

Human Resources Committee

15 May 2024

Present (In Person)

Mrs J James (Chair)

Councillor Mrs D Clements, Councillor SL Hancock MBE, Dr R Heath-Davies, Councillor M James, Mr GA Jones and Councillor R Jordan.

Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive, Head of People Services, Democratic Service Manager

(Virtual Meeting: 2.00 p.m. – 3.05 p.m.)

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor PJ Morgan and Councillor A Wilcox.

2. **Disclosures of interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2024 and 10 April 2024 were presented for confirmation and authentication.

On the proposal of Councillor Clements, seconded by Mr Jones, it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meetings held on 24 February 2024 and 10 April 2024 be confirmed and authenticated.

4. **Action Log and Matters Arising**

Completed actions were noted. It was requested that Autumn 2024 be shown as the timescale for the Workshop.

5. **Employee Forum**

The minutes of the Employee Forum held on 10 April 2024 were presented for information. The Chair suggested that some changes to the way attendees at the meeting were shown and also asked that the actions identified be captured in the Action Log. The Democratic Services Manager advised that they had been included in the Action Log relating to the Employee Forum.

Noted.

6. **Human Resource Management Update**

The report provided an update on work being undertaken within the HR team, including the Pay and Grading Review, policy review, sickness absence, training data and training provision. In answer to Members'



questions, the Head of People Services advised that agreement to requests under the flexible working policy were subject to operational demands and would be for a 6-month trial period in the first instance before a permanent variation in contract was agreed. With regard to recruitment, the review had considered whether the methodology remained current and attracted the right candidates, particularly younger people.

Members were concerned to hear of instances of long-term sickness absence relating to mental health, but were pleased to hear about the support mechanisms that were in place. The Head of People Services explained that wellbeing champions were being sought from across the organisation whose role would be to signpost staff, as well as to inform the Authority's work around wellbeing. Training would be provided and it was suggested that officers could liaise with Pembrokeshire County Council's Occupational Health Team which ran a similar programme.

Members had previously expressed concern regarding compliance with mandatory training and in response a more proactive approach to monitoring was being undertaken, with staff approached directly. It was noted that mandatory training formed part of the induction process for new staff, including seasonals, and some group sessions had been held where appropriate. Members requested a further update in due course and wondered whether a percentage figure would be better than actual numbers compliant/non-compliant.

Turning to the dashboard of statistics appended to the report, one Member expressed concern about the low number of Welsh essential posts that had been advertised over the preceding year and the impact this had on the number of Welsh speakers within the organisation overall. Officers advised that recruitment in general was challenging, and particularly so where there were specific requirements. It was noted that posts were advertised as Welsh essential if there was a need for a service to be delivered through the medium of Welsh and it was not possible to do that through the existing staff complement. Recent recruitment had been for posts where either the service did not need to be delivered in Welsh, or provision was already in place to allow this to happen.

Noted.

