



THE
PULSE

PULSE

Spring 2022 Edition

Welcome to your latest edition of The Pulse, some inspiring content to get you Springing forward this April!



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Welcome

by Rebecca Davis,
Chief Executive, WME

Since our last issue of The Pulse at the end of 2021 the world, has again, changed in ways none of us could ever predict in such a short space of time. The horrific atrocities carried out in Ukraine and the refugee crisis have been some of the harrowing things I've ever watched on the news, relentlessly for over a month. Alongside this, we've seen Covid restrictions ease and life return to as near normal as it has been for over 2 years. The knock on effects of both the War in Ukraine and pandemic are slowly going to start impacting communities in different ways, for many, this will see a real increase in the cost of living, as new taxes take hold and prices rise. Local Government will be at the forefront of this impact, as we see our communities struggle and try to find ways to mitigate this and even find growth opportunities in the most challenging of times. Local Government is the heart of democracy, what those in Ukraine are fighting to protect, so many of the stories about ordinary every day people, picking up arms to fight really resonated with me; I could see so many people in our communities and organisations doing the same if faced with the same situation. I've never been prouder to be part of the Local Government family, to work for an organisation that is led by elected members and owned by our Councils – we must never take for granted the importance of democracy on even the smallest of decisions that are made. Organisations across Local Government and the Public Sector will continue to evolve and I've shared a more detailed article on page (Whichever page Becoming the organisation of tomorrow will fall on) about how we will need to support our people both internally and externally.





Diversity and Inclusion

Hot Network article

By Simon Fanshawe



It really is quite understandable that a Council might justify the desire for diversity in its staff because it wants them to 'represent the diversity of the communities' they operate in and for. But how feasible is it to be 'representative'? In London, for instance, 10 years ago the Census revealed that there are over 100 languages spoken across all the boroughs. Some 78% of Londoners speak English as their main language at the same time as belonging to many different cultural traditions. The remaining 22% speak another 53% as theirs! So good luck with representing that!

It's a worthy thought though, even if it is arithmetically impossible. So how can 'being representative' be a practical, rather than a merely rhetorical, objective? A council could respond to that level of diversity through three interlinked approaches:

- Fostering alertness to the diversity of the residents it serves by increasing the diversity of its employees;
- Enabling employees to share their own differences with each other across the organization and increasing the collective understanding of diversity
- Supporting employees to have the confidence to adapt the design and delivery of those services to meet the different needs of people in the borough.

There is a deal of research to suggest that the presence of diversity in teams, while not representative, alerts us to difference outside in communities. This enables teams in Councils to develop a cultural sensitivity in the broadest sense of that phrase.

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Secondly, employees need to share that learning and the insights from their own differences across the organization, so that all their colleagues gain the benefit and, in whatever they do, are then more able to challenge the assumptions the organization is making about the services and products it provides.

Thirdly, people need to be supported by their managers to have the confidence to flex the services and products to match the different ways their residents and customers perceive, access and use them.

The presence of difference matters because it is much easier to challenge each other when we're not all the same. It's hard if you're the only one who is different but if teams are recruited (and promoted) explicitly to create and then value difference, you will have much wider and deeper discussions about the design and delivery of services which then have more impact.

Attempting to be 'representative' as a solution in public services can also blind you to the need for much more fundamental cultural change. There is a very eloquent example of this, albeit an American experience that nonetheless illustrates the pitfall. Professor Jennifer Eberhardt a well known Psychologist at Stanford University published some conclusions from her latest book "Biased" on her work with Oakland Police in California evaluating their behaviour when stopping drivers. She found that 'when officers were speaking to black drivers, they were rated as less respectful, less polite, less friendly, less formal and less impartial than when they spoke to white drivers'. She and her team then combed through nearly 500,000 transcripts of car

stops, tallying the words that signified respect and scoring them. This confirmed their initial conclusions.

However, something unexpected also emerged. 'Black officers were just as likely as white officers to exhibit less respect to black drivers. The drivers' race trumped the officers' race'. The lack of respect correlated to the race of the driver, not the race of the officer.

This points towards the problem lying in the overall culture of the police, not just its representative composition. Police officers, whatever their ethnicity, are being institutionalized into particular attitudes towards certain members of the public. This suggests that race is not the only lens through which to look at the reform of the police, that a lack of representation is not the sole cause of their failures to treat Black people and people from ethnic minorities equally with other members of the community. The problem is not representation, it's culture.



Simon Fanshwe of Diversity by Design is the author of the recently published

"The Power of Difference – where the complexities of diversity and inclusion meet practical solutions"¹

1 <http://www.diversitybydesign.co.uk/>
https://www.amazon.co.uk/Power-Difference-Complexities-Diversity-Inclusion/dp/1398601543/ref=sr_1_1?crd=25XSBT7ZEX170&keywords=the+power+of+differenc+simon+fanshawe&qid=1647532068&spre fix=the+power+of+d,aps,71&sr=8-1



How to stop burnout, so work/life balance is a reality, not a utopia

Hot Network Article

By Andrew Pain



Burnout: a modern buzzword, used loosely by some but fully understood by others, it's now recognised by the World Health Organisation as an 'occupational phenomenon', with research highlighting devastating implications for people who ignore it, from the 146,000 lives claimed every year in the United States alone, to the 1 trillion dollars in lost global production every year.²

But what is burnout and how do we stop it?

The World Health Organisation describes burnout as 'chronic work place stress that has not been well managed', describing 3 key symptoms:



1

Emotional, mental, physical exhaustion (you're not just a bit tired and in need of a lie-in or weekend away: you're utterly finished, overwhelmed and feel like you can't go on)

2

Negativity/ cynicism about your work (because you're overwhelmed, everything seems unfair, wrong and insurmountable. Unsurprisingly, you sink into a spiral of doom and gloom)

3

Poor time efficiency (exhausted and stuck in a negative cycle, you're unmotivated by the things which once energised you. You can't concentrate, your efforts feel pointless and you can no longer make key decisions)

From exclusion to inclusion – you can make the difference!

By Cheryl Samuels & Dean Royles

We need to see equality, diversity and inclusion in the NHS as part of a wider social movement for change, in which line managers, leaders and trade union reps have a crucial role to play.



Line managers and leaders hold positions of power in our organisations because their choices can impact positively or negatively on the people they are leading. It is for this reason that they need to approach people issues with thought and compassion.



We have all felt the pain of being excluded – whether it's being missed off the lunchtime invitation, excluded from a mailing list of career opportunities, not invited to that important meeting to discuss a project we were working on, or just being ignored when we tried to make a contribution to a discussion, it really hurts. Exclusion can be more subtle too: being excluded from an 'in joke', feeling that your items are always last on the meeting agenda, or not being credited for work you have done.

For some people we work with, being excluded is not an occasional inconvenience or frustration, but a regular occurrence. It's all the more hurtful when the result of indirect or direct discrimination, or conscious or unconscious bias, on the grounds of disability, race, gender or sexual orientation.

The journey to greater inclusion in the workplace has been a long one, through both legislation and workplace policies and procedures. Equal opportunity policies, equality and diversity strategies and, more recently, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) approaches, along with their corresponding training and leadership programmes, have all contributed to improvements in the workplace, but all have fallen short of delivering the socially just workplaces many of us want to lead and enjoy.

What is really clear to us is that legislation alone does not change culture. Racism in particular has become more nuanced in recent years and, as such, hovers below eye level but is still



felt by those affected. What hurts is the impact of those actions, inactions, systems, processes and behaviours from those who contribute or turn a blind eye to these lived experiences, or fail to acknowledge, accept or even believe they are happening under their watch.

This hurt can be further compounded when staff seeking advice following a pattern of incivilities are dismissed or disregarded because they are not experienced by the majority. Some of the most painful experiences are unseen but impact the invisible aspects of our physiology like self-esteem and confidence. Trade unions and line managers have a responsibility to broaden their spheres of influence so they can be constantly alert to difference. This provides the opportunity to gain a deep understanding of equality and diversity from a human perspective so they can champion inclusive and anti-racist practices, leading to a more positive and inclusive culture.

So what can we do in practical terms as managers, leaders and trade unions in this social movement for change?

Educate ourselves and lead by example

The NHS has some excellent leaders and managers who deliver day-in and day-out on overall organisational priorities, but work on ending discrimination and ensuring race equality has often lagged behind. Managers need to prioritise their own professional development – only when we change within can we outwardly influence the wider workforce and organisation. This means listening to staff, being curious and being willing to speak truth to power and demonstrate behaviours that lead to true allyship. We need to treat our commitment to EDI training and development as we do our professional CPD.

Welcome and encourage EDI teams as positive disruptors to existing cultures

The NHS has invested, perhaps more than other sectors, in appointing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) specialists in our organisations. But our conversations with many EDI staff suggest they are not getting enough support from senior leaders to drive change. These staff are positive disruptors, often observing and informing the organisation about uncomfortable truths which can be silenced, leading to inaction. As leaders, we can ensure a high profile for EDI issues in divisional and directorate meetings, and give visibility to EDI staff so they can showcase their expertise and explain the workplace culture data they are familiar with. Your EDI staff would love to receive an invite to speak to your teams.

Take responsibility and be accountable

Leaders who holding themselves and others to account for delivery are a huge catalyst for producing results. As leaders, we know the importance of visibility, living by our values and role modelling. We also know that more diverse organisations and better balanced boards deliver better patient care. We have incredibly diverse teams, but we know the diversity of our senior leadership teams doesn't reflect that diversity.

We need to ask ourselves: what deliberate action are we personally taking to improve the racial diversity of senior leadership within our directorates and divisions? Seek out resources and toolkits from your organisation or trade union, such as MiP's new guide to managing equality and diversity (mip.social/equality-guide). Representation matters as it inspires hope in a socially unjust society. Good leadership requires us to surround ourselves with people with diverse perspectives who can disagree with us without fear of retaliation.



Don't be afraid of change

We all know the importance of compassionate, supportive cultures and most of us are leading projects or initiatives to change and improve our cultures. Yet we worry about the potential unexpected consequences of changing the incumbent culture in highly complex organisations where care and compassion matter most. But with the support of our executive teams, we can take more risks and set more ambitious targets for equality and diversity, knowing there is a link to better patient care. Lockdown has taught us we can make changes in the workplace faster than ever thought possible. We can translate that sense of urgency into our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

And, if you are MiP or a trade union representative, you can work in partnership with management to create a compelling vision for greater inclusion and shape the culture of your organisation. You take on the role of representative because you want to make a difference, to improve your members' experience of work and ensure all have access to justice. Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff do not routinely have access to justice, in all aspects of life. Trade unions have a responsibility to advocate for and support paying members. Union representatives need to be impartial but ready to speak truth to power and amplify the voices of marginalised groups so action can be taken to eradicate micro-aggressions and other incivilities that dampen the staff experience. Keep EDI high up the agenda, update your own training, be an ally and make this a priority for action.

Managers, leaders and trade union representatives need to embody the changes needed and that starts with us holding the mirror up, acknowledging areas for improvement, taking informed action and holding each other to account. And we need conversations within our own teams, union members and management groups, where we actively listen in order to understand lived experiences and take action. The power of true partnership working can lead to culturally inclusive organisations that are intolerant to negative behaviours, but allow diverse staff to thrive.

Cheryl Samuels is deputy director of workforce transformation at NHS England London Region. Dean Royles is president of the Healthcare People Management Association. To join the movement for change on Twitter, use [#InclusiveHR](#).



Leading for Inclusion

In 2020, the 32 Councils in the West Midlands Region and West Midlands Employers collaborated to understand the challenges we face relating to inclusion and diversity within organisations by commissioning independent research into the lived experience of underrepresented groups in our organisations. This has led to the creation of our Leading for Inclusion programme which is beginning its first intake of cohorts in September 2022. The creation of this programme stems from the successful and CIPD and PPMA award winning Stepping Up D&I programme. More information will follow through a launch webinar.

To read more regarding the background and what the programme can offer you, please see our website [here](#).

For a more detailed breakdown and to register your interest see our brochure [here](#).

Keeping up with the Newbies

By Hiba Bukhari

Since the beginning of the year and the aftermath of Covid-19, WME has gone through many changes some of which include the growth of our small team in Willenhall. We are 4 new starters who have brought our own experiences and skills onboard and for this edition of the pulse we sat down together to write up a little about ourselves to let you all know what makes us tick.



Katy Finance Assistant



I started with WME at the beginning of December as Finance Assistant focussing on financial activities. Upon starting my induction we were again advised to work from home where possible, however even this being the case the team have already made me feel very much part of the WME family and don't feel like I have been on my own working remotely at all.

Prior to starting with the organisation I had a career break to raise my three Children, Finley 12 & Lilly and Ava 9. Once they were all in school I gained my AAT Level 3 Qualification and a role at an Accountants as an Accounts Clerk where I was for four years.

I spend my free time in the gym, as a taxi service for my children or away in our caravan.

Nathan Resourcing Service Advisor



I joined WME in December as a Resourcing Service Assistant on 6 month contract after leaving my role in Education Recruitment which I had been in for just over 4 years. Shortly after joining WME, I applied for the full-time position of Resourcing Service Advisor and now am a permanent member of the team.

I have really enjoyed my first few months at WME, everyone has been so welcoming, and I really feel as though I have become a part of the WME family very quickly.

I am very excited for what the future holds in my time at WME and can safely say I have found a place that I feel I can grow and develop both professionally and personally.

Now to leave you with a little interesting fact about myself... As a child I loved the show Fresh Prince of Bel Air it was all I watched, so much so that now my party trick is that I know all the words to the Fresh prince of Bel air theme tune (including the hidden verses).

Prove it did I hear you yell?!

Chloe Senior Consultant in Resourcing



I joined WME in December as a Senior Consultant in the Resourcing Team and am the lead for the WMJobs service. In addition to this I am also responsible for delivering regional campaigns and recruitment projects.

I'm so glad I made the move to WME – since arriving I've been made to feel welcome by the whole team. Everyone is clearly committed to delivering an excellent service and are full of energy and passion – it's really refreshing. Just because we are small in number doesn't mean we aren't ambitious!

I've worked in resourcing and HR for 15 years across a variety of roles and sectors. In my previous role I was a Resourcing Manager at West Midlands Police, responsible for police officer recruitment including our delivery of the National Uplift Programme and new entry routes into policing. Prior to my time at WMP I was the Recruitment Business Partner for the national charity Sense leading the recruitment and onboarding provision for England, Wales and NI with a particular focus on adult social care, ensuring statutory compliance and service improvement.

Fun fact – I have a very eclectic music taste – Spice Girls, David Bowie, Elton John, Slade ... I might have been born in the wrong decade!

Hiba Marketing and Communications Advisor



After joining the team in December within Marketing and Communications I quickly found my footing in a family away from my own, that welcomed me with open arms and respect. I have been given room to grow and give advice from my peers and elders whom I have so much to learn from.

I recently graduated in Digital Marketing Management and throughout my studies I have worked in many different sectors from admin, to sales, to kitchen design and now within Marketing as I found myself being able to apply my knowledge here. I am towards the beginning of my career journey but I still feel like a valued member of the team who is given the reigns and room to make decisions.

In my spare time I like to pick up new hobbies and fads all the time! I love eating, sleeping and visiting the gym occasionally. I am a Sagittarius and as expected I am always looking to my next adventure. Currently I am learning Korean and co-writing a book with a friend hoping to self-publish it soon!

It's exciting times and full speed ahead as we continue to expand with the introduction of our careers site where we advertise roles within our own organization. It gives everyone the opportunity to read more about WMEmployers and what our individual departments carry out to help offer the best recruitment, consultancy and training services that we can.

Where next for hybrid working?

By Karen Elliot

As the government has relaxed the rules on employees being able to return to the workplace, we are now in a position where we really get to experiment and learn how hybrid working could be part of the workplace over the long term. Up to this point, we haven't had choice. Before the pandemic, employees predominantly were expected to attend a place of work and during pandemic employees who could do so, were expected to work from home. It is only now, that employers and employees can work together to look at how they get the best of both worlds to create an approach which balances individual and organisational choice.

The million-dollar question is how to we achieve the best of both worlds. Let's look at three aspects which will be key to making it work in the long term.

It isn't just about location

There has been a lot of attention on the subject of hybrid working, or remote working, and for those who are unable to work in a flexible location, this has understandably caused a range of frustrations, not least due to the increased health risk



they have been under whilst being at a place of work during the pandemic.

Whilst we can't change the fact that some roles need to be done at a specific location, we can look at the wider flexibility agenda to see how people working in these roles can achieve greater work-life balance. Timewise (a leading consultancy in the flexible working agenda) looks at three dimensions of flexibility, 'where, when and how much'. A lot of attention has been given to the 'where' agenda as a result of the pandemic, but less so on the 'when' and 'how much'.

'When' is about when people do their work and how much flexibility has around this. For example, if someone works a 37-hour working week, does it matter if they don't work 9-5 or Monday to Friday? Or for those doing shift work, how could you achieve greater flexibility with start and finish times.

'How much' is about the number of hours you work, whether that is full time or part time.

Looking at flexibility more broadly than just location, is fundamental to those who need to be at a place of work.

Balancing fairness vs Flexibility

A piece of research funded by the CIPD and led by Affinity Health at Work through a consortium of employers and other stakeholders identified that being open, fair and consistent was a key behaviour for line managers⁴. I often get told by managers that they are concerned about allowing a flexible working request as it wouldn't be fair on the wider team.

Getting the balance right between being supportive of flexibility whilst being fair to all can be a tricky one, but two things can help here...

Firstly, look at the job design of a role. Challenge yourself to think differently about how a role could be delivered, factoring changes and developments in demands from customers, technological developments and workflows. Once this has been developed into a job description, you can then assess the role for its flexibility against the activities and duties. You are therefore assessing flexibility against a role profile, rather than an individual's request, therefore making it a far fairer process. It also enables greater transparency for flexibility right at the outset of the employee lifecycle. As a role goes through a job evaluation process to make decisions on pay levels, roles should also go through flexibility assessments and advertised accordingly.

Historically, employees have needed to justify why they wanted different working patterns, for example those with caring responsibilities being the most typical. But what about those who don't have caring responsibilities, but want to work in a different way to achieve greater work-life balance? Not asking 'why' someone wants to work flexibly is also really important to ensure fairness to all.

Mitigating the impact of a two-tiered workforce

There has been lots of talk about concerns over a two-tiered workforce, both during the pandemic and beyond. This is where there is a divide between those in the workplace and those working from home. One of the main frustrations I have heard from employees who have needed to attend a place of work is not only how they feel less valued, but also how their workload has increased to take on additional duties to compensate for those not on site.

Harvard Business Review have effectively tackled the issue of two-tiered workforce through what they call 'hybrid positioning'

and 'hybrid competence'.⁵ Hybrid positioning is about where people are placed. Those who are on site vs those who are remote have different access to resources and visibility. These are both key sources of power and influence. It is critical for manager to track their hybrid configurations, who is working when and where and surface the challenges this creates with the team and what you can do to overcome this.

Hybrid competence recognises that not all employees are equally skilled at operating within a hybrid environment. Hybrid working requires employees to effectively navigate between both worlds in a way that fully located or fully remote doesn't. Employees who are good at relationship building have an advantage in hybrid environments. Again, managers need to surface the subject of hybrid competence with their teams and look to address ways that they can provide support to build hybrid competence for those that need it.

Trial and error

None of us have had experience of working in a hybrid way outside a pandemic, so what has worked over the last two years may look different to the next two years. Taking an open minded and experimental approach over the coming months will help teams / organisations work out what is best for them.

Karen Elliot is a WME associate and Senior People Consultant, she works at both a strategic and operational levels to deliver value adding people initiative, using an evidence based approach.



The National Graduate Development Programme

From the Local Government Organisation

The National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP) is the flagship graduate programme for local government. A two-year, fast-track scheme, the NGDP recruits candidates from all over England, placing successful applicants within all types of councils. Graduates take on a minimum of three separate placements in a range of departments, services or schemes alongside completing an ILM qualification in leadership and management. The NGDP allows graduates to experience working in a local council and gives them the opportunity to see how local government operates as a whole.

Councils are fast paced and satisfying places to work in, and the NGDP allows graduates to work in placements across the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of an area, which are all vital parts of a local authority's role in a community. Graduates could be placed in a number of different services, such as housing, social care or working with councillors and politicians. Communities are evolving and there is now an even greater need to engage with and provide tailored services for an increasingly diverse population. The pandemic has also demonstrated the importance of local councils within communities and the support they provide to residents. The NGDP provides councils with graduates that are passionate about giving back to their communities and making a difference their local areas.

The NGDP has a very good retention rate, with alumni often staying in local government and progressing up the ranks. For example, some alumni have reached the levels of Heads of Services, Assistant Directors or Chief Executive. The programme helps to produce the leaders of tomorrow in local government and being part of the NGDP allows councils to start thinking earlier about longer-term succession planning and future leadership potential.

Graduates bring a new perspective and fresh thinking that can help generate new ideas within councils. They are often placed on high profile projects which give them the opportunity to develop key skills early in their career. The programme allows

the graduates to form professional networks that will continue to serve them throughout their careers.

Graduate recruitment can be time-consuming and demanding on council resources, and that is why the LGA runs a national marketing and recruitment campaign to help identify the most promising future leaders for the future of local government. Candidates go through a multi-stage recruitment process before they get to a council. This includes a situational judgement test, video interview and assessment centre. By using a rigorous recruitment process, the NGDP can ensure that candidates are of an extremely high calibre. The Local Government Association (LGA) manages the full recruitment process until interview, which is when candidates are introduced to councils.

Currently, the NGDP has graduates placed within over 60 councils across the country, and this number still growing. The NGDP is a flexible programme, making it easy for councils of any size to shape the programme in a way that both meets their needs and provides a brilliant experience for graduates.

This year, the National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP) has attracted applications from over 4,000 graduates keen to embark on a career in local government. The scheme is continually looking for new councils to sign up and take part. The scheme has been running for over 20 years and has worked with hundreds of councils and over 2000 graduates and is highly valued by the sector. Taking on an NGDP graduate has a number of benefits to your council and is a fantastic way to develop the local government leaders of the future.



It is easy for councils to sign up, to find out more information and details on the next cohort, visit the LGA website [here](#) or email ngdp@local.gov.uk for a chat with the team.

T-Levels and Industry Placements - Making T-Levels work for your council

By Nigel Carruthers



Last year, the Government launched a two-year technical qualification for 16–19-year-olds, called T Levels. T Levels are designed in collaboration with employers and offer a combination of classroom learning and work experience through an Industry Placement which runs for a minimum of 45 days.

Each T Level is equivalent to three A Levels and aims to equip young people with the key skills and knowledge required within industries such as digital, IT, construction and business and admin to name a few. T Levels also provide a progression route into apprenticeships, higher education, or entry level employment.

T Levels are an important way of training the next generation of talent and can help boost opportunities for young people. They also provide councils with an opportunity to engage with young people and promote their workplace as an attractive destination to work in the future. The Local Government Association (LGA) are working closely with the Gatsby Foundation to support local authorities who are looking to host Industry Placements, and to reap the short- and long-term benefits of T Levels.

What's in it for councils?

Taking on a T Level Industry Placement offers councils access to a pool of highly skilled and academic young people and allows councils to directly contribute to the skills, knowledge and opportunities of young people in their area, helping them to establish a future working in public services. This in turn increases awareness and understanding of local government and provides a diverse pool of work-ready young people to fill future vacancies.

A number of councils have already taken on T Level Industry Placements. One of those councils are Oldham, who recently took on a number of students studying a digital T Level. Aki Khan, Learning and Development Commissioner from Oldham

Council highlighted his experience of hosting placements at the council: “[At first] Line managers were a bit hesitant. [...] But it became quickly apparent that these guys are clearly self-motivated; a lot of the work that we gave them they lead independent research on [...]. It really changed perceptions [and] increased skills of mentors and line managers as well, because it was quite easy to nurture them and support them [...] because they were really eager to learn.”

As well as helping to shape the workforce of the future, T Level Industry Placements can increase capacity within teams during the programme and offer development for potential line managers and mentors.

Our support offer to councils

The LGA's T Level Support Programme aims to ensure councils have the capacity to engage, plan and deliver high quality Industry Placements, and will add efficiency to the process while ensuring the Industry Placement is effective for both the council and the young person.

Supported by the Gatsby Foundation, the LGA is offering direct support to councils, with up to five days of flexible support throughout the two year programme, and will work with each council closely to ensure best use of the support available. This can include working to find a T Level provider, line management and mentor training, and help with the recruitment process.

As well as this one-to-one support, as part of signing up to the Support Programme you will have access to the T Level toolkit, which includes a wealth of resources to ensure you can deliver high quality Industry Placements.

Applications for the
LGA T Level Support
Programme are open now.

Find out more on the LGA
website [here](#)



Intelligent HR analytics does NOT start with capturing data!



By Omar Ismail

It starts with asking questions and then capturing meaningful data that gives you the answers to your questions....



Too often, HR is caught up in collecting lots and lots of data and creating reports that showcase the level of input and activities HR have been involved in over the last month or last quarter. In essence, its hindsight sight reporting put simply looking backwards to go forward. However, when HR takes a different approach and challenge themselves to analyse and mine their data for insights, they can gain valuable foresight which can provide the right prescription on how to solve a business or workforce issues and or give a predication on what you can do to improve and or avoid problems looking forward. Ultimately, HR analytics, also known as people analytics, is the use of people-data in analytical processes to solve business problems. HR analytics uses both people-data, collected by HR systems (such as payroll absence management) and business information (for example, operations performance data).

As an HR professional in a data-driven world, you must be up to date with the latest advancements in data analytics and how they apply to people management. In today's fast-changing environment, expertise in people analytics is among the most in-demand skill sets in HR. Organisations worldwide are turning to human capital analytics to gain a deeper understanding of their workforces and improve the quality and credibility of HR decision-making.

My journey in HR analytics started over sixteen years when I was asked to link all the training & development programmes to the company KPIs with clearly defined ROIs for each programme. And I must be honest; it was no easy task. For the last four years, I have been delivering the CIPD Data and Analytics for People Professionals two-day programme globally. If you are curious to gain practical analytics insights and demystify the subject of measures, metrics, analytics, and data, this programme will provide an in-depth introduction to HR analytics. It gives you the tools to leverage your data in a way that creates more HR value and credibility.

Some of the key learning outputs gained from the programme are:



Of course, other learning and insights are gained that speak directly to how you are capturing and managing your data, but I wanted to provide a snapshot of what is covered during the two days.

At this point in this article, I imagine that some of you may be thinking analytics is not an exciting subject for me, nor is it my strength. Well, the good news is HR data analytics does not need to be complicated, and you do not need to have a data science degree in statistical analysis to create more HR value and make your data more meaningful for you, your leadership team and your organisation's strategic objectives.

You see, what I have learned over the last two decades using data is that it's not about statistics, plot diagrams, pie charts, and showcasing your ability to produce reports and fancy excel spreadsheets. It is first and foremost adopting an analytics mindset that solves your organisation's people & business problems. During the two-day programme, you will have the opportunity to explore and discuss the following questions... Take a moment now to reflect on the following questions:

Why do you capture and measure data within your organisation?

What do you currently measure?

How do you capture and measure data?

Does the person/s who receives the outputs of what you measure do anything with it?

Is your data understood discussed?

Do you measure for Hindsight, Insight, or foresight?

Do you capture both qualitative and quantitative data?

When considering the above questions in your organisation's context, you may think, I or we need to rethink the approach to our data analytics strategy within our organisation, but where do I start? The short answer is... to clearly articulate the purpose and problem you want your analytics strategy to address and solve today and for the future? However, if you think you would like more insights and support about analytics, then CIPD Data and Analytics for People Professionals two-day programme could be the right programme for you to start with.

Created in collaboration with the Local Government Association and the CIPD, the programme is aimed at Local Government people professionals leading their organisations through change and transformation. [The Inspire People Professionals Academy](#), was launched to help support you as part of our national workforce programme of support to councils across the English regions.

If you wish to find out more information, please join our inspire introduction event on 24th May at 11am through Zoom [here](#).



Thriving in Retirement

By Sharon Phillips, AD Finance & Governance

In February WME launched a new workshop focussed on an end stage of the employee life cycle – retirement! The Thrive into Retirement workshop supports individuals in planning for their retirement in a way that enables them to focus on what the future holds and how to 'leave their job well'.



Fiona Narburgh creator and facilitator of this workshop said

“What surprised me was how keen people were to leave their organisation in a really good place. There was far more talk of succession planning than globe-trotting. How public spirited we are, even as we approach our exit from local government.”



Here is Sharon Phillips' perspective from our first workshop.

Revive and Refire

I'm 60 with a husband who's been enjoying retirement for over a decade, so I attended **Thriving into Retirement** to make me start thinking about what life after work might look like for me. I have loved my working life, so the thought of retirement is a little bit scary.

The workshop is led by Fiona Narburgh and her easy style makes it very conversational, even in a virtual world. We each got a 'RetireBook' where we could start to capture early thoughts as we worked through 3 stages - what we want to do before we go - 10 key retirements issues - and the start of a plan!

Interestingly, half of the delegates had been in their current jobs for over 25 years (like me) and all appreciated having the time to really think about what retirement could offer. But they also wanted to think about what they still want to do before they leave work behind.

Everyone will get something different from this workshop, but it was a chance to discuss what we are excited about and worried about? To consider the potentials and the pitfalls. For many people, me included, their identity is intrinsically linked to the job they do, so I found the discussion around 'reinvention' helpful to start thinking not about who we are, but who we could be. I know I'd like to do some volunteering and have decided to start asking people who know me well, what they think I could be – just to open my mind to wider possibilities.

We also need to really think and plan for how we will fill our free time to give us structure and purpose. Hearing what interests' others began to spark ideas in me – including the need to incorporate exercise of any kind for a healthier body and mind. The workshop helped me think about a new purpose, new experiences ... and that I really should set a date!

We may be hesitant to talk openly to our managers about 'the when' - but in truth, having an honest conversation early can only help us and our organisation to plan for change. There may be things you want to do in your organisation before you go so it's an opportunity to discuss that with your manager, in turn the organisation will welcome a timescale that helps them to focus your knowledge and skills towards specific outputs before they lose you. Ultimately, we all want to leave well – we want to feel valued and be productive to the end, but we also want to be able to enjoy the transition phase – supporting successors, as you start to focus on your own new opportunities.



Research shows that people who think about and plan for retirement tend to thrive. The workshop recognises that as individuals' retirement will be different for all of us – of the different types of retiree, I think I could be an 'easy glider' but I want to be an 'adventurer' and a 'searcher', and possibly a 'continuer' too – so I will consciously add actions into my plan to make sure of this.

I will keep visiting my retirebook – adding to my interests and ambitions and developing my 'plan' to revive (through more free time) and to refire (through new interests). Most importantly, I will have the 'when' conversation with my manager!



Continuer

Base activities on skills and interests already developed, basically keep doing what they do and maintain their former identity



Adventurer

Go after new ideas and dreams, may launch entirely new enterprises



Easy Glider

People who just enjoy the freedom post work with no real plans and take one day at a time



Retreater

People who want a break from it all, they disengage or take some time out, potential to get depressed



Searchers

People who adopt a trial and error approach as they look into new possibilities



Involved Spectator

Still care deeply about their previous work and keep in touch with people still working

Email info@wmemployers.org.uk to find out more about Thriving to Retire.



Dear Boss,
I wanted to formally notify you that I intend to get pregnant tonight.... Said no employee ever!

The statement borders on ridiculous, doesn't it? For most individuals, informing an employer about a pregnancy usually comes after copulation, the bun is in the proverbial oven and a scan has confirmed the pregnancy.

But that's not the case for those couples who require fertility treatment in order to have a child of their own. Often, needing to tell an employer about starting a round of fertility treatment can feel as embarrassing and exposing as a fertile couple informing their employer that they're going to have intercourse.

As Kellogg's and Virgin Group become the latest organisations to offer support to employees going through fertility treatment, perhaps it's time to shine a brighter light on one of the most taboo topics not only in the workplace, but in society too.

The Statistics

The World Health Organisation describes infertility as a disease, estimating that 48 million couples and 186 million individuals live with infertility across the globe. Research carried out by Fertility Network UK estimates that 3.5 million people in the UK were affected by fertility issues.



It's also important to remember that infertility is not just a female issue, with male factor infertility accounting for approximately half of all infertility issues (Fertility Network UK).

In 2016, research⁶ carried out by Fertility Network UK and Middlesex University London found that 50% of women didn't tell their employer about their fertility treatment for fear of not being taken seriously, and 40% didn't disclose due to concerns that disclosure would have a negative impact on their career.⁷ Others may also feel a sense of shame that their bodies can't do what they're naturally expected to, and therefore feel unable to discuss their situation.

A 2019 poll of 4000 UK employees by LinkedIn and Censuswide found that 53% of respondents indicated that their employers did not have policies relating to fertility, whilst only 43% of respondents felt supported by their employers. The same survey also reached out to 1000 HR professionals, of whom 91% felt that 'they would benefit from education and support to better understand employee fertility issues.'⁸

6 - <https://fertilitynetworkuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SURVEY-RESULTS-Impact-of-Fertility-Problems.pdf>

7 - Harvard Business Review, 11 November 2020, <https://hbr.org/2020/11/employers-its-time-to-talk-about-infertility>

8 - People Management, 29 October 2019, <https://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/news/articles/employees-undergoing-fertility-treatment-lack-support>

Hear Their Voice

The fact that there is no statutory protection for people undergoing fertility treatment means there is a greater need for employers acting out of a duty of care to support their staff, with the impact of treatment being as much psychological as it is physical. But for employers to be able to carry out their duty of care, they need to create an open culture in which the voices of their employees can be heard without filters so that the true impact of the treatment on their employees can be understood.

Here's a little insight shared with us from a local government employee about their own experiences of undergoing fertility treatment whilst working:

"I've had a different version of the same journey with two different employers – the first time it was hard, stressful and I didn't feel like I could be open about what was going on. I ended up taking a lot of time off either as annual leave or sick leave just to avoid the stress.

I told two senior colleagues in my department about my infertility. Before long, the whole team knew not only that my partner and I were going to try to have fertility treatment but were also aware of the nature of the surgery I was due to undergo. The breach of confidentiality was huge and inevitably a contributory factor in my decision to find another job.

There were no formal policies in place for people like me. I felt unseen, unheard and a bit of a burden whilst people figured out what to do with my situation.

The drugs made me feel so tired and at times nauseous. The injection sites were often sore and bruised. I struggled to concentrate and my mind was always on the treatment and what would happen at the next appointment.

The second time was a completely different ballgame. The open culture of the organisation meant that I could talk freely with my manager who assured me that I would be supported and that my wellbeing came first – this mattered more than words could describe.

Because of the pandemic, my clinic required me to isolate from the start of the process through to the point of a pregnancy test. My organisation allowed me to work flexibly around how I was feeling and that made the world of difference."

Key Considerations – Employer Action Matters

When thinking about how best to support staff going through fertility treatment, here are some key considerations to think of:

-  How do you provide flexible working to enable an employee to undergo fertility treatment?
-  How do your policies recognise absences related to fertility treatment?
-  Is your bereavement policy/access to counselling inclusive to those who are undertaking fertility treatment and particularly for those that have experienced failed cycle(s) of fertility treatment?
-  Are managers aware and equipped are you managers about fertility treatment, and what support is available for them to provide? Is infertility training and awareness captured as part of training?
-  Is due consideration taken in regards to the employees work commitments during the time of fertility, with a positive correlation between stress and failed fertility treatment requires a review of the work that may create stress and pressure?
-  How inclusive is our support and understanding recognising that partners, including male partners may also need to undergo treatment and require flexibility to attend appointment?

Consistency, inclusivity and confidentiality are key – protecting staff when they are at their most vulnerable will pay dividends when it comes to staff loyalty. Your actions can make a significant difference on how an employee experiences their fertility treatment journey.

With infertility impacting so many people, maybe it's now time to **destigmatise** infertility, **normalise** conversations about fertility in the workplace, training managers to be able to have these conversations sensitively, **recognise** the challenges that infertility and fertility treatment can bring and **formalise** arrangements for individuals going through fertility treatment in policy.

The name of the author of this article has been omitted for anonymity and sensitivity.



Following the Recruitment Journey – Interim to Permanent

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

By Chantelle Wooldridge, Principal Consultant Resourcing



After a change in structure during the summer of 2021, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council required an Interim S151 Officer to join their leadership team whilst they considered the approach to appointing to the role on a permanent basis. Brent Davis, Chief Executive at Nuneaton and Bedworth asked WME to support in sourcing an Interim S151 Officer. With a buoyant candidate market, and S151 Officers in high demand, it was going to be a challenge to source someone who was available for an immediate start. Anna Jay, WME's Executive Search associate has more than 20 years'

experience of sourcing candidates for Executive roles, she is well connected and has an extensive network, which meant we were soon able to supply the Council with a small pool of candidates to select from. Stephen Fitzgerald, a former S151 Officer and Director of Finance was selected, invited for interview and appointed into the role.

Now that WME had secured an Interim S151 Officer into the role, the Council were keen for us to support them in recruiting to the permanent position. The Council had previously advertised the role and used more traditional routes of advertising, and although there had been a good response, the post was still unfilled. Anna Jay and I met with Brent Davis and Ruth Bartlett, HR Manager to fully understand the requirements of the role and the type of skills and qualities they were looking for in a candidate. We took the brief and created an informative and engaging candidate pack, which provided candidates with a real understanding of the journey the Council had been on over the last few years and their future ambitions post pandemic. Our recruitment strategy included advertising on specialist and national press, social media and Executive Search. Anna Jay conducted the Executive Search, reaching out to her network and sources to find suitably qualified and skilled candidates. We provided Brent with a progress update report on a weekly basis, which included

how many candidates had been approached and any feedback received from candidates which we felt needed to be highlighted. By the time of the closing date, the role had received circa 700 views across the advertising platforms and more than 80 candidates had been approached about the opportunity.

The campaign resulted in 7 applications for the role, 6 of which were either Recommended or Marginal candidates. We presented a longlisting report to Brent Davis and Ruth Bartlett, which included a full breakdown of activity for the entire campaign. We discussed candidate's submissions and decided on a longlist of 4 candidates. The Council were keen to take through the 4 candidates to final members panel, however we strongly recommended technically assessing candidates and conducting a further short list before candidates were invited to attend the final members' panel.

Stephen Fitzgerald and I conducted virtual technical interviews with candidates to understand their technical skill and finance experience. By including this step we were able to add real value to the selection process because we were able to identify areas of strength and development for each candidate and provide more insight into their experience, in addition to what had been previously submitted on their CV. After further discussion we agreed that 3 candidates be the final longlist and taken through to the final members panel.

The final panel took place a few days after the technical interviews, where a candidate was successfully appointed.

It's been a pleasure to work with Brent Davis and Ruth Bartlett with this recruitment campaign and to be able to see the recruitment journey from interim to permanent be made.

We are passionate about people and we work collaboratively with you as part of our Executive Recruitment service, to source the talent you need. We understand every client's needs are different, and from our extensive public sector experience, we know the need to be able to adapt and work flexibly is key, which is why our Executive Recruitment offer is tailor made.

You can read more about Brent's experience of working WME as their preferred Executive Recruitment partner by [here](#).



Making the most of WME Interims

By Lesley Shore



A recent front cover in the MJ shone a spotlight on the current and predicted squeeze on professional and senior management roles across the Local Government Sector. Most of you will have already experienced recruitment difficulties in key roles, whether in planning, senior social work or HR, and latest indications are that this trend is likely to get worse over the coming years not better.

There will need to be a number of initiatives to address these shortfalls, and many of you will have approaches to talent management, succession planning and career pathways in your workforce strategy to support this identified gap.

These initiatives however will only yield results in the medium to long term. What do you do if you have someone in a key post resign now? How can you manage whilst the person exits the business (often with lots of holiday to take) and the wait whilst a recruitment process is planned, activated and for your new recruit to resign and join your organisation. For you to do justice to a recruitment campaign this may take two to three months, with potentially an additional 3 months' notice – meaning that you will be without a key postholder for 5 to 8 months.

West Midlands Employers can support you in providing high quality interim services across a number of senior roles. Whilst you may know of our Interim services for HR professionals, you may not know that we also provide interims for other professions, and have recently placed interims in S151, Monitoring Officer and Comms roles.

Sometimes thinking about having an interim might be a bit daunting – you will have to do all the work of “onboarding” someone twice for what will be hopefully a short period of time, but don't let the thought of this put you off. What interims provide is a flexible, experienced resource who often don't need lots of induction or hand holding through the early months, as they are used to joining organisations with a minimum of support. They can focus on clear objectives for delivery from you and don't get side-tracked into lots of other issues, meaning they can deliver work quickly and with a clarity of purpose which is often helpful for when a permanent post holder arrives, especially if projects have stalled due to lack of capacity.



Tina Cook, one of WME's experienced HR Interims says

“Being an interim has opened up a variety of roles in different organisations, which I thoroughly enjoy. Most often colleagues are pleased to have you on board and in my experience have made me feel like part of the Team quickly.”

Whilst I understand the unpredictability of an interim and gaining future assignments, this way of working suits me.”

So if you find yourself needing a short to medium term resource why not think about a WME interim – ask any of the WME team and we will direct your query to the right place.





Becoming the organisation of tomorrow

By Rebecca Davis, Chief Executive, West Midlands Employers @RebeccaDavisWME

Its time to focus on our People Strategy 3.0 for a highly volatile world; only a few months ago, we thought 2022 would be a return to normal. We are now faced with new challenges, all of which offer both opportunity and threats to our organisations and people. A recent PWC survey of Chief Executives reported, that in 2022 73% highlight that there is a 'skills threat' to the sustainability of their business, compared with 10% reporting that in 2014. We are seeing and feeling that in Local Government – we have many specialist roles, that we are in direct competition with other sectors for. Those skills in most demand are creating a 'gig economy', where workers are controlling where, when and how much they work for; as a sector we can't compete with money. We need to compete on our own terms and that competition has to come through 'Making a Difference for and through our People'. OD in Local Government is as much about our internal people as the impact we have on people in our community.



Our People Strategies need a radical, sweeping and progressive rethink and if as a Leadership Team you don't have that on your list of priorities for 2022/23, it needs to be. Our People Strategy is the business articulation of how the business strategy will be achieved from a people perspective and in a sector which is all about our 'people' and not 'products' we need to ensure we really understand the link to business value and report on it using the right real-time metrics.

Organisation Development practitioners are the creators of the strategy aligning business value and facilitating organisational success. At WME we are working with many top teams and HR Directorates to really understand the challenges of the future workforce, in early 2022 we launched our Regional Workforce Strategy for Local Government, that is designed to fit alongside local People Strategies.

People Strategies need to 'become' something different, top trends we expect to see are:



Equality & Diversity will become EDB

Equality, Diversity & Belonging. Its not enough for people to feel accepted and a sense of organisational fairness, people want to feel they have a sense of belonging. This can't be created in a strategy or policy. Its about culture - and its clear people are looking harder at what that means and what their purpose is. Our people are also our community, they live and work in areas that have felt inequality through the pandemic and as employers we need to be acutely aware of the link between what we do and how that feels for our workforce and their families; as both members of our community and employees. This is at the heart of creating belonging.



Wellbeing will be become Financial Wellbeing

In 2020, wellbeing was all about mental wellbeing and supporting people through the pandemic. That's still important and there is still a need to help people adjust to the new ways of working. In 2022/23 we need to ensure we are supporting financial wellbeing, people will struggle and we need to help people learn ways to save money, budget better and where necessary support some provision of assistance. We also need to support the financial wellbeing of our communities, with a clear plan to help the thousands that will find themselves struggling to pay increasing energy bills, manage interest rate increases and needing to access food banks.



Managers will become more influential

As employees work more remotely, the sphere of 'contact' they have will be eroded over time. Employees will have less and less regular informal contact with managers and Directors from other teams. The tendency of Zoom and Teams calls to be very tactical and functional will mean the influence of managers will increase. Effectively managers will become the face of organisational culture and pivotal to retention. Poor managers and management practices will be very costly for organisations, even more so in hard to fill areas. As the power of managers increases, so must our investment in their development and approach to addressing poor management behaviours.



Employee engagement will become about digital dialogue

Within Local Government we have invested heavily in the role technology plays in engaging customers and our citizens, but we've lagged behind when it comes to the digital platforms and technology to regularly engage with our employees and understand what that data is telling us. Annual engagement surveys don't capture the here and now and its in the 'here and now' that people make decisions about leaving or staying in an organisation.

HR in Education Programme

An Opportunity for HR Development

by Lorna Wells, WME Principal Consultant

WME has designed and launched the **HR in Education Programme**. This is specifically for HR practitioners new to working in the Education Sector. With the third cohort dates now out, course designers Lorna Wells and Monica Puri both share their experience of working in the Education Sector and the benefits the new programme will have for HR colleagues who are new to working in schools.



I moved from a Corporate Local Government HR role to a School Consultant role in 2004. Having worked in a consultancy role for most of my HR career I was well conversed with handling a caseload and providing advice at all levels. What I wasn't prepared for was the significant differences I was faced with working in a school environment for the first time. The governance arrangements add a layer of complexity, getting my head around all the different school types and who is responsible for what was something I learnt on the job and I was lucky to have a supporting team with experience working in schools. Had a formal grounding through a bridging course or programme been available it would have helped me be confident and perform at a higher level more quickly.



Another thing I hadn't had much experience of, was the level of engagement and interaction with the Trade Unions as there is in schools. These relationships are fundamental to the success of managing people issues on an individual or collective basis and these negotiations and relationships are a significant responsibility for a Schools HR Adviser.

A further complexity is the multiple terms and conditions, having never worked with the Burgundy Book and STPCD and safeguarding requirements before it was a very steep learning curve for me and again I think I would have benefitted greatly from a formalised training course on these areas. I do remember falling foul of Teachers resignations dates during my first dismissal for ill health case – a lesson hard learnt and never repeated!

I worked for 15 years supporting schools across two separate LAs in the region and enjoyed it immensely. The complexity and diversity of cases it exposes to you is unique and a huge development opportunity for those HR specialists who enjoy a focus on ER but it is so much more than that.

There is no doubt that a foundation course covering the aspects of HR in schools would have been beneficial and would have allowed earlier confidence in dealing with all the complexities of the education sector.

By Monica Puri – WME Principal Consultant

I was employed as a Schools HR Advisor from 2010 - 2016. When I first started, I had transferable skills in terms of my HR knowledge and CIPD, but what came as a shock was how different the application of people practices, and procedures were. Thankfully, I was in a supportive environment where I learnt on the job and I also attended a two-day course which covered some of the nuts and bolts of the Schools Environment. This helped my understanding of the different types of schools and the role of the governing body which was the starting point of my very steep learning curve.

I soon realised as I took on different cases and projects how different the operating model of the school and its governance structure are compared to corporate departments. In addition, the intricacies of the Standard Teachers Pay & Conditions Document and the Burgundy Book can be quite complex to interpret.

Working with Governors, Headteachers, Senior Leaders and Teaching Unions I slowly learnt the protocols and where the decision-making powers were. Like any role, your confidence grows over time and on reflection I know that a course like the **HR in Education Programme** would have increased my confidence, improved my approach, and enhanced my overall performance. I know from my own experience the benefits and return on investment this course will produce for Schools.



WME are running the HR Education Programme again in September 2022. The course is currently delivered by Lorna Wells and consists of 6 modules, to date these have been delivered virtually with a 3 hour session for each module. The dates of the next course are as follows:

Module	Dates
Module 1	1 September 2022
Module 2	2 September 2022
Module 3	5 September 2022
Module 4	7 September 2022
Module 5	9 September 2022
Module 6	12 September 2022

To find out more about the HR in Education Programme click [here](#) to see the full details. For more information email info@wmemployers.org.uk



The Challenge is back –

bigger and better!

by Lorna Wells



Like so many events cancelled or postponed due to Covid, The Local Authority Challenge, as was, has not been in our region for some time. It is therefore my absolute pleasure to announce that on 10th November 2022 WME, in partnership with RWTA Ltd, will be hosting the West Midlands TriSector Challenge!!!! The event now brings wider benefit to the public sector by opening up to all public sector organisations, and voluntary and private sector organisations who have a specific focus for delivering services in the public sector. Richard Wills and Dave Senior of RWTA Ltd may be familiar names as they were instrumental in the running of the LA Challenge but now have developed the idea further so it is bigger and better than ever!

Having joined WME after the last Challenge was held, I jumped at the opportunity to see firsthand this new event by volunteering to be one of the facilitators for the London and SE TriSector Challenge which took place on 17 March at Lords in London.

With the sun shining down on my walk from Marylebone to Lords I knew we were in for a fabulous day! On arrival I was welcomed by Richard and Dave and presented with my Facilitators pack including a tablet so all of the information and scoring sheets are now electronic – no reams of paper and a real example of how we are all becoming more sustainable in service delivery and a far more efficient way of collating the feedback.

I started to prepare for my first scheduled meetings of the morning, what roles would I be playing? Time to start channeling from any past experience and brush up on my acting skills! Richard launched the event with an energized opening and the game clock started ticking, the excitement in the room was already palpable.

For anyone not familiar with the format of the Tri-Sector Challenge the idea is straightforward. An all-day management development event where teams of delegates compete against each other through simulation. Seeing them placed as a senior management team from an organisation in the sector they work in they are faced with a host of real life challenges relevant to their particular sector. Delegates can test themselves in a safe environment and are given the opportunity to develop organisational, communication, team building skills and behaviours through interaction with a range of stakeholders. That's where the facilitators come in! Playing the role of both internal and external contacts, facilitators interact with the teams, giving them information and challenging their ideas and strategies for solving the problems they are set. This provides them with some insight into what a conversation on real issues with key stakeholders might be like. Just as one example – interacting with a team from a Police Authority I played the role of an LA Chief Executive, wanting some answers on the strategies

being proposed to tackle certain crimes in my Borough! The scenario information provided to both the teams and facilitators is incredibly detailed so both sides know what points they need to raise/discuss/push at any particular meeting, of which there are many during the day! No more spoilers though! The facilitators then complete an assessment form on their tablet which is collated.

Throughout the day I interacted with most of the teams in one way or another and there was a real buzz of excitement and energy in the room (as well as a few nerves from time to time – it is a Challenge after all!). Teams work towards a short presentation and the game clock finally ticks away to the end of the Challenge – phew, some air punching, whoops and a round of applause to signify the work is done! A well-deserved dinner and drinks are then served before the awards are announced and trophies presented to the winners!

This is much more than a management development opportunity, it is certainly ideal for those up and coming leadership stars in your organisation and a chance for those aspiring to progress to a more strategic level to practice skills in a totally safe environment. Beyond that it holds value to individuals and their organisation in the application and development of a range of skills so crucial to the delivery of our services, and it gives insight to certain scenarios that some employees won't be exposed to until they move into more senior roles. Above all it is delivered in an energetic and fun way seeing the delegates thoroughly immersed and engaged in the activities and their fictitious roles and wanting to achieve!

I can't wait to bring the event to our region and am so excited to be part of this new and bigger Challenge, which if anything has now become even more relevant to our member organisations and the difficulties we face.

So it's time to start identifying those aspiring leaders of the future. There is huge benefit for any employee who attends even if they are not looking at moving up the ladder immediately the skills they will develop on the day will be transferable in their current roles too – who doesn't want to find new ways to build effective relationships and be able to look at problems from multiple angles?

Entries are now open.
For further information on the Challenge [click here](#) or contact us at info@wmemployers.org.uk.

You may also join us in registering for the Tri-sector launches via zoom:

May 3rd at 4.30pm

May 13th at 9.30am

Good luck - the honour of lifting the West Midlands TriSector Challenge Trophy for 2022 could be yours!



Congratulations to our West Midlands 2022 Nominations



PPMA Awards

Shortlist 2022

Best health and wellbeing initiative
Shropshire council

Excellence in service delivery
The Unsung Heroes

**Payroll Team, People Service
Centre**
Warwick county council



MJ Awards

Finalists

Best Council Services Team

- City of Wolverhampton Council's Travel Unit
- City of Wolverhampton Council

Best Social Housing Initiative

- The Wolverhampton House Project
- City of Wolverhampton Council

Chief Executive of the Year

- Monica Fogarty, Warwickshire County Council

Corporate Director of the Year

- Nigel Minns, Warwickshire County Council

Delivering Better Outcomes

- Pick-Fit, Joint venture with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
- High Peak Borough Council

Digital Transformation

- Delivering responsive services through Location Intelligence
- Walsall Council

Innovation in Building Diversity and Inclusion

- SCULPT for Accessibility
- Worcestershire County Council

To see the rest of the finalists

[click here](#)



LGC Awards

Shortlist 2022

Children's services

- Telford and Wrekin Council
- City of Wolverhampton Council

Council of the year

- Staffordshire County Council
- Telford and Wrekin Council

Digital impact

- Worcester council

Diversity

- City of Wolverhampton

Economic support

- Telford and Wrekin Council

Environmental services

- Birmingham City Council

Future places

- Coventry City Council

Health and social care -

- Birmingham City Council
- Shropshire council

Innovation

- Shropshire South
- Staffordshire Council

Large team of the year

- Coventry City Council
- Dudley MBC

Public health

- Telford and Wrekin Council

New to WME

WME works with experienced consultants to ensure you have access to the best talent to support your consultancy projects and interim support. Here are the latest recruits to our ever-growing Talent Bank of preferred consultants.

Jacqueline Roberts

Jacqueline is a development professional experienced working at both a strategic and operational level. A proven change agent, successful in the implementation of the design and delivery of development and talent programmes. She is an experienced coach and facilitator, who specialises in managing complex situations and problem solving, with a particular interest in developing ways of collaborative working through a facilitative approach.



Wolverhampton Homes

WMJobs is very happy to welcome Wolverhampton Homes to the WMJobs family!

Wolverhampton Homes manage and look after more than 22,000 homes on behalf of the City of Wolverhampton Council and after an internal service review were keen to develop their resourcing service. WME began supporting this project last autumn in order to:

- Improve the candidate experience.
- Adopt and implement TalentLink ATS in line with the new resourcing process to utilise the functionality of TalentLink to manage the end to end recruitment process and support the incremental roll out of self-service elements to managers.
- Support efficiency savings to the recruitment service by streamlining processes within the recruitment workflow.
- Upskill relevant HR users to be able to confidently use the system.

In the last few months the WMJobs team have been working with the Wolverhampton Homes project team who will shortly go live with their new workflows and processes, powered by TalentLink and wmjobs.co.uk!

Movers and Shakers

- **Vicki Lee** has moved from Head of HR at Wychavon and Malvern Hills to Head of HR at Sandwell MBC
- **Clare Morgan** has been promoted to HR manager at Rugby
- **Jacqueline Roberts** has been appointed by WME as an intern OD lead to Dudley MBC
 - **Wendy Trainer** has been appointed by WME as an interim Monitoring Officer to Lichfield BC



Careers at WME

We will soon be recruiting for the following roles within WME:

Service Development Manager

L & OD Team



Specialist Workforce Consultant – Adult Social Care

(hosted by WME for WM ADASS)



Resourcing Advisor

Resourcing Team



Systems Officer

Business and Corporate Team



These roles are also offered on a secondment basis for candidates from Local Authorities.

Once they are online, you can apply for these roles at

www.careersatwme.org.uk.

Festival of work 2022

WME are pleased to let you know about a special offer for Members through our partnership with the CIPD for the CIPD Festival of Work - 15-16 June 2022 WME members will receive a 20% discount using the code EE20.

Further discounts can be added for:

- Members
- Small Group Booking (3-5) 10% Discount
- Large Group Booking (6+) 15% Discount

Examples of discounts:

	Price	EE20 Discount	Small group (10%) + EE20	Large group (15%) + EE20
Member Normal	£875	£700	£630	£595
Non-member Early Bird	£875	£700	£630	£595
Non-member Normal	£1095	£876	£788.4	£744

There is a great lineup of varied speakers at the conference sessions and loads of exhibition stands and plenty of spaces for people to meet and mingle.

It is perhaps more important now than ever before that people in HR take time out for themselves, to immerse themselves in the stories of others in their profession and gain valuable insight and ideas to take back to their teams.

You can attend virtually or come and feel the buzz of being around everyone at London Olympia 15-16 June 2022. Plus, those that book conference tickets will also get access to the session recordings soon after the event, so you don't have to worry if there are two great sessions on at the same time.



Dates for your diary

WME Calendar of Events 2022

11th May 2022	Heads of HR Lunch - Birmingham
21st – 23rd June 2022	HOT - Virtual
12th July 2022	Chief Executive AGM and networking event - Birmingham
28th September 2022	HOT in Person - Birmingham
11th & 13th October 2022	Employment Law - Virtual
7th November 2022	Coaching Conference - Birmingham
10th November 2022	Trisector Challenge - Birmingham
7th December 2022	Head of HR Lunch - Birmingham

WME@Events

28th – 30th June	LGA Annual Conference & Exhibition - Harrogate
12th – 14th October 2022	Solace Summit 2022

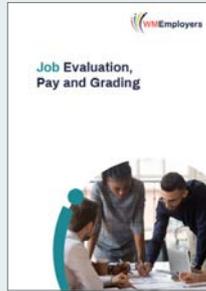
To book: www.wmemployers.org.uk or email info@wmemployers.org.uk

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WME 360



Making Virtual Working Work Masterclass



New Ways of Working



Managing our Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace

Resourcing



Executive Recruitment

Next issue in Summer!

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