

Committee: FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Date: 30 July 2019

Report: HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Purpose of report

1. To provide Members with information on the following during the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019:

- recruitment activity and equal opportunities;
- training and development; and
- turnover and retention data.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the report be noted.

Strategic Planning Framework

3. The information and recommendation contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework, and specifically Corporate Action Plan Objective 34, to "Plan and manage all aspects of the Authority's business so as to make the most effective use of our resources".

Recruitment Activity

3. As part of the recruitment process, information is gathered to monitor the effectiveness and cost of our recruitment advertising for vacancies which are advertised externally. Candidates are asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. This form is confidential and is not provided to the shortlisting officers. It does, however, provide us with information about the demographic of our applicants and also information on where they saw the post advertised.

4. In the year from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 20 posts were advertised. This is slightly up on 2017/18 when 18 posts were advertised, but less than in 2016/17, when 36 vacancies were advertised.

5. Recruitment costs have reduced this year compared to 2017/2018. Just over half of these costs (£1,900) are attributable to advertising for two Development Management posts with adverts being placed in the appropriate professional publications in an attempt to attract applicants.

Year	Recruitment Costs
2015/2016	£947
2016/2017	£6,048

2017/2018	£11,610
2018/2019	£3,585

6. All vacancies are advertised on our website (the jobs webpage has a direct link from our home page) and via social media. We use specialist websites such as the Countryside Jobs Service, which are low cost (compared to advertisements in print) and very successful. We also post on the North Yorkshire County Council job-site and another public sector site called Sector1.co.uk . We do what we can to minimise costs whilst at the same time trying to ensure that the advert is distributed as widely as possible.

7. In 2018/2019, 21 vacancies were advertised. We had a total of 167 applications for all roles, 49 male and 118 female. 21 male and 65 female candidates were shortlisted, with 2 male and 19 female candidates being successful.

8. 51% of applicants saw the role advertised on our own website; 21% saw the advert on the Countryside Jobs Service website; 9% saw the advert on other websites; 14% of applicants responded to an internal advert or word of mouth.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

9. The monitoring of applications for the purpose of equal opportunities is a practice recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. This is an important tool to enable the Authority to ascertain at an early stage whether or not there appear to be any areas of its work from which certain disadvantaged groups are excluded. This monitoring provides evidence as to whether or not current recruitment practices are reaching the full spectrum of possible candidates and aims to avoid possible future problems of allegations of discriminatory practices.

10. It should be remembered that the completion of the monitoring form is not compulsory, and non-completion does not invalidate an application. Therefore, not all applicants complete the form fully, or at all. The evaluation of these forms do still, however, provide an insight into the demographic applying to the Authority and the methods they use to find jobs.

11. Of those who completed the monitoring form, 1% of applicants were under 18 years old (applying for apprenticeships), 20% in the age group 18-25, 22% in the age group 26-35, 12% in the age group 36-45, 27% in the age group 46-55, 18% in the age group 56-65 and less than 0.5% (1 applicant) over 65 years of age.

12. 5 applicants disclosed that they had a disability and all of these applicants were shortlisted. The Authority has a policy, which is consistent with Equality law, that all applicants who disclose a disability will be shortlisted *if* they meet the essential criteria for a particular job.

13. 111 applicants stated that they were of 'White – British' ethnicity, 11 stated that they were of 'White – English' ethnicity, 2 stated that they were of 'white-Scottish' ethnicity, 4 stated that they were of 'white-Welsh', 2 stated that they were of 'white-Irish', 9 stated they were of 'White - Other' ethnicity, 1 stated that they were of 'Black British' ethnicity and 3 that they were of 'other' ethnicity.

Training and Development

14. Training and Development continues to be important to the Authority and its staff. Training plans were determined for each directorate following the annual appraisals which were returned in April 2018.

15. It is the responsibility of the manager and staff member to agree their training and development needs for the forthcoming year and to apply to the Director to agree those requirements via the Directorate Training Plan.

16. The training budget for 2018/2019 was £30k which was broken down in the following way:

- 'Topslice'. £11k allocated to pay for corporate training, including £5k towards health and safety training.
- £19k allocated between the three directorates (proportionate to the number of staff in each directorate) for specific training relating to the work of that directorate and the individual officers.

17. In 2018/2019 HR facilitated corporate training courses including recruitment, assertiveness and Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Managing Safely training.

18. The Authority has access to a shared e-learning portal for all UK National Parks (ELMS). All 15 National Park Authorities are now using this system. One significant development in 2018/19 is that a NPA Staff Induction Module has been developed and added to ELMS which will work alongside an updated residential offering to provide a great general induction to the National Park family for all new starters. The residential programme is a course which can be hosted by National Parks on a rotation basis, and can be offered in the North and the South of the UK.

Turnover

19. Some degree of employee turnover is inevitable. It is also desirable. The influx of new people can generate new ideas and fresh ways of thinking. Turnover also gives the Authority the room to develop career progression of existing staff, either through promotion or through a sideways move. No organisation wants to stagnate.

20. However, if labour turnover is too high or the most valuable employees are leaving, this can damage organisational performance in a number of ways, including the financial cost of replacing leavers and the loss of corporate knowledge and skills.

21. There is no universally recognised point at which labour turnover starts to have a negative impact on an organisation. Although it has been suggested that a turnover level of between 5% and 10% is a healthy and realistic rate for most organisations

22. During the period from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, 11 employees left the Authority for the reasons detailed below:

Reason for Leaving	No. of Employees	% of Leavers
Voluntary resignation	9	82
End of probationary	1	9

period – non-confirmation of post		
End of Fixed Term Contract	1	9
TOTAL	11	100

23. The turnover rate for 2018/2019 was 7%.

To put this in context, the UK average employee turnover rate is approximately 15% a year.

Employee Retention

24. The length of service of the 10 people who left the Authority in 2017/2018 is shown below:

Length of Service	Number of leavers
<1 year	4
>1 year but < 2 years	3
>2 years but < 3 years	0
>3 years but < 4 years	0
>4 years but < 5 years	1
>5 years	3

Feedback from Leavers

25. Exit interviews are only requested when the employee has voluntarily resigned, and are not compulsory.

26. Of the 7 who voluntarily resigned, 3 provided feedback. The feedback was positive about working for the Authority and its policies and has not resulted in any actions.

Conclusions

27. Whilst recruitment monitoring indicates that in general the number of applicants with protected characteristics (disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) is proportionate to the Authority's local population within the National Park, some anomalies do occasionally occur. In 2018/19 it can be seen from paragraph 7 that a higher percentage of women than men (than usual!) applied for vacancies, and an even higher percentage of women were successful. This difference is more evident in 2018/19 than usual, and reflects the type of roles that were advertised. Shortlisting is done 'blind' with the panel unaware of the applicants protected characteristics.

28. The majority of applicants identify vacancies online via our website. However, there is still a market for traditional advertising methods, in particular for senior and specialist roles, especially if used alongside the new media.

29. Officers continue to benefit from a training budget which increased in 2018/19 for the first time for a number of years.

RECOMMENDATION

30. That the report be noted.

Hannah Clarke
Head of HR and Communications

17 June 2019