



General Purposes Committee

3 April 2014

Report from HR Director

Wards affected:
ALL

HR Strategy 2014 – 2017

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The People Strategy 2010 – 2014 provided an overall framework for all Human Resources and people related activities. Aligned to the council's One Council priorities this four-year strategy and accompanying workforce development plan built on the council's vision to be an employer of choice.
- 1.2 The People Strategy expires in April 2014 and will be replaced by a new three-year HR Strategy and action plan.
- 1.3 The new HR Strategy builds on the previous activities and proposes five strategic aims to provide a modern and responsive HR service that delivers value for money for the council.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The General Purposes Committee is asked to approve the new Human Resources Strategy 2014 - 2017 and action plan.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The People Strategy 2010 – 2014 was the council's second strategy, which provided an overall framework for all Human Resources and people related activities. Aligned to the council's One Council priorities this four-year strategy had an accompanying workforce development plan that built on the council's vision to be an employer of choice.
- 3.2 The People Strategy 2010 – 2014 identified six strategic priorities that lead to the creation of a number of related activities.
- 3.3 By April 2014 this strategy will expire and will be replaced by the new HR Strategy 2014 – 2017. A review of the council's performance against the people strategy

2010-14 is contained in the new draft strategy. The new strategy has a particular focus on how the HR function will continue to deliver value for money for the council.

- 3.4 The proposed HR Strategy has been created following a review of the existing People Strategy and takes into account the 2013 -2014 review of the Borough Plan, and a review of reports submitted to PMO relating to HR's One Council project activities. This has enabled analysis of performance data to ensure that ongoing improvement activities are included in the new HR strategy, and to ensure that the Strategy objectives and the council's current borough plan are aligned.
- 3.5 Stakeholder engagement took place to elicit their views and to encourage 'buy in' from managers and staff on HR's key priorities for 2014 – 2017 and have been reflected in the draft strategy.
- 3.6 Consultation with HR's stakeholders occurred throughout February and March 2014 with the aim of identifying the key priorities for HR over the next three years.
- 3.7 The groups consulted included:
- The Leader and Deputy Leader
 - CMT
 - Employee engagement via Focus Groups
 - HR DMT
 - HR Improvement Group (HRIG)
 - Trade Unions
- 3.8 The themes identified through the engagement were:
- Stronger performance management, with staff particularly focusing on the need for better application of the appraisal system and 121 sessions;
 - Improved learning and development offering;
 - Strong leadership and direction from managers; and
 - Improved sickness and attendance management.
- 3.9 Focus groups took place in February 2014 aimed at identifying the perceived strengths and areas for development for HR from an employee perspective by engaging with a sample of staff. The sessions were separated into management and non-management groups to allow for open exchange.
- 3.10 Trade unions have welcomed 'the strategy for 2014-2017 and have offered their broad support to achieve its aims.'
- 3.11 The new HR Strategy 2014 – 2017 proposes five strategic aims to enable the delivery of a modern and responsive HR service:
1. Achieving organisational effectiveness and strong performance management
 2. Recruiting, retaining and rewarding a diverse, highly skilled, flexible and motivated workforce
 3. Valuing diversity and reducing inequalities
 4. Developing high performing managers and talented staff
 5. Building the professionalism and skills of the workforce to support One Council projects and deliver high quality services

- 3.12 The HR strategy and action plan provides the framework and overarching priorities to enable the council to deliver on agreed objectives. Under the umbrella of the HR strategy a Workforce Strategy and action plan and a Diversity Strategy and action plan will be developed.
- 3.13 These will be the instruments that will facilitate the delivery of council and HR priorities. They will ensure all activities and objectives relating to employment, workforce development, employee retention, developing staff and diversity are linked to supporting achievement of the Human Resources' challenging targets over the forthcoming years.
- 3.14 CMT supported by HRIG will have the overarching responsibility for ensuring the strategy is implemented and middle managers are fully engaged. HRIG will also be responsible for monitoring the roll out of the strategy on a quarterly basis. Progress against the strategy and action plan will be reported on an annual basis to CMT for consideration and approval.
- 3.15 It is recognised that the council will review its strategic objectives following the elections in May 2014 and that it is envisaged that a revised borough plan will be rolled out by the end of 2014/early 2015. It is the intention to review this draft strategy in the context of any new borough plan and on an annual basis. It is anticipated that once the lifespan of the new borough plan is determined that the HR strategy will have the same lifespan.
- 3.16 The strategy will also be reviewed in light of the staff survey in 2014. The results of the survey will be incorporated into future recommendations/actions associated with the HR strategy.
- 3.17 It is the intention to produce an action plan to support the roll out of the HR strategy on an annual basis.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Any costs associated with the delivery of the HR strategy will be accommodated from existing budgets.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The new HR Strategy meets the council's employment obligations and follows good HR practice.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The HR Strategy 2014 – 2017 and accompanying plan include an action to create a new Equality Strategy in 2014. The Equality Strategy will set out how the council will work towards meeting an Excellent rating in the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- 6.2 The new strategy will benefit all employees and there is no evidence to suggest that any equality group(s) will experience adverse impact. The Equality Team are conducting an Equality Analysis on the HR Strategy and action plan and supporting Workforce Strategy, which will be completed by April 2014.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

7.1 The body of the report concerns itself with matters relating to staffing.

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer

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