

## South Wales HR Forum

### Health & Social Care Sub-Group



### Meeting 1 Notes

**Date :** Friday 27th May, 2016

**Location:** JCP Solicitors, Swansea

**Attendees:** Mark Hendy, Chair & Founder South Wales HR Forum  
Vicky Nicholas, HR Manager, Family Housing Association (Wales) Ltd  
Christine Rimmer, Director, People Work Together Limited  
Cathryn Ferris, Assistant Director (People) Cartrefi Cymru Cyf  
Catherine Ryan, HR Assistant, Fieldbay Ltd

**Apologies:** Joanne Davies, HR Manager, Community Lives Consortium  
Rebecca Francis-Davies, Regional HR Advisor, HC One  
Hayley Marshall, HR Manager, Fieldbay Ltd  
Emma Knapper, Head of HR, Fieldbay Ltd  
Paul Boon, HR Business Partner, Shaw healthcare Ltd  
Jayne Harrison, HR Business Partner, Shaw healthcare Ltd

In advance of the meeting the following information was submitted to attendees outlining the proposed purpose and objectives of the sub-group.

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The South Wales HR Forum, Health and Social Care sub-group has been assembled to provide a platform for HR professionals within the health and social care sector to meet and share ideas, challenges and suggestions to support one another within their respective employers or work arenas.

Members of this group may work directly for health and social care employers, have an interest in HR activities within this sector or work in a consultancy capacity supporting this sector.

A general overview of some of the areas to be discussed within sub-group meetings include (but are not limited to);-

- Employment legislation changes and how they will affect the sector
- Other PESTLE factors which are affecting the sector or have the potential to affect the sector
- Common themes and challenges which affect the sector and how these can be overcome
- Items for discussion and escalation within the HR community, Welsh Assembly Government and the UK Government.

- Positive and pro-active HR activities that are taking place within the sector and which should be promoted

South Wales HR Forum members who agree to become members of this sub-group should be aware that their name and designation will be stated on any publications or documents that the group produces. This is in keeping with the transparent ethos of the Forum. As such, you should ensure that you have permission for your company's name to be utilised for this purpose, where appropriate.

A sub-group chair will be nominated at the first sub-group meeting whose responsibilities will include:-

- Arranging meetings
- Collating output from each meeting and sending this to the Chair of the South Wales HR Forum for distribution
- Presenting an overview of sub-group activities to members at the AGM.

A member of the Forum Council will endeavour to always provide support to the sub-group and will take care of any expenses incurred for such things as room hire, but may not always be available to attend sub-group meetings.

Sub-group membership is non-committal and we understand the busy nature of members day to day activities, however members are expected to confirm either way, whether they will or will not be attending any scheduled meetings so that no unnecessary expenses are incurred.

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At the meeting, all participants talked openly about the challenges that they were experiencing within the health and social care sector, and these mainly comprised of the following areas:-

#### Turnover

Most attendees discussed the high levels of turnover that they are experiencing within their businesses. This ranged from 20% being the lowest to 35% being approximately the highest.

Various reasons for this level of turnover were discussed with pay rates appearing to vary quite substantially between all employers. Participants confirmed that a trend is starting to be identified where employees are choosing to leave this sector for slightly higher paid industries that have similar level entry requirements, such as the retail industry.

#### Local Authority Challenges

Particularly in businesses that were closely linked with local authorities, either where supplier contracts had been entered into or where the services were provided within exclusive local authority boundaries, the pressures from within these authorities are spilling over into the care providers. For example, one attendee explained how the proposed local authority mergers might have a substantial impact on their customer base. Another attendee explained how the local authorities are not supporting businesses with the introduction of the National Living Wage (more below).

## National Living Wage

Some attendees explained how the National Living Wage will have a profound effect on their business, especially those who provide domiciliary care services with the effect of the NLW with the recent employment tribunal case judgements such as the Tyco case.

One attendee explained how the NLW introduction had resulted in payments being made to staff to ensure compliance but this was affecting the financial reserves of the business.

It was commented that there is a belief that the Government do not understand the scale of this crisis affecting the health and social care sector and that there's a view that it may take even harsher consequences, such as large scale care providers closing to the scale of the BHS and Tata crisis, before any help or significant support is offered to the industry. There was a definite viewpoint that both Government's need to be doing much more to support this industry.

## Agency Usage

Some attendees explained how due to turnover and recruitment difficulties, agency usage is increasing and is unsustainable. There was a view that some individual services are unwilling to operate with agency staff whereas some others are getting close to operating fully with agency staff members which is unacceptable.

## **Future of the South Wales HR Forum Health & Social Care Subgroup**

After discussing these challenges, of which there were more but the above cover the key themes, the group outlined some areas of which they would like to focus in future.

It was agreed that this group would collectively lobby the Government, both Welsh Government and Westminster, regarding the challenges the sector in Wales are facing from a people point of view.

It was also agreed that as a group we would explore working with FE/HE colleges/universities to promote and support care as a career, recognising that more must be done in this area with our academic partners.

Finally, it was agreed that the group would explore funding opportunities with the Welsh Government for various purposes including staff development.

Date and time of the next meeting is to be arranged.

Many thanks to JCP solicitors for supporting the South Wales HR Forum and allowing us the use of their facilities.