

## **POLICY, PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY DEPARTMENT**

### **1. Staffing**

- 1.1 All staff within the service are routinely working from home, with a requirement for a few staff to attend the office for a couple of days per month to complete some elements of payroll processing that require manual intervention. All HR systems are operating as normal under this arrangement.

### **2. Pay & Pensions**

- 2.1 Pay & Pensions activity has continued uninterrupted. A number of additional pay transactions have been accommodated and processing has been completed fully and accurately

### **3. Employment Relations**

- 3.1 This service has been on the sharp-end of providing advice to managers in the Council and Head-teachers across the Borough's schools on a wide range of unfamiliar HR matters that emerged as a result of the pandemic and associated lockdown. Most of the routine work of this service has been held. Face to face processes such as hearings and consultation exercises are not possible under current guidelines as they constitute a 'mass gathering'. Alternative approaches are being considered currently. There will however be significant backlog of work in this area for many months to come.

### **4. Efficiency, Recruitment & Resourcing**

- 4.1 Some staff roles have been re-purposed with a few changes being made to processes and procedures to support the Council response to the pandemic. Recruitment & Resourcing Officers have worked on the redeployment and transfer of staff to support activities such as the Shielded Individual Hub, PPPE Hub, Adult Care, Bereavement Management, and voluntary sector activity. In many cases, this is now being reversed, and staff repatriated to their substantive roles.
- 4.2 There has been significant demand for agency workers, particularly in the Adult Care area since February. This has created an ongoing and consistent work demand which continues. Some demand could not be met by the marketplace, resulting in additional procurement arrangements being put in place by colleagues in the Procurement team.

### **5. Organisational Development**

- 5.1 Face to Face training and L&D work was suspended in March, however training provision has continued in many respects through webinars. The service has contributed heavily to the well-being agenda, providing support, intervention and sign-posting to staff wanting to access well-being support. The service has worked closely with colleagues in Public Health to launch the 'wellbeing portal', which has been very positively received

5.2 The take up of e-learning increased significantly following lockdown. The availability of e-learning had meant that we have continued to support staff with L&D resources during this difficult time. This higher level of delivery and usage will be retained in the post-COVID environment. 10,600 e-learning interventions have been completed so far in 2020, compared to 4,600 in the whole of 2019.

6. Policy, Partnerships & Business Support.

6.1 The Policy and Business Support functions within the service have become an integral part of the collaborative programme to reinstate services as lockdown eases. This work will continue for some time, using the clear method that has been devised.

6.2 The Partnerships Officer has, and continues to play a key role in a number of strands of activity that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes liaison and coordination activity with stakeholders in the voluntary and community sector, input and support to the Shielded Individual Hub, assurances and support to refugee families in the Borough, and input to the coordination and support of asylum seekers who have been located within the Borough during the pandemic.

7. Trade Union Liaison

7.1 It should be noted that the level of collaboration and mutual respect that exists between the Council's joint Trade Unions, Members and management has proved a very solid platform for the exploration and resolution of issues during the pandemic. This has enabled a constructive approach to the management of the range of unexpected HR and people management issues that the pandemic has presented the Council with.