

CABINET DECISION

Leader of the Council – Councillor Bob Cook

Corporate Management and Finance - Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor David Harrington

SHAPING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

SUMMARY

The Shaping a Brighter Future (SBF) programme is 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 this report is to provide an update to Cabinet on the development of the programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cabinet note the progress in the development of the SBF programme and the programme plan in Appendix 1.
2. Cabinet agree to receive regular progress reports on delivery of the programme.

BACKGROUND

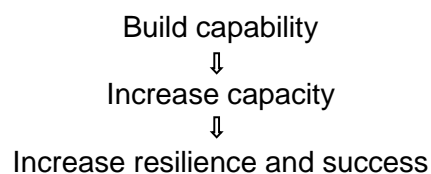
1. The background and context for the SBF programme was set out in the 16 January 2014 Cabinet report.
2. However it is worth noting that the context for the programme set out in the January report has not changed. We still face challenges relating to:
 - Serious financial pressures
 - Huge growth in demand for services
 - Fundamental changes due to welfare reforms
 - Changes in the delivery structures for public health and social care services
 - Potential changes to the delivery of strategic economic development linked to the LEP and City Deal.
 - An ageing workforce and associated loss of extremely experienced and knowledgeable staff through retirement.
 - 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 are however only part of the context and we also recognise that we have:

- 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.
3. The SBF programme we are developing reflects these realities and accepts that we have a responsibility and duty to support and develop our own employees through these challenging times.
 4. The SBF programme is an essential element of our ongoing commitment to long term planning and investment in the organisation and is arguably the most important invest-to-save project we have embarked on. It under-pins the programme of transformation which we are undertaking which began with the first Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) reviews in 2009. Our investment in our workforce will be critical to meeting our future challenges and this programme is another example of how our long term and planned approach to development is serving the organisation well. The programme will be delivered over the next 5 years and whilst some benefits will be realised in the short term it is important to recognise that this is not a short term fix.

DETAIL

5. The SBF programme has been under development over the last 3 months and is still changing and developing as more employees engage with the process through discussions.
6. The principle of the programme remains unchanged from the original vision - that we will build more capacity in the organisation by investing in our own people and growing our own talent to increase capability through personal and team development.



7. As outlined in the January report, I have been leading the SBF development work in collaboration with an experienced specialist in organisational change – Mel Nixon. Mel who has worked for many years with NEREO and many Local Authorities is, due to his long term working relationship with me, 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 it's people and his identification with the big plans we have for the Borough.
8. Both Mel and I have been delighted at the enthusiasm with which employees have engaged with SBF. Over the last three months we have talked with a wide range of employees through Setting the Standard sessions, work with the Youth Forum, individual meetings and team visits. We have been provided with creative, challenging and transformational ideas and suggestions and great enthusiasm from dedicated and committed employees. This development phase is still ongoing and the detailed programme is continuing to evolve as we incorporate many of these ideas. However we are now at a stage where the plan is crystallising 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 our 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 our employees support package to ensure that we support and retain our staff

More detail on the workstreams is included in *Appendix 1*

9. We have also established an approach to delivery of the programme. The development of the programme is being shaped by our employees and it is equally important that it will be delivered by our employees, supported, where necessary, by a small team of external specialists. Work will 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 is set out in *Appendix 1*.
10. We have identified some additional specialist resources needed to support the programme and have put in place a contract arrangement to call in leadership development and training to complement the in-house delivery team.
11. We have also begun to hold promising discussions with partners in other organisations who are interested in working with us on this programme. Catalyst have expressed a commitment to working with us on the programme.
12. The LGA have requested more information about the programme and follow up discussions will be held to identify all available support. We will explore all available possibilities to identify match funding and support to further enhance the programme.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13. All costs associated with the “Shaping a Brighter Future” programme will be met from within existing budget allocations. An allocation of £185k per annum has been made from the transformation reserve to support the project.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. There are no legal implications arising from this report. However as noted in the January report to Cabinet legal guidance has been sought on the creation of the Liz Nixon Charitable Trust. In recognition of Mel Nixon's commitment to providing his time free of charge to this project a charitable trust has been established in the name of Liz Nixon (Mel's late wife). The trust will be used to fund apprenticeships at the Council for young people of the Borough, particularly targeted at vulnerable young people and our own Looked After Children.

RISK ASSESSMENT

15. The risk associated with the “Shaping a Brighter Future” is assessed as low.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

16. The development of greater capacity and resilience in the organisation will lead to benefits across all strands of the Community Strategy.

CORPORATE PARENTING

17. The creation of the Liz Nixon Charitable Trust will provide support for our Looked After Children and therefore supports our Corporate Parenting obligations.

CONSULTATION

18. The proposal has been subject to consultation with CMT, EMT, employees through Setting the Standard and the Trade Unions. Further consultation will continue to take place with employees as the detailed project plan continues to be developed.

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