

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

12 September 2016

People Strategy, 2014 to 2019 (refreshed 2016)

<p><u>Issue/ Purpose:</u></p> <p>The refreshed People Strategy has been designed to provide medium to long term direction of travel for the people related aspects of the Agency and complement the Corporate Plan, which was similarly refreshed in early 2016.</p>
<p><u>Summary:</u></p> <p>The People Strategy recognises that highly skilled and motivated people are essential to the success of the Agency and so we aim to be:-</p> <p>An employer of choice, with a complement of people and a sustainable, future pipeline to meet the needs of an expert, innovative organisation and adapt to changing requirements.</p> <p>The document has been structured to reflect the potential employee lifecycle, with each section identifying the significance of the topic, the Agency's current position in relation to this and high level related plans for the future.</p>
<p><u>Resource implications:</u></p> <p>No additional resources specific to the People Strategy itself with any additional resourcing required in relation to specific plans subject to business case approval</p>
<p><u>EU Referendum implications:</u></p> <p>Not specifically at this time, although potential implications in relation to resourcing and future roles are being monitored.</p>
<p><u>Timings:</u></p> <p>Strategy intended to extend to 2019, but note that there are related annual business plans and ongoing review and refresh as required.</p>
<p><u>Action required by Board:</u></p> <p>For note and any comment welcome.</p>
<p><u>Links:</u></p> <p>Corporate Plan Annual Business Plans (Agency and Division/Centre)</p>
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<p><u>Which of the five themes in the Corporate Plan 2013/2018 does the paper support?</u></p> <p>Achieving excellence – A well run, efficient and effective organisation.</p>

If relevant, which Business Plan strategic activity does it support?

Organisational Excellence

CET Sponsor: Vanessa Birchall-Scott

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency **People Strategy – 2014-2019 (refreshed 2016)**

1. Introduction and Summary

The People Strategy has been designed to provide medium to long term direction of travel for the people related aspects of the agency and complement the Corporate Plan (2014 to 2018), which was similarly refreshed in early 2016.

The Corporate Plan and all related strategies fit within the agency setting of a challenging and unique public health role and a set of principles that guide our behaviours, as defined below:

Our vision: We protect and improve the health of millions of people every day through the effective regulation of medicines and medical devices, underpinned by science and research.

Our values: Innovative, Proactive, Impartial, Evidence-based, Open, Trustworthy.

The People Strategy takes account of the context within which we operate, recognising the complexities of being an international trading organisation operating in a competitive environment, which is also an executive agency of the Department of Health and part of the Civil Service, public health and broader public sector.

In the shorter term the People Strategy aims to support the successful delivery of the agency Annual Business Plan while ensuring that the people related elements of the plan fit with and support progress towards the medium to longer term Corporate Plan.

As with all strategies, it is important to have a clear aim in mind and to be able to reference this when making what should be contributory decisions and taking related action. This People Strategy recognises that highly skilled and motivated people are essential to the success of the agency and so we aim to be:-

An employer of choice, with a complement of people and a sustainable, future pipeline to meet the needs of an expert, innovative organisation and adapt to changing requirements.

This document has been structured to reflect the potential employee lifecycle:

1. Skills planning and role/team design;
2. Attracting and resourcing;
3. Inducting and developing;
4. Leading and managing (including performance);
5. Rewarding (financial and non financial);
6. Engaging and retaining;
7. Supporting health and wellbeing;
8. Succession planning; career development and talent management;
9. Use of workforce informatics to support decision making;
10. A partnership approach with staff and their representatives;
11. Effective management of change;

12. Linking with external partners on issues of mutual benefit;
13. Valuing diversity;
14. Policies/processes which are fit for purpose and the future;
15. A capable, professional Human Resources team

The content of the rest of this document aligns with these broad headings.

1. Skills planning and role/team design

Significance

A good match between individual, team, division and agency requirements and actual workforce profiles in terms of roles, skills and organisation is fundamental to both current and future agency performance.

Assessing internal and external supply is a key part of the workforce planning equation, seeking to match supply related intelligence with the workforce requirements of the Corporate Plan. Whilst such planning is not an exact science, it is essential to ensure that the agency is well equipped to anticipate the future.

Current Position

As a baseline to longer term workforce planning, there needs to be a clear understanding of the current workforce profile and insight into the collective (and sub-categorised) size, skills, seniority, longevity, potential, motivations and intentions of staff. This enables us to assess internal supply of peoples/skills in the short and longer term and include alongside what needs to be an increasing awareness of the opportunities and challenges of sourcing people/skills from outside the agency.

The Corporate Plan outlines agency priorities and these need to be translated into specific roles/skills requirements and provide a blueprint for people related action, such as resourcing and development; some of which may have a significant lead-in time.

Plans

Through use of a new HR Information System (HRIS) being implemented in 2016, we will seek to ensure that we have robust, individual and collective information about our current workforce, which can be analysed to assess likely future internal supply.

The HR Division will work closely with Directors and colleagues both inside and outside the agency to build a picture of potential external workforce supply and different ways of sourcing and securing this.

All Divisions will have outline workforce plans which reference both demand and supply for roles which require scarce skills and/or are hard to recruit to for other reasons, by the end of 2016/17. These will be developed further in terms of breadth of roles included and detailed analysis, projections and related action planning in 2017/18.

Divisional workforce plans will contribute towards an agency wide workforce plan and this will be maintained and feed into the Talent Management framework and resourcing and

development plans. The workforce plans will include the apprenticeship initiative which has a government target of 2.3% of headcount per annum, alongside an increasing range of other temporary and permanent resourcing opportunities.

In terms of role and team design, in the longer term we will ensure there is the right capability mix between general management abilities, core skills, specialist knowledge, agility, an ability to bring original thinking and to build strong networks in the outside world; using these connections to find and spread system innovation. There is also a need to further develop joined-up working on cross-cutting activities and structures and processes within the agency to engender matrix working.

In addition to planning and sourcing the skills, knowledge and experience required, there will be an ongoing need to pursue a culture where people accept that changes to roles/teams and an increase in flexibility in order to anticipate internal and external environmental change, is the norm.

2. Attracting and resourcing

Significance

The agency is already an attractive place to work providing opportunities for interesting and challenging work, but as the economy strengthens and the competition between employers for the most able and talented staff increases, the agency's continued success is dependent on developing more innovative means to attract and retain an increasingly mobile workforce.

There are already hard to recruit to roles which present a current risk to the agency and a recognition that these could increase in number directly or indirectly, adversely impacting on agency performance.

Current Position

Significant efforts continue to be made to strengthen and maintain the agency's employer brand, through use of advertising and social media, promotional campaigns, careers events and opportunities linked to current staff networks and attendance at meetings and conferences.

The agency promotes the career development of its staff and there is a focus on both improving and publicising monetary and non-monetary employee benefits. This emphasis on total reward will continue.

Vacancies are advertised in a variety of media, including Civil Service and NHS Jobs, supplemented by LinkedIn, Twitter and professional media. Tailored targeting and value for money decisions on publicity have been focussing on hard to recruit to roles, but are increasingly being used across the agency as any vacancies arise.

Plans

Resourcing activity will be prioritised to address short term recruiting challenges, but increasingly during 2016/17, we will focus on more diverse and longer term approaches to attracting and resourcing. Resourcing initiatives will include apprenticeships and through strengthened relationships with partner organisations, such as Universities, arrangements to share in the development and deployment of scarcer skills.

In recognition of the likelihood of both scarce skills and variable demand, the agency will also look to employ/engage on a more flexible basis where appropriate, thereby sourcing expertise for specific periods when required.

The first module of the new HRIS will substitute for parts of the current Civil Service Jobs system and provide an e-recruitment system in mid 2016 which will deliver a more positive applicant and recruiting manager experience and simple and efficient processes, to support an increasing focus on quality and outcomes.

Recruiting managers have a critical role to play in the selection of staff and as such there will be an increasing emphasis on developing assessment skills and the use of a broader range of assessment tools in 2016/17 and ongoing.

Longer term resourcing initiatives will link to workforce planning and talent management and development to achieve the agency's aim to be an employer of choice by strengthening the agency employer brand and resourcing opportunities. Making the right resourcing decisions for the future is critical to business success and will be prioritised accordingly.

3. Inducting and developing

Significance

There is a clear business need to develop staff who are high performing, adaptable and take personal responsibility and are able to operate in a fast moving environment which seeks to provide high quality, value for money outcomes in line with the agency vision and values.

We recognise the importance of supporting new staff to quickly become effective in their new roles, able to access learning and development activities which support them with ongoing development in their roles, as well as to potentially develop enhanced skills, in line with agency workforce plans and their career aspirations.

Current Position

There are well developed induction arrangements in place. In addition to local induction, there is a three stage process which typically spans day one to month nine and this includes a range of practical information and signposting, an outline understanding of the various operational functions and an opportunity to meet with the Corporate Executive Team.

A full review of the induction arrangements in 2015 led to an increase in interactive opportunities at stage two and development of a specific managers' induction programme for those new to managerial roles.

Individual development needs are recorded in personal development plans and in addition to the more traditional training courses, these can be met through a range of approaches including; research, project work, seminars, conferences, coaching, mentoring and

shadowing. The agency actively promotes the development of staff and is committed to 5 development days per year, per employee target. There is an acknowledgment of differences in learning styles, active promotion of the range of options available and a growth in blended learning opportunities.

The agency also has links with UCL, Kings College London and a number of other academic institutions, which enable access to a broader range of courses and seminars. In addition to individual, team and division related development needs, the agency has confirmed four Civil Service priorities: leadership of change, project management, digital and commercial.

Plans

Our induction arrangements will continue to be reviewed and updated in line with feedback and opportunities to enrich the programme via use of developing technologies.

We are committed to supporting staff to manage their own learning and development within the context of current and future business needs. In addition to the personal development planning process, during 2016/17 a more proactive training needs analysis exercise will involve managers and teams identifying any gaps in the current provision and options to address these.

There will also be an assessment of the current statutory and mandatory training requirements, with a view to ensuring that these are fit for purpose.

Suitability and success of training and development provision will increasingly be demonstrated in terms of outcomes linked to training needs analysis and staff feedback mechanisms. In 2016/17, a project focussing on training and development evaluation will be launched, with the intention that this will be piloted and rolled out in 2017/18.

We already know that our future skills requirements include:

- Technical and scientific skills, especially in areas of increasing importance such as genomics
- Project management and planning skills
- Information management and digital skills
- Business development skills
- Commercial and contract management skills
- Influencing and negotiating skills
- Leadership skills, which demonstrate ability to lead as priorities change
- Managers who empower their teams to deliver, creating a positive working environment in which people are engaged and able to challenge, innovate and develop their skills, within a consistent performance management context
- Skills that support people to be versatile in a continually changing environment

and we will be looking to further develop our understanding of these requirements, as well as identifying others and seeking to meet them.

4. Leading and managing (including performance);

Significance

Our leadership and management community needs to be skilled at setting future direction, engaging people, developing capability and managing effectively to deliver results both individually and collectively. Leadership and management capability are vital to the agency's continuous improvement and organisational development.

Current Position

The Corporate Executive Team (CET) actively seek to be visible, live the values of the agency, promote appropriate behaviours amongst colleagues and provide strong, consistent leadership. In addition to regular business meetings, CET have quarterly development days and monthly mini away days which focus on particular priority issues and support senior team development and working.

At a broader senior manager level, an annual 360 degree feedback process has been introduced alongside more formal career conversations and use of the 9 Box Grid to feed into Talent Management. Plans are already in place to roll this out in terms of principles across the agency in 2016 and 2017, to support development and deployment of leaders and managers of the future.

Bi-annual Senior Leadership Group meetings focus on specific topics in a workshop style and provide further development and networking opportunities. Bi-annual Managers Meetings focus on the development of an even broader range of line managers and both make use of external speakers where this adds value to the programme.

After a wholesale review in 2015, the performance management scheme was refreshed to make it easier to understand and operate, as well as supporting managers and staff with focussing their attention on the "what" and "how" of performance. At its core is the principle that objectives fully reflect the agency and divisional business plans, that everyone is making an effective contribution to the agency's priorities and all can visualise their contribution.

Managers are supported in managing performance concerns at the earliest appropriate stage. Staff are offered support and can discuss issues, concerns and options with managers and if they wish to with Human Resources colleagues and/or trade union representatives. All parties are encouraged to seek to reach mutual solutions at an early stage, if at all possible. However, if fundamentally the role is not the right one for the person, we believe that there should be an honest conversation and the individual should move on.

Plans

As a result of the commitment to leadership there will be an increasing focus on identifying and developing talent/leadership development programmes to ensure that those individuals with the appropriate technical skills, as well as those with more general management skills, have the leadership and management skills to lead the agency and its' staff into the future.

5. Rewarding (financial and non financial);

Significance

As an Executive Agency of the Department of Health (DH), with an overarching pay framework and negotiating committee and rules set by the Cabinet Office and Treasury, there are significant constraints on any new approaches to pay and reward. However, total reward (financial and non-financial reward) remain important and there is a recognised need to maximise total reward and align some of these rewards with recognition of past and promotion of future performance. This is especially important in an environment where salary levels are recognised as less competitive than in the private and even parts of the public sector.

The position and plans in respect of broader non-financial rewards are included in the relevant sections of this document and focus in this section now turns to financial rewards.

Current Position

During 2016/17 the application of available pay flexibilities and the position in relation to governance arrangements with DH should be finalised and the focus will then be on ensuring that any flexibilities are fully utilised in appropriate circumstances. We continue to review the annual Civil Service pay award guidance and consider application of any additional flexibilities within this guidance, progressing these via the current negotiating and consultation arrangements.

In a survey about non pay benefits, staff were asked to prioritise potential further financial benefits which could be considered for the future and a programme of related work commenced in 2015/16.

Plans

We aim to offer a total reward package that attracts, motivates and retains staff at all levels and in all work areas and professions. We will continue to seek to recognise the contribution that staff make both individually and as a group in maintaining and developing the agency's current performance and reputation, as well as developing initiatives and the agency for the future.

The intention is to utilise those pay flexibilities, including performance related bonuses, which do exist to best effect, seek further flexibilities and focus on those roles which are hard to recruit to and attempts to increase the overall total reward package.

Our staff will benefit from the roll-out of a Civil Service employee benefits portal which is due to be rolled out in the Summer of 2016 and will provide access to a wide range of significant discounts.

6. Engaging and retaining;

Significance

There is clear evidence of the direct correlation between engagement and performance and retention and that staff want to be respected, valued and heard; with a line of sight between role, vision and values. We are keen to ensure that every opportunity is taken to enhance staff engagement and thereby the performance of individuals and the agency as a whole.

Current Position

The people survey continues to be a key measure of engagement. Every effort is made to ensure a high response level and results are widely shared and discussed with staff. Whilst it is pleasing that both response rates and overall survey scores have been increasing, it is recognised that there is still more to do. Action planning is undertaken involving divisional staff and pan-agency actions are developed by the CET, with input from the People Survey Focus Group and others such as the Senior Leadership Group. A “you saidwe did” approach is taken to feeding back on progress.

We actively encourage regular one-to-ones as well as team and divisional meetings and matrix working across divisions, as well as with external stakeholders, with the aim of engaging staff both in the work of their team and the wider agency and health economy.

The agency holds bi-annual all staff meetings, Managers’ Conferences and Senior Leadership Group meetings, intended to engage and develop staff at the same time as encouraging increasing collaboration.

Information is also shared with staff in a number of ways; such as by email, through the agency’s intranet pages (INsite), on a monthly basis by means of a team brief cascaded through team meetings and the all staff meetings.

Plans

We are keen to ensure this is a great place to work; inclusive, flexible and modern; encouraging openness, challenge, innovation and excellence and recognising the importance of engagement and empowerment in achieving these goals.

Previous Managers Conferences have focused on staff engagement and related topics such as story-telling, with high profile external speakers and the intention is to continue to build on this theme.

We are increasingly using additional tools such as surveys to seek feedback on events and issues and an example of this in 2015/16 was the survey on staff benefits. We will continue to use both regular and ad hoc opportunities to engage with staff.

7. Supporting health and wellbeing;

Significance

The importance to all agency staff of a healthy lifestyle and a good work life balance is understood, as is the impact this can have both personally and for the success of the agency.

We have a moral as well as a legal duty of care to our staff, as well as a responsibility to support staff to attend work appropriately and perform effectively.

Current Position

We are committed to providing a healthy working environment, in which all employees are supported to meet their potential. We actively promote the wellbeing of our staff and take active steps to ensure their safety and health in the workplace.

In addition to internal resources, staff have access to professional Occupational Health services provided by Imperial Health and an employee assistance programme provided by Workplace Wellness, with on-line and telephone help, including counselling 24 hours a day.

Our Occupational Health service arrangements now include more pro-active support to staff and the opportunity for staff to access a range of screening and related feedback opportunities, as well as sessions on stress/resilience such as those organised in 2015.

Plans

We will increasingly focus on ways to improve health and wellbeing in 2016/17 and beyond. This aim will contribute to staff engagement, the agency employer brand and through links to performance, will add value to our staff and the business.

HR data will increasingly be used to provide an insight into any absence or other health related patterns which can inform future developments in health and wellbeing initiatives.

Key future activities include annual plans which will feature staff 'MOT' type and promotional events, overseen by a task and finish group established in early 2016.

8. Succession planning; career development and talent management;

Significance

We recognise a need to move away from a more traditional model of career management, which defines career progression in terms of an upward, linear trajectory. Careers now take many different forms and follow many different courses and there is a clear need to both recognise this and seek to work in partnership with staff to realise the potential benefits of a more flexible approach and plan accordingly.

Current Position

The agency seeks to 'grow its own' talent, building expertise through investing in the development of staff to fill key strategic and leadership roles wherever possible and as part of a succession planning approach at divisional and agency-wide levels.

With this in mind the agency established a new Talent Board of CET members at the start of 2016, which will meet at least annually to review senior and other critical roles and potential and development needs of possible successors. The intention is for there to be a cascade of this approach across the agency, developed during 2016/17.

The exercise of identifying potential career paths started with the establishment of a pan-agency Group in late 2014 and work continues to map and develop skills based families of roles with a view to 'growing our own' and the development of skills as part of a career within the agency.

Plans

Future succession planning activity will support the agency in identifying key roles and developing succession plans for these roles. This understanding can then drive learning and development, coaching or resourcing activity depending on whether there is recognition of a need to develop internally, recruit externally, do both or find a more creative solution.

Increasingly, staff are multi-skilled and will be more able to work across divisions. This clearly needs to be balanced with ensuring the agency builds world class technical expertise in key areas such as senior scientific and regulatory roles.

Emphasis will be placed on supporting staff to define their own career path, so they can manage their own aspirations in a way that best aligns their personal career goals and this will be an outcome of the career pathways work which will continue throughout 2016/17 and then on an ongoing basis.

Such an approach to career development will facilitate a more flexible and multi-skilled workforce, better able to adjust to changes in activity as a result of regulatory, demand or funding changes. A multi-skilled workforce will be more adept at responding to crises when increased levels of resource need to be focused in a particular area. Talent management and succession planning is intended to keep the agency ahead of the game.

9. Use of workforce informatics to support decision making;

Significance

It is imperative that staff data is managed securely, in line with the Data Protection Act and transactional processing in relation to staff data is undertaken in an efficient and timely manner. Staff data is also the foundation for a broader set of informatics which can support the agency with identifying potential issues for further consideration and provide trends and patterns which support future decision making and action.

Current Position

The new HRIS will be implemented during 2016/17 and this will have a significant impact upon the robustness and security of data, as well as increasing transactional capability.

Plans

The new HRIS includes self-service for managers and staff who will be able to access and update appropriate information, as well as undertaking transactional processes. The outcome of this will be an improvement in the ownership and accuracy of data and easier access to information which will support managers with their managerial and planning roles.

We will be in a much better position to benchmark internal and external data and to set key performance indicators which support identification of outliers, further investigation and any related action. The facility to produce 'real time' management reports to identify trends and trajectories will support a look forward approach to utilisation of data to add to the current look back based analytics. This will be especially helpful for planning purposes.

10. A partnership approach with staff and their trade union representatives;

Significance

We recognise that increased employee involvement is likely to lead to improved organisational awareness, commitment and motivation and constructive relationships with staff and with trade union representatives is key to this.

Current Position

We have a strong and constructive employee relations constitution with the agency trade union representatives and the intention is for staff and their trade union representatives to receive clear and timely communication on all matters relating to working at the agency.

We meet formally with our trade union representatives on a quarterly basis and informally in the intervening months, in our Staff Partnership Committee. However, it is recognised that in order to ensure that communications are timely and partnership working operates at a local and even an individual staff level, there are ongoing interactions, as required.

The agency/DH partnership arrangements for pay and policies seek to ensure that issues of common interest are consulted upon and where appropriate negotiated collectively and issues of relevance to one party only are managed through local arrangements.

Plans

We will increasingly seek to ensure representation on internal people related groups, such as the People Survey Focus Group and the Equality & Diversity Group includes a cross section of representatives from across the agency.

There is recognition that trade union representatives can significantly contribute to issues of common interest and in addition to these more formal groups they should be engaged with ongoing initiatives such as those relating to health & wellbeing.

We will regularly share and discuss staff related information when the new HRIS is in place and this information is sufficiently robust for the agency to be using this as a basis for further consideration.

11. Effective management of change;

Significance

The agency needs to evolve in order to benefit from new opportunities and overcome challenges and there is an ongoing need to deliver improved services, as well as adapt to changes driven by external challenges; such as those posed by changes in funding arrangements, increasing competition, a demand for improved customer care and digital innovation.

Current Position

It is recognised that a rationale for more significant changes which impact directly or indirectly on staff forms the basis of a written business case and/or consultation arrangements. Such consideration may lead to the need for role, team and even agency-wide redesign or relocation in order to ensure that realignment supports delivery of the agency business and corporate plans.

There is a clear and ongoing commitment to working with staff and being open and transparent about such changes at the earliest opportunity. It is recognised that staff themselves add significant value through contributing to plans for the future.

Plans

We will continue to fully consult staff and support them through any change programme, and where appropriate work across divisions and the Civil Service to increase any required redeployment opportunities. We will also ensure messages are shared with staff and unions in a timely and transparent manner.

In terms of bigger picture changes, we will support workforce planning and related re-profiling and communications through the provision of HR data and professional advice, to ensure good practice is followed and management action is consistent and compliant with employment legislation and agency policy.

We will provide appropriate services to support individual staff affected by change and ensure managers receive change related guidance and training.

12. Linking with external partners on issues such as secondments;

Significance

We recognise there are significant benefits to be achieved from working closely with a broad range of other organisations and that this applies to staff related issues, such as sharing and developing expertise.

Current Position

We already participate in secondments and Civil Service sharing arrangements as well as networking with organisations and their staff throughout the UK and in some cases the World via meetings, conferences and our work itself.

Introduction of an agency profile on LinkedIn and use of Twitter have led to a significant number of followers and connections to significant number of both organisations and individuals with common interests.

Plans

We will increase networking and more formal partnership arrangements within the health and related education and research sectors in the UK and abroad to identify and progress opportunities for mutual benefit in relation to a range of workforce related issues, including joint appointments, secondments or other formal/informal routes.

We will also pursue shared hosting of events and training with neighbouring Civil Service organisations and those with whom we have most in common, such as Department of Health and Public Health England.

We will continue to increase our social media profile and related opportunities to connect.

13. Valuing diversity;

Significance

A proactive approach to equality and diversity is required in order to gain advantage from a truly diverse population of staff.

The diversity of our staff is valued and the pledge and objectives developed and published in 2015 represent a commitment to enhancing the value which is gained from a modern working environment, seeking to bring in the best people and develop internal staff irrespective of their individual characteristics and background.

Current Position

An agency Equality and Diversity Group was established in 2015, along with an outline strategy and action plan which aim to create an open and inclusive culture in which everyone feels valued. It is recognised that diversity correlates directly with improved employer brand, organisational competitiveness and reputation.

Plans

This more proactive approach includes use of equality impact assessments for staff related policies and analysis of workforce equality data which will be regularly reviewed, particularly in relation to exercises such as performance related pay and performance management processes.

We will strengthen our aim to empower all staff to challenge any discriminatory behaviour; the aim is to ensure that the working environment is free from any kind of bullying and harassment. Where issues do arise, we will ensure that there is a transparent employee relations framework through which complaints can be assessed and appropriate informal or formal action taken.

14. Policies/processes which are fit for purpose/the future.

Significance

It is important to ensure that all line managers are capable and confident in managing staff and are able to access guidance, training and advice to support them in this and as a result, staff management is both best practice and uniformly applied across the agency for all staff.

Staff similarly need to be able to access information and seek advice on a range of employee related issues.

Current Position

During 2015/16 it was agreed that all HR policies would be reviewed on a priority basis and refreshed policies would be fully consulted on with managers and trade union representatives, to ensure that they are both clear and relevant; plus supporting tools would be developed as appropriate – flow-charts, Frequently Asked Questions, etc.

The first tranche of highest priority HR policies were progressed and published in late 2015/16 and a refreshed set of INsite pages related to staff policies, procedures and resources was also introduced in 2015/16, to aid staff access to current information.

Plans

The remaining HR policies and related toolkits will be progressed during 2016/17 and communications and INsite pages will be developed to support the launch and access to these. Whilst it is not intended to provide HR policy related training, consideration will continue to be given to manager skills training which supports implementation of these policies as close to source of any issue as possible.

15. A capable, professional Human Resources Division

Significance

The role of the Human Resources team is to support the agency in realising its vision and to facilitate the achievement of the Corporate Plan by leading the delivery of the People Strategy, through professional expertise, projects, policies and processes.

Current Position

During 2015 a new Director of Human Resources was appointed and following consultation on agency needs and priorities, the design of the HR team structure was reviewed, revised and appointed to. Many of the team have identified divisions which they focus on and others have more specialist roles which span the agency. The introduction of an HR Customer Service charter and a range of publicity about the new team and ways of working have helped to establish the new HR team and their role.

The HR team link with a range of contractors and shared services providers and thereby access additional specialist skills and benefit from economies of scale. These include:-

- Civil Service Employee Policy group
- CGI (payroll provider)
- Imperial Health

- Workplace Wellness

More informally the team network with other organisations, such as those located close by and those who form part of the Department of Health Arms Length Bodies group or broader Civil Service networks and are able to share arrangements, such training and social events as well as knowledge and skills.

Plans

The HR team vision is to be a leading HR function defined by excellence and innovation, supporting the agency's vision and values through aspirational, exciting and innovative approaches to attracting, retaining, developing and rewarding staff.

We will continue to work in partnership with managers, staff, trade unions and all other relevant stakeholders focussing on a shift from administrative and operational skills and responsibilities to more of a tactical/strategic focus during 2016/17 and beyond. It is recognised that just as successful business strategies must be distinctive, people strategies too must focus on competitive people advantage relative to competitors.

Each annual HR business plan will continue to include a number of significant projects which support the agency in the achievements of its annual and longer term objectives.

In addition, HR will provide strategic support to planned organisational developments and related programmes and projects, including resourcing and developing priority skills and talent and succession management, especially for hard to recruit to roles. The broader topic of recognition and reward will also continue to receive focussed attention.