

**Agenda Item No:**

**Report No:**

**Report Title: HR Benchmarking**

**Report To: Employment Committee**

**Date: 15 February 2010**

**Ward(s) Affected: All**

**Report By: Head of Business Services**

**Contact Officer(s): John Clark, Head of Business Services**

**Purpose of Report:**

To report the results of a recent benchmarking exercise on HR activities in the Council.

**Officers Recommendation(s):**

1 That you note the report.

**Information**

1 CIPFA run a series of benchmarking clubs for authorities and in June 2009 we took part in the HR benchmarking club for the first time. 34 district or borough councils across the country took part and our results have been compared with theirs. The results are summarised below.

- We have fewer HR staff per 1000 employees (9.35) than the mean (10.96) or the median (9.96)
- Our HR cost per employee (£272) is lower than the mean (£326) and the median (£301)
- Our cost per HR employee (£29k) is lower than the mean (£30k) and the same as the median.
- Our percentage of part time staff is the same as the mean for all districts
- Our sickness absence rate is worse than the mean for all districts
- We have fewer staff dealing with Health and Safety than the mean (1.1 per 1000 vs. 1.4)
- The Health and Safety cost per employee is lower than the mean (£34.8 vs. £49.7)
- We spend less on Occupational Health and Welfare than the mean (£23.9 per employee vs. £40.7)
- We are above average in employing disabled staff, but below in employing them at a senior level

- We are below average in employing women at a senior level
  - We are below average in the percentage of ethnic minority staff employed, but are one of only a few whose staff composition matches or exceeds the composition of the local workforce.
  - The age structure of our workforce is much more skewed towards older staff than other authorities
  - Staff turnover is lower than the mean (8% vs. 13.6%)
- 2** For the second section of the exercise CIPFA identified a number of areas of activity with a series of what it described as “modern practices” against each one. We were asked to identify which of those modern practices we currently carried out. For example, in the section on employee benefits, whether we have childcare vouchers (yes) or a workplace nursery (no). In the 12 areas identified we were average or better than average in 9 of them in providing or working to these “modern practices”
- 3** Managers who have significant contact with HR on staffing matters for their dept/section were asked for their views on the service provided by HR staff. 38 managers were approached for their views and 19 responded. The managers were asked to rank the importance of various HR functions and their satisfaction with the service provided. 19 is fairly small sample but the results were:

<b>Services (defined by CIPFA)</b>	<b>Importance</b>	<b>Performance</b>
Advice and guidance on policies/procedures	High	Good
Discipline, grievance and ET cases	High	Good
Recruiting the right people	High	Good
Managing your staff's performance	Medium	Good
Setting the right grades and pay	High	Adequate
Managing organisational change	Medium	Adequate
Meeting legal obligations in employment	High	Good
Ensuring your staff work in a safe and healthy environment	High	Adequate
Ensuring you and your staff are appropriately trained	High	Good
Wellbeing and work/life balance for staff	Medium	Adequate
Achieving a positive equality/diversity environment	Medium	Good
Sickness absence monitoring and advice	Medium	Good

**4** The HR staff were also rated:

<b>Services (defined by CIPFA)</b>	<b>Importance</b>	<b>Performance</b>
Helpfulness	High	Excellent
Easy to contact	High	Good
Unbiased and Objective	High	Good
Reliable, you can trust them	High	Good
Knowledge of key policies and procedure	High	Good
Understanding your requirements	High	Good
Speed of response	High	Good
Clarity of information provided	High	Good
<b>Overall rating of HR</b>		<b>Good</b>

**5** Overall the results are very good and show that HR activities in the council are well run and appreciated. The detailed results will be used to set improvement targets in next year's service plan.