



Joint North Yorkshire branches

LGR Update

Updates on Local Government Reorganisation from the joint North Yorkshire local government branches; Craven branch, Harrogate branch, North Yorkshire branch, Ryedale branch and Scarborough branch

Issue 2
4 October 2021

UNISON working to protect jobs, as councils agree joint protocol on recruitment

UNISON wrote to the Chief Executives of all eight councils last month to ask that they work together to manage and coordinate recruitment between now and the new Council coming into being.

It didn't make sense to us for the eight councils to continue making external appointments to posts that could be affected by LGR.

We were concerned that some councils were continuing to advertise and recruit to roles that could be duplicated when the new council comes into being from April 2023, and this could create an unnecessary redundancy risk for existing staff.

We are pleased that the eight councils have come together to agree a new 'partnership agreement' which will:

"...maximise opportunities and help retain staff across the authorities, safeguard people's ongoing employment, aid transition to a new organisation,

minimise the risk of future redundancies when bringing services together, better manage resources (staff and finance) in the transition phase, and to continue the delivery of high quality services."

The agreement means that vacancies will be advertised across all eight councils, and existing staff will be able to apply and take part in secondment opportunities.

Staff who do take up secondment opportunities will have the safety-net of knowing that their substantive posts with their original council will remain in place.

We recognise that there are frontline roles that councils are currently finding difficult to recruit to, so we acknowledge that it won't always be appropriate to offer posts to internal staff.

You can read the partnership agreement overleaf.

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Partnership agreement on staff movement and recruitment, agreed by the 8 councils

This is an agreement on staff movement and recruitment during the transition period from 1 October 2021 to the formation of a new council. This protocol aims to maximise opportunities and help retain staff across the authorities, safeguard people's ongoing employment, aid transition to a new organisation, minimise the risk of future redundancies when bringing services together, better manage resources (staff and finance) in the transition phase, and to continue the delivery of high quality services.

The current labour market is extremely scarce and so existing staff are our most valuable asset and will be difficult to replace, particularly in the context of LGR, which may be off putting for many potential applicants.

This framework and the approach adopted is as below, and individual CEXs will need to approve any deviation for their council.

1. All staff across the councils will have equal access to vacancies ensuring equal opportunities for all. Vacancies from all councils will be published on this website, providing all staff with access to apply for all opportunities (internally and externally available). Those interested in applying will be directed to the recruiting council's process.
2. Our councils will work together to discuss where we feel there is the potential for issues such as smaller team numbers post LGR or duplicate roles and look to offer alternative solutions to filling the vacancies in different ways ensuring service outcomes are not impacted. Wherever possible, internal recruitment from across all councils will be sought for vacancies in the transition period with specific efforts to secure temporary rather than permanent resource. A list of duplicate and potentially merged roles will be drafted by HR leads and shared with Heads of Paid Service to aid their decision-making throughout the period of transition.
3. Recruitment to frontline posts needed in the same way in the new council, will continue as normal via external as well as internal recruitment.
4. Where staff in one authority cover a role in another authority, in whole or part, this will be via secondment whereby they will be paid the job evaluated rate for the job (pro rata as appropriate) and will retain their substantive contract in their home council. Where staff take on a secondment opportunity, or additional duties to cover vacancies, support will be provided as needed in terms of training and development which will be considered as part of the appointment process to cover the vacant role.
5. Newly created or additional positions supporting LGR work will be advertised internally across all councils prior to recruiting externally. This provides existing staff with development opportunities, usually via secondment, where they retain their substantive contract in their respective council.
6. In addition to internal advertising there will work by council HR leads with service leads as appropriate, to help identify potential staff who may be able help provide temporary cover for vacant posts.
7. If, for appropriate roles the above is exhausted and a need remains, approval to recruit will be obtained by the HR Group from the relevant CEX. This will usually be on a temporary basis, with permanent recruitment only being considered for roles deemed critical and hard to fill, and where offering a temporary contract will impact on the ability to recruit, and not filling the vacancy will be detrimental to service provision during transition and beyond. In considering exceptions and granting authorisation to recruit, consideration will also be given to whether the role could provide an opportunity for suitable alternative employment for staff in different roles who may be at risk in the future.
8. The labour market has a high level of scarcity, adversely effected by Covid, with many roles hard to fill; therefore positive and consistent messaging across recruitment campaigns for staff, is required to minimise anxiety and maximise likelihood of recruitment. A recruitment campaign brief to supplement campaigns and a recruiting manager brief communicating a united position and collective brand is to be used across all staff recruitment and retention activity.
9. For restructures taking place prior to the new council, redeployees within the recruiting Council will continue to have priority access in line with the recruiting Council's normal processes. As per the existing sub-regional redeployment agreement between the 8 councils, redeployees from the employing council will be considered where possible as a priority with hiring councils after the hiring councils own redeployees have been considered, but prior to other internal/external applicants.
10. Wholly or partly owned subsidiary companies will be encouraged to advertise via the microsite, providing all staff across the 8 councils with easy access to vacancies. Those interested in applying will be directed to the relevant recruiting process. There will be no secondment opportunities to these subsidiary companies, staff applying and if successful will be offered appropriate contracts.