

# Resources and Equalities Scrutiny Panel

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Presenter:

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[wolverhampton.gov.uk](http://wolverhampton.gov.uk)

## **Objective two:**

**To be an inclusive employer, building a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve**

## **Actions taken to support objective two:**

**‘To be an inclusive employer, building a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve’**

# Recruitment and Selection

## Deputy Director of Housing

- April 2022 – advertised widely and shared with community contacts for promotion
- Technical panel conducted shortlisting - panel members all had unconscious bias training
- Common reason for not being shortlisted – qualification criterion not met. i.e. educated to degree level or equivalent or technical knowledge wasn't demonstrated
- Four part recruitment process (presentation, interview with 10 person diverse stakeholder panel, 1:1 with Chief Executive and 1:1 with Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing)
- Received 16 applications, 6 were shortlisted for interview, 1 withdrew. 5 candidates were interviewed
- Internal female candidate was appointed
- Majority became aware of the advert via WMJobs, Wolverhampton.gov.uk or Job.LocalGov
- Statistical data on impact of Community Resources is not available to us so we cannot assess the impact this had

# Recruitment and Selection

## Deputy Director of Housing

- Underrepresented groups did apply, majority didn't get shortlisted as they didn't meet the qualification requirements (4 LGBTQ+ community and 3 applicants from an ethnic minority background which included 1 from a white ethnic background).

## Next steps

- Continue to utilise and develop local contacts to promote jobs – e.g. working with Wolves@Work to refer CWC vacancies where there is a consideration for 18-24 year olds to be utilised
- System amendments to allow candidates to confirm how they found out about the role – improved monitoring
- Review Person Specifications to remove barriers, explore alternatives to qualification requirements – completed for Deputy Director of Assets and Director of Residential Services posts
- Review wording on WVJobs and WMJobs to ensure we clearly communicate that we welcome applications from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups – promote inclusive employer via WV Jobs
- Continue to co-produce interview questions with stakeholder panel members at Senior level

# Recruitment and Selection

## Recruitment and Selection Policy and Managers Guide

- Introduction of agreement for care leavers to apply for apprenticeship roles at the 2 week internal stage
- Requirement for panels to be diverse (gender and race as a minimum)
- Introduction of 'candidate information pack'

## Recruitment and Selection Training

- Review of HR specific training for managers to support the above 

## Launch of WVJobs Microsite (HR led)

- New starter survey conducted – candidates want more information about what working for the council requires, culture and benefits
- WVJobs seeks to attract high quality, diverse candidates
- Provides information on culture, council plan and vision, information on careers, links to vacancies, staff equality forum information, trade union information, HR Policies, testimonials from employees, and much more

# Policy Reviews

## February 2022:

- Dignity at work policy statement

## Diverse Panel Requirement & Introduction of SeeHearSpeakUp (Safe Space)

- Discipline Policy and Managers Guide, Standard Operating Procedures, template letters
- Management of Attendance Policy and Managers Guide, Standard Operating Procedures, template letters
- Capability Policy and Managers Guide
- Grievance Policy and Managers Guide, Standard Operating Procedures, template letters

## Trans Equality Policy

- Complete overhaul – worked with Stonewall
- Transitioning at Work Guidance

# HR Engagement on new ways of working

- 5 month engagement with employees, managers, trade unions, staff equality forums. **266** attendees and **103** survey responses.
- Themes of feedback:
  - Flexi leave/TOIL (Time off in Lieu)
  - Working Hours
  - Travel and Mileage
  - Productivity and Sickness
  - Employee Support
  - Workstyles
- Creation of a 'fair, inclusive and attractive offer which ensures employees across flexible, field and fixed workstyles are treated equitably and fairly and are empowered, supported and developed to deliver the best possible service for the diverse community we serve'.
- Ensure the council is an employer of choice



# HR Engagement on new ways of working

Work is ongoing, will require amendments to the following policies/guide:

- Working Hours Policy
- Sustainable Staff Travel Policy
- Agile working policy and toolkit
- Leave Policy and Table
- Collective Agreement – Managers guide
- Dress Code Policy – with principles

## **Policies (new or in review)**

**Policy development now co-production with key stakeholders (employees, managers, trade unions, internal and external SMEs and staff equality forums. Thorough benchmarking is conducted before drafting a policy for review).**

**Bereavement Support Guide** – launched October 2022

- Raises awareness amongst managers and employees about the individual and personal nature of grief and bereavement, cultural differences in practices and traditions and signpost available support.
- Introduction of 5 days bereavement support leave, separate to Time off for Dependents

**Autism Awareness Guide** – to be launched pending approval December 2022

- To provide managers and employees with information and guidance on support available to help autistic employees and potential candidates through the recruitment and selection process

**Retirement policies**

- Three policies (retirement, flexible retirement and statement of pensions) in review
- Support work/life balance when employees reach retirement age

## **Workplace Menopause Pledge – October 2022**

According to information obtained online from the NHS (2022) those experiencing symptoms of the menopause are usually aged between 45 – 55 years of age.

### **Workforce Demographic:**

71.1 % of the total number of employees aged between 45 and 55 are female

This is a total of 906 female employees which accounts for 22% of the entire workforce

### **Commitment to:**

- Recognising that menopause can be an issue in the workplace and women need our support
- Talking openly, positively and respectfully about the menopause
- Actively supporting and informing our employees affected by the menopause

# Workplace Menopause Pledge – October 2022

## Actions:

- HR, Organisational Development, Public Health and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are working together to support the pledge
- Reviewing Menopause in the Workplace guidance originally introduced in 2019 with manager awareness training
- Chatty Cafes on the menopause to encourage sharing of experiences, support redevelopment of a guide and request volunteers to support panel event (described below)
- Panel event of employees who have gone through the menopause to share their experiences and discuss what helped them through the process
- Womens health survey to be launched 2023 – includes support requirements on menopause

# Mental Health Survey – December 2022

## Purpose:

The council has a range of support mechanisms for health and wellbeing, however, the Human Resources and Organisational Development teams want to obtain feedback on the range of services we provide at work to support employee wellbeing and improve the lives of colleagues, ensuring we offer services that are fit for purpose in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

- Mental Health Issues is the most common reason for sickness absence at the council
- ‘Mental Health Issues’ sickness absence made up 21.57% of all sickness-related absence in 2022/2023 Q1, compared to 17.41% in the previous quarter (2021-22 Q4).
- Other initiatives include support and signposting to tailored assistance via Management of Attendance meetings, trained support from mental health first aiders, pilot of the Head for Health Scheme, dedicated information on wellbeing Our People pages, well-being pledges, chatty cafes, lunchtime yoga sessions and many more...

## Employee Assistance Programme

- Currently provided by Carefirst via Sodexo. Contract ending in 12 months. Reviewing market and obtaining requirements for new contract. The mental health survey will feed into the requirement design also.

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