

Northwards Housing – HR & Equality Sub-Committee Meeting

Hexagon Tower
Tuesday 23rd September 2008 at 7.00pm

Chair: Martin McKevitt

Present: Martin McKevitt (MM) Board Member
Joan Fitzgerald (JF) Board Member

In Attendance: Steve Wood (SW) Director of Business Services
Tara Kelly (TK) Equality and Diversity Officer
Lisa McBurnie (LMcB) Head of HR

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions The meeting was not quorate. It was agreed to meet noting the various items and deferring those for approval.	
2	Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from June Hitchen, Fatima Adamjee, Rachel Christie and the Chief Executive.	
3	Declaration of Interests / Confidential Matters / Equality & Diversity Matters Arising There were no declarations of interest. Item 12 was a confidential report. E&D issues to be picked up under the relevant agenda items.	
4	Minutes of the Last Meeting – 24th June 2008 The minutes and confidential minutes of the last meeting held on 24th June were noted and would be brought back for approval at the next meeting.	
5	Matters Arising There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.	
6	Single Equality Scheme TK gave a verbal update on progress with the Single Equality Scheme. This had been passed by the Board at their meeting on	

	<p>9th September and was now being worked on by Publications and Design. TK agreed to bring back a draft document prior to publication.</p>	TK
7	<p>Equality and Diversity Action Plan</p> <p>TK gave Sub-Committee the first quarterly update on progress with the Equality and Diversity Action Plan. 9 actions had been completed in their entirety and 20 were ongoing out of a total of 47; 61.7% progress to date.</p> <p>MM asked whether there were any key areas that were behind target and TK talked through the outstanding items and how these were being addressed.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report.</p>	
8	<p>Absence Performance</p> <p>SW presented the absence report for August and ran through a couple of the key features on current performance. The current trend was for a figure of 10.2 days for the year, higher than target (9.5 days).</p> <p>LMcB explained the ongoing work providing assistance to Managers in identifying supportive and reasonable adjustments for employees as well as reinforcing messages within teams about individual responsibility.</p> <p>Following a request from Sub-Committee, it was agreed to provide a list of long term absence cases on a periodic basis as part of the report.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report.</p>	SW
9	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>SW gave a verbal report on the Health and Safety Team which had now been created and explained some of the work the team were already getting involved in as well as the preparation of an action plan being put together by Alan Lawrenson, Head of Health and Safety. It was agreed that AL should be invited to a future meeting.</p> <p>LMcB reported on the new working relationships with the Unions through the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) and advised Sub-Committee that reporting arrangements around Health and Safety were now being put in place.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report.</p>	SW

<p>10</p>	<p>Consultation on Greater Manchester Future Transport</p> <p>This report, which was for approval, was deferred.</p> <p>Sub-Committee asked about the effect on Northwards of the proposals and SW outlined some of the implications for the organisation as both a service provider and as an employer.</p> <p>Sub-Committee would come back to this discussion.</p>	<p>RL</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Language Review</p> <p>TK presented a report which had already been through Neighbourhood & Quality Services Sub-Committee advising the outcome of the Language Review.</p> <p>The original languages for use on documents had been set following review of the 2001 Census. Now, however, the languages could be based upon feedback from customers and information about what translations were being done. This review had indicated that there were 40 languages being used in North Manchester.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report and the changes in the languages being used in publications, recognising that Northwards would work to assist any of its customers with any language should the need arise.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p>Employee Satisfaction Survey</p> <p>See Confidential Minute</p>	
<p>13</p>	<p>Workforce Profile</p> <p>LMcB presented a report based on work done following the results of the Fair and Equal Survey for customers which had allowed comparison of the organisation's workforce with its customers. The report was a summary of the detailed finding split by team.</p> <p>The comparison had been done in four areas. On ethnicity and gender the organisation was broadly similar to its customer base. And on age, the only real difference was a lower than average population of over 65's which was as expected. Work was being done in this area to set targets for retention beyond the age of 65 to ensure that where appropriate people were given the opportunity to remain in employment.</p> <p>The biggest piece of work revolved around disability where in comparison to 40% of tenants being disabled, the workforce</p>	

	<p>profile was 6%. A number of pieces of work were now being done in looking at the revision of policies and training for disability in the workplace to change attitudes. Other initiatives included some work on taster programmes with Remploy.</p> <p>LMcB advised Sub-Committee that better reporting was coming in the form of quarterly monitoring of recruitment, as well as retention, to continue the focus on improvement.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report.</p>	
14	<p>Reward and Recognition Policy</p> <p>LMcB presented a Reward and Recognition Policy for consideration by Sub-Committee. This was merely a formalisation of things that were already being done and the intention was to build on the initiatives through 2009.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the approach being taken which was felt to be really good as the personal touch was extremely important.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the policy.</p>	
15	<p>Investors in People</p> <p>LMcB reported the application for Investors in People was not on track due to workload capacity. Through October it was hoped to have updated the status and set out a clear plan of what the organisation intended to do. The Chamber of Commerce were being invited to assist in the preparation work.</p> <p>MM asked about likely timescales and LMcB responded that the probable date was March 2009, although this needed confirmation.</p> <p>Sub-Committee noted the report.</p>	
16	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no further business for Sub-Committee to consider.</p> <p>With thanks, the Chair closed the meeting at 8.15pm.</p>	
17	<p>Date of Next Meeting - Tuesday 28th October at 7.00 pm</p>	