

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

06 July 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Workforce Strategy Update Report

Final Decision-Maker	Employment Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of HR Shared Services
Lead Officer and Report Author	Dena Smart, Head of HR Shared Services
Classification	Public
Wards affected	

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee note the progress of the actions set out in the Workforce Strategy

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

1. Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – the Workforce Strategy is an overarching strategy that affects all staff and therefore can have an impact on the council's ability to deliver all priorities.
2. Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough - the Workforce Strategy is an overarching strategy that affects all staff and therefore can have an impact on the council's ability to deliver all priorities.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Employment Committee	06 July 2017

Workforce Strategy Update Report

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The council has had a Workforce Strategy since 2008 and this has been reviewed and developed as the priorities and environment has changed. The most recent version covers the period 2016- 2020 and was agreed at the Policy and Resources Committee 29 June 2016. As part of the approval the P&R Committee requested that the Employment Committee should receive progress updates twice per year.
 - 1.2 At Appendix I the report sets out the progress made against specific action areas that form the Workforce Plan.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The key themes of the Workforce Strategy are:
 - Organisation culture and change;
 - Resourcing;
 - Development, and
 - Rewards.
- 2.2 There have been developments in all of these areas and many of the developments are cross cutting and affect more than one of the themes. In the last quarter our attention has been on the information received from the Investors in People assessment which took place in January 2017. The information below sets out the main findings and this will be used to focus our work in the next 12 to 24 months.
- 2.3 The Investors in People (IiP) standard has been re-developed in the last few years and there is a completely different look and feel to the 'generation 6' version. The major change is that the standard now incorporates much of the modern research into employee engagement and a completely new feature of the assessment is an employee engagement questionnaire to all staff. This is available both on-line and in hard copy for those without access to a computer. The assessors received 219 completed questionnaires which was 43% response rate (this is above the international IiP guidelines and considered statistically significant). Of these questionnaires 46 (21%) were in the Street Scene or Grounds Maintenance teams.

In addition to the questionnaires there were 54 staff interviewed and observation at several meetings in Maidstone House, the Depot and the Museum. There was also a thorough document review of policies, appraisals and other corporate documents.

The increased level of assessment has resulted in an increase in cost but the inclusion of an employee engagement survey meant that the council did not need to participate in the Best Companies engagement survey which saved approximately £12,000 (bi-annually). The cost of the IiP assessment was £16,000 and this included an annual visit and support by the assessor

to assist with any developments, case studies, etc but the cost is only once every three years if the council decide to go ahead with further assessments.

2.4 The IiP standard highlights the areas that make great organisations with engaged employees. The areas of assessment are illustrated in the diagram below.



The IiP assessment is graded by the assessor dependent on the evidence they find in all the different sources. There are four levels, standard; silver; gold and platinum, the council achieved a silver award.

The top three areas of best practice and areas for further work taken from the assessor report are set out in the table below.

Best practice	Further Development
Managing Performance Living the organisations values Structuring work	Reward and recognition Leading and inspiring people Building Capability

2.5 Since the assessment and the report the Wider Leadership Team has had a workshop with the assessor to consider the ways in which we can build on our existing strengths and improve in the areas that are flagged as priority areas for continuous improvement. A more detailed analysis from the assessor indicated that although MBC has a very impressive range of reward and recognition tools these are not being used by managers and there is definitely a perception that MBC do not pay as well as other employers. We are currently working on the development of Total Reward statements that should highlight the full range of benefits each employee will receive.

Leading and inspiring people was an area of mixed views. There were a great deal of positive comments about the Chief Executives leadership style,

her depth of knowledge of the organisation and willingness to involve people. At the time of the assessment the Directors had only been in post for six months and the assessors view was that people had not got to know them so they were 'unsure' on some of the questions and this affected the overall rating. The other strong theme from the assessor was the officer and member relationships with some officers reporting that these were quite strained. To try and move forward on this last point there is an agreement to hold a facilitated session with the LGA to consider ways of working.

Building Capability focusses on the council's approach to ensuring that all staff members are able to develop and use their skills to full capacity. The assessor felt that the recent change to the appraisal process (Developing Everyone) was a step in the right direction but a more structured approach was needed to succession planning and to a 'mind-set' change amongst staff members so that they fully engage in the development of the council in the future.

- 2.6 The WLT agreed that this should be taken forward by a cross section of officers. This group has now met and started to work on the action plan which will be integrated into the broader Workforce Strategy Plan.
- 2.7 Other areas that have been progressed include the development and roll out of Resilience Training for staff and managers (two separate programmes). This is as a direct response to the fact that stress and anxiety have been our highest causes of sickness absence for several years. We have had external speakers deliver sessions previously but these were often not well attended. The programme aimed to put a more positive focus onto resilience rather than stress and was a combination of the science of stress, mindfulness and other coping mechanisms as well as overall well-being.
- 2.8 The council is in the process of running a 'Stepping up to management' programme which incorporates the Chartered Institute of Management level 3; the Myers Briggs Type Inventory which help people to understand individual differences and a 360° feedback process. This is the second of these programmes which have been well received and are part of the management development framework.
- 2.9 We are currently in the process of recruiting two Heads of Shared Services (ICT and Legal) and the Mid Kent Services Director. These are critical appointments to take the organisation forward and will provide a further focus for management development in the organisation. The IiP assessor concluded that the organisation offered a very good range of training and development opportunities for staff but felt that there was insufficient structure to our approach to succession planning, this is something we will work on in the coming months.
- 2.10 The Workforce Strategy sets out the key themes for the period 2016-2020, there is an associated action plan that will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the council continues to develop. The action plan that was agreed in June 2016 is at Appendix I and it has been updated with the progress to date. It will be revisited as the information from the IiP assessment is analysed by the working group.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress to date, and agree that work continues on the current action plan. Members could substitute alternative actions or add to the existing ones.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is for the Committee to note the developments and support the on-going work.
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5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Workforce Strategy was developed with input from the managers in the organisation and discussed with both the trade unions and Staff Forum.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Developments based on the Workforce Strategy are regularly communicated to managers and staff through Wakey Wakey, Team Talk activities, consultation with trade unions Staff forum and by email.
- 6.2 Actions within the Workforce Strategy are regularly reviewed by the Wider Leadership Team and twice a year by the Employment Committee.
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7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Workforce Strategy has an impact on all aspects of the corporate priorities.	Dena Smart Head of HR
Risk Management	The overarching risk is that if the council does not have a Workforce Strategy it may fail to put in place the actions to deliver the priorities	Dena Smart Head of HR
Financial	There are areas of the Workforce Strategy that may have a financial impact but these would be costed within the normal annual budget	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
Staffing	The Workforce Strategy will have an impact on staff – this should be a positive impact as we work to ensure that there are improvements.	Dena Smart Head of HR
Legal	Although there may be specific actions	[Legal Team]

	that have legal implications there is nothing identified in the plan overall that will have legal implications.	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	No impact identified at this time	Dena Smart Head of HR
Environmental/Sustainable Development	No impact identified at this time	Dena Smart Head of HR
Community Safety	No impact identified at this time	Dena Smart Head of HR
Human Rights Act	No impact identified at this time	Dena Smart Head of HR
Procurement	No impact identified at this time	Dena Smart Head of HR
Asset Management	No impact identified at this time	Dena Smart Head of HR

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Workforce Plan update

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Workforce Strategy

<http://aluminum:9080/documents/s49435/Enc.%201%20for%20Workforce%20Strategy%202016-2020.pdf>