CORPORATE SERVICES AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE: *REVIEW OF RECRUITMENT IN HILLINGDON*

Cabinet Member	Councillor Richard Lewis

Cabinet Portfolio	Central Services, Culture and Heritage

Officer Contact	Luke Taylor, Democratic Services

Papers with report	Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee Review of Recruitment in Hillingdon

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report	To receive the Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee's review into Recruitment in Hillingdon and to give consideration to the recommendations of the review.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: *Our People;*
Financial Cost	The branding project (Recommendation 1) would incur additional costs via the existing recruitment services contract. Exact costs would depend on the scope and scale of the project. There are no other direct financial implications associated with the recommendations included in this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Corporate Services and Partnerships
Ward(s) affected	All

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1) **Welcomes the Committee's findings from their review into Recruitment in Hillingdon;**

2) **Agrees the following recommendations from the Committee for implementation by officers, in consultation with and sign-off where required, by the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member:**

Policy Overview Committee Recommendations

(1) **That the Council develop an employment brand, agreed by the Leader of the Council as lead member for Communications, to ensure the organisation has a unique and attractive message that differentiates from other employers in the public, private and third sector.**

(2)   That the Council develop and implement a social media recruitment strategy, not only focused on advertising vacancies, but also promoting and managing the Council's online reputation and employer brand.

(3)   That the Council develop a culture of internal advocacy for the organisation among its staff, and reinforce this support through introducing a recruitment referral scheme.

(4)   That the Council develop a "Total Reward" approach to recruitment marketing, which involves not only advertising remuneration, but also the total worth of the recruitment package.

(5)   That the Council introduce and develop a workforce succession plan for all key roles within the organisation.

(6)   That the Council create talent pools of existing employees, an alumni network enabled by social media, and an "Apprenticeship Talent Pool" to ensure talented apprentices have opportunities to maintain employment within the Council.

(7)   That a centralised Job Description Library is implemented and all managers involved in recruitment are re-trained on the new e-recruitment system, together with refresher training on selection methods and equalities.

(8)   That a review of the current Competency Framework is conducted by the Council.

(9)   That the Council introduce consistent interview questions associated with each job description, suitable selection techniques and values-based interview techniques to ensure employees' are culture-fit, and occupational testing for recruitment to key and relevant roles. Cabinet also requests officers investigate appropriate ICT assessment techniques as part of the selection process, to ensure office based workforce retains a high level of ICT competency.

(10)   That the Council introduce an evaluation of recruitment and selection processes and performance indicators as part of the probationary period sign-off process, reporting on a quarterly basis to Corporate Management Team.

Additional recommendation proposed by Cabinet:

(11)   That all costs associated with the recommendations in the review are fully contained within the Human Resources budget or excess Directorate savings.

Reasons for recommendations

The recommendations of the review will enable the Council to improve and modernise recruitment in the Council to help the London Borough of Hillingdon remain a successful public sector employer.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject some or all of the Committee's recommendations.

Supporting Information

1. The aim of the Committee's review was to examine the Council's current recruitment policy and to investigate other ways the Council can improve and modernise recruitment.

2. The Terms of Reference of the review were as follows:

    I.   To understand how recruitment is currently undertaken, and learn more about current areas of success which could be more widely replicated;

    II.   To look at suggested models of best practice internally, in local and regional government, and in private and third sector employers, as appropriate to the aims of the review;

    III.   To consider, and recommend to Cabinet, any improvements to the Council's present approach.

Comments on Recommendations

Whilst the attached report from the Committee sets out the review in more detail, officers advise Cabinet that the Committee has made some positive recommendations to take forward and would support their implementation as set out below:

Recommendation 1: *That the Council develop an employment brand, agreed by the Leader of the Council as lead member for Communications, to ensure the organisation has a unique and attractive message that differentiates from other employers in the public, private and third sector.*

A joint project by Communications and Human Resources would support the development of an employer branding (within the overall Hillingdon brand) for consideration by the Leader of the Council, supported by brand specialists accessed through our recruitment services contract within existing budgets.

Recommendation 2: *That the Council develop and implement a social media recruitment strategy, not only focused on advertising vacancies, but also promoting and managing the Council's online reputation and employer brand.*

The Recruitment team would support Communications in expanding the existing social media activities across specific recruitment platforms, such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Glassdoor, so prospective applicants are made aware of the Council's successes. Targeted recruitment campaigns would then be used having developed an interested candidate audience.

Recommendation 3: *That the Council develop a culture of internal advocacy for the organisation among its staff, and reinforce this support through introducing a recruitment referral scheme.*

A recruitment referral scheme will initially be set up for hard-to-fill roles, such as planners and social workers. Research suggests that applicants referred by a colleague generally are more engaged with the organisation, as they have been told about the company's objectives, culture and way of working.

Recommendation 4: *That the Council develop a "Total Reward" approach to recruitment marketing, which involves not only advertising remuneration, but also the total worth of the recruitment package.*

The Recruitment team would not only indicate the salary range for vacancies but also advertise an overall value of the employment package, including employer pension contributions and additional holidays. This allows candidates to make meaningful comparisons to roles within the private sector that do not offer such positive benefits.

Recommendation 5: *That the Council introduce and develop a workforce succession plan for all key roles within the organisation.*

It is proposed that key posts, for example, the top three tiers of the organisation, as well as all 'hard-to-fill' roles, are identified and mapped centrally within Human Resources. A database will be kept for each of these roles, indicating where potential internal successors exist and the potential timescales and development required before the successor will be ready to assume the role should it become available. Good quality succession planning can significantly reduce recruitment costs while also raising motivation for employees who feel invested in.

Recommendation 6: *That the Council create talent pools of existing employees, an alumni network enabled by social media, and an "Apprenticeship Talent Pool" to ensure talented apprentices have opportunities to maintain employment within the Council.*

The recruitment system can be used to maintain 'talent pools' or candidates that have indicated an interest or applied for a role within the Council. Although they may not have been successful, they could be appointable and we could automatically send notification of similar jobs that may become vacant.

Similarly, as part of our social media recruitment strategy, officers would create a network of good performing employees who have moved on from the Council but may wish to return in the future. We would keep them updated of new vacancies.

Recommendation 7: *That a centralised Job Description Library is implemented and all managers involved in recruitment are re-trained on the new e-recruitment system, together with refresher training on selection methods and equalities.*

A potential system solution allowing HR to centralise all job descriptions has been identified and a proposal to implement within current budgets will be submitted to Members for approval.

Recommendation 8: *That a review of the current Competency Framework is conducted by the Council.*

The current competency framework is over a decade old and may no longer be fully appropriate to the way the Council works, given the rate of transformation over that period. Human Resources would conduct a review of the framework and how effective it is, as part of the recruitment process and make recommendations of any changes required.

Recommendation 9: *That the Council introduce consistent interview questions associated with each job description, suitable selection techniques and values-based interview techniques to ensure employees' culture-fit, and occupational testing for recruitment to key and relevant roles. Cabinet also requests officers investigate appropriate ICT assessment techniques as part of the selection process, to ensure office based workforce retains a high level of ICT competency.*

If Cabinet agree to implement a centralised Job Description Library (recommendation 7) then this would act as a depository for set interview questions based specifically upon the person specification set out for the role.

The recruitment team would also identify key selection tests that could be used to identify specific capabilities, such as literacy, numeracy, accuracy and ICT skills.

Recommendation 10: *That the Council introduce an evaluation of recruitment and selection processes and performance indicators as part of the probationary period sign-off process, reporting on a quarterly basis to CMT.*

The proof of successful recruitment is selecting candidates who go on to perform at the desired level or above. The probationary sign-off document would be redesigned to capture data on employee opinion of the recruitment and induction process, as well as manager assessment on the quality of the newly recruited team member. This information will be collated quarterly and presented together with other key performance indicators, such as average length to hire and cost per hire.

Financial Implications

The employer branding project would involve advice via the existing recruitment services contract. The scope and scale of the project would need to be finalised before an accurate estimate of the costs can be forecast.

It is envisaged that the investment would help to contain and potentially reduce the existing recruitment advertising costs incurred by the Council. It should be noted that the total budget for recruitment advertising is £150k. There are no other direct financial implications should Cabinet agree the Policy Overview Committee's recommendations, and it anticipated that the majority of proposals could be implemented within existing Council budgets. In the event that implementation required additional resources, a funding strategy will be developed to inform future Member decisions.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendations?

A positive, professional and efficient recruitment and selection experience for potential candidates considering work at the London Borough of Hillingdon. In turn, Hillingdon residents will benefit from high calibre officers, culture-fit and successfully delivering the Council's mission and services that put our residents first.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

Consultation with key witnesses formed part of the Committee's review.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report, confirming the financial implications noted above.

Legal

The issue of appointment of local authority officers has a firm statutory basis in the form of section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972 which provides that a local authority shall appoint such officers as it thinks necessary for the proper discharge of its functions. Any

appointment made should be on such reasonable terms and conditions, including conditions as to remuneration, as the authority thinks fit.

The Council has devised a set of Officer Employment Procedure Rules which can be found in Schedule F of the Constitution and the Borough Solicitor confirms that they will not require any amendment in the event that Cabinet accepts the recommendations of the Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee.

There is a section in the Policy Overview Committee's report on Equalities and Diversity which focuses on the Council's certification as a Disability Confident Employer. This is, of course, very important, but the Council also has a wider Equal Opportunities Policy in place which needs to be strictly observed in every recruitment process which takes place.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.