
ADMINISTRATION

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Head of Service signature	Rosemary McCullough
Date	14 April 2021
Peer Review signature	For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.
Date	Click or tap to enter a date.
Director signature	For Audit purposes please ensure this is signed.
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1. Introduction

Name of Service	Human Resources and Organisational Development
Included Service Units	Employee Resourcing Employee Development Employee Relations
Directorate	Organisational Development and Administration
Purpose of Service	To provide a range of professional support, advice and training for the Council's 900 employees, managers, and elected members, and to develop our organisation through our people to be the best we can be. Our goal is to support the Council to become recognised as a high performing organisation.
Key customers/ stakeholders and their needs	<p>External: Residents of the Borough, Recognised Trade Union Officials, External bodies e.g. NI Audit office, Equality Commission</p> <p>Internal: The Mayor, The Council, Committees, Elected Members, Corporate Leadership Team, Council Employees/Workers</p> <p>Professional advisors: Solicitors, Office, Local Government Staff Commission, Northern Ireland Audit Office</p>
Context, challenges & key assumptions	<p>Context: This plan strives to reflect the outcome approach of the Community Plan and is relevant to the Council's Performance Improvement Plan,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be financially responsible • Maximise the potential of our staff to deliver outcomes • To deliver high quality customer focussed services <p>It should be noted that this Service Plan that all services will be delivered in the context of COVID Regulations. Best efforts will be made to ensure that planning will take regulations into consideration but where possible business as usual will be the aim.</p> <p>Political: This service area has a number of HR and OD policies that are agreed by Council before they are implemented within the organisation. Therefore any employee relations, resourcing or development issue is dealt with in compliance with HR and OD policies.</p> <p>Economic: The service area ensures that the programme of activity has allocated budget and ensures due diligence in terms of spending of this budget.</p> <p>Social: The Councils employees are the Core audience for what this service area delivers. However, the residents of the borough and to some extent surrounding boroughs are also affected by t service e.g. recruitment to new posts</p> <p>Technological: The service area relies on many aspects of technology. It is always looking at ways to improve efficiencies and modernise the service to make it more user friendly and accessible to all e.g. introduction of new software (Core</p>

	<p>II) to align the HR and employee payments services. This will streamline services and cut down on duplication of work</p> <p>Legal: The service area works within the legislative context at all times, ensuring that Council are compliant. HR takes advice where appropriate on complex legal matters.</p> <p>Environmental: The service area complies with the sustainability agenda ensuring that consideration for the environment is made in all aspects of corporate activity.</p> <p>Challenges: many challenges due to the onset of the global pandemic in March 2020 and the impact that has had on HR services. In the last year HR had to suspend many of its normal services and to focus on the well being aspects of HR to ensure our employees were kept up to date and informed of ever changing circumstances. The challenge this year will be resuming normal services and continuing to ensure the well being of our employees</p> <p>Strengths: The HR and OD service has a knowledgeable and committed staff who are highly skilled and motivated. The service also has support from Elected Members, Corporate Leadership Team and the Performance Improvement and ICT teams. There are sound HR and OD policies/procedures in place and there is a good working relationship established with the Trade unions.</p> <p>Weaknesses: there are inconsistencies with regard to how different line managers apply council policies, an increasing number of employee relations and attendance issues, increased absenteeism and well being issues more prevalent in HR and OD staff due to increasing workload and fast moving environment</p> <p>Opportunities: opportunities to gain support from elected members and corporate leadership team e.g. financial support in the implementation of the Core II software system, establishing closer relationships with other services e.g. site visits, opportunity to have more team building exercises within HR and OD</p> <p>Threats: configuration of office staff and inability of access by some staff to top floor, overload of new strategies, policies and procedures, everchanging environment, not gaining trust and engagement from workforce.</p> <p>Assumptions: That the service can go back to 'normal' post pandemic.</p>
<p>Reflection on previous performance – successes and lessons learned</p>	<p><i>Reflect on prior year and year to date</i></p> <p><i>Reflect on</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Key successes</i> • <i>Key Learning (Identify any objectives, KPIs or actions that you are not taking forward to this year and why e.g. achieved, shift in focus or have a better version of it etc. If it was achieved state what difference it made.)</i> <p>The performance of the HR and OD service was measured in its 2020-21 Service Plan and subsequently revised plan and also in the Council's more high-level Performance Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Key Successes</p> <p>Considerable work was carried out based on the Key Performance Indicators within the 2020-2021 Service Plan for HR and OD. The majority of Council structures have now been completed and all the main HR and OD policies are in place, some of which have been reviewed and consulted on with the Trade</p>

Unions whilst there is a timetable in place for those policies yet to be reviewed. Harmonisation with regard to most of the terms and conditions of employment have been completed. There had been additional Key Performance Indicators identified, however, these were put on hold due to covid-19 and changing work priorities.

However, the key indicators put on hold were replaced with other priorities due to Covid-19 and the HR and OD service has been successful in being reactive and ensuring that these new priorities were carried out in a timely and efficient manner.

The HR and OD service has been successful at adapting to the ever changing environment brought about by the global pandemic including keeping up to date on new initiatives such as the Job Retention Scheme and Job Support Scheme and ensuring that staff were required to keep working, work from home, be part or full time furloughed and notification of all these changes to the payroll department.

The HR and OD service has successfully reviewed all the casual/temporary and agency staff to ensure that where work was available that first priority was given to permanent employees. The service has also had considerable success in finding redeployment opportunities for employees with no meaningful work to do as a result of Covid-19, which has led to making sure that all employees are effectively communicated with in connection with any changes to their employment contract. HR and OD have also successfully dealt with a wide range of queries in connection with the pandemic and advising on how these impact on individuals' work and contracts of employment. The service has also been successful in negotiating with the Trade Unions on all matters to do with the impact of Covid-19 including the introduction of a Voluntary/Compulsory Redundancy Scheme. Other successes have been the introduction of an interim home working policy and the preparation of a draft formal homeworking policy for future use.

In addition to all this, the HR and OD service has continued to deal with essential employee relations/resourcing and development issues. As the year progressed the section has started to build up to providing more of its normal activities in addition to the work related to Covid-19

Key Lessons

The main lessons learnt by HR and OD in the last year are that the service must be reactive at all times to changing situations and circumstances. This has always been the case when working in this area, however, never have we experienced the need to react so quickly to change than we have had to do in the last year, since the start of the pandemic.

Lessons learnt are that HR and OD have been able to adapt to change extremely quickly. It became apparent early on that Covid 19 had a huge impact of the HR and OD service and that it was our top priority to look after the well-being of our employees. Therefore, HR and OD had to temporarily suspend a number of our normal services and focus on employee wellbeing and providing critical and ever changing advice to managers and all employees.

We have also learnt how adaptable our staff can be when the need arises and

how well many staff adapted to a change in role and a change in their working conditions

2. How does our Service contribute to community planning outcomes and PEOPLE priorities?

The Human Resources and OD service can be expected to have a direct impact on the following:

Community Planning Outcome	PEOPLE priority	Our focus for 2021/2022
Outcome 1: All people in Ards and North Down fulfil their lifelong potential	<p>To work closely with local schools and colleges in order to advise educational facilities of the wide range of jobs that are available within the Council.</p> <p>Develop apprenticeship schemes with local schools and colleges</p>	To work with Belfast Region City Deal to create a regional apprenticeship scheme
Outcome 4: All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy	To ensure that local people know the types of jobs available within the Council and work with local schools and colleges to develop apprenticeship schemes and align courses provided by colleges to posts that are available in the Council	To work closely with local schools and colleges to develop good working relationships

3. Key activities for 2021/2022

SERVICE:	Human Resources and Organisational Development			
Community Plan Outcome:	Outcomes 1-5: All people in Ards and North Down feel pride as they have access to a well-managed sustainable environment			
Corporate Plan PEOPLE priority(ies):	Performance – Be financially responsible			
Council KPI(s):	Mandatory KPI			
Service Objective:	Mandatory KPI			
What difference will it make?				
Underpinning strategies:				
Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2021/2022 (actions)		Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
Ensure that we spend the budget allocated to the HR and OD service		March 2022	Head of HR and OD	Finance

SERVICE:	Human Resources and Organisational Development		
Community Plan Outcome:	Outcome 1-5:		
Corporate Plan PEOPLE priority(ies):	Maximise the potential of our staff to deliver outcomes		
Council KPI(s):	n/a		
Service Objective:	Invest in the workforce to ensure there is a skilled, adaptable and motivated workforce		
What difference will it make?	Will ensure that employees have the skills/training and experience required to carry out their role to their full potential		
Underpinning strategies:	Learning and Development Strategy		
Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2021/2022 (actions)	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
Develop a Corporate Induction Programme for all new Council staff so that all staff will be able to settle in more quickly and therefore be more productive	Formal Corporate Induction Draft Programme to be developed by 31 December 2021 and ready to be consulted on with trade unions at a future date	Head of HR and HR and OD Managers (resourcing)	Heads of Service/Service Unit Managers/CLT/HOST/Trade Unions/Elected Members/Corporate Communications
Produce a 'Reduction in Absence' Action Plan	Take action where possible to ensure there is a reduction in staff absenteeism and put in place an	Head of HR and OD and HR Manager (Employee Relations)	All staff/trade unions/elected members/occupational health consultants

	Action Plan working towards a reduction in absence to be no more than 5%		
Ensure People Plan is delivered for year 3	% of Actions on the People Plan for year 3 to be completed by March 2022 -Thank you culture and Reward and Recognition scheme to be in place by March 2022	Head of HR and OD and HR Manager (Development)	Performance Improvement/Corporate Communications/Trade Unions/Staff/CLT
Roll out of OD Strategy	% of staff are aware of the OD Strategy	Head of HR and OD and HR Manager (Development)	CLT/Trade Unions/Staff/Corporate Communications and Performance Improvement Services
Ensure Pride in Performance Conversations take place throughout the year	% of Staff Conversations within HR and OD are completed within HR and OD	Head of HR and OD and HR Manager (Development)	Trade Unions/HR staff/Corporate Communications/Performance Improvement Services
Ensure monthly meetings take place with entire HR team	% of team meetings to be delivered on teams	Head of HR and OD	Corporate Communications

<p>Ensure there is engagement with all employees and trade unions on appropriate government initiatives to tackle Covid 19 and in any plans to return staff to the workplace</p>	<p>Ensure that staff continue to get appropriate communication in connection with any changes to their terms and conditions as a result of Covid 19 and are kept up to date with any matters relating to their employment</p>	<p>Head of HR and OD and HR Managers (Resourcing)</p>	<p>Performance Improvement/Corporate Communications/Trade Unions/Staff/CLT</p>
<p>Ensure Trade Unions are consulted with effectively with regard to any changes that affect employees as a result of Covid 19 i.e. return to work plans/home working policies/travel to work policies/any transformation plans/updates on voluntary severance etc.</p>	<p>Staff are aware of any new plans/schemes and communicated with effectively and there will be support from Trade Unions on proposed way forwards on all related initiatives</p>	<p>Head of HR and OD and HR Managers</p>	<p>CLT/Trade Unions/Staff/Corporate Communications and Performance Improvement Services</p>
<p>To introduce a regional Apprenticeship Scheme into the Council to aid recruitment of employees into some areas whereby it has been difficult to attract staff</p>	<p>Continue to work with Belfast Region City Deal to create a regional apprenticeship scheme</p>	<p>Head of HR and OD and Manager (Development)</p>	<p>CLT/Trade Unions/CLT/HOST/Local Consultation and Negotiation Forum/ All staff</p>

Continue with timetable to review all main HR and OD policies to ensure policies are fair and consistent with regard to how staff are managed	% main HR and OD policies to be reviewed with the recognised Trade Unions (forum group) – main policies for year ahead to be reviewed are Absence/Flexible working	Head ;of HR and OD and all HR and OD Managers	Trade Unions/CLT/Host/Local Consultation and Negotiation Forum/all staff
Formulation of a Formal Home Working policy	Draft policy has been prepared, working group from HOST to look at future implications of this	Head of HR and OD and HR Managers (Resourcing)	Trade Unions/CLT/Host
Review of Flexible Working Policy	Draft policy prepared, needs further consultation between CLT and Host	Head of HR and OD	CLT/Host/Trade unions

SERVICE:	Human Resources and Organisational Development		
Community Plan Outcome:	Outcomes 1-5		
Corporate Plan PEOPLE priority(ies):	To Deliver high quality customer focussed services		
Council KPI(s):	n/a		
Service Objective:	Ensure services meet customers' needs		
What difference will it make?	Ensure that our customers both internal and external are provided with an efficient and effective service to enable them to be motivated, productive and successful		
Underpinning strategies:	Recruitment and Selection procedures		
Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2021/2022 (actions)	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
Ensure human resources are in place in a timely manner so that the right people are in the right jobs at the right place at the right time, HR are gradually returning to carry out normal recruitment services, however, the first priority will be to ensure that all staff without meaningful work are redeployed prior to recruitment of new staff	<p>% of recruitment exercises completed within 6 weeks from advertisement to recommended for employment</p> <p>% of candidates not shortlisted to be informed within 2 weeks from date of shortlisting</p> <p>% of candidates at interview to be notified within 2 weeks from date of interview</p>	Head of HR and OD and HR Managers (Resourcing)	All senior managers/CLT/Trade unions/Elected members

Ensure the new Core II phase 1 HR integrated attendance software is implemented and effective and a timetable in place for other phases	June 2021	Head of HR and all HR and OD Managers	Finance/Performance Improvement and Core II provider
Ensure HR continues to be GDPR compliant	% of employees receiving training in new policy	Head of HR and OD and all HR Managers	Data Compliance Officer
Provide training on the Whistle blowing policy	March 2022	Head of HR and OD and HR Manager (Development)	Data Compliance Officer

Service Development / Improvement

What service development/improvement will we undertake in 2021/2022?	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
Develop a formal workforce strategy which sets out its formal status and objectives for recruitment, retention, training and development of staff in line with the new Corporate Plan	Excellence	To have a whole-council co-ordinated approach to workforce recruitment/ planning	March 2022	Head of HR and OD and HR Manager (Development)	Heads of service/service Unit Managers/CLT/Host/Trade unions/Elected Members/Corporate Communications
To commence HR visits teams calls to various work locations	Excellence	Improve understanding of issues between Managers/Staff and HR and OD and to improve the service provided to Managers	One teams meeting to take place per quarter	Head of HR and OD and Hr managers	CLT/HOST/All managers/Staff
HR and OD staff to have online Team Building/Development Days to discuss current issues and future plans	Excellence	To ensure all HR and OD staff are aware of the overall objectives of the team and to increase engagement within the team.	At least 2 development days per year	Head of HR and OD and HR Managers	Performance Improvement Services/ facilitators/trainers

SPECIFIED ASPECTS OF IMPROVEMENT

What will this improve?	Definition
Strategic Effectiveness	<i>is key to linking the community plan, and the ongoing processes that underpin it, with a council's improvement processes. The Department would expect that a council's strategic community planning outcomes and objectives should be central to that council's improvement activity and clearly contribute to the strategic effectiveness aspect.</i>
Service Quality	<i>all relate to service provision by aiming to meet the needs of citizens and ensuring fair ease of access to the most suitable services that meet their needs. Clearly, all of these objectives can be demonstrated individually or collectively. Fairness can also be demonstrated by exercising non-service functions in ways which reduce disadvantage and improve social well-being, for instance by improving citizens' access to information or by addressing inequalities experienced by Section 75 groups.</i>
Service Availability	
Fairness	
Sustainability	<i>When carrying out its functions or providing services, a council may demonstrate improvement when it operates in a way that contributes towards the sustainability of its area, as required under the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 and the associated Northern Ireland Executive Sustainable Development Strategy. on-going efficiency may also be shown if fewer resources are utilised while maintaining provision of substantially similar or better services. Should a council choose to alter the manner by which a service is provided and in so doing it uses fewer resources or more integrated services, it will not only be demonstrating efficiency, but may demonstrate improved sustainability as well</i>
Efficiency	
Innovation	<i>any changes to service design and delivery methods that are intended to yield improvement under any other aspect, and are reasonably likely to do so. This allows councils to make changes which may not have tangible effects within the same reporting year, but are likely to in subsequent years, and still count them as improvements.</i>

Service activities being stopped / changed:

What service / activities will we be stopping / changing in 2021/2022	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
Training and Development	The default for training and development will be to carry this service out online wherever possible	none	None	None	None
Recruitment and Selection	There will be a mixture of face to face social distanced interviews and interviews carried out online	Minimal – room bookings	None	None	None
Disciplinary/Absence/Grievance meetings	There will be a mixture of online and face to face meetings	Minimal – cost of room hire	None	None	none

Performance Measures:

Performance Measures (should include those for the Business as Usual and Service Improvement actions outlined above and relevant measures from Community, Corporate and Statutory)	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 To date	2021/22
% Staff Attendance	Corporate	Quarterly	n/a		95%	88.37%	92.93%	95.85%	95%
% Spend against budget	Corporate	Quarterly	n/a	99.9%	102.79%	97%	102%	93.2 %	95%
% staff reporting regular receipt of team briefings	Corporate	Quarterly	n/a	100%	100%	100%	100%	NA	100%
Pride in Performance Conversations	Corporate	Annually	n/a		NA	NA	100%	0%	95%
Days lost per employee across the Council	Corporate	Quarterly			12	12.2	10.31	14	12
% of actions on the People Plan completed for year 3	Corporate	Quarterly				85%	90% for year 2	NA	100% year 3
% of review of main HR policies	corporate	Quarterly				20%	55%	60%	100%

4. Risks

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
	Lack of systems to identify underperformance of staff	3	6	6	Capability procedure Pride in Performance conversations	3	1	3	Tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to have staff pride in performance conversations with all staff 	ongoing	Head of Service and OD Manager	
	Lack of awareness by staff of their job requirements	4	1	4	Ensure job descriptions are up to date Have regular meetings with staff	4	1	4	Tolerate		ongoing	Head of Service and Service Managers	
	Lack of awareness by staff of organisational issues	3	3	9	Employee communications IIP programme	3	1	3	Tolerate		ongoing	Head of Service and OD Manager	
	Employee and ex employee litigation	4	3	12	Ensure fair and consistent policies are in place which are non discriminatory	4	2	8	Action	Further review policies /procedures	ongoing	Head of Service and Employee Relations Manager	
	Employer/Employee inappropriate behaviour	4	3	12	Whistle blowing policy Employee Code of Conduct Behaviour Charter	4	1	4	Tolerate	Whistle blowing training to be rolled out	ongoing	Head of Service and Employee Relations Manager	

Ref:	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner	Notes to explain rationale for scoring, etc.
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action				
	High levels of sick absence	4	3	12	Return to work interviews Absence Policy	4	2	8	Action	Reduction in Absence Action Plan	ongoing	Head of Service and Employee Relations Manager	

5. Resources

Are all actions resourced within the current (2021/22) budget plan? Yes No

Will additional resources be required?

Yes No

(If no please comment in Section A below how the actions will be funded, ie Staff Resources, Equipment, Revenue Budget, Capital Budget.)

(If yes please detail additional resources in Section B below.)

Section A: Existing Budgets

Section B:

Staff: No changes, there are 2 additional temporary staff in place for the implementation of CORE II

Financial: In budget books

Other:

If the required additional resources are NOT available, please state:

NA

What is the likely impact on the public?

NA

What is the impact on staffing?

NA

6. Monitoring and Review

The HR and OD plan will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the HR and OD team are on track with regard to achieving key actions with the ultimate goal of achieving the targets set.

7. Conclusions

It will be a challenging year ahead for the HR and OD team due to having to continue to deal with matters arising from Covid 19 and also resuming normal services.

8. Appendices

None