

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – 14th AND 18th JUNE 2018

INFORMATION BULLETIN – STAFF TURNOVER AND WELFARE

The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested a review of impact on staff turnover and welfare resulting from the move to Endeavour House and Stowmarket.

Please Note:

- The information below does not relate specifically to organisations who had relocated as this type of information was not available.
- Three-year information is not available at present owing to a change in software systems. We will be able to collect this data going forward.

TURNOVER

- **A comparison of staff turnover in Babergh and Mid Suffolk (BMSDC) to other sectors when a company / council relocated**
- **Did the move cause an increase in decisions from some staff to leave?**
- **A review of the historical figures for staff turnover over the last three years**
- **A breakdown of staff turnover for each department – not currently available**

Turnover Period	BMSDC	Public Sector	Private Sector
April 2016 – March 2017	10.5%	19.4%	22.5%
April 2017 – March 2018	22.5%	Not available	Not available

- 122 members of staff decided to leave BMSDC during the year 2017/18. 20 of those were employed on a fixed term contract as scanners in preparation for the move and contributed to the increase in turnover during 2017/18.
- From the remaining 102 leavers, **23** members of staff directly cited the move (to either Endeavour House or Stowmarket) as a reason for leaving. Employees are not required to provide a reason for leaving therefore this figure is indicative only.
- The Council has now seen a period of stability, following the move, with the final quarter of 2018 showing a **decrease** in staff leaving to **22**. This is comparable with the same period in 2016/17 which saw a total of 21 staff leave.

Indication of which departments were understaffed and vacancy timescales

- There are specific recruitment challenges in the Development Management team. 17 people have left in the last 18 months. This was driven by several factors including the move and changes to terms and conditions, retirements and people choosing to move onto promoted or alternate posts. There is also a recognised shortage of Planning Officers across the Suffolk system. We have had 4 or 5 recruitment campaigns in the last 18 months. We have taken on new staff as well as seen some internal progression. We are struggling to recruit, at Grades 5 and 6 with 6 vacancies at Grade 5 and 2 at Grade 6. This is a national pattern for this profession and we are currently considering whether a market forces supplement would assist with recruitment.

SICKNESS ABSENCE and STRESS RELATED ABSENCE

- Did the move cause more long-term sickness and stress related absence?

Two-year comparison of sickness absence

Sickness	Sickness days lost (total for 12 months)	Number of employees	Sickness days lost per employee	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)		Sickness over FTE (average days lost per FTE)
Apr 17 Mar-18	4,470	531	8.42	25/03/2018	463	9.65
Apr 16 Mar-17	3,920	543	7.22	25/03/2017	480	8.17

Reasons for Absence

	BMSDC Top 3 2016/17 Number of workers 543	BMSDC Top 3 2017/2018 Number of workers 531	HSE 2016-2017 Number of workers 1.3 million
1	Virus/Infection 537 days lost	Stress/Anxiety/Depression 933 days	Stress/Anxiety/Depression 13,475,000 days
2	Other 468 days	Musculoskeletal 823.5 days	Musculoskeletal 9,625,000 days

3	Stress/Anxiety Depression 375 days	Virus/Infection 439 days	Other 4,400,000 days
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Mental Health Sickness Absence

Mental health related sickness absence data for BMSDC over the past two years shows that we have seen a significant increase in this type of illness. We have undertaken a programme to raise awareness of mental health issues, support staff and more proactively manage trigger factors causing absence.

Employee Assistance Programme

Categories of counselling calls

Counselling Calls	1 Jan - 31 Dec 2016	1 Jan - 31 Dec 2017
Work Related Stress	11	21
Separation/Divorce	10	0
Anxiety	5	23
Service Enquiry	5	6
Disciplinary	2	9
Depression	1	15
Partner	1	6
Individual Event	1	0
Impact of Mental Health of Another	0	3
Bereavement	0	2
TOTAL	35	85

- The Council over the past year has been preparing for the move to a new headquarters with an extended period of uncertainty for staff. With a change as big as this, it is inevitable that it will cause some stress that people have differing levels of resilience against or decide that the change does not suit them. It is therefore not surprising that the level of leavers and sickness has increased, but this will be carefully monitored post move to ensure that both indicators move downwards again.

Action Planning

- There is a planned introduction of a Wellbeing Programme (base line assessments, analysis followed by team wide or individual interventions), and a Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) programme which was launched in January 2018.

- The Suffolk User Forum spoke to the Extended Leadership Team (ELT) in March 2018 on Mental Health in the Workplace. We have four Positive Mental Health Management workshops being held for ELT from April to July 2018. The first MHFA cohort is on 28/29 June which is when our co-sponsored Suffolk County Council (SCC) trainer will be able to deliver her first cohort following her train the trainer training.
- We have had a wide range of events available in collaboration with SCC for Mental Health Awareness Week and Dementia Awareness Week.
- There were Agile Working, Wellbeing and Resilience and Stress workshops delivered as part of the All Together Organisational Development Plan.
- Coaching conversations are built into 1:1 performance discussions. The organisation has an ongoing programme of Agile Working and Building Resilience training, and Business Partner relationships with managers identify early interventions and analyse HR trends to formulate preventative action. Developmental activity underway includes an improved induction programme, and a Workforce Strategy which includes skills analysis, succession planning, personalised CPD and links skills to the Joint Strategic Plan outcomes.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Committee also requested information relating to service area and grade split for sickness information and average length of service for leavers. At present we do not collect this data, but we will do so moving forward.

Anne Conway
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June 2018