

Report to: Personnel Committee



Date of Meeting 4th July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

'Grow Our Own' Project Update

Report summary:

This report provides the Committee with an update on the 'grow our own' project which aims to support recruitment, retention and succession planning.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes the work to date and planned future work.

Reason for recommendation:

To allow the Committee to retain an overview of the work being undertaken to implement the 'grow our own' arrangements to support recruitment, retention and succession planning.

Officer: Jo Fellows, HR Manager. Email: jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk.

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Medium Impact

See below.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The equality impacts of this approach are being identified and mitigated against, as part of this work.

Links to background information Workforce Priorities report presented to Personnel Committee on 2nd September 2021 ([Agenda for Personnel Committee on Thursday, 2nd September, 2021, 10.00 am - East Devon](#)).

[Link to Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
-

Report in full

1. Part of the planned activity to support recruitment and retention is to 'grow our own' staff through the development of more structured mechanisms for new recruits, including those in the early stages of their career, to have a pathway to join the Council and for staff to then progress within the Council. This also supports staff development, career progression and succession planning.
2. With the focus on the Reward Review during 2022 this work has not progressed as far as originally hoped, but the aim is, during 2023, to pursue the following:
 - Obtain recent apprentice and intern feedback to inform the project
 - Recruit to a HR Apprentice role to support the work
 - Work with Environmental Health on a career pathway/apprenticeship programme pilot
 - Explore Arboriculture apprenticeship options
 - Further pilot work experience and develop stronger links with East Devon secondary schools.
3. In 2024 and beyond we will then build on this, working with other service areas to develop career pathways and apprenticeship programmes, offer T Level placements, develop an apprentice peer support network and explore opportunities to provide work experience and apprenticeships to underrepresented groups, for example young people with learning disabilities.
4. The work undertaken to date on our employer brand will assist with attracting people to join the Council. It includes some new apprenticeship templates for use on social media and at career events, including the Exeter College Apprenticeship Expo which took place in February 2023 during National Apprenticeship Week. We have also joined the South West Apprenticeship Ambassador Network which provides peer support and opportunities to promote our apprenticeships.
5. During the same week in February we provided a work experience placement for a Year 12 student from Colyton Grammar School. The feedback from the student and staff involved in the placement was really positive and will help inform our wider work experience offer. Particular thanks go to Cllr Jake Bonetta for suggesting the placement, along with Cllr Ian Thomas and Cllr John Loudoun who joined us to hear the student's presentation, which was a project he undertook during the week, where he developed a young person's guide to working for the council. More recently some of the HR Team have attended careers events at Sidmouth College, promoting the Council to students. A Year 10 work experience placement will be taking place later this month which we will also use to inform our future offer.

6. Some of the images from our recent activities, along with quotes from the Year 12 student and some staff about the work experience placement, are at Appendix 1.
7. I look forward to sharing further progress on the 'grow our own' activity in due course.

Financial implications:

No financial implication at this stage identified.

Legal implications:

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report.

Appendix 1 – examples of recent ‘grow our own’ activity



“It was a pleasure meeting D, finding out about his studies and discussing the diverse work that Economic Development cover. I hope he found it as rewarding as we did!” *Manager*



“I like the way he was given the opportunity to see services across the Council and he said how much he had enjoyed the week so far.” *Staff member*

“I have been shadowing and working with various different teams across numerous departments...providing me with a great insight into its operations and what career options are available. The opportunity has completely altered my perception of the organisation and I feel that many people are unaware of the actual day-to-day services that the Council manages which ultimately ensures that East Devon is a great place to live for all. I'm very grateful to have had this experience and I believe that it would be really beneficial for more young people to get involved in opportunities in the Council to help work with the brilliant teams here to have their say on how to shape this region for the future...I was assigned a project of creating a presentation on why young people should choose to work in the Council and the feedback I received from talking to many officers really helped me to get a great sense of the benefits of choosing a career in this line of work. The project helped me to develop my organisational skills, in addition to the employability skills I learned from attending a mock interview...I'd like to say a particular thank you to Cllr Jake Bonetta and Jo Fellows in HR for managing and organising this work experience week, as well as the other councillors and many officers who dedicated their time to explain what their jobs involve which helped me gain as much from this week as I could”. *Student*