

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 24 2020

ESTABLISHMENT

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Bob Deed, Cllr Nikki Woollatt
Responsible Officer: Matthew Page, Group Manager for Human Resources

Reason for Report: To inform Members of the overall structure of the Council showing the management and deployment of officers. This report should be read in conjunction with the functions of individual officers highlighted in the Constitution.

RECOMMENDATION: The Scrutiny Committee NOTE the Establishment Report

Financial Implications: Financial risk will only occur where the structure of a service changes without adherence to allocated budgets.

Legal Implications: In accordance with article 14 of the Constitution.

Risk Assessment: If the establishment is not appropriately managed and reviewed then service delivery will be put at risk.

Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues highlighted in this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: This report highlights the Establishment figures and, as such, supports our aim to reduce costs without affecting service quality and continuity.

Impact on Climate Change: No climate change issues highlighted in this report.

1.0 Introduction/Background

1.1 Under Article 14 of the Mid Devon District Council Constitution, the Chief Executive is required to report to full Council on the manner in which the discharge of the Council's functions is coordinated, the number and grade of officers required and the organisation of officers (see Structure Charts).

2.0 Structure of the Council

2.1 There has been a good amount of progress made in providing practical solutions and expertise to support the Council with the delivering of its objectives. The creation of a new all staff consultative group, a new sickness absence policy (see section 4) and the development of the competency framework are some of the highlights from the past six months. There is a lot more to do however, particularly in improving the quality of line management (informal) interventions and delivering the all-important skills review (audit) this autumn.

3.0 Establishment

3.1 The FTE as at 1 December 2019 was 432.18 (including 12 Apprentices) compared to 419.92 (including 15 Apprentices) as at 1 December 2018. The

small rise in staff in Finance and Operations is partly down to vacancies being included in the establishment which have not been filled (so the establishment looks fuller than it actually is).

- 3.2 There was also the recruitment of some additional posts including the addition of a Group Manager in Revenues and Benefits. Some Operations departments have made a concentrated effort to reduce casual workers but have allocated more hours to the actual establishment to cover service delivery (eg Leisure).

| Directorate | FTE 2019 | FTE 2018 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Chief Executive | 4.86 | 4.86 |
| Corporate Affairs | 60.24 | 62.01 |
| Finance & Assets | 54.13 | 49.87 |
| Operations | 270.9 | 259.81 |
| Planning | 42.05 | 43.38 |
| | | |
| Total | 432.18 | 419.92 |

4.0 Sickiness Absence

- 4.1 Sickiness absence continues to be managed and support is provided to assist employees on long term sickness back to work. The current data below indicates a decrease of 0.4 days lost per FTE during the monitoring period compared to last year.

| Monitoring Period | Days Lost | Long Term Absence (15+ days) | Short Term Absence (less than 15 days) |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Dec 2018 – 30 Nov 2019 | 3564 (average 8.2 per employee) | 1628 (average 3.7 per employee) | 1936 (average 4.5 per employee) |
| 1 Dec 2017- 30 Nov 2018 | 3635 (average 8.6 per employee) | 1884 (average 4.4 per employee) | 1750 (average 4.1 per employee) |

- 4.2 Out of an average headcount of 524 members of staff, 150 had no recorded sickness absence during the 12 month monitoring period which equates to 28% of the workforce.

- 4.3 The table below provides a breakdown of both Long and Short Term absence by reason with the highest highlighted in red during the period 1 December 2018 to 30 November 2019.

| Reason | Long Term days | Short Term days | Total Days Lost |
|---|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Back & Neck | 103 | 111 | 214 |
| Chest & Respiratory | 151 | 96 | 247 |
| Eye, ear, nose & mouth | 55 | 123 | 178 |
| Genitourinary/gynaecological | 116 | 37 | 153 |
| Heart, Blood Pressure | 49 | 38 | 87 |
| Infection | 69 | 476 | 545 |
| Musculo-skeletal | 406 | 177 | 583 |
| Neurological | 0 | 98 | 98 |
| Pregnancy related | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| Skin disorder | 0 | 24 | 24 |
| Stomach, liver, Kidney | 63 | 380 | 443 |
| Stress, mental health | 616 | 302 | 918 |
| Industrial Injury | 0 | 9 | 9 |
| Other | 0 | 59 | 59 |
| Total | 1628 | 1936 | 3564 |
| Days Lost per employee (total days/FTE) | 3.77 | 4.48 | 8.25 |

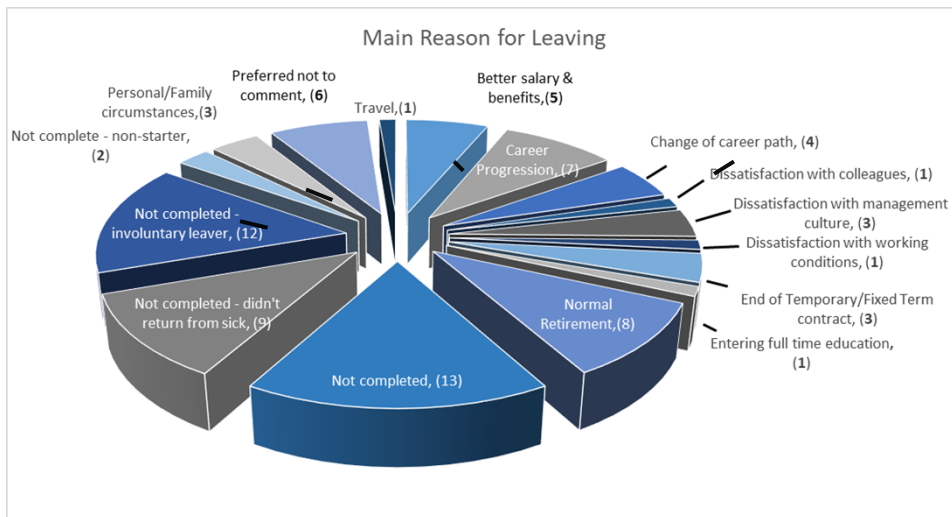
- 4.4 A new Sickness Absence Policy has been brought in from the 1 February 2020 to improve the quality of management interventions around sickness. Key changes include the requirement for employees to directly certify their sickness to their line manager on the first day of their sickness, a new guideline that we would not expect any employee to exceed 6 days of sickness in the rolling year and clearer advice on how to manage short term and long term sickness.

- 4.5 The statistics detailed above in 4.3 show the number of days lost due to short term sickness higher than the days lost due to long term sickness. This is unusual and suggests that we require a more robust approach to managing short term sickness. The policy looks to help improve this aspect of management performance.

5.0 Turnover

- 5.1 The annual turnover rate to December 2019 is 14.7%. During the 12 month monitoring period 77 employees left the council; 55 were resignations, 8 were retirements, 11 dismissals and 3 end of fixed term contract.

5.2 Turnover is higher than at the same stage of the reporting cycle last year (11.73%). This is in part down to restructuring carried out in different parts of the business but also to some difficult capability, conduct and sickness issues that have needed to be addressed.



6.0 Looking Forward

6.1 Leadership Team and the recently formed Corporate Management Team will continue to review both the make-up and content of our Establishments to ensure they are robust and market ready.

6.2 The successful implementation of the new Sickness Absence policy is vital to reducing short term absence and subsequent pressures eg agency spend. This will be a key area of focus for the Group Manager for HR and the management teams across the Council.

6.3 The carrying out of the skills review (audit) in October of this year will be a key milestone in terms of our workforce planning and us knowing the wider strengths and development opportunities in our employees. This will help further develop and focus our talent development.

6.4 The regular provision of workforce data (quarterly) will allow us to better understand our establishment performance eg turnover, vacancy rate, and compare this to our financial and operational performance eg agency spend.

Contact for more Information: Matthew Page, Group HR Manager (01884 234919 / mpage@middevon.gov.uk)

Circulation of the Report: Cllr N Woollatt, Cabinet, Leadership Team

List of Background Papers: Establishment Report 2019, Structure Charts