

HR services update

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the Authority’s Human Resources (HR) services. The key points are:

- The Authority is on track to deliver against the improvement plan set out on the June HR Services Update.

RECOMMENDATION(S) The Authority is asked to:

- 1) Note this report

1. Introduction

WLWA’s HR service was given ‘Limited Assurance’ status in an internal audit last December. Key actions included:

- Reviewing and updating policies
- Undertaking relevant DBS checks
- Getting employee files fully up to date and complete
- Delivering recruitment training to staff
- Creating a checklist for new starters
- Addressing a backlog of email requests for HR support

An approach was described to the Authority’s June meeting for providing immediate HR support, addressing the audit requirements, and assessing options for the future of the service. Specialist HR consultants were to be appointed to deliver the work and the timescales were set out as follows:

Date	Work completed
30 Jun 2023	HR advisors appointed
30 Sep 2023	Critical outstanding audit actions complete (>85% of total actions)
30 Sep 2023	Review of HR services complete
31 Dec 2023	All audit actions fully complete and long-term HR solution is being rolled-out

2. Progress update

An HR consultant, acting as HR Manager to the Authority, has been in post since June. Another HR consultancy has delivered an assessment of the work required to meet the audit requirements and has since been appointed to deliver the policy update element of this work, with the HR Manager delivering the remainder.

Performance to date against the audit requirements is described below:

Audit Requirement	Status	Description
Reviewing and updating policies	On track	Consultants started the work in August
Undertaking relevant DBS checks	On track	HR Manager is delivering
Getting employee files fully up to date and complete	On track	HR Manager is delivering
Delivering recruitment training to staff	On track	Currently being scheduled by HR Manager
Creating a checklist for new starters	Complete	Evidence sent to auditors
Addressing a backlog of email requests for HR support	Complete	Evidence sent to auditors

In addition, the HR Manager has produced an Options Appraisal for future HR delivery models for the organisation. This is currently being reviewed and discussed by the Senior Leadership Team.

In summary, the HR improvement objectives and timescales are on-track to be achieved.

3. Financial Implications

The June HR Services Update described a potential £27k overspend on the HR staffing budget to deliver the approach. The overall cost will be within the June estimate.

4. Staffing Implications

Employees of the Authority are now receiving quality HR support. The HR Manager is part-time, meaning that availability of the support is limited, but this is encouraging a level of self-service, increasing employees' understanding of employment law and HR matters.

5. Legal Implications

Without sufficient HR support, the Authority is at risk of inadvertently breaking employment law. Commissioning HR support is helping to mitigate this risk.

Contact Officers	Tom Beagan, Head of Service Delivery tombeagan@westlondonwaste.gov.uk	01895 545516
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