

Personnel Committee – 9th September, 2019

Walsall Integrated Skills Project (WISP) – introducing an internal jobs market

Service: All

Wards: All

1. Summary of report

- 1.1 To provide information to Personnel Committee in relation to WISP (Walsall Integrated Skills Project) in terms of proposed process and any potential investments further to the Core Brief announcements in April 2019.
- 1.2 The report assesses the actions taken in implementing this process at Sunderland Council (there known as SWITCH) and applies a similar approach to standard approved processes here at Walsall. Where appropriate, changes to the Sunderland approach are put forward for consideration in order to ensure relevance to the local context.
- 1.3 The reports outlines the potential costs of implementation along with an outline project plan and the proposed timelines for implementation.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to;

- 2.1 Support the approach being undertaken to develop the proposal and implement WISP. From an HR and OD perspective, supporting the organisation and its people during change is an important role. Change can result in significant stress for those involved at any point of the process, whether as employees, managers or representatives. Walsall Council invests in the on-going development of its staff and WISP is a mechanism where the Council may continue to benefit from that investment, even as roles and demands change.
- 2.2 Walsall Council already has well established processes to manage organisational change and redesign based on best practice, national guidance and ACAS Codes and the operational HR team is well versed in their application. WISP should operate as an extension to these processes, not in opposition to them.
- 2.3 WISP aims to reduce the cost of organisational redesign, to provide surety of employment as far as is possible, and therefore to ensure continued return on the investment Walsall has made in its people over the tenure of their employment with the Council.

3. Report Detail

- 3.1 The Walsall Proud Programme will see many changes within our organisation addressing both ways of working and ways of thinking, building a sustainable delivery model for the future. It is an exciting time.

- 3.2 As a direct result of this, we will encounter the requirement to redesign elements of our organisation, whilst simultaneously maintaining 'business as usual' in order to protect services through the transformation period.
- 3.3 The transformation is being managed through a set of work streams which capitalise on existing knowledge, incorporate cross directorate working and which are supported by specialist colleagues from PWC, including the development of change coaches (part of the Perform Plus work stream) and the development of self-awareness through coaching amongst managers (via Odyssey).
- 3.4 We are fortunate in being able to learn directly from the experiences of other Councils, most notably Sunderland City Council, where a programme of 'regeneration' was implemented as part of the organisational redesign process
- 3.4.1 The main driver for the introduction of the programme at Sunderland City Council was the need to make significant financial savings of 30% across a 5-year period.
- 3.4.2 For Walsall, the context is slightly different. Still the need for organisational efficiency, but more as a result of service transformation than purely hard cuts
- 3.5 WISP, like SWITCH, will be based on the premise that employees can always learn and impart knowledge, but, core strengths, such as personality and aptitude, are more established on reaching working age. It is therefore believed that from our workforce (excluding schools), it should be possible, in many instances, to identify someone with the right skills/aptitude for a vacant role. In other words, to create an internal jobs market in place of the current redeployment process which is limited to priority groups (at risk) who will remain a priority, but it will also open doors to on-going development opportunities for other staff.
- 3.6 How will WISP work? (See also WISP Process Flow Chart at Appendix 1).
- 3.6.1 Any employees who wish to be considered within the internal job market will be invited to undertake a set of psychometric tests: numerical and verbal assessments plus a personality/cultural preferences questionnaire.
- 3.6.2 For managers, an additional assessment (Situational Judgement) will also be undertaken.
- 3.6.3 It is recommended that we use the following tests, already currently available for use through our recruitment team:
- WAVE Professional Styles (with Expert Report) which measures motives, talents, preferred culture and competency potential in one dynamic online questionnaire.
 - Significant consideration has been given to working with Odyssey using a shorter form of the LUMINA report, used by the Executive and top tiers. Whilst a short form is available, it is only accessible via download to a mobile telephone with an overview report available to download on the device. This presents difficult issues in adopting this methodology:

First, Council will be reliant on employees downloading an App to their phone and completing the test via their phone.

Secondly, the results will not be available to the organisation unless they are sent to us. The report cannot be forwarded.

If the employee funds an 'upgrade' to the App, then we could use this methodology more successfully, but it is unlikely that employees will consider this a suitable approach and logistically would prove difficult to manage if multiple small amount claims were made for refund.

Not all employees have access to a work email address and so we could be reliant on them sending us this information from a personal account (if they have one).

Employees may not consider it appropriate to use their device to download Apps for work purposes and/or to send information using personal accounts (if available).

- Odyssey personnel recognised WAVE as an excellent tool and one which links well with LUMINA. It was their initial response, in agreement with Council recommendation. The Council recommendation therefore remains the most suitable option.
- Saville Professional Analysis Aptitude: verbal aptitude (working with words), numeric analysis (working with numbers).
- Scenarios (Managers only) – Situational Judgement Test (Executive or Management Level).

3.6.4 Results will be uploaded to the new HRIS, One Source by the HR team

3.6.5 At the same time, employees will be invited to upload their work experience against their personal profile on One Source through the self-service portal.

3.7 When a vacancy is identified, the person specification will incorporate the role requirement against each of the assessments, based on the *strengths* required to deliver services and the more efficient service delivery model post service transformation.

3.8 In the event of there being no employee who may be assimilated into the new role in line with policy, a search will then be conducted by the recruitment team to highlight employees (within a grade range) who have joined the internal jobs market (by voluntarily undertaking the various assessments) and who have the right strengths. Enquiries can then be made to ascertain whether the employee is interested in exploring the role.

3.9 In filling vacancies via this route, preference would be given in the first instance to those employees who may potentially be displaced, before enquiring of other employees who have entered the internal jobs market.

3.10 Interested employees will then be asked to submit an application for the role and a normal selection process will ensue.

3.10.1 Applications will be via a proforma for non-managerial roles, and via CV for all posts of a managerial nature.

3.11 It is recognised that, potentially displaced employees may not wish to enter WISP, or indeed to be offered redeployment. In such cases, redundancy may be agreed in line with Council policy.

3.12 A draft timeline for implementation is provided in Appendix 2.

4. External Intelligence

4.1 Significant information on this process was gleaned from the former HR Director at Sunderland Council

5. Financial implications

5.1 See Table below. Committee is asked to note that employee numbers are estimates.

Item	£
Adaptation of One Source to accommodate loading of assessment results (<i>one off cost</i>)	6,000 - 7,000
Verbal reasoning psychometrics @ £50 per person x 200 employees	10,000
Numerical reasoning psychometrics @ £50 per person x 200 employees	10,000
WAVE Professional Styles test @ £150 per person x 200 employees	30,000
Scenarios – Situational Judgement Test (managers/executives only) @ £130 x 100	13,000
Total (less potential severance/redundancy and pension strain costs)	69,000 – 70,000

6. Legal considerations

6.1 There are no legal obligations on, nor consequences for, the Council arising from the proposal outlined in this paper as indeed it is a worthy mitigation of redundancy but, it will require amendment to current policies/procedures and subsequent consultation with trades union colleagues (followed by Committee approval) prior to implementation.

7. Citizen impact

7.1. There are no identified implications on the residents of Borough in the implementation of these recommendations.

8. Equality implications

8.1. There will be no requirement for an Equality Impact Assessment specifically for WISP as any assessment will be captured within any policy/procedural changes ahead of its implementation, including how we continue a focus on increasing levels of diversity.

9. Consultation

9.1. Trades Union Colleagues have already received several direct briefings on Wisp via meetings with the CEO, and the Employment Relations Forum, and this will continue more formally, once approval to proceed is granted.

9.2. In order to accommodate WISP, the following policies/procedures will require revision, consultation and subsequent approval:

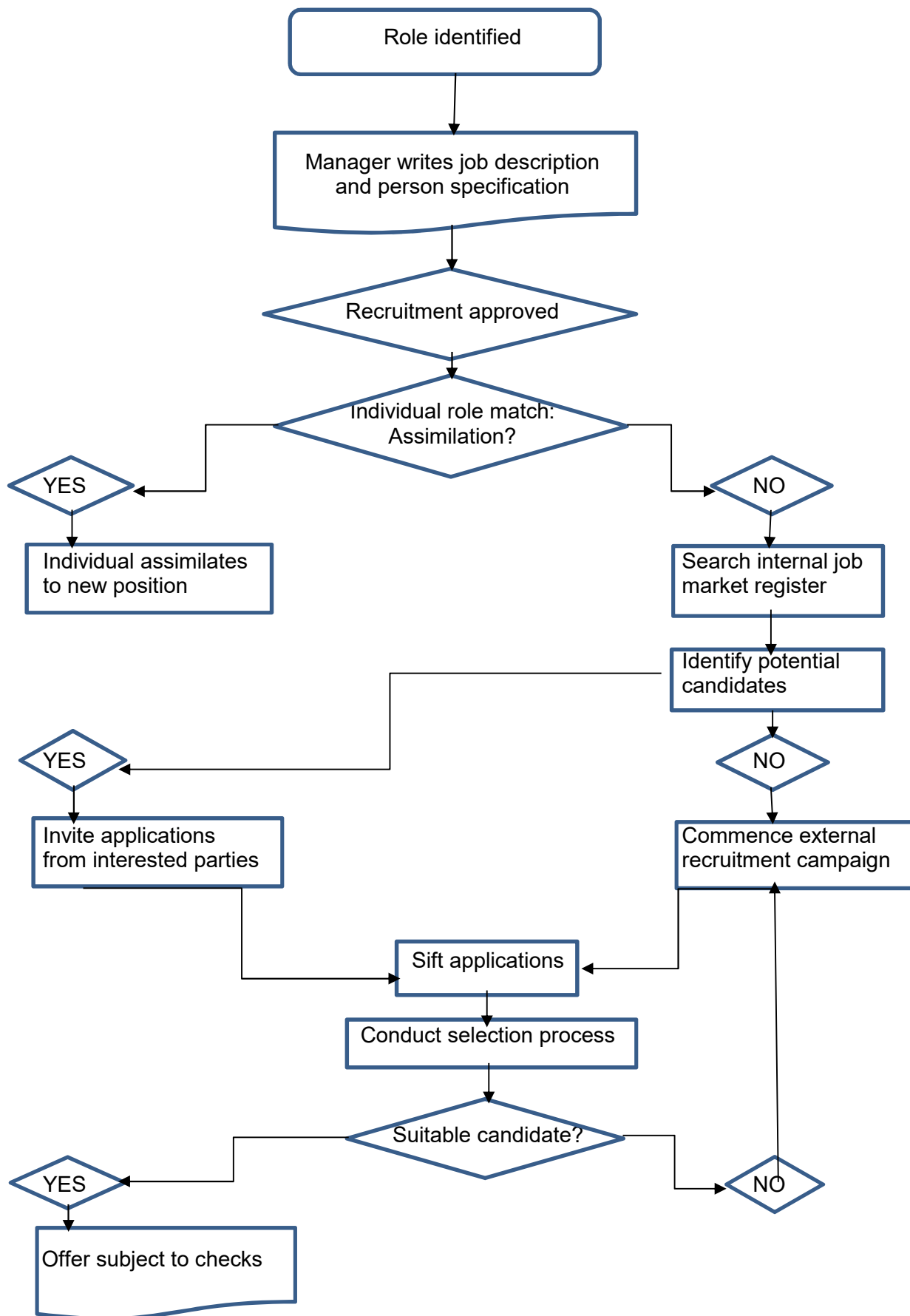
- Guidance on the writing of Job descriptions/person specifications
- Job Evaluation
- Recruitment Policy
- Management of Change
- Redundancy Policy/Procedure
- Redeployment Policy/Procedure

Additionally, manager will require support and training in the writing of job descriptions/person specifications to ensure that strengths are taken into account in line with the assessment requirements.

Report Author

Rebecca Wassell
Assistant Director of Human Resources
01922 655600
rebecca.wassell@walsall.gov.uk

WISP PROCESS FLOW CHART



APPENDIX 2

APPROXIMATE TIMELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION (high level plan)

[illegible][illegible]