

CLIMATE CHANGE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday, 28th January 2025 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders in the Chair

Councillors Ashley Taylor (Vice-Chair), Cathy Jeffery, Emma Stevenson and Carol Wood.

Officers:- Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services) (from CLI28-24/25), Peter Wilmot (HR Business Partner), Laura Slater (Employee Engagement Officer), Thomas Dunne-Wragg (Scrutiny Officer) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting, observing, was Councillor Anne Clarke (Portfolio Holder for the Environment).

CLI23-24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Catherine Tite and Jeanne Raspin (Junior Portfolio Holder for the Environment).

CLI24-24/25 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to be considered.

CLI25-24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

CLI26-24/25 MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Emma Stevenson and seconded by Councillor Cathy Jeffery **RESOLVED** that the minutes of a Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 26th November 2024 be approved as a true and correct record.

CLI27-24/25 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

The Chair presented the List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered.

RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered in the private document be noted.

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CLI28-24/25 HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY - MONITORING UPDATE

The HR Business Partner presented the report to the Committee.

The Employee Health & Wellbeing Framework was originally agreed in 2017 and had been updated yearly. A copy of the 2024-27 Framework, which identified areas for improvement, was attached at Appendix 1. An infographic of the Framework 2024-27 was attached at Appendix 2.

As requested from a previous Committee meeting, the latest Sickness Absence Report (covering Quarter 2 2024/25) was attached at Appendix 3. It was noted this information was provided to the Safety Committee and Union / Employee Consultation Committee.

The Council had replaced the previous joint HR service (with North East Derbyshire District Council) and had its own combined HR and Payroll function from December 2022 – the health and wellbeing of staff had been a key priority.

The Strategic Director of Services entered the meeting.

In 2024 the Council had approved the creation of a new post, the Employee Engagement Officer, who would champion and drive forward key health and wellbeing initiatives and improve manager and employee awareness across health and wellbeing issues.

The Employee Engagement Officer was introduced to the Committee.

Work continued with HR & Payroll, Senior Leadership Team, Service Managers and employees to ensure steps were taken to achieve identified areas and promote the five main pillars of wellbeing - Physical, Mental, Social, Financial and Career.

The Council had undertaken a number of initiatives and actions, including on Mental Health awareness, the Vivup Rewards & Benefits, and free NHS health checks.

To a question on the number of Mental Health First Aiders, the Employee Engagement Officer confirmed there were currently 10 – one based at the Riverside Dept, the others spread out around the Council. The Committee were informed, when Derbyshire County Council (DCC) advertised upcoming training courses on Mental Health First Aider training, this was promoted on the Council's intranet (Eric).

To a question on the development of Neurodiversity Champions, the HR Business Partner explained the Council was aiming to increase awareness first rather than make use of Champions due to limited resources.

However, through awareness sessions and the implementation of policies, if a member of staff came forward who wished to become a Neurodiversity Champion, this could be arranged.

A Member stated it might still be useful to have a central Neurodiversity Champion who could raise awareness and signpost to external support / training.

The HR Business Partner informed, when it came to the Menopause Policy, support groups were found to be most affective. While a Neurodiversity Champion could still be an option, no individual had yet stepped forward. However, it was agreed this could still

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be researched.

A Member stated raising awareness remained a good starting point for this work.

To a question on if any Financial training included use of online banking (in light of the ongoing local bank branch closures taking place), the Employee Engagement Officer stated the next Financial advice session (externally run) would be taking place February 2025, but training on online banking could be looked into.

The Chair asked if the Council was providing any support to staff on the UK National Government's current aim of creating unitary authorities. The HR Business Partner informed recent staff surveys had taken place. Working groups would be established to respond to the survey and present the results to staff. On the reorganisation of local authorities, messages from the Council and Chief Executive had become regular.

A tab on Eric had been created to keep staff informed and it was theorised the reorganisation might impact staff recruitment, retention and morale. Demand for learning and development, however, might increase as staff attempt to insulate themselves from any adverse arrangements in the future.

RESOVLED that the report be noted.

Approved by Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources

CLI29-24/25 WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Work Programme 2024/25, attached at Appendix 1, to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme 2024/25 be noted.

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 10:25 hours and Members then met as a working party to continue their review work. The working party concluded at 11:32 hours.