

Minutes of **Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Recruitment and Staff Retention**

Meeting date **Wednesday, 6 September 2023**

Members present: Councillor Michelle Le Marinel (Chair), Councillor Ryan Towers (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Gordon France, Christine Heydon, Alex Hilton, Samantha Martin, Pauline McGovern, June Molyneaux and Kim Snape

Officers: Hollie Walmsley (Head of Human Resources), Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer) and Matthew Pawlyszyn (Democratic and Member Services Officer).

Apologies: Councillor Karen Derbyshire

1 Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Nominations were requested for the Appointment of a Chair. It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved (unanimously): That Councillor Michelle le Marinel be appointed Chair of this Task Group.

The Chair then requested nominations for Vice Chair. It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved (unanimously): That Councillor Ryan Towers be appointed Vice Chair of the Task Group.

2 Declarations of Any Interests

Councillors le Marinel, Towers, Hilton, France and Heydon members declared a personal interest insofar as they were members of a trade union.

3 Background Information - Recruitment and Staff Retention

Hollie Walmsley gave a presentation on the background information circulated with the agenda, which gave details of organisational turnover 2022-23 and year to date 2023-24. The data included statistical information by Directorate and by reason for leaving (voluntary resignation, end of fixed term contract, retirement/ERVS, or dismissal / agreed exit).

Hollie explained that the corporate Recruitment and Selection Policies had been jointly agreed with UNISON.

She stressed that the Council wanted to minimise turnover, however it was equally important to have a steady influx of new employees to maintain a healthy organisation. She indicated that as regards the year to date, she would expect the final end of year turnover to be lower (i.e.14-15%). In comparison with other Lancashire councils, Chorley usually comes in about the mid-range. Compared with the private sector, the public sector generally has a lower turnover. However there are exceptions e.g. NHS which has a very high turnover.

Arising from a query, Hollie explained that staff moving to other areas within the organisation does not count as turnover.

Members then moved to discussion of the purpose of the Task Group (Scoping the Review).

Resolved (unanimously): That the information be noted.

4 Scoping the Review

Members gave consideration to the scope of the review. Councillor Hilton stressed the importance of keeping the review focussed on strategic issues, which were in the remit of councillors, rather than operational issues, which were in the remit of officers. He also emphasized that employer-trade union relations were very good. The Task Group ought to be clear about its objectives for this piece of work.

It was suggested that it would be useful for the Task Group to have clarification on the role of councillors (i.e. making strategic policy decisions) and role of the Chief Executive (as Head of Paid Service) as defined by the Constitution. It was acknowledged that statistical information was useful in informing decision making.

A query was made about the distinction between recruitment and staff retention and whether either presented an issue. Hollie Walmsley indicated that at Chorley there was no issue as regards staff turnover (retention). She said that when high quality staff leave, often it is not personal, and if there are any concerns there are procedures in place to address this.

As regards recruitment, she indicated that there were challenges nationally and globally in the modern labour market. She informed members that the Council do have a strategic approach to workforce planning, which includes a reduction in spend on agency staff over the next 2 - 5 years. To meet this objective, a Recruitment and Talent Advisor had recently been appointed with Human Resources.

The Task Group discussed the scoping document and agreed upon the aims and objectives of the review, which included maintaining service delivery, identifying areas of risk and what can be improved. It was noted that the scoping document was a "living document" which could be amended during the course of the review.

To assist the review, members requested a number of policies and documents relating to recruitment and retention to be provided for consideration at the next meeting.

Resolved (unanimously): – That the scoping document be completed as agreed.

5 Dates of Forthcoming Meetings

Resolved (unanimously):-

That the schedule of dates for meetings of the Task Group be as follows:

- 3 October 2023, 6:30pm
- 19 October 2023, 6:30pm
- 30 November 2023, 6:30pm
- 14 December 2023, 6:30pm
- 17 January 2024, 6:30pm

Chair

Date