

HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX COMMITTEE

24 FEBRUARY 2020

REPORT OF HEAD OF PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE AND PROJECTS

A.3 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND HEALTH & WELLBEING UPDATE REPORT

(Report prepared by Katie Wilkins & Anastasia Simpson)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update Human Resources and Council Tax Committee on the Council's current activities that relate to Employee Engagement and Health & Wellbeing.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is much evidence to suggest that an 'engaged' workforce describes employees who are healthier, happier, more fulfilled or more motivated. Employee engagement is the extent to which employees feel passionate about their jobs, are committed to the organisation in which they work and put discretionary effort into their work (CIPD, 2019).

Research reveals that high levels of engagement are clearly linked with higher levels of performance, customer satisfaction, productivity, innovation, staff retention and efficiency.

The Council regularly undertakes an independent and confidential staff survey, which is partly funded by the Local Government Association to establish current levels of employee engagement. The last reported findings from the survey compiled by Dr Martin Reddington, demonstrate the following:-

- From an employee perspective, Tendring District Council continues to have a committed workforce, investing time, energies and concentration to get the job done well, and feeling a sense of pride in doing so.
- Reported levels of organisational engagement have increased – this is the sense of loyalty and advocacy that employees feel towards the Council.
- The Council relies on good will and high levels of motivation and performance from staff, in terms of 'going the extra mile' and 'engagement' with organisational objectives and values.
- The perception of Tendring District Council as an 'employer' continues to improve.

This is further evidenced from the staff survey which was conducted as a part of the Investors in People (IIP) Gold Assessment in January 2019, the final Assessment Report states:-

"It was apparent from the assessment TDC employees, many of whom are long serving, think TDC is a great place to work.

They have embraced the Investors in People principles and continue to strive for further improvement. This will continue to be achieved by maintaining a culture of openness and trust where staff are regularly asked for opinions, ideas and suggestions for improvement."

To gain further insight into how staff feel about working for the Council, a TEDD Lite Survey will be undertaken, again managed by Martin Reddington Associates, during Feb/March 2020.

The results will help us assess progress during 2019/20 and identify and prioritise actions where more improvements can be made. The focus of the survey will be to establish:-

- What is good about working for the Council?

- What is not so good? What could still be improved?
- What makes an employee go the extra mile at work?
- What gets in the way of them doing a good job?

Understanding the importance of an engaged workforce, and the reported link between this and the health and wellbeing of its employees, the Council is committed to a proactive approach towards workplace health and wellbeing. Good health and wellbeing can be a core enabler of employee engagement and organisational performance (CIPD, 2019).

Research suggests that adopting a positive culture around employee engagement and wellbeing is likely to contribute to reduced turnover of staff, reduced levels of sickness absence/presentism and encourages the Council to be 'an employer of choice.'

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the content of this report be noted.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Encouraging employee engagement and supporting employee well-being, contributes to our corporate values as detailed in the Corporate Plan 2020-24

- Councillors and staff uphold personal integrity, honesty and respect for others
- Innovative, flexible, professional staff committed to delivering excellence
- Recognising the diversity and equality of individuals.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

No specific risks have been identified. Finance is within existing budgets.

LEGAL

The Council has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure its staff receive the correct training for their role and to ensure health and safety at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and other related legislation.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

N/A

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

Evidence suggests that supporting employee's health and wellbeing is likely to boost commitment, motivation and other aspects of engagement. On this basis, the organisation has worked hard to create a framework to achieve this.

Raising the profile of Mental Health

The authority is committed to promoting the positive mental wellbeing of its employees and to supporting any employees who may experience mental ill-health, including working in partnership with a number of 3rd parties to provide staff with a range of resources and training a number of Mental Health First Aider's and Livewell Champions amongst the workforce.

In addition, we have delivered a number of training programmes and initiatives across the authority as detailed below:-

- Training for Managers on how to support an employee with Mental Health conditions (*Mental Health First Aid England*)
- Training for all staff on how to support co-workers with Mental Health conditions (*Mental Health First Aid England*)
- Stress Management Workshops (*Health in Mind*)
- Sleep Hygiene Workshops (*Health in Mind*)
- Introduction to Mindfulness (*Adult Community Learning*)
- Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Awareness (*Provide*)
- Time to Talk Coffee mornings for all staff and attended by our Mental Health First Aiders and Remploy (*Time to Change*).

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

The Council is also committed to promoting Healthy Lifestyles across the authority and again in partnership with a number external organisations, we are able to offer and promote the following services:-

- Corporate Gym Membership
- Staff Pilates Classes
- Lunchtime Walks
- Walk to Work week
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Lloyds Pharmacy (Flu Vaccination Clinic)
- Anglia Community Enterprise (ACE) (*NHS Community Health Services, such as health checks, My Weight Matters*);
- Talks about Menopause for both men and women (Essex Police)
- Free Eye Checks for users of DSE and a current arrangement with Spec Savers for all manual workers to have a free eye test.

Financial Wellbeing

TDC understands the importance of Financial Wellbeing for our employees. Based on research carried out by Neyber around two thirds of UK employees currently experience money worries. This not only affects their personal life but it also impacts their professional life. Over half of UK employees said that money worries affect their behaviour and ability to perform in the workplace. To help support employees in this area we have signed up to a programme for staff to be able to access financial support from Neyber.

Neyber is an award-winning financial wellbeing provider that helps UK employees be better with their money. They work with employers to support financial wellbeing in the workplace with access to affordable, salary-deducted loans, a range of savings and investment products and access to financial education.

Employee Assistance Programme

The Council's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available to all employees and Members. This service is delivered by Workplace Options, an independent, provider of employee support services. Their staff are specialists in fields such as wellbeing, family matters, relationship issues, debt management, consumer rights, and much more.

The EAP is paid for by TDC at a current cost of £4.95 per employee/Member. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and is accessible by phone, email and online.

The EAP can provide practical information, fact sheets and packs, resource information on support services in the local area and even short-term face to face or telephonic counselling. The EAP website also offers extensive resources including articles, interactive tools and regular online seminars.

Confidentiality is the foundation of the service and Workplace Options is bound by professional standards regarding confidentiality and the disclosure of details of individuals who have contacted them.

The EAP also provides Manager Assist for anyone in a management, team leader or supervisory role to provide information and guidance on people management issues or any subject which is impacting upon them, an individual or their teams.

Remploy

The confidential service delivered by Remploy, is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions and is available, at no charge, to any employees with depression, anxiety, stress or other mental health issues affecting their work.

Their specialist advisers provide:

- Tailored work-focused mental health support for nine months
- Suitable coping strategies
- A support plan to keep them in, or return to work
- Ideas for workplace adjustments to help them fulfil their role
- Practical advice to support those with a mental health condition.

TDC have signed up to an Embedded Service via Remploy, which allows us to signpost staff to the service on a monthly basis. Remploy works as an advocate for the employees offering them support and signposting them to other organisations and has worked closely with HR and Managers to support staff back into the workplace.

Employee Wellbeing Week

Encompassing all of the factors in Health & Wellbeing and working in partnership with a number of 3rd parties, the Human Resources Team delivered a very successful Employee Wellbeing week in June 2019, each day focusing on a different element of Health and Wellbeing as follows:-

<p>Day 1 - Physical Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Weight Matters • Livewell (Healthy Living) • ACE (Health Checks) • Provide (Health Advice) • Cervical Screening Resources • Specsavers (Golden Ticket) • Heathshield (Health Plan) • Simply Health (Health Plan) • Essex Police (Menopause & Andropause) 	<p>Day 2 - Exercise Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk to work • CLC Exercise Classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spin - Body Balance • Corporate Gym Membership • Discounted Healthy Breakfast/Lunch • Sleep Hygiene (Health in Mind)
<p>Day 3 - Financial Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neyber (Financial Support) • Pension (Advice) • Ellisons (Will Writing) • Unison (Union Membership) • Citizens Advice Bureau (Financial Advice) 	<p>Day 4 - Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health in Mind (Stress Management) • Employee Assistance Programme • Adult Community College – Wellbeing Courses/Resources • Lifehouse Spa

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffey Brooks (Mortgages, Investments, Pensions) • Zenith (Salary Sacrifice Scheme) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to Talk Coffee Morning (MHFA) • Remploy (Mental Health Support) • Dementia Friends Sessions
<p>Day 5 - Food & Nutrition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACE (Heathy Eating Demo) • Tuck in (Health Eating Advice) • Bluebird Tea rooms (Practical Healthy Cooking Demo) • Virgin (Healthy Family Advice) • Dietician 	

Rewarding our Staff

The Council has both financial and non-financial rewards for staff; these are to reflect the different expectations and priorities of staff.

These other rewards include the following:

- Local Government Pension Scheme for all staff
- Training Support
- Salary Sacrifice Schemes including
 - Car Purchase Scheme (Ultra Low emission cars)
 - Cycle to Work Scheme
- Additional career development opportunities –
 - Secondments,
 - Special projects
 - Funded Higher Education
- Recognition through the Celebration of Success and STARS Event
- Flexible working
- Home working
- Free car parking
- Flexi time scheme
- Discounts scheme with local and national organisations
- Additional days annual leave granted after 5 years of continuous service
- Long service awards

Finally, the Council is able to demonstrate that it is a supportive and proactive employer through being holder of the following awards:-

- **Disability Confident Leader Status**

TDC were proud to be one of the first local authorities to gain their Level 3 Disability Confident Leader status in November 2017 and are taking an active leadership role in encouraging and helping other employers on their journey to becoming Disability Confident, while continuing to support current and new employees in the workplace.

- **Investors in People Gold Award (IiP)**

In 2019 TDC was delighted to again be awarded Gold accreditation against the Investors in People Standard, demonstrating continued strong commitment to high performance through good people management.

- **Silver Armed Forces Award**

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant. TDC in 2019 were proud to be a Silver Award winner, demonstrating their commitment to support the Armed Forces Community.

- **Inclusive Employer**

TDC is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity and to encourage inclusion and diversity among its workforce. The Council takes positive steps to ensure that all current and prospective employees and service users are not discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, creed/religion, ethnic or national origin.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION
N/A
APPENDICES
N/A