

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

12 SEPTEMBER 2019

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET INFORMATION ITEM

Leader of the Council – Councillor Bob Cook

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE (IIP) – ANNUAL REVIEW 2019

SUMMARY

The Investors in People (IIP) award sets out the criteria for high performance through people. The Council has held the IIP Accredited award since 2003 and has maintained accreditation ever since. The Council were most recently accredited in July 2018 and awarded the Investors in People Standard.

We are required to undertake annual reviews at the 12 and 24 month anniversary of our accreditation. The annual review is a valuable opportunity for the Council to consider our progress and assess our current position against the IIP Standards. The annual review considered evidence from Senior Managers within the organisation and from our employees on an individual and group basis. The 12 month review took place in July 2019 and as a result the Council continues to be recognised as an Investors in People organisation.

Evidence gathered during Interviews provided significant evidence of good practice across all Indicators of the Standard and feedback in the report and directly from the Assessor is excellent. The review again highlighted that the Council is working beyond the 'Developed' level in many areas.

It is particularly pleasing to receive such positive feedback and recognition of the Council's ambition and approach to valuing our workforce, notwithstanding the significant financial challenge and change, that our organisation and employees have been part of over the recent years.

REASON FOR PRODUCING THIS REPORT

To update Cabinet on the Council's positive progress against the Investors in People standard and to share the outcome of the recent Investors in People Annual Review report (**Appendix 1**).

DETAIL

1. Organisations that meet the world-recognised Investors in People Standard reflect the very best in people management excellence. The Council has held the IIP accreditation since 2003. The Council were most recently accredited in July 2018 and retained the IIP award, recognised as an "IIP Accredited" organisation up until 2021.
2. In 2015, IIP launched the 6th generation of the IIP standard, with a performance model with nine new indicators as outlined below. The Nine Indicators, which align closely with the work the Council is doing to support and develop employees and particularly with the Shaping a Brighter Future, Smarter Working and Better Health at Work programmes.



3. The Council was assessed and awarded IIP against the “Developed” level of the IIP Performance Model meaning that we demonstrated that “appropriate principles and practices are in place and communicated, and that people and leaders know what is expected of them”. It should be noted that we elected to seek assessment against the “Developed” level of IIP performance as it was felt that this option represented the most cost-effective approach. The assessment, whilst less in-depth than the higher level assessments, still provided a thorough and independent examination of all we are doing at a competitive cost.
4. As part of our accreditation the Council are required to undertake annual reviews at the 12 and 24 month anniversary of the accreditation. The 12 month review took place in July 2019 and as a result the Council continues to be recognised as an Investors in People organisation.
5. The annual review was undertaken by an IIP practitioner on 22 & 23 July 2019, using a mixture of leadership discussions, individual and group interviews and review of documentation.

An initial meeting with the Managing Director and the Director of HR, Legal & Communications took place, followed by individual and group meetings with a further 33 employees. The selection of people for interview was based on a range of criteria, including involvement in the Council’s apprenticeship programme, employee Health and Wellbeing activities and the Council Shaping a Brighter Future Programme. The assessor also met with the CEO of the Council’s Health and Wellbeing provider: Veronica Harnett from Redcar & Cleveland MIND.

There was also the opportunity for the Assessors to review Council documentation including the Council’s Employee Survey 2018 results, Intranet material and film clips.

6. Interviews provided significant evidence of good practice across all Indicators of the Standard as outlined in the Annual Review Report at **Appendix 1**.

7. **Key Findings:**

Leading and inspiring people: There was strong evidence of our employees being well supported in their development, in some cases leading to career progression and a change of direction. There was a high level of confidence in senior leaders’ ability to drive the council forward, and agreement that the transition to a senior team led by the Managing Director had been smooth.

Living the organisation’s values and behaviours: It was identified that we have an established suite of values which recognise the importance of public service and our behaviours

promote working hard and not being afraid to try something new. Our employees gave many examples of how the values are put into practice in their daily work, for example by supporting local communities through restorative practice, improving customer service and working with young people.

Empowering and involving people: Feedback from the interviews confirmed that people feel empowered and are encouraged to come forward with ideas for improvement, and to participate in decision-making. Several people who were interviewed were heavily involved in the selection process for apprentices, through participating in assessment centres and interviews. Involvement in such activities encourages people to collaborate and to develop new skills and these are all features of the Advanced and High-Performing performance level of the Investors in People framework.

Delivering continuous improvement: The Shaping a Brighter Future and the Apprenticeship programme support continuous improvement. It was noted that the strategy to employ apprentices required an innovative approach to recruitment and selection with the publication of a comprehensive brochure and the decision to hold two town centre open days enabling the variety of apprenticeships on offer to be publicised to a wide audience. The selection was in progress during this review but it was noted that the selection process itself was innovative, with assessment centre tasks being designed to bring out the best in candidates by assessing their suitability for the roles through participation in activities.

The organisation's approach to Employee Assistance and Wellbeing training provision was also recognised as innovative. Comprehensive reporting from the contractor demonstrates positive evaluation of training delivery; and in-depth analysis of access to services.

Creating sustainable success: The assessor noted that this continues to be an area of strength for Stockton Borough Council. Feedback from the interviews provided good evidence of people's involvement in short-term and long-term planning and there is clearly an understanding of the future challenges and opportunities which face the Council as it pursues its ambition.

8. The report concluded that Stockton Borough Council continues to be recognised as an Investors in People organisation. The progress since the 2018 Assessment had been recognised and the assessor was pleased to learn about the Council future plans and ambitions.
9. A 24 month review meeting will take place with the Lead Assessor in July 2020 to consider our progress, and as suggested in the report we will aim to include some of the apprentices who have recently been recruited to discuss their progress and opportunities. In the meantime we will continue to engage with our employees and work with the nine indicators to ensure a positive 24 month review. Our commitment to the refreshed and now permanent Shaping a Brighter Future Programme is continuing to yield positive results and will focus in future around making this a great place to work and delivering the vision as set out in our Culture Statement.

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