources available at the Council. Every day lost to sickness creates additional pressure on staff who are able to work and sometimes on budgets where it is necessary to back fill posts. There can be considerable costs associated with the use of agency staff to provide cover particularly in health and social care services.

How does this contribute to the Council Plan?

A healthy and well workforce is key to meeting the Council's priority for organisational resilience.

Any additional changes to this strategic risk?

When the Council moves towards its 'Living with Covid' plan from 25 April 2022, which will see a relaxation of the Covid Secure measures, there is a risk that staff may come into the workplace unaware that they have Covid. The Council is taking the clear view that staff who have Covid should not be in the workplace however with the national cessation of testing there is a risk that some cases may be missed. Also, there will be staff who are anxious about returning to the workplace due to the impact that Covid may have on their health or that of their families. Therefore, steps are being taken to mitigate this risk for extremely clinically vulnerable employees through the use of individual people risk assessments to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place.