

Northwards Housing – HR & Equality Sub-Committee Meeting

Hexagon Tower
Tuesday 30th January 2007 at 7.00pm

Chair: Martin McKevitt

Present: Fatima Adamjee Board Member
Ade Alao Board Member
Rachel Christie Board Member
Martin McKevitt Board Member
Sue Pemberton Co-optee

In Attendance: Steve Wood (SW) Director of Business Services
Lisa McBurnie (LMcB) Human Resources Manager
Tara Kelly (TK) E&D Officer

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions The meeting was confirmed as quorate.	
2	Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from June Hitchen and Robin Lawler.	
3	Declarations of Interest / Confidential Matters / Equality & Diversity Matters Arising There were no confidential matters or declarations of interest to note. Equality & Diversity matters were noted on specific reports.	
4	Minutes of Last Meeting held on 28th November 2006 With a change to paragraph 2 of Item 8 to note that trainees are not guaranteed a job. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.	
5	Matters Arising Item 16 - Training Sub-Committee requested that a revised Board training programme be issued as soon as practically possible. SW agreed that this would be done, although he reported on the reasons for the present delay which was due to the illness of the Governance Support Officer.	

<p>6</p>	<p>Probationary Period</p> <p>LMcB presented the report which had come back to Sub-Committee after review. Sub-Committee had previously asked for the probationary period for senior managers to be reviewed and this had now been changed to six months for senior managers. There were no other changes to the previous report.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted with pleasure that their comments had been taken on board by management and that the new procedure was much more realistic.</p> <p>Sub-Committee approved the Probationary Period Policy and agreed to recommend it to the Board for their approval.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Board: That the Board approve the Probationary Period Policy.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Organisational Health Indicators</p> <p>LMcB reported on progress against the range of Organisational Health Indicators and took Sub-Committee through some of the detail. Sub-Committee noted that progress on a number of the Key Best Value Indicators was extremely positive, although performance on the top 5% of earners being from black and minority ethnic communities or who were disable still remained at 0%.</p> <p>LMcB reported to Sub-Committee on the present rates of sickness absence and confirmed that the organisation was on track to achieve the target of 10 days, although it may be close.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted that the Performance Indicators on BME and disabled had both moved extremely positively in the year and Sub-Committee commended the work done to achieve such performance.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Retirement Policy</p> <p>LMcB report on new requirements under age legislation that had now been introduced which had brought in required changes around what choices were presented to individuals coming up to retirement age. As a result of this, a Retirement Policy had been prepared and this was considered by Sub-Committee.</p> <p>In answer to a question, SW explained the 85 year test which applied to actuary reduction on pension earned up to 31st March 2008. LMcB confirmed that the pension rules for retiring between the ages of 60 and 65 were set by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund and that the policy reflected these.</p>	

	<p>The Sub-Committee approved the policy and recommended to the Board that it be approved.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Board: That the Board approve the Retirement Policy.</p>	
9	<p>Occupational Health Comparison</p> <p>LMcB presented to Sub-Committee a report detailing the present use of Occupational Health Services. To date, the service provided by Manchester City Council had been used on an ad hoc basis and no formal Service Level Agreement was in place. As part of the Service Level Agreement Review, this had been looked at in some detail and the SLA being presented by MCC had been compared with a similar agreement with the North Manchester PCT.</p> <p>LMcB reported that the present service was extremely cost efficient whereby the organisation paid only for visits and this system seemed to meet the needs at the present time. The conclusion of the officers, therefore was that it didn't make sense to set up an SLA with a certain amount of fixed cost. In answer to a question, LMcB confirmed that there was an extremely good relationship with the present providers and that there would be a flexibility to buy in other services, including those from the PCT if the organisation so wished.</p> <p>Sub-Committee approved the report and the basis on which Occupational Health Services should be provided for the company.</p>	
10	<p>Absence Performance</p> <p>LMcB reported further on present absence performance and the good news that if the organisation continued on the current trend, it would exit the year on 9 days ahead of the target of 10. This would be a reduction of 2 days against MCC performance in the previous year.</p> <p>A lot of work was going on working with managers and the reports had proved to be extremely helpful in establishing trends around long term sickness.</p> <p>AA asked about the use by managers of the statistics and it was confirmed that partnership working considering the welfare of employees had made a real difference.</p> <p>Sub-Committee commented on the good progress and received the report.</p>	

11	<p>Progression Towards Quality Standards Level 2</p> <p>TK presented a report detailing what had been achieved so far and what was being done in order to achieve Level 2 status. An action plan was being developed for 2007/08 and two equality impact assessments had now been completed.</p> <p>TL reported that she was meeting with all line managers in March and that certain areas of weakness, including monitoring systems and work with contractors were being looked at. There was a meeting to be held with the evaluator in the following week to ascertain how close Northwards was to achieving Level 2.</p> <p>Sub-Committee discussed the report and AA asked how close Northwards was to achieving Level 3. With this in mind, MM asked if a paper could be presented to the next Sub-Committee on how the organisation moved to Level 3.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the progress and the report.</p>	
12	<p>Changes to Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE)</p> <p>TK reported on changes to the present KLOE on Diversity, which now looked at a number of additional factors and put far more emphasis on reflecting local need and knowing who the customers were. It was clear that consultation was a key issue.</p> <p>AA commented on the use of the Equality Action Plan and how far this was actually incorporated in Team Improvement Plans and being actioned. The officers agreed that this required continual review.</p> <p>Sub-Committee received the report.</p>	
13	<p>Training</p> <p>There were no training items noted from items that had been discussed at the meeting.</p>	
14	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no further business for Sub-Committee to consider.</p>	
15	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>MM reported that Resource & Audit Sub-Committee had requested that as a one-off, the start of the next HR & Equality Sub-Committee meeting be delayed to 7.30pm and this was agreed by Sub-Committee.</p>	

	<p>Therefore, the next meeting of the Sub-Committee would take place on Tuesday 27th February 2007 at 7.30pm.</p> <p>With thanks to everyone for attending, the Chair brought the meeting to a close at 7.55pm.</p>	