

Audit Improvement Plan Activities



DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE

Audit Improvement Plan Activities

KEY FOR RECOMMENDATION PRIORITY

Priority 1	- Findings that are fundamental to the integrity of the Service's business processes and require the immediate attention of management.
Priority 2	- Important findings that need to be resolved by management.
Priority 3	- Findings that require attention.

Secondary Contracts – Director – People Services

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
<p>1. Monitoring of Secondary Contracts</p> <p>Whilst speaking with our sampled line managers, none of them were aware of any formal reporting or monitoring requirements for secondary contracts. There were instances of line managers performing local monthly wellbeing check-ins with employees, however, also instances of no monitoring.</p> <p>There is an expectation that the individual with the secondary contract will manage their hours and ensure safe working, with employees required to sign a declaration when applying for a secondary contract, confirming they are aware of their responsibilities with monitoring their working hours and rest breaks. However, it would be beneficial for the Service to introduce more formal monitoring requirements, to</p>	3	<p>The observations and associated recommendations of the audit are accepted and there is a recognition that monitoring arrangements would benefit from further strengthening, including the introduction of wellbeing support. In relation to the suggestions: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly wellbeing calls with their line managers – the Area Leadership Team are planning to introduce quarterly on-call contract reviews. Whilst not monthly, this new arrangement will ensure that a structured 	<p>Recommendation/Corrective Action: To introduce more formal monitoring requirements, to provide assurance that working time regulations are being adhered to.</p> <p>Responsibility: Director - Community Safety</p> <p>Target Date: 31 March 2024</p>	As part of the response restructure, we will strengthen current procedural guidance regarding secondary employment requirements, and we will embed a quarterly working time directive compliance check.	On Track

<p>provide assurance that working time regulations are being adhered to.</p> <p>Whilst determining the exact means of monitoring resides with the Service, some ideas which were discussed during the course of the review are provided below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring those with secondary contracts to have monthly wellbeing calls with their line managers, rather than the current annual 1:1 requirement. • Requiring the substantive line manager to have a periodic discussion with the secondary line manager, to enable considerations of hours worked. • Introduction of central monitoring of secondary contracts, such as checks on timesheets and/or rotating systems. <p>Any changes to current arrangements should be reflected within the Service's procedure document, which is currently due for review, and also formally rolled out to applicable employees and line managers.</p>	<p>meeting is set in place that will include a wellbeing check.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line manager discussions – the Area Leadership Team can also ensure that line manager discussions take place following the quarterly meetings. • Introduction of central monitoring of secondary contracts – the procedure is owned by Response Support who will ensure that monitoring arrangements are strengthened, to include audits of working hours. 			
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Grievance Arrangements – Director – People Services

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
<p>1. Training and Overall Awareness During our audit we spoke with 12 employees (who are also line managers) and found that the majority of these felt confident with raising and managing a grievance. However, some did raise that there is a lack of formal training around grievance arrangements and raising a grievance. Staff are provided with initial induction training which briefly touches on the subject, however there is nothing in depth specifically around grievances. Line managers are not provided with additional training when moving into a role of seniority.</p> <p>There were also some minor inconsistencies with regards to the monitoring of grievances across line managers which could be as a result of lack of training. We are aware of ongoing work from the Area Manager - Response to create guidelines for different roles. We would suggest that grievance awareness is incorporated into these. Additionally, only two of the sampled members of staff were aware of the poster to signpost the raising of grievances, therefore this may require a further rollout.</p>	2	<p>The observations and associated recommendations of the audit are accepted. In response to the action highlighted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are in the process of reviewing our grievance procedure and will incorporate the Training and Awareness recommendations of this audit along with any recommendations from our Independent Review. • We are already in the process of strengthening the arrangements for how the Service manages performance issues such as grievance and discipline and this includes the need to refresh our management training and awareness. This will be achieved through refreshing the HR modules of our Leadership Development Programme and ensuring our Role Induction process covers this area in more detail. HR Business Partners already provide support 	<p>Recommendation/Corrective Action: The Service should introduce further training and awareness over grievance processes, both for employees raising grievances and managers handling them.</p> <p>Responsibility: Director – People Services</p> <p>Target Date: 31 March 2024</p>	<p>A revised Leadership Development Programme has been drafted, which includes the re-introduction of HR management modules that cover areas such as this. We are planning to launch the new Leadership Development Programme in April.</p>	Complete

		<p>to line managers and assist with monitoring, but we will ensure Managers are clear of the grievance handling processes, particularly when a manager is new in role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workplace concerns poster is displayed at every workplace and is on CONNECT, we will however publicise this further to ensure increased awareness. In addition to this we are developing a portal which will increase the accessibility so that staff can raise concerns without the need to read through a more detailed procedure. The portal will be launched in September. 			
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Payroll – Director – People Services

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
<p>1. Payroll Policy / Procedure Documentation</p> <p>When reviewing the payroll process within the Service, it was found that there is no formal documented policy or procedure for activities undertaken by the payroll function. Whilst we are comfortable that employees receive adequate information within their contracts in regard to their payroll terms and conditions, it is recommended that it would be beneficial to have a documented procedure and/or policy implemented within the Service to ensure consistency is maintained during any unexpected absences from the payroll team. This would also support the training of new starters.</p> <p>As no issues with payroll processes have been found during this review, and supporting documentation such as the payroll schedule are in place, it has been deemed most appropriate to place this as a Priority 3 action.</p>	3	<p>The observations and associated recommendation of the audit are accepted and there is a recognition that the payroll function would benefit from a document which outlines the standard processes in place within the payroll team's responsibilities. A payroll process document will be produced by the end of December 2023.</p>	<p>Recommendation/Corrective Action:</p> <p>The Service should develop a document which outlines the standard processes in place within the payroll team's responsibilities. This document should incorporate the payroll schedule.</p> <p>Responsibility:</p> <p>Employee Relations Officer</p> <p>Target Date:</p> <p>31 March 2024</p>	<p>A new payroll guide is being developed and is on track to be delivered by the target date.</p>	On Track

Short Term Absence Management – Director – People Services

Main Recommendations	Priority	Management Response	Implementation Plan	Management Update	Progress
1. Training Whilst all of the sampled line managers stated that they were comfortable with their roles and responsibilities for short term absence management, none had received any recent training. They had either never received training or received training a number of years ago. All felt it would be beneficial to have some form of refresher training, to ensure there was consistency with how the instances of absence are being dealt with. There were instances of sampled staff members referring to a previous 2-day training session they had undertaken covering all aspects of performance management, including short term absence and Return To Work (RTW) processes, however this is no longer provided.	3	Our Leadership Development Programme is being refreshed and will include updated HR Management Modules that provide training and guidance on managing absence.	Recommendation/Corrective Action: To implement periodic line manager refresher training/coaching sessions around absence management. Responsibility: Health and Wellbeing Manager Target Date: 31 March 2024	This has been picked up in the new Leadership Development Programme	Complete
1. Absence Forms (RTW) During our sampling of line managers and HRBPs, comments were received that there were instances of the RTW form not being used consistently and correctly. It was also stated that Human Resources Business Partners were seeing forms with N/A or uncompleted answers to some key questions. Currently there are sections to complete within the RTW forms, once an individual has hit a trigger,	3	The Health and Wellbeing Manager will review the RTW forms to ensure clarity and better understanding. HRBP's will continue to provide support to managers to ensure forms are completed appropriately.	Recommendation/Corrective Action: To carry out a review of the RTW forms to ensure that they are clear and provide support to the line manager. Responsibility: Health and Wellbeing Manager Target Date: 31 March 2024	A review of the RTW forms has been completed and were assessed to be clear and supportive.	Complete

<p>relating to targets. The sampled HRBP's have reported that these are not always being completed.</p> <p>For the RTWs where a trigger has been hit, there should be support based targets, whereby absence related targets are included (for example, no absences within six months), however there are instances of these coming back with N/A or blank, meaning the HRBP is having to coach the line manager in how to effectively complete the document. Suggestions were also made to split the questions to ensure they are more specific and therefore answered accurately, such as actions being set, and wellbeing support offered.</p> <p>It was also noted that the wording used for target setting was not consistent throughout, therefore it would be beneficial to have a list of appropriate targets incorporated into the RTW form to enable consistency.</p> <p>RTW forms should be included in the absence management training referenced within Finding 1, to ensure all line managers are completing them fully and consistency.</p>				
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