WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE
Date: 4 May 2016

Careers Website - Performance and Progress 2015/16

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Staffing Policy Committee with:

    a. A complete set of 2015/16 performance data for the careers website which launched 11 May 2015.
    b. Progress made against the improvements identified in the report to Staffing Policy Committee on the 4 November 2015
    c. Details of further developments planned to improve attraction and recruitment

Background

2. A report was presented to Staffing Policy Committee on 4 November 2015 which outlined the background to the careers website development and implementation, the key performance indicators (KPIs) which had been developed and the first outturn report for Q1 and Q2, and identified the further improvements planned for 2015/16. To provide further contextual information, the paper also outlined the attraction initiatives which were being undertaken to draw people to the website and highlighted jobs (e.g. via social media, targeted advertising through campaigns) and to promote the council's brand (EVP) by promoting key messages and unique selling points[1] (USPs).

3. An analysis of the careers website KPI's is provided in paragraphs 11 – 20. The KPIs that have been developed have supported the identification of areas where further improvements are required and include the:

    *   customer journey
    *   conversion rates - clicks through from job adverts to 'apply'
    *   effectiveness and reach of targeted recruitment campaigns (e.g. for social care, Procurement/Commissioning), particularly through paid for advertising and social media

4. The majority of the improvements identified in the previous report have been made; progress against these can be correlated with an increase in the number of website sessions by more than 60% from Q1 – Q4 with a steady rise in applications being started from Q2 – Q4 despite a slowing down in the number of vacancies being advertised due to internal budgetary pressures

5. In addition to the development of contextual links[2] (identified as an improvement action in November 2015), HR have also recently developed website landing pages to support recruitment campaigns. Landing pages allow the council to convey detailed content on one page, specific to a particular service area and jobs being advertised. The specific landing page has a unique webpage address which can be used in all promotion – paid advertising, social media for example, giving potential candidates targeted information and increasing the probability of job applications being made. A landing page was recently built to promote a number of vacant jobs within the Strategic Procurement Hub

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[1] A unique selling point is a factor that differentiates a product or service from its competitors. A USP could be thought of as "what you have that competitors don't."

[2] Contextual links is any relevant content, appropriate to the job being advertised that takes a candidate to another page on the website or external to the website. It is usually displayed as a discrete panel to the side of the webpage being viewed. Examples of a contextual link would be a careers film on YouTube, a staff blog etc
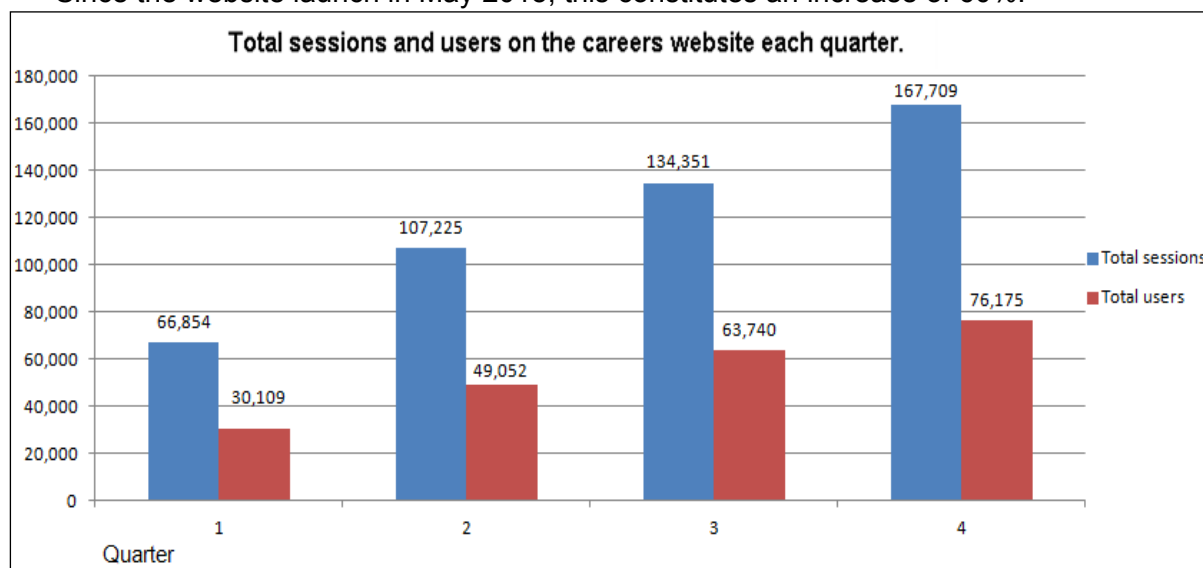
6. Alongside the launch of the website, the use of social media as an important promotion and attraction tool to drive traffic to specific job adverts and engage potential candidates has been further developed. In January 2016 HR & OD developed an account profile on Instagram to promote the council and careers to a younger age cohort (39% of Instagram's UK's active users (14 million) are aged 16-24). This makes our social media presence unique for local government with active promotion and targeting taking place over Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn as well as Instagram. In addition, all career related films are hosted on the councils YouTube account

7. The development of the council's Glassdoor profile continues with regular company updates being added and employee reviews noted and responded to. As part of the council's account, Glassdoor also pulls through jobs advertised on the council's career website, providing a further avenue for targeting potential candidates with relevant jobs

8. In April 2016, the council was the first UK local authority to reach the Glassdoor 'Open Company' status which is a programme designed to recognise companies that embrace transparency. The council's current company rating of 4.5 is outstanding when compared to other local authorities and commercial companies in the UK (further commentary is provided in section 21 below)

Main Considerations for the council

9. KPI summary table for 2015/16 Q1 – Q4 is attached as appendix 1. It has to be noted that the data for Q1 is not complete because the careers website launched mid-way through Q1 (May 2015). However, the analysis still gives a comprehensive view of the performance over the last year and enables the identification of improvements needed and the setting of targets where appropriate for 2016/17

10. Benchmarking data has been sought from other local authorities through the southern counties HR data benchmarking group. However, members of this group do not collect the range of data that can enable benchmarking to take place. This situation will be monitored

KPI summary analysis:

11. 33,358 extra sessions[3] took place in Q4 compared to Q3, with 12,435 additional users. Since the website launch in May 2015, this constitutes an increase of 60%:

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[3] A 'session' is a group of interactions that take place on the website within a given time frame. A single session can contain multiple page views

12. Approximately 78% of visitors are female with an average of 52% visitors aged 35 – 54 and 30% aged 18 – 34 years

13. The majority of website users continue to be local and live in Trowbridge. However, this could reflect a proportion of employees visiting the careers website during breaks who work at council buildings in Trowbridge.

14. Over a third of users continue to navigate to the website from a google search, and the proportion of users navigating to the website directly has decreased slightly to 23%. This is in line with national research around how google is an increasingly used search engine tool for job vacancies

15. The bounce rate[4] has continued to increase up to 32.1%. This could be due to users becoming more familiar with the website and navigating directly to the search and apply pages from a google search.

16. Facebook continues to produce the highest number of re-directs with 72% increase to the careers website; over ten times more than for the second highest, LinkedIn. This reconfirms the council's strategic approach to using social media as a key medium for recruitment. In addition, 25 visitors to the website came from Glassdoor during Q4 which is a key area of growth for 2016/17

17. The majority of website users continue to view via a desktop computer although the number of people viewing the website via a mobile device has increased by 8% since Q1. This again is in line with national research which indicates that most job site views are made on a mobile device. As the council's website is 'mobile-friendly' together with the development of the 'apply by CV' in February 2016 (noted in section 27) this ensures that viewing relevant job adverts and submitting a job application via a mobile device is simple and easy for candidates

18. The 'search and apply' page is the most commonly visited page. This is ultimately the page we want to direct viewers to, to maximise the conversion from views into applications

19. The number of applications started has increased in Q4 by 67 more than the previous quarter. This careers website data does not take into account whether the application has been completed and submitted. However, when this data is compared to the numbers of applications started and submitted within the council's applicant tracking system (Talentlink), the data follows the same pattern

20. The candidate satisfaction survey is sent to successful candidates on completion of the interview process. Although survey response rates are low (21 responses received for Q1 – Q4), the majority of answers are positive and do not indicate any causes for concern (Appendix 3).

Social media analysis:

21. Glassdoor analytics show that the number of people engaging with the site has increased. The total number of page views has reached 7,000; monthly views are steadily increasing after a peak in October 2015 when the council became an engaged employer with Glassdoor.

22. The number of employee reviews on Glassdoor now stands at 21. Employee reviews contribute to the council's overall company rating as employees can rate Wiltshire Council on five different workplace criteria using a scale of 0 - 5 (appendix 4). The council's overall rating has improved from 3.4 in May 2015 when the careers website

[4] The 'bounce rate' is the percentage of visits to the website where people only look at one page before exiting

was launched to 4.5 in April 2016. This is an outstanding rating when benchmarked against other local authorities and commercial companies. The rating for 'work/life' balance exceeds the overall rating at 4.7 which is significant given that this is one of the council's 'selling points' used in promoting the council as an employer of choice. 94% of those submitting an employee review would recommend Wiltshire Council as a place to work to their friends

23. The use of social media as a tool for sourcing potential candidates as well as promotional activity has increased. Since November 2015, a number of sponsored Facebook adverts have been purchased for services to ensure maximum exposure to specific jobs as well as identifying potential candidates matched against the job requirements, particularly using LinkedIn. These have ranged from housing, planning, procurement, social care, economy and leisure.

24. Although this area has yet to be developed further, there has been some success with this approach in terms of supporting recruitment to jobs which have historically been hard to recruit to. Recent examples have been a Service Development Officer in the housing service and a Conference and Reviewing Officer in children's commissioning (the latter resulting in the exit of an agency staff and reducing agency spend)

25. This use of social media also has also resulted in a number of broader, positive outcomes that supports the overall strategic vision for resourcing:

- Positioning the council as an employer of choice within the increasingly competitive candidate market (improving awareness and exposure)
- Steadily increasing the numbers of people engaging with HR & OD with increased exposure (and hence increasing the number of likes/followers) about a range of careers and initiatives
- Offering a way of contacting HR & OD outside of standard 9 – 5 office hours

Improvements made since the last report:

26. Progress against the improvements identified in November 2015 is shown as a table in Appendix 2.

27. Key highlights have been:

- Introduction of 'apply by CV' for all non-safeguarding roles in addition to the online application form resulting in 240 clicks in one week at the end of March alone. This is also an added 'selling' feature as we know that CV applications aren't accepted as the norm amongst many local authorities.
- Contextual links and landing pages developed adding more variety and content to job adverts and campaigns that is proving to be an effective way of engaging more candidates and increasing the chances of applications.
- Using analytical data to target social media promotion and advertising to optimum viewing times.

Next steps – key improvement actions:

28. Continue to develop the 'apply by CV' functionality on the website for all roles (including those that are deemed as 'safeguarding' roles requiring additional requirements under the Safeguarding Policy). This will be an added attraction and promotional opportunity, making the council leaders in the field of recruitment.

29. Actively promote careers to the defence and armed forces community, including their spouses and apply for the gold award of the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. As part of this work, HR are leading on creating a landing page on the careers site which sets out how our employment practices are armed-forces friendly. This page will be

promoted on social media and linked to from the homepage of the careers site to enable us to help recruit employees with military connections, be they Reservists, former serving personnel, spouses/partners and family members.

30. Develop analytical reporting, aligning different data sets to create a joined up view of the candidate journey. The candidate survey will also be refined and developed to add to the overall set of information

31. Continue to develop the council's profile on Glassdoor and promote the outstanding company rating to aid attraction, recruitment and employee engagement

32. Roll-out EVP awareness internally. The careers website, careers messaging has been integrated robustly with the council's EVP. However, there is a need to communicate the EVP through internal messaging to the council's workforce ensuring a connection between outward and inward facing communication. This is particularly important during the on-boarding[5] phase when new employees join the council; an on-boarding project is being developed by HR & OD (commencing summer 16) and will involve a range of internal stakeholders. Joint work between corporate communications and HR to develop this is underway.

33. Continue to develop landing pages and other resources (e.g. short films) to market and target specific jobs, particularly those hard to recruit to

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

34. None

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

35. The careers website was designed with full involvement from a range of stakeholders, including the council's staff disability forum, consultation with an individual member of staff with a sight loss and with full professional input around web accessibility standards from Penna and from the council's communication team. Feedback influenced the design of the website, particularly colours used, contrast and text (e.g. the 'accessibility' button allowing users to increase the colour contrast and increase the size of the text). Images and films made ensured that they both covered the topic of equality and diversity and that there was good representation from diverse groups (e.g. black and minority ethnic, disabled staff)

Risk Assessment

36. If the website is not monitored for its efficiency and performance, there is a risk to the organisation in terms of attracting quality candidates with the right skills and experience to create a strong and diverse workforce. This would ultimately impact on service delivery and the delivery of the Business Plan.

Financial Implications

37. Licence costs (Talentlink provided by Lumesse and Talentbond – both providing the applicant tracking system and advanced search functionality) will have to be budgeted for 16/17 and annually thereafter in order for the website to function.

Recommendation

38. It is recommended that Staffing Policy Committee:

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[5] Onboarding is the process by which new employees are emotionally, physically and professionally integrated into the established culture and operations of their new employer

a. note the contents of this report, and
b. are provided with a further update on the performance of the website in 12 months

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