

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**10 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF  
EXECUTIVE**

**CABINET DECISION**

Leader of the Council – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Cook

**SHAPING A BRIGHTER FUTURE UPDATE**

1. SUMMARY

The Shaping a Brighter Future (SBF) programme has been developed to increase capabilities, build capacity and resilience, and support succession planning in the workforce. The SBF programme proposal was approved by Cabinet in January 2014 followed, in April 2014, by approval of the more detailed individual work streams that would make up the programme. Significant progress had been made since then, and there have been a number of early successes. The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update to Cabinet.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cabinet note the progress with the development of the SBF programme.
2. Cabinet agree to receive further, regular progress reports on delivery of the programme.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

This report provides details of progress made on the Shaping a Brighter Future (SBF) programme and information about some early successes.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

5. Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, in accordance with **paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or

- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.
6. A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code).
  7. Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

8. It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.
9. Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code).

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**SUMMARY**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Cabinet note the progress with the development of the SBF programme.
2. Cabinet agree to receive further, regular progress reports on delivery of the programme.

**BACKGROUND**

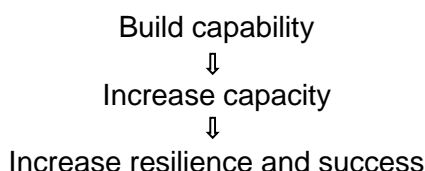
1. The 16 January 2014 Cabinet report set the context for the SBF programme. The challenges remain valid and we are still facing:
  - Serious financial pressures – the Medium Term Financial Plan position was reported to Cabinet on 16 July 2015 and indicated an estimated budget gap of £17m in 2018/2019. The Big Picture Programme to reduce the gap is expected to result in a period of significant organisational change;
  - The increasing demands on services as a consequence of an ageing population;
  - Fundamental changes due to welfare reforms;
  - Changes in the delivery structures for social care services and the NHS and integrations between the two as required by the Better Care Fund;
  - Changes to the delivery of strategic economic development linked to the LEP, Combined Authority and City Deal;
  - An ageing workforce and associated loss of extremely experienced and knowledgeable staff through retirement;
  - Similar to other local authorities, increased signs of stress and fatigue in the workforce.

2. 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.
  - An ongoing commitment to maintaining our Investors in People and Customer Service Excellence accreditations
3. The SBF programme reflects these realities and accepts that we have a responsibility and duty to support and develop our own employees through these challenging times. It 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 underpins the Big Picture programme.
4. Our investment in our workforce is critical to meeting our future challenges and the SBF programme is another example of how our long term and planned approach to development is serving the organisation well. It is reflected in the positive results from the 2014 Employee Survey, with employees expressing strong feelings of being valued, engaged and empowered and, significantly for SBF, expressing a readiness to take responsibility for helping make the organisation be more innovative.
5. The programme was envisaged as a long term (5 year) programme and whilst some benefits have been realised in the shorter term, it is important to recognise that other outputs and outcomes will take longer to come to fruition.

**DETAIL**

The Programme Structure

6. The principle of the SBF programme is 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. The SBF Programme is being delivered through eight work stream teams as follows:

<u>Work stream</u>	
Workplace Culture	Developing a statement of workplace culture, a set of supporting behaviours and a communication and implementation plan.

Selection & Recruitment	Looking at how we select and recruit people and how that might need to change to ensure that successful candidates fit both organisational culture and technical requirements.
Talent Identification & Succession Planning	Developing a mechanism for identifying and proactively growing our own talent together with a formal approach to succession planning.
Personal Development	Building a portfolio of tools that enable employees to identify and meet their personal development needs within the context of organisational needs
Team Development	Developing a framework for team working and a range of tools and techniques to help teams understand each other and work better together.
Partnership	Considering the principle of partnership, what sort of partner the Council wants to be, what types of partnership we should be involved in, who we should partner with and what our role should be.
Employee Wellbeing & Retention	Evaluating the current package of employee wellbeing and support measures. Developing a package that is fit for purpose for the future and a communications plan to promote it.
Right People, Right Place	Seeking to ensure that people's skills and talents are being used to the best effect in the right place in the organisation.

8. In addition there are two teams ensuring that the whole programme remains on track and keeps all employees and stakeholders informed. These teams are:
- Programme Management & Resource Network
  - Communications
9. Governance is provided through a Programme Board, chaired by myself and a Project Team made up of the work stream lead officers who are all Corporate Directors or Heads of Service.
10. SBF activities run alongside our usual day to day service provision activities, but are resourced and structured in a very different way to the traditional hierarchical structures that exist elsewhere within the organisation. Employees that wish to take part join the "Resource Network", a group of resourceful volunteers who have skills, abilities and experience that can be utilised to maintain the development and delivery of the programme, whether that be as a member of one of the work stream teams, acting as an advocate for the programme by talking and listening to their colleagues, or by supporting other SBF related initiatives. It is inclusive and open to all employees. An active and vibrant Resource Network underpins the SBF delivery model and the enthusiasm and commitment of Resource Network members has been remarkable. As well as employing the talents of our employees to maximum effect to shape the development of the organisation, participating in SBF is a real opportunity for our staff to do something different, make new connections and develop their skills.
11. To date 135 employees have joined the Resource Network and are participating in the programme in some way. Membership covers the full spectrum of grades, ages and service areas. A significant number of other employees across the whole organisation have actively engaged in discussions about our workforce culture. We envisage that more employees will join the Resource Network as the programme evolves over time.

## Progress

12. The latter parts of 2014 and early 2015 were taken up with establishing the Resource Network and setting up the work stream teams. All the teams are now operational and meeting regularly. SBF was set up to be a long-term programme, described as a “marathon, rather than a sprint”, but already there are several early successes to report:

- **Culture** – more than 20 staff culture workshop sessions have taken place, gathering views on what constitutes good and bad culture – some of these have been open events, others for specific teams. In parallel, an analysis of the feedback from the 2014 employee survey has been undertaken to inform work on a description of the desired future workforce culture. A draft culture descriptor will be finalised shortly, for further consultation and refinement, and it is anticipated that the final description of culture, along with a set of associated values and behaviours will be launched early in 2016.
- **Selection & Recruitment** – A “task and finish” review of recruitment arrangements has streamlined the recruitment process and introduced new checks and procedures that actively contribute towards the objective of developing a new recruitment process that ensures we recruit people that embody the desired emerging organisational culture as well as possessing the required technical skills for the job. Further work is ongoing to develop adverts, job descriptions/person specifications and interview questions that ensure candidates’ cultural fit.
- **Headway** – A new self-awareness programme called Headway has been developed and implemented. Headway is designed to grow emotional intelligence and unlock personal strengths. It has been designed in-house and six members of the Resource Network are being trained as facilitators to provide internal capacity to support the roll-out of the programme. To date five programmes have been delivered, covering a total of 59 employees. Feedback from participants has been very positive.
- **Coaching** – A review of coaching has been completed and recommendations are being implemented. These include:
  - The recruitment and training of eight new coaches;
  - The development of a training course “Coaching Skills for Managers”;
  - A coaching initiative in Economic Growth and Development, targeted to help staff in the new service handle change. This will act as a pilot, prior to roll-out council-wide;
  - New management arrangements to accompany a re-launch of the coaching service.
- **Advocates** – 36 members of the Resource Network have joined the SBF Advocate Network. The advocates’ role is to listen and talk to groups or individuals who would like to know more about SBF. They encourage people to be involved in the programme.
- **Communications** – A communications plan is in place. This includes prominent SBF pages on the intranet and regular updates through KYIT.

13. There are also a number of other pieces of work in progress and expected to start producing benefits before the end of the financial year:

- **Mindfulness** - The Employee Wellbeing & Retention work stream is developing a pilot Mindfulness course which will be evaluated to gauge the benefits of rolling-out a programme across the whole organisation as a way of reducing personal stress and enhancing resilience.

- **Bite-size Headway** – A series of short, lunch-time sessions exploring some of the themes and concepts introduced during the Headway Programme in more detail.
- **Mentoring** – The development and implementation of a mentoring scheme.

14. The teams are still working up the detail of their longer term work programmes, but plans include:

- A new apprenticeship/traineeship programme designed to help with hard to recruit areas and to fill skills gaps.
- Development of a system that identifies the talents, potential and aspirations of all employees, defines the talents that will be of benefit to the organisation and a process that enables us to use this information to meet the objectives of the SBF programme.
- Development of a range of tools and interventions that will support more effective team work.
- Development of new models for partnership working in the future.

15. Members will recall that Mel Nixon, an experienced specialist in organisational change, worked with me to shape the initial concept of SBF into its present delivery format. In recognition of the good progress made in establishing the Resource Network and setting up the work stream teams and reflecting his confidence in our ability to deliver successful outcomes, Mel stepped down from his advisory role at the end of January. This update presents an opportunity to record our thanks to Mel for his valuable contribution.

#### External Interest

16. There has been national interest in the SBF programme:

- APSE are following progress and are keen to explore the links between SBF and the APSE model of the “Ensuring Council”, which endorses the role of local authorities as stewards of local wellbeing and supports the maintenance of core in-house service provision. I addressed this subject when I spoke at the APSE annual seminar at the beginning of the month.
- I have been invited to talk about SBF at a conference in Northern Ireland. The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland provides HR support and oversight for councils in Northern Ireland and is interested in using SBF as a case study of innovative practice to help them develop a regional approach to promoting good practice in HR and organisation development activity.
- The LGA have also asked to be kept informed as the programme progresses.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

17. All costs associated with SBF are being met from within existing budget allocations.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

18. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

19. The risk associated with the SBF Programme is assessed as low.

### **COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **CONSULTATION**

21. The launch of SBF was subject to consultation with CMT, EMT, employees through Setting the Standard and the Trade Unions. The Programme has support of the Trade Unions and is discussed as a standing item at the monthly Trade Union Liaison Group meetings. There has been extensive consultation with employees through the workforce culture workshops. Further consultation will continue to take place with employees as the programme continues to evolve.

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