

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

DATE 1st DECEMBER 2016

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Leader of the Council – Councillor Bob Cook

BUILDING CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE IN THE ORGANISATION – SHAPING A BRIGHTER FUTURE/SMARTER WORKING

1. Summary

This report updates Members on progress with the Shaping a Brighter Future programme and references how SBF and the new workforce culture has set the parameters for us to consider and challenge how we work both now and in the future. This is being addressed through the Smarter Working element of the Big Picture programme. By thinking differently about what we do and how we do it, using service reviews, system changes, building moves and technology as catalysts for change, we are aiming to:

- further enhance our efficiency
- remove unnecessary barriers that stop our staff being empowered
- become a more modern, lean, fit for purpose, paper-light organisation that operates in a way that meets the changing needs and expectations of our customers and employees
- be a financially sustainable organisation
- continue to be a successful organisation that is independently recognised

2. Recommendations

1. Cabinet note the report

3. Reasons for the Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To provide members with an update.

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.

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.

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)

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

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.

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 report

DETAIL

1. In January 2014 Cabinet noted the approach to developing a Shaping a Brighter Future Programme to be delivered over a period of five years, recognising there would be some 'quick wins' and some more longer term solutions.
2. The principle of the programme was that it would be designed to 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. In recognising that the organisation faces a reduction in resources over the coming years the programme aims were articulated as being to:
 - Build capability
 - Increase capacity
 - Increase resilience and success
3. In April 2014 Cabinet were provided with an update on the programme and noted the intrinsic links with the Council's ongoing commitment to long term planning and invest to save approach. SBF underpins the programme of transformation that formally began with the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) reviews in 2009 and continues

through the Big Picture Programme and our Planning and Delivery Framework. (See Appendix 1).

4. The programme was designed around a number of key work streams and two supporting strands:
 - Workforce culture
 - Selection and recruitment
 - Personal Development
 - Team Development
 - Talent Identification & Succession Planning
 - Right people, right place
 - Employee well-being and retention
 - Partnership
 - Programme Management and Resource Network (Supporting strand)
 - Communications (Supporting strand)
5. A further update report to Cabinet in September 2015 provided details of some of the early successes and emerging plans from the work stream teams.
6. It is timely to bring a further update to Members both on the Shaping a Brighter Future Programme itself and the approach to Smarter Working which is designed to further enhance the capacity, resilience and effectiveness of the organisation.

Shaping a Brighter Future

7. The fundamental principle of SBF is about recognising that hierarchy in an organisation is necessary but deploying an empowered 'network style' of working improves resilience and capacity as well as providing learning and development opportunities, ensuring people's skills are used to best effect and promoting the concept of 'One Council'.
8. The development and use of the Resource Network (a network of employees drawn from all parts of the organisation) to progress with SBF work streams, support a number of other SBF initiatives and to advocate for the SBF programme has proved extremely successful with a wide range of staff actively getting involved and is a principle and approach that is now being used in relation to other projects and pieces of work across the Council.
9. The outcome from the Workforce Culture strand, led by the Chief Executive, provides the foundation, not only for the other SBF work streams, but for setting the scene and articulating 'how we want to work here'. The workforce culture and associated behaviours were developed through a series of events engaging hundreds of employee from across the Council and are being well received in the organisation and will facilitate the progress of our approach to smarter working (see below).
10. The workforce culture has been determined as:

"We are an organisation where all staff are trusted, supported and valued to make a positive contribution at work. Where we never lose sight of the fact that we're here to serve the people of the borough. This is a place where:

- Everyone's views and opinions are encouraged, heard and properly considered
- We share responsibility for our own learning and development and are encouraged and supported to do so by others

- We work hard and feel comfortable to suggest new ideas, ways of working and to take managed risks
 - We all feel a strong sense of belonging to the whole Council and our skills, knowledge and experience are used to benefit the organisation as a whole”
11. This has been translated into a sharper statement that is clearer and easier for staff. ‘We are an organisation where we all make a positive contribution at work for the whole council. Where we never lose sight of the fact we are here to serve the people of the borough. This is a place where.....
- We are valued, trusted and supported
 - We are heard
 - We take responsibility for our own development
 - We work hard
 - We are not afraid to try something new
 - We belong
12. A set of underpinning behaviours has been developed to help translate this into practice. (See Appendix 2)
13. Support for the Personal Development of employees includes;
- Headway (an in-house developed self-awareness programme delivered to over 300 employees, which has been further enhanced by the introduction of ‘Team Headway’ and Headway “Bitesize” sessions. A new programme “Headway – Deeper Insights”, building on key Headway themes, is being piloted
 - Coaching and mentoring
14. The recruitment and selection work stream have introduced the culture and behaviours into the interview process to ensure that people being recruited into posts are a good cultural fit with the organisation as well as technically competent. The group has also been considering the contribution that apprenticeships can make to the organisation in terms of bridging skills gaps.
15. Team Development is piloting an approach to team charters linked to creative and effective teams. The group is exploring team appraisals and measures, team interventions and how the health and wellbeing of teams can be assessed,
16. Talent Identification & Succession Planning have merged with Right People, Right Place and have developed an approach to identifying talent within the organisation, ensuring it is used to benefit the Council as a whole and provide leadership development opportunities to support resilience and succession planning. The Talent Network will be launched in spring 2017 following a pilot towards the end of this year.
17. The Employee Well-being and Retention group have introduced:
- Mindfulness sessions and tasters which have been well-received with positive feedback indicating improvements in productivity and relieving stress (a suggestion that came from a member of staff)
 - Developed a booklet and intranet pages pulling all of the information together on employee benefits
18. The Partnership work stream has been looking at what constitutes a partnership and what makes a good partner and will be feeding the findings into their work to develop a “partnership toolkit”.

Smarter Working

19. It is undoubtedly a challenging time for local authorities, the context and reasons for this are well documented in other reports to Cabinet. Stockton Borough Council is no exception to this. Our employees are working extremely hard to tackle all of the challenges we face and Members have to take increasingly tougher decisions.
20. Alongside this we need to acknowledge that both our customer and employee bases are changing, not only in terms of the demographic, their needs and expectations but also how they access information, products and services.
21. In addition, in the case of our employees we need to consider how we can modernise our working practices to match their expectations, improve productivity and resilience and attract and retain talent.
22. There is a pressing need to consider what we do, how and where we do it. Alongside our Big Picture Programme, aimed at delivering the requisite savings to deliver a balanced budget in line with the MFTP and our Shaping a Brighter Future Programme, we need to challenge what we should stop doing, what we continue to do, how we do it and whether we can do it differently. This will help us make sure:
 - that the valuable asset of our staff are focussed on doing the things that add value to the organisation
 - we make the best use of individual and collective skills and talents to deliver outcomes and objectives within the Council Plan
 - time is not spent on doing unnecessary tasks, activities or bureaucracy
23. Our approach to smarter working is intrinsically linked to SBF in that it is primarily about our people thinking differently about what work is and how we do it and how we, as an organisation, through our SBF culture empower them to do it. Through our approach to smarter working we will be:
 - Actively engaging with our employees to develop ways of working smarter
 - Considering whether we have the right data and information to shape our services, enhance decision-making and whether we are using it to best effect
 - Reviewing some of our business processes to make sure they are necessary and that they are as efficient and productive as they can be
 - Utilising existing and new technologies as a catalyst for and enabler of working differently
 - Making sure optimum use is made of our buildings
 - Ensuring our IT infrastructure and software is fit for purpose and is helping us to work better and differently
 - Assessing whether our internal policies and procedures help or hinder us and changing them or getting rid of them where necessary
 - Shifting towards being a 'paper light' organisation
 - Moving our customers to accessing services and engaging with us increasingly through digital means whilst retaining trust, good service and appropriate choice
24. Stockton Borough Council is a successful organisation with a long and positive track record for continuous improvement and doing things better. Doing things better is no longer enough in the context we find ourselves in. In line with our culture we need to do things differently if we are to achieve the step change necessary to ensure we are a financially stable organisation that is focused on delivering targeted services to meet the needs of our customers.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

There are no community impact implications as a direct result of this information report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this information report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications as a direct result of this information report

RISK ASSESSMENT

Shaping a Brighter Future and Smarter Working are categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

Shaping and Brighter Future and the approach to smarter working support the delivery of the following priorities within the council plan:

Ambitious, effective and proud to serve

- Delivering a balanced and sustainable medium term financial plan
- Developing and delivering value for money and efficiency
- Optimising the use of assets
- Deliver customer service excellence
- Continue to attract, develop and support our diverse, capable and resilient employees
- Ensuring we have a resilient and flexible ICT infrastructure

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications relating to corporate parenting.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

N/A – information only report

Name of Contact Officer: Neil Schneider/Julie Danks

Post Title: Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive

Telephone No. 01642 52700/01642 527007

Email Address:neil.schneider@stockton.gov.uk/Julie.danks@stockton.gov.uk

Education related? No

Background Papers None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: N/A

Property

No direct implications as a result of this information report but the approach will support the optimisation of use of Council accommodation