Human Resources
Evolving Role of HR
South Lanarkshire Council

South Lanarkshire Council reviewed its HR service to ensure that it was providing the most efficient and relevant service possible. In response to the review, the council introduced a number of key changes to service delivery including a centralised model with five devolved personnel departments. As a result, sickness absence for non-teachers in South Lanarkshire is lower than the Scottish average of 10.63 at 10.29 and is reducing at a faster pace.

Background

HR is key to the successful implementation of an ongoing change agenda and the modernisation of the Council. HR policies and practices will help embed the desired values in staff as well as freeing up valuable time for the HR Team to focus on those activities where they can make the greatest difference to the bottom line, and therefore demonstrate value for money.

Key Activities

The HR service was reviewed with the key outcome being a phased reduction in staffing numbers and change of structure. This resulted in a centralised model with five devolved personnel departments:

- Employee relations team
- Resourcing team
- Transactional Centre
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Learning & Development
- HR Business Partners

Additional changes include:

Agile Working

- New structure, new workplace
- Minimal allocated desks
- IT allocation to allow flexible working

Maximising attendance

- Significant amount of effort in previous structure and lot of one to one interactions
- HRMS personnel/payroll system automation linked to absence

- Direct input absence start and end dates and other absence information by managers
- Automatic email alerts and reminders for managers to take action – e.g. refer to physio, hold Attendance Support Meetings, counselling
- Escalation to managers' line managers if action not taken/recorded
- Improved absence reporting on self service
- Continued case management and advice for long term and complex absence cases

Employee Relations

- Personnel employees undertake disciplinary investigations
- Support managers at disciplinary hearings as required
- Grievance and Dignity at Work support
- Appeals and tribunals

Digital changes

- Move to increased self-service for managers
- Online guidance - intranet
- System changes for Maximising Attendance
- Exploring online forms
- People Connect – employee self service
- Accident reporting
- Overtime processing

Benefits and Impact

- Sickness absence for non-teachers in South Lanarkshire is lower than the Scottish average of 10.63 at 10.29 and is reducing at a faster pace.
- The review has resulted in positive feedback from teams.