

Wales Audit Office Report
Evaluation of the Council's Review of People Performance Management

Progress Update – 13 September 2019

Background

During 2017, as a result of concerns highlighted by the Council's Internal Audit team, the Council's Corporate People Performance Management Review Working Group undertook a review of the Council's People Performance Management Framework and presented its findings to the Council's Corporate Management Team on 10 October 2017.

The Wales Audit office reported to the Audit Committee on the 13th July 18 that *“over seven months has elapsed since the review concluded but no action has yet been taken to address the report's recommendations.”*

The findings were subsequently formally handed over to the People Strategy Governance Board (PSGB) in February 2018 – Chaired by Gareth Morgans (Director of Education & Children); the PSGB has been charged with developing a detailed action plan. This work is still ongoing, however the attached report provides Members with an update on the progress being made in terms of addressing the review's recommendations.

Recommendation 1

Directors/Heads of Service undertake a desk top review of service structures, particularly within high risk customer facing areas, to identify any potential risk areas to reduce the likelihood of similar failings occurring as a result of flat structures.

Actions undertaken:

Under the Delegated Powers set out in the Council's Constitution, the Chief Executive and Directors have specific responsibility in determining all matters related to staffing and structures. The Corporate Management Team has considered & discussed the recommendations highlighted by the report and has ongoing input into the development of re-structuring or realignment as appropriate. This is an ongoing process to respond to service needs including the delivery of significant of PBB savings. The Corporate Management Team is satisfied that the structures are appropriate to deliver the Council's services.

Since the review, work has been undertaken to prioritise those services areas that had been highlighted e.g. Waste and Leisure. Both these areas have been or are in the process of being realigned. This work was ongoing before being highlighted during the Review and is being monitored by HR Business Partners at the relevant Departmental Management Teams.

Recommendation 2

Directors/Heads of Service to undertake a desk top risk assessment of dispersed service delivery teams including agile working and remotely located teams as well as teams with a

distinct identity or external/individual brand (i.e. Families First) to identify potential risks of disconnection from the corporate organisation.

Actions undertaken:

The Leadership & Management Development Framework has been developed and there are various tools and resources available to support capacity & capability when managers have remotely located teams. In terms of agile working, the Learning and Development team now provides a programme of development aimed at supporting managers to manage an agile workforce, this includes tips on how to maintain good communication when managing dispersed teams. In addition IT colleagues are providing relevant IT solutions that ensure managers are able to keep in touch with staff that are working from dispersed locations e.g. Skype for Business, mobile phones.

Recommendation 3

Building on the existing review of the induction process it is recommended that 'new manager's guide' be developed to complement the new 'employee guide' currently under development. The 'new manager's guide' is to be used during induction to identify areas of training and development and is to include a checklist for managers signposting them to the relevant technical and people management information, tools and support. This checklist should include but is not exclusive to:

Technical management:

- Financial regulations
- Procurement rules
- Corporate priorities
- Code of conduct
- Budget management
- Performance management
- Relevant checks and balances
- Legal/statutory requirements

People management:

- Workforce planning
- People management
- Emotional intelligence
- Recruitment and selection (including job profile development)
- Appraisals and reviews
- Induction and probation
- Agile working
- Declarations of interest
- Managing change

Actions undertaken:

The Heads of Service Forum has been engaged to support the development of a framework, and an evaluation has been undertaken of the Future Leaders Programme with a view to making it available across a wider organisational base.

A range of tools and resources are currently available to underpin the new leadership and management behaviours and the recent Investors in People Review supports the approach for extending leadership and management competencies at all levels. This work will continue to be overseen by the PSGB.

Recommendation 3a

Ensure that managerial training needs identified at induction stage are streamlined into, and reviewed during, the appraisal process.

Actions undertaken:

Funding was identified in March 2018 to allow the Council to develop a new “on-boarding” system to be accessed via its HR system, which will allow for customised induction and support for new managers. This piece of work has now been developed and has been presented to senior managers within People Management for their input. The system will provide the ability for staff development to be monitored alongside appraisal discussions.

Recommendation 4

Introduce workforce and succession planning as a key element of the Executive Board and Heads of Service Business Plan sessions to reinforce work currently being undertaken by HR business partners and strengthen accountability.

Actions undertaken:

Workforce planning is an integral element of the business planning process. HR Business Partners have been working with Departmental Management Teams to provide comprehensive workforce data to assist with business and workforce planning. A Toolkit for Managers has previously been developed and briefing sessions for managers have been provided.

Recommendation 5

Review the process for creating job profiles in order to increase the focus on behavioural standards/core competencies and reduce task orientated criteria. Develop clear guidelines/support for managers for creating job profiles of this nature.

Actions undertaken:

A Leadership and Development Framework has been developed and various tools and resources are available to support capacity and capability in this area. This includes service areas adopting a leadership and management academy for those aspiring to become leaders and managers. Further work will now be undertaken to extend the organisation’s competency framework across all levels, reflecting the outcomes of the recent Investors in People Review.

The Heads of Service Forum has been engaged to support the development of the framework, and an evaluation has been undertaken of the Future Leaders Programme with a view to making it available across a wider organisational base. A range of tools and resources are currently available to underpin the new leadership and management behaviours and the recent Investors in People Review supports the approach for extending leadership and management competencies at all levels. This work will continue to be overseen by the

PSGB. This can be evidenced by the Evaluation of Future Leaders Programme Development Programme for Heads of Service and the Investors in People Review 2018.

Additionally, the Leadership & Management Development Framework has been developed and various tools and resources are available to support capacity & capability in this area. This includes Service areas adopting a Leadership & Management Academy for those aspiring to become leaders/managers. Further work will now be undertaken to extend the organisations competency framework across all levels reflecting the outcomes of the recent Investors in People Review. Again, this can be evidenced by the Leadership & Management Behaviours Competency Framework (UCF), Future Leaders Programme Evaluation and the Investors in People Review 2018.

In addition, a more streamlined electronic job profile template has been introduced and guidance for managers has been produced.

Recommendation 6

Review the appraisal process to focus on behaviours and core competencies and develop a suite of tools to support managers to flexibly implement appraisal principles within different structures and service profiles.

Actions undertaken:

There has been a focus on delivery skills based development for managers/supervisors in conducting appraisals, supporting individual performance and development. Service and professional occupational groups have been a priority and the evaluation of this will be measured in the forthcoming post IIP Review. The outcomes and the skills gap to support this measure will be evaluated/monitored through the Investors in People review and the People Strategy Work Stream. This is evidenced by the In-House and commissioned learning and development modules. In addition, the Council's HR system has been further developed to provide managers with an online appraisal tool, which automates the process.

Recommendation 7

In line with recommendations of the Internal Audit Review of Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality 2017, the guidance on declarations of interest should be reviewed and, if appropriate, updated. The use of meta compliance and/or Resource Link should be explored as a means of ensuring the necessary awareness of the requirements with managers and staff.

Actions undertaken:

Since the Review, consideration has been given to best practice across Public Sector in Wales and as a result a new draft Employee Code of Conduct Guide and Declaration of Interest Form have been developed for discussion and agreement. IT colleagues have also included the development of an e-form into their work programme, which will be made available to all staff once the content of new form has been agreed. Going forward consideration will need to be given to how the process for declaring interests is publicised to staff.

Recommendation 8

All internal audit recommendations to be monitored via PIMS, subject to successful system testing.

Actions undertaken:

All Internal Audit recommendations are now on PIMS.

Recommendation 9

A risk register to be developed by the People Strategy Group based upon the recommendations made in the report.

Actions undertaken:

The PSGB has incorporated this into their work programme for consideration and, as it is now being recorded on PIMS, there is no requirement for a bespoke Risk Register (See above).



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