

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MEMBER AND EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL**

**WEDNESDAY 10 JULY 2013**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES SHARED SERVICE**

**Report prepared by Dena Smart**

**1. WORKFORCE STRATEGY - UPDATE**

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 To note the progress made to implement the Workforce Plan which is designed to deliver the five key themes of the Workforce Strategy.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Human Resources Shared Service

1.2.1 That the Panel endorses the work to date and support the plan for future activities.

1.2.2 That the Panel supports the work for Member Development as part of the Workforce Strategy.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The Workforce Strategy (Appendix I shortened version without all the background documentation) is one of the key enabling strategies that support the Council's Strategic plan. The Workforce Strategy and associated plan was agreed by the Cabinet following consultation with the panel in January 2013.

1.3.2 There has been significant progress in most of the priority themes, an update on specific progress against each of the actions is at Appendix II but a general update on the progress is set out below.

1.3.3 **Organisation Development** – this theme is largely about the design of the organisation to ensure that resources are best used in the achievement of the council's business and in a manner that is consistent with its values. During the preceding six months there has been a significant re-structure at senior levels to increase efficiency and value for money. This has resulted in the reduction in the number of posts at Head of Service and the realignment of the services in each area. The 'ripple' of the re-structure is still underway and this work has

required good collaboration between Members and Officers to match the organisations requirements.

Partnership work within MKIP has continued and in April 2013 one of the largest partnerships was implemented which resulted in all members of the ICT services from Tunbridge Wells and Swale being TUPE transferred into employment with Maidstone. This was a significant project undertaken by the ICT managers and HR and through a co-ordinated approach the transfers went very well.

Work is underway to establish the options for the longer term employment/ business model for MKIP with a project team led by Zena Cooke, Director of Regeneration and Resources.

**1.3.4 Leadership Development** – this has been an area of significant development in the last six months. Much of the work was to be developed through the employee engagement plan (update attached at Appendix III). To progress the actions the council tendered a project which was awarded to the Communications Lab who have specific expertise in the area of employee engagement. Progress has been made in most of the areas that were flagged by the IiP Gold Health check, specifically:

- 1.3.4.1 Work to streamline the current competency framework which is considered to be too onerous to use and to enable managers to set clear expectations of what is required.
- 1.3.4.2 The development of team exercises to assist line managers to bring to life the council's core priorities and values so that staff are clear where they fit into the bigger picture.
- 1.3.4.3 The development of a coaching programme for all line managers to strengthen their skill set when working with team members.
- 1.3.4.4 The development of an evaluation framework to strengthen our approach to measuring the return on investment (ROI) for all development activities.

In addition to the work of the Communications Lab the One Council all staff briefings took place in April with the theme of Great Opportunity. A DVD was commissioned to bring to life the views of businesses in the borough and how they felt the council helped them, or could help more.

This work will continue to develop over the coming months.

The Member Development Policy and training calendar has been refreshed which contributes to the strength of leadership in the council and community.

1.3.5 **Skills Development** – the updates to the specific skills identified for the future are set out in appendix II. The appraisals have been analysed and corporate needs assessed to determine the corporate training calendar for 2013/14, this includes the standard annual training, health and safety training and the skill development identified through the workforce planning process. The proposed calendar will be with the Corporate Leadership Team for approval in July.

1.3.6 **Recruitment and Retention** – there is some indication that recruitment activities are picking up. As at 1 April 2013, the Council employed a total headcount of 500 employees and an FTE of 446.72 (this figure also includes the TUPE transfer of the ICT staff from Swale and Tunbridge Wells Council). This represents an increase in the headcount of 1.3% and an increase of 2.62% in the FTE from the previous quarter. When compared to the same period in 2012, the headcount has increased by 1.42%, whereas the FTE has increased by 2.18%.

During the period Jan – March 2013 there were 13 posts advertised which indicates some increase in activity. In the year April 2012 to March 2013 turnover was relatively low at 6.73% however there have been several resignations in the areas of building control and planning which were traditionally our 'hard to recruit' professions and there are some signs that these posts will be difficult to fill, careful examination of the recruitment processes are underway.

1.3.7 **Pay and Reward** – there was a change to pay scales in 2013 with the matching of the Living Wage levels for the lowest paid, this is a significant step forward for the council's reward package. Other benefits have been improved in the whole package particularly in the area of health and well-being – these are set out in the Appendices.

#### 1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Panel may wish to suggest additional or alternative actions to support the implementation of the Workforce Strategy as there are a wide variety of options; however as this is the first six months of a three year plan it is probably too earlier to properly evaluate the impact of the current proposals.

#### 1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The workforce strategy has an indirect impact on all of the council's priorities and is directly connected to 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 The strategy is designed to minimise the risks associated with a workforce that becomes disengaged, the only risks associated are that the council judges a particular initiative incorrectly and with continual feedback from the actions this risk should be reduced.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1. Financial	x
2. Staffing	x
3. Legal	
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development	
6. Community Safety	
7. Human Rights Act	
8. Procurement	x
9. Asset Management	

1.7.2 There are financial and procurement implications because we have engaged the support of external consultants to assist with the development of the programme, this is within budget and procurement rules have been followed.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

- Appendix I – Workforce Strategy
- Appendix II – Workforce Plan update
- Appendix III – Engagement Plan update

1.8.2 Background Documents

None

**IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?**

**THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED**

Yes

No

If yes, this is a Key Decision because: .....

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Wards/Parishes affected: .....

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