

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....24th April 2014

1. Title of Item/Report

Shaping a Brighter Future

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on the Shaping a Brighter Future (SBF) programme.

The Shaping a Brighter Future (SBF) programme was being developed to build capacity and resilience and support succession planning in the workforce. The SBF programme outline was approved by Cabinet on 16 January 2014. The purpose of the report was to provide an update to Cabinet on the development of the programme.

The background and context for the SBF programme was set out in the 16 January 2014 Cabinet report.

However it was worth noting that the context for the programme set out in the January report had not changed. The Council still faced challenges relating to:-

- &#9642; Serious financial pressures
- &#9642; Huge growth in demand for services
- &#9642; Fundamental changes due to welfare reforms
- &#9642; Changes in the delivery structures for public health and social care services
- &#9642; Potential changes to the delivery of strategic economic development linked to the LEP and City Deal.
- &#9642; An ageing workforce and associated loss of extremely experienced and knowledgeable staff through retirement.
- &#9642; Signs of increased stress and fatigue in the workforce as evidenced in the sickness absence statistics and from feedback from my regular service briefings and meetings throughout the workplace

These challenges were however only part of the context and the Council also had to recognise:-

- &#9642; Huge potential and talent in the organisation as evidenced by

APSE awards, positive feedback from residents and businesses and a host of nationally recognised accreditations and awards across our services.

• A strong track record and culture of employee development.

• A dedicated, high performing and committed workforce who care about their work and enjoy being part of the Council.

The SBF programme that was being developed reflected these realities and accepted that the Council had a responsibility and duty to support and develop its employees through these challenging times.

The SBF programme was an essential element of the Council's ongoing commitment to long term planning and investment in the organisation and was arguably the most important invest-to-save project the Council had embarked on. It under-pinned the programme of transformation which the Council was undertaking which began with the first Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) reviews in 2009. The investment in the workforce would be critical to meeting future challenges and this programme was another example of how the long term and planned approach to development was serving the organisation well. The programme would be delivered over the next 5 years and whilst some benefits would be realised in the short term it was important to recognise that this was not a short term fix.

The SBF programme had been under development over the last 3 months and was still changing and developing as more employees engage with the process through discussions.

The principle of the programme remained unchanged from the original vision - that the Council would build more capacity in the organisation by investing in its own people and growing its own talent to increase capability through personal and team development.

As outlined in the January report, the Chief Executive had been leading the SBF development work in collaboration with an experienced specialist in organisational change – Mel Nixon. Mel who had worked for many years with NEREO and many Local Authorities was, due to his long term working relationship with the Chief Executive, providing his services free of charge to this project for the next 5 years. His commitment to SBC as an organisation reflects his belief in the potential of its people and his identification with the big plans for the Borough.

Both Mel and the Chief Executive had been delighted at the enthusiasm with which employees had engaged with SBF. Over the last three months they had talked with a wide range of employees through Setting the Standard sessions, work with the Youth Forum, individual meetings and

team visits. They had been provided with creative, challenging and transformational ideas and suggestions and great enthusiasm from dedicated and committed employees. This development phase was still ongoing and the detailed programme was continuing to evolve as they incorporate many of these ideas. However they were now at a stage where the plan was crystalising around 8 areas of work:-

- Defining the workforce and workplace culture
- Developing a more robust selection and recruitment process
- Establishing an improved approach to talent identification and succession planning
- Building a programme to ensure that individuals operate to their maximum potential by identifying and delivering on development needs
- Reviewing the operation of teams to ensure they are working to maximum effect
- Building stronger relationships with partner organisations
- Reviewing the structures in the organisation to ensure that we have the right people in right place
- Reviewing employees support package to ensure that we support and retain staff

More detail on the workstreams was attached to the report.

An approach to delivery of the programme had also be established. The development of the programme was being shaped by employees and it was equally important that it would be delivered by employees, supported, where necessary, by a small team of external specialists. Work would continue over the next few months to firm up this delivery model and to identify employees to dedicate time to the programme. However a model based around a small programme board, project team and resource network was attached to the report.

Some additional specialist resources needed to support the programme had been identified and a contract arrangement had been put in place to call in leadership development and training to complement the in-house delivery team.

Promising discussions had also taken place with partners in other organisations who were interested in working on this programme. Catalyst had expressed a commitment to working on the programme.

The LGA had requested more information about the programme and follow up discussions would be held to identify all available support. All available possibilities to identify match funding would be explored to further enhance the programme.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The progress in the development of the SBF programme and the programme plan in Appendix 1 be noted.

2. Cabinet receive regular progress reports on delivery of the programme.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To update Members on the delivery of SBF.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday, 2nd May 2014

Proper Officer  
28 April 2014