

Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: Current staffing issues (Standing Item)

Date: 23 February 2021

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1. Purpose of the Report

This is an information item highlighting to the Committee, any issues of particular interest that relate to the council's workforce.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this report.

3. Summary of current issues

3.1 The continuing "lockdown" regime means that many employees still work from home after almost a year. Currently leisure centres are closed to the public and most employees who normally work at those sites are in receipt of "furlough pay" made through the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS).

There is work underway to plan for an eventual return and consideration is being given to how this might be achieved and what the new workplace might look like and operate. It seems likely that there will be a much greater degree of flexibility which in turn should lead to potential benefits in operational efficiency and environmental impact with fewer people regularly travelling to work and to meetings

3.2 The "phase 2" senior management review has now been completed and the new structure implemented. Recruitment is underway to fill the remaining new Head of Service post (the Head of Financial Services and IT). Unrelated to the review, the Corporate Director of Environment, Communities and Leisure is due to leave the council at the end of March and similarly, a recruitment exercise has now commenced to fill this post. An interim arrangement will be applied in the short term.

3.3 The commencement of the council's placements through the supported internship scheme (operated in partnership with Notts County Council and West Notts College) has had to be paused due to the current "lockdown" arrangements but it is hoped that the three students, each with learning difficulties, will be able to begin their placements with us once we move out of "lockdown" again.

3.4 The council is taking an active part in the government's Kickstart scheme designed to help young people (up to the age of 25) who are in receipt of Universal Credit. The scheme offers meaningful paid work on a six-month contract. We have partnered with East Midlands Councils who are acting as an "Employer Gateway" to coordinate the placements. It is hoped that in early spring we will be able to offer two placements in our Waste Team and three in Parks and Street Care.