

CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Thursday, 10th November, 2016 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 p.m.

Voting Members

Cr. P.J. Moyle (Chairman)
Cr. D.S. Gladstone (Vice-Chairman)

Cr. D.M.T. Bell
Cr. R.L.G. Dibbs
Cr. B. Jones

Cr. Marina Munro

Cr. A.R. Newell
Cr. P.F. Rust
Cr. J.E. Woolley

12. MINUTES –

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8th September, 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

13. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY –

The Panel welcomed Karen Edwards, Corporate Director, and Alison MacLachlan, Organisational Development Officer, who gave a presentation updating Members on the Council's Organisational Development Programme, which had been developed over a three to four year period.

In 2013, the Council's narrative had been created; "Rushmoor – fit for the future". Members of staff had been involved in the process and had worked together to identify a common understanding of the changes that would need to be made by all staff in order for the Council to become financially sustainable. It was noted that there were four key themes to the narrative:

- Political leadership
- How we will work with residents, communities, local businesses and local partners
- Leading and working together
- Learning and developing together

It was explained that the key themes of the narrative linked to core behaviours, which focused on how staff worked, not what they worked on. The length of the narrative had meant that it was difficult for staff to memorise and, therefore, small groups of staff developed the 'simple rules', which summarised the principles; everyone matters, give it a go, continue to improve and take responsibility and see things through. It was noted that the simple rules used language that was easy to understand and were promoted around the Council Offices, which helped staff to remember and adopt the simple rules.

The Panel was informed of the desired outcomes of the Organisational Development Programme, which included ensuring that the Council was a sustainable learning organisation. Other areas that the strategy hoped to improve was engagement with communities, residents, businesses and partners and supporting Members in their “local leadership” roles.

In order to deliver the Council’s 8-Point Plan to achieve financial sustainability, the Organisational Development Programme was split into eight categories and examples of previous, current and future work was shared with the Panel. The Action Learning Programme was explained in detail and Members noted that the Council had trained twelve facilitators, nine of which had been accredited. The crucial conversation training was also explained as an example for ‘organisational skills’. Between August, 2016 – January, 2017 a total of 148 members of staff would have participated in two days of training. One Head of Service had qualified as a crucial conversation trainer, which meant that the Council had not needed to arrange external trainers for the sessions. Staff feedback from the sessions had been positive and it had encouraged a number of staff members to tackle difficult conversations that had previously been avoided.

Members noted the launch of “My HR” in October, 2016, which was described as an e-portal for staff to access their payslips and view or update their basic employee information. There was an intention to include a functionality that would allow staff to claim mileage and overtime. The Panel questioned whether this system would be rolled out to elected Members and it was confirmed that this could be explored in the future.

There had also been a focus on developing core management skills, which was made available to a number of staff, including those involved in project management and aspiring managers. It was noted that further sessions would be arranged to allow additional staff to attend.

The number of staff engagement sessions had increased with a total of six planned for the year. The first staff showcase had been in 2015 and had focused on systems thinking reviews within the Council. A Member event had also taken place and both sessions gave staff the opportunity to share their experiences and how they had used systems thinking in their day-to-day work. Panel Members were invited to attend the forthcoming staff showcase, taking place on 15th December.

It was noted that, previously, there had been limited engagement with learning and development. In 2015, an appraisal experiment took place and as a result of this, development reviews had been introduced to the Council. Members of staff had been asked to complete a learning and development form after their development review session. The form allowed staff to raise areas of skills development that they would be interested in. It was noted that 261 members of staff had completed the form (88%) and of those, 195 staff members had highlighted at least one development or learning need. Three main areas of development had been identified:

- Digital and social media
- Commercial skills
- Political skills

The Panel was informed of the work planned for 2017. It was noted that there would be a focus on the development of skills identified in the development review process. Also, a skills audit would be carried out with the aim of creating a live skills database. This would enable the Council to utilise relevant skills that current staff members already had.

Members noted that there was a particular focus on the development of project management, this was because the Council had not been able to deliver some of the projects in the 8-Point Plan as quickly as had initially been intended. It was explained that, due to the work being done on the waste and leisure contracts and the Parking Strategy, there was a lot of change to manage and therefore, the Council would benefit from stronger project management skills.

The Panel was advised that measuring the effectiveness of the Organisational Development Strategy had been difficult to evidence. However, it was possible to recognise a change in the organisation. For example, there was more openness to utilising different digital technology, a clearer intent to tackle difficult conversations using techniques learnt and practiced through training, an increased use of listening and question skills acquired through action learning and a keen interest and involvement from staff around the organisation in initiatives that would affect the future of the Council.

The Panel thanked Karen Edwards and Alison MacLachlan for their detailed presentation and **NOTED** the update.

14. **WORK PROGRAMME –**

The Panel **NOTED** that the remaining programme of work for 2016/17 would be considered at the next mid-cycle meeting, with all Members invited to contribute in advance.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

P.J. MOYLE
CHAIRMAN
