

Report to: Employment Committee
Date: 22nd June 2015
Report Subject: Staff Engagement and Support
Report Author: Lisa Hooley, Acting Director of HR

Report Title: Staff Engagement and Support

Recommendation(s)/Decision required:

To note the workforce initiatives, staff engagement and support mechanisms that are in place.

Summary of key stakeholders involved in report production:

Angela Beadsworth x 1291

1. Background

This report provides an update on workforce activities to support, develop, engage and communicate with our workforce, so that quality services continue to be delivered to Trafford residents and customers.

2. Reshaping Trafford Council

Communication and Engagement

A range of communication and staff engagement activities has been put in place, some of which are as a result of feedback received from the Employee Survey conducted in 2012/13 and the first 'Are you ready for change?' Survey, which was undertaken in February 2014. This information has informed the development of the Reshaping Trafford 'Supporting Change to Happen' strategy that sets out how we will lead, communicate and engage the workforce through the significant organisational change journey and some of the activities are outlined below for information.

2.1 Survey (June 2015)

Building on the 'Are you ready for change?' survey conducted in February 2014, a further survey is proposed to take place in mid-June entitled: 'Are you equipped for change?'. This survey acknowledges that we have listened to the feedback received from staff and equipped the workforce with a range of engagement activities, tools and techniques over the last 12 months to support them on the next phase of their change journey. We are retaining the same questions in the follow-up survey to

allow us to benchmark appropriately and evidence that the changes we have put in place to support the workforce are making a real difference.

The results of this survey will help to further shape the 'Supporting Change to Happen' strategy forming part of the Reshaping Trafford Council programme and it is intended to share the initial survey results at the two staff engagement events later this year; Trafford Leaders' and Working Together for Trafford.

2.2 Corporate Management Team Drop-in Sessions

The first CMT engagement drop-in sessions were held for the Transformation and Resources (T&R) and Children, Families and Well-Being (CFW) Directorate staff on 22nd May 2015, with Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure (EGEI) staff meeting with their Corporate Director on 29th May 2015. These are informal sessions where staff can ask questions or just find out more about their senior managers to encourage on-going dialogue and a more open culture for sharing and exchanging information across the Council.

These sessions were implemented as a direct result of staff feedback.

2.3 Newsletters/Website

A series of Reshaping Trafford newsletters are issued on a regular basis informing staff on a wide range of topics relating to the changes happening across the Council. The next newsletter is due in early June and will be an update covering some of the areas highlighted in this report, to remind managers/staff of the range of support that has been implemented / delivered to support them on their change journey. A further newsletter is also proposed, which will focus specifically on the programme of change within CFW.

2.4 Trafford Leaders (July 2015) / Working Together for Trafford (September 2015) Events

These two events formed part of a full week of engagement activities/events during June 2014 that saw the HR service working closely with Transformation and Communication colleagues to promote the Reshaping Trafford programme to staff at all council sites.

The next events will provide an update on the Devolution agenda (the Trafford Leaders' meeting will particularly focus on this), the Reshaping Trafford projects and the staff engagement and development activity that has been undertaken in the intervening period and the results of the planned survey will also be positioned during these events.

To allow sufficient time to conduct wider communications and strive to ensure full engagement in the survey, these two events are scheduled for early July for Trafford Leaders and early September for Working Together for Trafford.

We are also continuing to demonstrate how we have delivered upon our 'You Said, We Did' ethos by evidencing how we have listened to staff and made changes to our approach based on their feedback, engagement ideas and training programmes undertaken.

2.5 JVC Project

As part of the wider corporate consultation process leading up to the contract award stage, fortnightly meetings took place with the trade unions in relation to the JVC project. Direct communications with staff also took place via briefings at key milestones in the procurement process, using opportunities of scheduled team meetings, via newsletters and updates on the Reshaping Trafford website.

Following the contract award to Amey, their staff are now based at both the Carrington and Trafford Town Hall sites; these staff are available to respond to any queries from staff and Amey will continue to have a presence on site throughout the whole of the mobilisation period and for a period of time post-mobilisation.

Since the commencement of mobilisation, there have been staff roadshows at both Carrington and the Town Hall; these roadshows were attended by all staff and have been followed up by one-to-one meetings. We have also set up fortnightly trade union meetings, which are joint meetings, attended by HR and managers from both Trafford and Amey.

Staff continue to receive written communications about the transfer and we have recently developed a set of joint FAQ's, with input from Trafford and Amey. We are also now producing joint newsletters to reflect our partnership approach.

2.6 Female Leadership Network Events (29 May – Fashion Show)

A Charity Fashion Show, with invitations sent from Trafford's Female Leadership Network, was held at Trafford Town Hall on Friday 29 May, 2015, with a company called 'Colours Fashion' offering their range of high street fashion labels for sale. Chelsea Norris from the Key 103 breakfast show, who presented at last year's staff awards, sponsored this event and hosted the show.

The fashion show brought current high end fashion from the high street straight to the catwalk. Guests were excited to see the wide range of clothes and many took the opportunity to buy them at real bargain prices on the night.

The event was a real success and presented a further opportunity for staff to come together in a relaxed and enjoyable environment further contributing to our staff engagement strategy.

2.7 Annual Employee Recognition Awards (October 2015)

Planning has commenced for the next employee recognition awards to take place on a date to be agreed in October 2015.

The annual awards ceremony and evening is an extremely successful part of the staff engagement strategy and presents an opportunity for staff to take part in the nomination process leading up to the event. It provides the opportunity for those who are shortlisted to celebrate with others and attend a fully-sponsored function outside of working time and enjoy a three course meal and entertainment.

Learning and Development

2.8 Suite of Management Development Sessions (January – May 2015)

Following on from feedback gained through the Are you ready for change? survey, three inter-dependent workshops were delivered in Autumn 2014 by North West Employers (Emotionally Intelligent Leadership for Successful Change, Managing the Stretch and Strain of Change and Creating Meaningful Dialogue),

The following additional sessions as part of Phase Two have been developed and are currently being delivered to managers:-

- Coaching for Improved Performance (incorporating support for the refreshed Personal Development Review process).
- Negotiating and Influencing Skills.
- Commercial Awareness Skills.

To supplement this programme, e-learning packages are also available on a range of related topics (such as Coaching, How to Manage through Change and Constructive Feedback) and additional sessions on Managing Change and Personal Resilience are available on a demand basis internally delivered by the Learning and Development team.

A full evaluation of the Phase One and Two activities under the Reshaping Trafford 'Supporting Change to Happen' strategy is currently taking place and will inform further learning and development interventions in 2015/16.

3. CFW Organisational Development Action Plan

The HR service is currently working closely with CFW managers and Finance in relation to addressing the required performance management, cultural and training and development actions arising from the recommendations of the CFW budget monitoring action plan, agreed by the Accounts and Audit committee in September 2014. An Organisational Development Recovery Action Plan was compiled and progress updates on this have been provided to CMT and the Accounts and Audit Committee.

Three 'people' recommendations were developed to ensure that the CFW Directorate can move further forward to achieve a uniform Directorate culture with appropriate behaviours that are modelled by all employees; that managers have the

relevant people management skills and expertise and that succession plans are in place to avoid future skills gaps.

The HR service has put in place a number of targeted and bespoke learning and development interventions for staff in CFW and Finance, to achieve the people recommendations.

4. Member Development

As Members will be aware, three workshops, which form part of the Trafford Local Leaders' Programme, have already been delivered with a further final session under consideration with a potential delivery date in August 2015.

To support the introduction of new tablet devices and potentially new mobile phones, all councillors are being offered the opportunity to attend a 1:1/small group support session with training, if required, during June 2015.

Arrangements are being put in place for overview briefings around the requirements of the Care Act for Members with a more in-depth briefing provided for those members who require it. It is proposed to ask Members to self-select which training is most effective to meet their needs. We are currently scheduling Personal Development Review sessions with Members with their preferred preference of an officer or peer discussion.

Following the recent elections and appointment of new councillors, an Induction programme for new Members is taking place and we are currently scheduling an opportunity for new Members to meet with the Corporate Management Team during June 2015.

We continue to promote and encourage take up of further learning and development opportunities to Members and continue to provide support to our Member Development Steering Group.

5. Apprenticeships and Internships

Apprenticeships

In total, 90 apprenticeship positions have been created within the Council and our priority groups continue to be Looked-after-Children in line with Trafford's corporate parenting responsibilities, young people aged between 16-24 and Trafford residents.

12 Looked-after-Children have been supported onto a Trafford Council Apprenticeship and 5 of these individuals have completed their apprenticeship. In the last 12 months, 2 of these 5 have completed Level 2 and 3 apprenticeships and have now moved onto permanent roles. We currently have one Looked-after-Child on the programme.

We have a total of 18 apprentices currently on the programme employed across the Council, with an additional 7 opportunities being recruited to across a variety of roles.

A wide-range of support and development is in place for our apprentices, including a comprehensive induction, personal development plans, peer/buddy and mentoring support and HR development / team-building sessions.

Upon completion of their apprenticeships, 26 apprentices have obtained permanent roles with the Council and 11 have secured permanent roles externally.

A traineeship programme is being developed in partnership with Trafford College with a target group of up to a maximum of 10 young people either known to the Youth Offending Service and / or were children in care. The aim of this programme is to support them to move towards independence and preparation for future career development and potentially prepare these individuals for an apprenticeship.

An annual induction event is being organised for new intakes onto the apprenticeship programme.

Internships

We continue to work in partnership with Pure Innovations, Trafford College and Central Manchester Hospital NHS Trust to deliver and further develop a programme to support young people with learning difficulties/disabilities into work experience and ultimately into employment.

All individuals on the programme have secured work experience and employment opportunities and the Council have provided work experience opportunities for a number of individuals on the programme. In addition, two young people were offered fixed-term contracts with the Council with the offer of supporting them to find further alternative employment when these initial contracts cease.

Trafford has recently confirmed our commitment to continue to contribute funding towards staffing costs of the Employment Support Officer in supporting the programme for a further year and a new cohort of young people has been recruited to the programme. We will continue to work in partnership to source work experience and jobs with our partner organisations and with businesses across the borough and contribute to providing support through the Internship Steering Group.

We are continuing to:

- Promote opportunities to businesses and support through 'Jobs with Training' funds, which are monies converted from remaining unused GM commitment grants allocated to Trafford.
- Explore opportunities for work experience within the Council and/or with partners/businesses for the current year's cohort.
- Support the partnership Steering Group.
- Support on-going promotional events/activities.

We have also been invited to present and run workshops at an international conference being held in Manchester in June 2015, to further promote the internship programme

6. Outplacement Support

There are several mechanisms to support staff who are leaving the Council through redundancy to move onto the next phase of their career in a positive manner. For professional employees and senior managers, support can be accessed via Penna, who are the UK's number 1 provider of career transition services. Staff who are referred to the service can either choose a pre-determined support package or can use an agreed number of credits to flexibly access support in the best way for them.

We also access support from the DWP/Jobcentre Plus, who have provision for the whole workforce. They held two sessions for 'at risk' staff in April, which were well attended. At the sessions, staff were given an overview of the types of support available, advised about accessing benefits/managing finances and sign-posted to other services. They also indicated the follow-on support that they would like to receive. Further group and one-to-one sessions were then arranged during May and June 2015, which included interview and CV skills development and information on self-employment. As well as the formal sessions, staff can also use a self-help route.

Support for the preparation of CVs/interviews is also available for interested staff delivered by the HR Learning and Development team.

7. Health and Well-Being

We have introduced health and wellbeing events to promote healthier lifestyles in the workplace, working in partnership with a range of external providers.

Some of the exhibitors supporting these events include Connect Physio, CYPS information services, BDMA, Herbal Life, Trafford Leisure Trust, LA Fitness and Lloyds Pharmacy. A range of activities, information and advice is made available to staff, including smoking cessation, blood pressure checks and weight management along with BMI testing, sport demonstrations and advice and encouragement on taking up activities such as outdoor workouts and gym memberships.

The addition of the Tug of War was a big hit last year, with staff commenting that it really boosted morale and gave a general feeling of wellbeing. Last year, we added in more interactive activities including inflatable games, hoola-hooping, a football penalty shoot-out and sumo suits.

Annual football tournaments at the Soccerdome have also encouraged teams across the council to come together and enjoy a competitive event, whilst exercising and keeping fit.

Following the recent schools Service Level Agreement open event held in April 2015, 13 schools have expressed a keen interest to hold a health and wellbeing event within the school for their staff and this is being progressed.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

Employment Committee is recommended to note the workforce initiatives in place and underway across the organisation, together with the wide range of activity in respect to staff engagement and support.