CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 14th January 2021
Report Subject	Employment and Workforce Mid-Year update
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets,
Report Author	Senior Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide Members with an update for the Mid-Year 2020/21 Report. This report provides details of the following:

- Headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
- Organisation Age Profile (Non –Schools and Schools)
- Employee Turnover and Stability (Including Redundancies and Early Retirements)
- Attendance
- Performance Monitoring (Appraisals)
- Resource Management (Agency Workers)
- Equality and Diversity
- Achievements made by Human Resources within the quarter

The format of this report and the accompanying Workforce Information Dashboard reports are intended to focus on organisational performance and trends. The dashboards are a visual presentation of data, showing the current status and historical trends of the Council's performance against key performance indicators.

This report provides a brief narrative on the overall performance against a number of indicators. A more detailed explanation is provided on an exceptional basis where performance is falling below organisational performance indicators or where there has been a significant movement, either upwards or downwards, in the reported trends. The narrative will include an explanation for the movement in trend and details of any proposed actions to improve or maintain performance.

The performance information for the whole organisation is split to show Schools and Non-Schools data separately.

On a periodic basis, this report will highlight key achievements or projects undertaken in support of the People Strategy and/or Council Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS	
1	Members comment on Mid-Year Workforce Information Report 2020/21 (April 2020 – September 2020).

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	**EXPLAINING THE WORKFORCE INFORMATION REPORT**
1.01	**Headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE)** The headcount and FTE figures during at the mid-year point show an overall decrease of 14 FTE across the Council since April. Non-schools show an increase of 4 FTE, and Schools show an overall increase of 18 FTE.
1.02	**Age Profiling** Age profiling the organisation, departments and teams is an important part of understanding the age demographics of our workforce and where we may need to focus attention. Why do we use age profiling? • to identify work areas with a high average age • to help plan for retirements and how we will recruit or retain staff • to highlight patterns and trends across our workforce • to support workforce planning. Understanding our workforce profile, enables the Council to assess supply and potential problem areas within a given service/portfolio and aids succession planning by identifying any skill gaps that may arise. Without an analysis of age profile (and skills profile), no workable long term planning can be made.
1.03	**Employee Turnover and Stability (Including Redundancies and Early Retirements)** The mid-year turnover percentage is 4.06%. This is an improvement when compared to the previous year (6.25) but not surprising given the restrictions in terms of movement generally during quarter one due to the national lockdown. Human Resource colleagues actively encourage the use of exit interviews so portfolios can monitor and understand individual reasons for leaving. Reasons for leaving include not having a clear understanding of what to expect to in their role and/or of the Council as an employer. The feedback obtained from exit interviews also assists Human Resources to review the effectiveness of the various recruitment methods used across the Council and justify making changes as appropriate to improve recruitment and retention.

1.04	**Attendance**
	The mid-year cumulative full time equivalent (FTE) days lost for the Council is 3.07. This is a significant improvement when compared to the previous year (4.67). The COVID-19 pandemic has seen a change in the way that all workgroups undertake their work. For a substantial number, this has seen them working from home, for others, they remain in work with high levels of PPE. All of these changes have had a positive effect on some illnesses such as infection rates.
	Attendance has been managed very closely throughout the pandemic as managers and employees have had to learn to manage a range of new and complex scenarios such as self-isolation, household isolation and COVID absence. As we continue to navigate new legislation and provide guidance for complex situational questions, to tackle the short and long term obstacles associated with the impact of COVID-19 it has been necessary to provide regular communications and updated guidance to managers and employees. In addition, we have extended our seasonal flu programme to provide vaccinations to all key workers.
1.05	**Performance Monitoring (Appraisals)**
	Many of our employees have and continue to work differently in what are often challenging circumstances. Some employees have been be unable to work due to the nature of their work or the lack of facilities to work from home. There have been particular challenges for many with the closure of schools and other services most notably those with caring responsibilities for children or other dependents. There have also been a number of employees who, for many months, were required to shield because of their vulnerability or illness.
	We will all have team members who have gone above and beyond for the benefit of the Council and/or the communities they serve. Sadly, we will also be managing the adverse impact of COVID-19 on employees' mental health which, for some, has taken a heavy toll.
	Employees still need a framework in which they can provide and receive feedback and continue to learn and grow. With this in mind, for 2020/21 we have introduced an alternative approach to our normal performance appraisals in the form of a structured one to one which provides for a welfare check, an honest discussion about what has been achieved during the last six months, and how they have coped. Followed by what can realistically be achieved in the next six months and the normal career conversation which provides an opportunity to discuss and explore future aspirations.
1.06	**Resource Management (Agency Workers)**
	The cumulative mid-year agency spend for 2020/21 is £1.36m. The largest agency spend is within Streetscene and Transportation at £714,000. The second largest spend is within Social Services at £291,000. Both of these services have been at the forefront of the response to the pandemic, which has required to changes to working practices, including the introduction of

	'bubbles' to keep our workforce safe which has impacted on the number of additional, temporary resources required to supplement the service.

The cumulative mid-year 'Off-contract' spend for 2020/21 is £167,000. This shows that the use of agency workers is continuing to be used more appropriately across the organisation. However, Human Resources will work with Portfolios who continue to spend 'Off-contract' to further educate and assist in the appropriate use of agency workers.

There were a total of 90 active agency placements on 30 September. At the time of running the report 72 placements exceeded the 12 week Agency Worker Regulations threshold. Of those that exceeded the threshold, 50 were within Streetscene and Transportation, 13 in Housing and Assets, 4 in Social Services, 2 each in Governance, and Planning, Environment and Economy and 1 in Education and Youth. |
| 1.07 | **Equality and Diversity Workforce Monitoring**

Workforce diversity monitoring is an important means of demonstrating, implementing and promoting equality of opportunity. Ongoing promotion and monitoring is carried out to gather information on the diversity of our workforce including potential recruits as well as existing employees. The Council collects diversity information based on current UK equality legislation which aims to prevent discrimination on grounds of age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion and other protected characteristics. Information gathered can if analysed regularly, help us to identify barriers that prevent access to employment and career development for certain groups of people, and to develop solutions, such as positive action plans or alternative policies and practices. |
| 1.08 | **Achievements – Workforce Health and Wellbeing Survey**

During the summer of 2020, we created an employee health and well-being survey, the purpose of which was to understand the overall emotional, social and physical wellbeing of our employees during the early part of the pandemic. Between 18/08/20 and 21/09/20 we received 1,237 responses which equates to 20% of the workforce. Based on a typical response to employee surveys of 5-30%, this is a healthy response rate.

The survey had four key sections designed to get a baseline assessment of the health and wellbeing of our employees, namely:

- General Health and Wellbeing
- Working from Home
- Working Differently
- Return to Work.

97% of those who completed the survey indicated that they were in reasonably or very good health. During the pandemic, the council has been able to expand its use of remote working which has enabled more services to operate as normal, or as close to normal. Of those who responded, 85% believed they had a good work-life balance and 9 out of 10 employees were being kept in regular contact with by their managers and were receiving regular updates. |

	A high level assessment of the findings are detailed in the presentation at Appendix Two.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None arising directly from this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	None as the dashboard reports appended to this report details existing actual out-turns in the various measures.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None arising directly from this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix One: Dashboard – Workforce Information Mid-Year Report 2020/21
5.02	Appendix Two: Health and Wellbeing Survey – High level outcomes

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	**Contact Officer:** Sharon Carney, Senior Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development. **Telephone:** 01352 702139 **E-mail:** sharon_carney@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	**Headcount and FTE** This will provide information on the current levels of the Council's workforce.

Age Profiling
The purpose of providing the Organisational Age Profile is to enable the Council to provide a guide to the future number of potential retirements and succession plan by identifying any skill gaps that may arise. Without an analysis of age profile, no workable long term planning can be made.

Employee Turnover and Stability (Including Redundancies and Early Retirements)
This information will provide the awareness of trends in turnover rates within the Council for potential measure to be put in place for high turnover rates, if applicable.

Attendance
Attendance remains a high priority in the Council and will provide detailed information on the areas for improvement for absence/attendance. Stage 1 and Stage 2 capability hearings are the formal stages of the Attendance Management policy where sanctions including dismissal take place.

Performance Management (Appraisals)
Reporting on performance appraisals and development will enable more effective monitoring of potential training needs for future planning.

Resource Management
This information will include the usage of agency workers within the Council.

Equality and Diversity Workforce Monitoring
Information will be provided to inform what measures, if any, need to be implemented to prevent inequalities within the Council.

Red Book
JNC for Local Authority Craft & Associated Employees.

Green Book
JNC National Agreement for the former APT&C and Manual employees.