

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Executive Management Team

24th April 2019

REPORT AUTHOR: Paul Bradshaw, Head of Workforce & Organisational Development

SUBJECT: Workforce Transformation – our aspirations for the workforce

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

The engagement, capability and talents of the workforce will be key to delivering the Council's transformation programme. The purpose of this report is to share my thoughts with EMT about what I feel our future aspirations for the Council's workforce should be and to seek EMT's support for the programme of organisational development, laid out in this report, which will help us to achieve our aspirations. As part of this, I have explored in the attached appendix why organisations invest in their workforces in this way.

2. Background

2.1 Introduction and summary

Great organisations that perform at the top of their markets and industries recognise that their success is built upon the engagement, capability and talents of their workforce. Well-known names such as Google, Virgin and Apple, along with local companies such as Admiral recognise that their success has been built on their workforces and the investment they have made in staff, for instance in empowering them to make improvements, equipping them with the skills and resources to do so and thoroughly engaging them in transforming the business.

To develop even better levels of engagement and in responding to tightening and more competitive employment markets, employers are placing a greater emphasis on the employee's overall 'Employee Experience'. This experience goes beyond typical strategies for employee engagement, and encapsulates everything the employee experiences throughout their connection with the organisation. Starting with their first contact with the organisation as a potential recruit to the last interaction at the end of their employment. This will not just include HR, but also ICT, facilities, communications, the social side, benefits, events, social occasions and any distinctive experiences. An example of a distinctive experience coming from a local company, Admiral Insurance, who hold a weekly tombola in some teams on a Friday, with the employee whose name is drawn being immediately given the afternoon off as paid leave.

The case for investing in employee engagement is well established, indeed employers with engagement levels in the top quartile compared to employers with levels in the bottom quartile, are 21% more profitable, 17% more productive, achieve 20% higher sales, benefit from sickness rates 41% lower, see turnover rates up to 59% lower and have 70% less safety incidents.

Justin King the long serving former Chief Executive Officer of Sainsbury's highlighted the importance of employee engagement in his company in the following statement:

“In our business with almost 150,000 people, engagement is a key concern. In businesses of our scale, you don’t even get started without engagement!”

I have explored in the **attached appendix**, current academic theory and sector practice on how investing in engagement and the experience employees enjoy in their working lives, helps contribute to the success of their organisations and have looked at the good practice of a number of award winning employers in this.

At Powys, we aspire to delivering great public services, and we recognise the central role the workforce has in delivering those services. Moving forwards our workforce of 5,800 will be the force for improvement and transformation in the Council and their engagement and commitment to the Councils vision, priorities and transformation programme will be key to our future success.

To this end, our aspiration is to develop an even more confident and healthy workforce, which invests all of its talents and energy in changing, improving and transforming the services we deliver to the people and communities of Powys and the way in which we deliver those services. MT

I have explored below the aspirations for the Council’s workforce and the key steps, which will help us to achieve this. These developments and improvements to our workforce plans and approach will be an important transformation programme in its own right. It should be noted that this programme of work would also support and be complementary to the workforce development being undertaken in Adult’s and Children’s social services.

2.2 Transforming Powys - our aspirations for the workforce

To experience great leadership

- To be well led and inspired, within an engaging leadership style
- For all managers and leaders to understand and display an engaging compassionate leadership style, supported by softer people management skills
- To be supported, led and performance managed through regular ongoing coaching conversations
- To also be offered formal coaching to help them develop and unlock their many talents

To have greater clarity about expectations and their role

- To understand and be clear about how they contribute to the Vision2025 and the Council’s and their service’s priorities and plans
- To understand that great performance and outcomes come from both delivering your objective or priority and by the behaviours you demonstrate in delivering it
- To be supported and managed in developing their capabilities and behavioural approach

To be empowered, enabled and equipped to be our force for transformation

- To have a real voice and be able to contribute their thoughts and ideas regularly, simply becoming the way we do things around here

- To be given the permission (**empowered**), to change, improve and transform services, within an enabling, supportive, simple change framework
- To be involved (**enabled**) in discussing and designing how their services can be best delivered at the earliest opportunity
- To be **equipped** with skills development and other resources which support and facilitate change and transformation in the Council

To be better recognised for their work

- For their great work and behaviours to be regularly recognised, praised and celebrated
- For this to be done in a more instantaneous way – in real time
- To see those employees consistently delivering being successful in their careers and in accessing other Council opportunities

To support the health and wellbeing of the workforce

- To be supported by a fit for purpose ongoing regular wellbeing programme
- To have ready access to health advice and counselling services
- To be supported by compassionate and engaging leaders and managers
- To be screened against occupational health risks where required

To work in a sustainable and stable organisation, with opportunities to advance

- To professionally workforce plan so that; we know the workforce we need in the short to medium-term, we have plans in place to upskill & succession plan the current workforce in line with those needs and are confident about how we will recruit to any gaps
- For workforce planning to be fully integrated within mid-term organisational planning so employees experience seamless structured change and are involved in the plans leading to those changes
- To be upskilled on an ongoing and structured basis in line with our plans and to enable staff to be successful and confident in their current and developing roles
- To see more staff undertaking wider more enriched multi-skilled roles
- To be involved at the earliest opportunity in designing how their services will be best delivered in the future, in response any to financial and/or service needs
- To retain significant numbers of staff displaced by change, through really effective internal redeployment arrangements
- To be able to work in a flexible and agile ways which better support the delivery of services and/or their work-life balance. As part of this we need to explore whether we can adopt assumed flexibility
- To be offered opportunities to develop further skills and to support progress with their career plans, in line with council career paths and succession planning
- To benefit from an increasing number of younger people in the organisation through optimising the use of apprenticeship and graduate schemes

To see successful partnership working

- To see staff feeling engaged with and contributing to the plans, mission and purpose of the partnership they are working in
- For staff to understand and be able to apply the key skills and behaviours which underpin partnership working
- Importantly for staff to feel confident about their role and how they contribute to the partnership

Ultimately, that employees feel fully engaged in the work & transformation of the Council

- As we implement the actions detailed in this paper, we will be told through the staff survey, pulse surveys and anecdotally that they feel more engaged in and informed about change and transformation in the Council
- And about the real contributions and improvements they have made to Council services

2.3 Turning our aspirations into reality

We will realise our aspirations for the workforce through implementing a well-informed workforce strategy, which is fully integrated with the Council's strategy and by prioritising the actions, which deliver the greatest impact and return. A typical workforce strategy covers 3 to 5 years and comprises 5 or 6 key themes.

Whilst our new workforce strategy will be developed in the coming months, with key stakeholders, I have laid out the actions, which will help us to realise our aspirations below and have grouped them into higher-level strategic headings for ease of reference. Please do not therefore read this as being the Council's Workforce and OD strategy, as this will emerge in due course.

Developing organisational agility – our structures and strategic workforce planning

- We will develop our workforce planning so that it fully integrates with the Council's overall planning process and can be competed seamlessly with the PTHB
- We will develop and implement a workforce resourcing plan, encapsulating; fit for purpose operating model/structures, our recruitment and retention needs, talent management, succession planning and developing the ongoing and new skills needed in our workforce
- We will facilitate the refreshment of the workforce resourcing plan each year for each service and for the Council as a whole
- As part of this, we will compare our workforce profile needs against the local demographic market, identifying any gaps and risks in order to better inform our workforce strategy and plans
- We will review our agile working agenda and arrangements to ensure we make the best use of our assets, further optimising digitalisation

Developing our approach to leadership & management

- We will define our leadership approach with SLT
- This in my view should be an engaging (participative) and compassionate approach

- We will develop a set of leadership behavioural competencies which will bring this to life and build them into our leadership development courses, training and the performance review of leaders
- As part of this we will seek to develop a set of shared competencies and to deliver leadership development in conjunction with the PTHB
- We will provide all new leaders with induction in our leadership approach and what is expected and will also provide training and induction in softer people management skills
- We will provide leaders with further opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills, for instance by participating in; breakfast briefing sessions, lunchtime learning sessions, interactive manager forums/networks and by working/engaging with coaching and mentoring

Please note that in referring to leaders we are also referring to managers

Developing a healthy culture & strong engagement

One of the main drivers for engagement will be through an effective compassionate and participative leadership style as detailed above. Whilst this will be a key driver of engagement, stronger and fuller engagement will be supplemented by a number of other key actions/levers we need to develop, including:

- Leaders and managers giving employees the permission to change and improve their services within simple frameworks. Our culture moving forwards need to be such that, where a simple improvement does not need additional resources, employees are confident and able to develop/implement it. Where however the impact is significant or the change needs investment, employees need to be provided with simple ways to request and access the support and any authority needed
- To develop the coaching conversation skills of all of our leaders, so that we can support the work and performance of colleagues on a day to day and week to week basis, rather than twice a year during their formal performance review meetings
- To further develop our professional coaching capacity in the Council to increase the number of employees we can offer coaching to
- To develop and embed set of behavioural competencies for the workforce as whole, so employees know what kind of behaviours they can expect from each other and are aware of what is expected from them
- To further improve the Individual Performance Review process so that it manages and supports performance in respect of both our objectives and the behaviours expected from us
- To review how we recognise the good work of staff, for instance through immediate real time thanks, praise and recognition arrangements. Platforms already exist whereby managers and staff can instantly recognise and praise the work and behaviour of colleagues
- To develop better mid-term workforce planning and to develop an engaging and compassionate leadership style, through which we involve all employees in conversations about and in designing how their services can be best delivered in the future

- To actively listen to feedback from staff surveys and our pulse tests and to use the findings to inform our next cultural steps and to assess the impact of our ongoing actions
- To review, enhance and develop more ways for employees to be able to readily and freely feed up, down and across the organisation, their thoughts, ideas, views and opinions
- To review and simplify our policies for managing workforce change, ensuring they are fit for purpose, enabling and transparent

Developing our capability and capacity

- We will promote induction standards to ensure comprehensive induction for all new starters, including staff, managers and Members
- As part of annual workforce planning we will identify our future skills gaps and the newly emerging skills required through our organisational and service strategies and plans, to provide a programme of skills development to support colleagues across the Council, in line with the 21st Century Public Servant model
- The learning and development interventions we offer will be needs led to address; our ongoing transformation programme and project management capacity, skills gaps/new skills needs identified through workforce resource planning, our required mandatory training and to support the Councils identified career and succession planning needs (this can be referred to as top down training needs)
- We will also identify any further significant training needs identified through the Individual Performance Review process and explore any such need with each service (this can be referred to as bottom up training needs)

Improving and transforming the Council

Alongside delivering business as usual, it's essential that we lead the workforce in improving and transforming the services we deliver, and that as part of this, we garner and harness 11,600 innovative ideas from 5,800 colleagues, rather than say 32 ideas from a SLT of 16 leaders.

Whilst I have outlined elsewhere in this document a number of ways we can support transformation and improvement, there is more we can do:

- Our coaching conversations and formal coaching can focus on and be branded around coaching for transformation and improvement
- Similarly, the individual performance review process can focus on transformation and improvement as could any reward and recognition categories we develop
- We could develop a small cadre of *Change Champions* around the Council, selected on the basis that they are change positive and want to contribute to transformation and improvement. We could develop their skills in supporting change and make them available as a resource to teams working on change projects. Rather than this group being an extra resource and cost, we could say release them from their jobs for a day each week/fortnight
- We will deliver training in the Councils chosen change and transformation methodology
- We could explore rolling out and supporting Dragon's Den events across the Council

Developing further our Health & Wellbeing offer

We want our employees to have the best possible experience of the organisation. Whilst all of the actions and plans referred in this document will help to improve and optimise the overall experience of employees, which can contribute to their health and wellbeing, there is more we can do to improve our offer:

- We will procure a new occupational health contract, which is more flexible and able to offer timely appointments and counselling to staff
- We will also procure and implement a 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme, which employees can access for advice and support at any time
- We will deliver an annual series of health guidance and screening events around the County
- We will ensure employees who undertake any activities which require health screening (such as HAVS) receive suitable health screening

3. Next Steps

Subject to EMT'S support in relation to the aspirations and programme of organisational development laid out in this report, a paper will be prepared for the Transformation Delivery Board scheduled for 7th May seeking their support.

Meanwhile an inaugural meeting of a Workforce Board has been arranged on 3rd May to support and begin driving this programme of work.

I am also in the process of drafting a two-year work-plan to deliver this programme of work. Resourcing this plan will be a little challenging, as three senior OD officers departed last year and the budgets for their posts helped contribute to the Council's savings requirement, with further savings of £200k being identified against our corporate OD spend. Given our OD staffing resources are therefore limited, we will involve colleagues from the wider WOD Service where possible, and will be making a bid to Welsh Government for transformation funding for a considerable number of our planned projects over the next two years.

4. Recommendation

EMT is requested to support the aspirations and programme of organisational development laid out in this report and to support a paper being taken to the Transformation Delivery Board on the same basis.