

No.

Date

CHANGE BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting held on 11th July, 2002.

Present: Councillor H.J. W. James (Chairman); Councillors G.J.M. Fletcher, G.C. Kemp, N. Moore and A.J. Williams.

Also present: Councillor Mrs. C.V.L. Clay.

Apologies for absence: These were received from Councillor C.P. Franks.

(a) Minutes of the meeting held on 29th May, 2002 -

AGREED - T H A T the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 29th May, 2002 be noted.

(b) Member Development (CE) -

Member development had been identified as a requirement in the Corporate Governance Action Plan, and endorsed as a priority by the Change Board and the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources).

The diagnostic report had identified a number of proposals for action including:

- Cabinet and Scrutiny roles to be clarified;
- “Backbenchers” to visit other authorities and learn how they have developed the community leadership role;
- A political champion for member development to be appointed (Councillor G.C. Kemp) together with the creation of a strategy for member development. The strategy would include comprehensive induction, basic skills programmes e.g. IT, and specialist development addressing the needs of Cabinet, Scrutiny and Community Leadership;
- Party leaders to attend the Leadership Academy and consider taking advantage of external mentoring;
- Encourage members and officers to experiment and learn from each other as well as from others in the family of local government;
- Explore the scrutiny function after visiting a range of councils who are experimenting in different ways with the scrutiny process;
- Systematic training of members and staff in project management.

The overall objective of a member development programme would be to identify the various roles of elected members in the Vale in the light of the modernisation agenda for local government. From the definition would flow a set of key competencies for members to include strategic management, performance management, budgetary and financial management, community leadership, overview and scrutiny. The member development programme would be developed along the lines of core competencies for

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all members with specific development activities for group leaders, chairs of scrutiny committees, new members etc.

AGREED -

- (1) T H A T the content of the report be noted, and the overall approach to member development be endorsed.
- (2) T H A T a detailed proposal be submitted to the next Change Board, to be held, if possible, by the end of July 2002, identifying the aims and objectives of the programme, the proposed process and indicative timescales for completion.
- (3) T H A T a further report on proposals for improving members' services be submitted to the Cabinet on 31st July, 2002.
- (4) T H A T these minutes be referred to the meetings of the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) to be held on 16th July, 2002.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To further the member development initiative identified in the Corporate Governance Diagnostic Report.
- (2) To allow members to consider detailed proposals in this aspect of the Corporate Governance Action Plan.
- (3) To provide improved support for members to enable them to fulfil their roles.
- (4) To progress these matters as soon as possible.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public -

AGREED - T H A T the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it contains exempt information as defined under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the relevant paragraph of the Schedule being referred to in brackets after the minute heading.

(d) Recruitment and Retention of Staff (CE) (Exempt information - paragraph 5) -

The report set out the difficulties encountered in recruiting/retaining staff in the context of a buoyant and competitive employment market. A number of senior managers had been attracted to apply for outside jobs in the last few months, and as a short term response to these pressures the Chief Executive had used his emergency powers, in consultation with the three Leaders, to offer a 10% personal supplement for retention purposes in three individual cases, subject to the officers agreeing to remain in the Council's employment for the next three years.

Concern was expressed at the need to establish clear criteria which would be applied in such cases.

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It was noted that some Welsh local authorities had broken through JNC benchmark guidance for Chief Officer posts in an attempt to attract and retain staff.

It was believed that an external view of the issues facing the Council would help in reviewing recruitment, managerial capacity, retention, succession planning, staff development and related workforce issues. The terms of reference for such a project were set out below:

“The Vale of Glamorgan Council requires assistance in reviewing its policies on recruitment, retention, grading and staff related issues. The Council is committed to a wide-ranging corporate governance action plan, which includes the development of a human resources strategy. The proposed work on recruitment and retention must fit in with the wider action plan, as managed by the Council in collaboration with the Improvement and Development Agency.

The Vale has experienced difficulties in attracting suitable candidates into a number of professional and managerial positions. In addition, some more able staff have tended to move quickly to other public sector employers. One neighbouring authority has advertised higher salaries than on offer in the Vale, causing problems at both managerial and operational levels.

A review of policies and procedures is required, together with an audit of recent staff losses and recruitment experiences. The review should:

- (a) Identify the current and potential staffing difficulties.*
- (b) Evaluate and compare the grades of internal posts with the market, particularly for hard to fill positions.*
- (c) Consider the pay and terms of conditions for posts where difficulties are identified or expected.*
- (d) Evaluate the overall effect of Recruitment and Selection procedures.*
- (e) Examine the use of qualifications and training to attract and retain good people.*
- (f) Compare recruitment and relocation packages against competitors in the region.*
- (g) Examine the impact of the Vale’s perceived location on recruitment.*
- (h) Take a critical look at those employment policies that impact on retention, career development and employee satisfaction.*
- (i) Gather information on the experience of the average member of staff eg: how well am I valued nurtured etc.*
- (j) Identify the scope for joint working with other local authorities, public bodies, the private sector, and other bodies on these issues.”*

AGREED -

- (1) T H A T the terms of reference for the project as amended, be confirmed.
- (2) T H A T the Chief Executive be authorised to use his emergency powers to negotiate the detail and costs of the project with providers.
- (3) T H A T a summary of the Consultants’ report be brought back to the Change Board with recommendations.

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(4) T H A T a further report be submitted on the criteria to be utilised with regard to the use of the Chief Executive's emergency powers in cases where it is proposed to offer a personal supplement for retention purposes, and that pending consideration of the report no further action be taken in these circumstances.

(5) T H A T the Chief Executive report to the Cabinet on the grading of the post of Head of Visible Services and of other vacant Chief Officer posts to be advertised in the near future with a view to ensuring the recruitment and retention of suitable staff.

(6) T H A T the Senior Management Appointment Panel meet before the end of July to finalise the arrangements for the advertisement and appointment of the Head of Visible Services.

(7) T H A T these minutes be referred to the meetings of the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) to be held on 16th July, 2002.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To enable the Council to identify the drivers of staff recruitment and retention difficulties.

(2) To enable timely progress to be made on this issue.

(3) To inform members in due course of the outcome of the study.

(4) To ensure that clear criteria are applied.

(5)&(6) To ensure the recruitment and retention of key staff.

(7) To progress these matters as soon as possible.