

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 11 April, 2016

Report of the Leader

Employee Engagement Strategy - Overview Report

Purpose of the Report

1. To ask Cabinet to note the progress in relation to the Employee Engagement Strategy and endorse its continuation throughout 2016/17.

Recommendations

1. To note the progress in relation to the current Employee Engagement Strategy as set out in the overview report at [Appendix 1](#).
2. To endorse the continuation of engagement work and specifically the launch of a new Staff Charter as set out at Appendix A to the overview report.
3. To refer the report to Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee on the 19th April 2016 as part of the consultation process on the new Staff Charter.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To ensure Members are kept informed of the continuing work in relation to employee engagement and the importance of the proposed Staff Charter.
2. As 1 above.
3. As 1 above.

Background

2. Members will be aware of the work that has been undertaken over the last nine months to progress the staff engagement strategy and to ensure its alignment with the Council's Reshaping Services Programme and Corporate Plan.
3. The strategy was developed to ensure that employees from all service areas understood the rationale for the Reshaping Services Programme, its implications for staff and the wider Council workforce plan.
4. A key and consistent message throughout the process has been that the levels of accountability, engagement and flexibility of our employees will need to continue to increase as services change and the numbers of directly employed staff reduce.

5. It was clear from the outset that the Reshaping Services Programme would need to be supported by an updated Vale Contract (or Charter) i.e. one that more closely reflected the very different needs of the next five years.
6. Over the last nine months work has progressed through eight separate phases of engagement to help shape the above work and the content of a new Staff Charter. The work has involved over 1800 employees and the support and sponsorship of the Council's senior leadership team. The eight phases are as set out below:-

1	Summer Briefing Sessions	July 2015
2	Employee Surveys	October 2015
3	Staff Conferences	November 2015
4	Working Groups	December 2015
5	Presentations to Corporate Management Team	January 2016
6	Forming the final product	Feb/March 2016
7	Launch of the new Staff Charter	April 2016
8	Review and Evaluation	On-going

7. The work has progressed through phase 5 and 6 over the last two months and is now submitted for endorsement by Cabinet prior to the commencement of consultation on the proposed Staff Charter over the next two months.

Relevant Issues and Options

8. The attached report is presented as an overall summary of the work to-date and brings together the various themes and strands from each of the following four working groups:-
 - Expectations of my Manager.
 - Seeking my Views.
 - Keeping me informed.
 - Developing my Skills.
9. The terms of reference for each work group, the main outcomes and the specific proposals are set out at pages 10 - 13 of the report. A complete summary of all proposals is set out in the project plan at Appendix B to the report. Examples of some of the proposals within the report include:-
 - The launch of a Staff Charter as a basis for consultation with all employees.
 - The strengthening of the Council's Leadership Café.
 - A review of the effectiveness of internal staff communications.
 - The forming of a staff editorial team to help shape the Core Brief process.
 - The review and relaunch of the Council's employee appraisal scheme.
 - The roll-out of a skills audit to help improve capacity across services.
 - The forming of a staff engagement group to maintain regular dialogue with CMT.

10. The report was considered and approved by the Corporate Management Team on the 16 March 2016 and prior to presentation and hopefully endorsement by Cabinet.
11. The Staff Charter is seen as the vehicle for summarising the outputs from the nine month engagement process, reflecting the work from each of the four project working groups and well as providing a means for evaluating progress in each area.
12. The Charter is congruent with the original vision of the engagement process i.e. the need to provide clarity around the mutual expectations between the Council and its employees and a template against which future employment policies can be shaped.
13. Following consideration by Cabinet on the 11 April 2016 it is intended to circulate the Staff Charter for consultation purposes during April/May with a view to a more formal launch on the 1 June 2016.
14. The process of consultation will provide the opportunity for all employees to comment on the 'product' of the engagement process and, in essence to be comfortable that it reflects the outcomes from the work over the preceding nine months.
15. Some of the commitments in the Staff Charter will need a degree of discussion and interpretation within service areas. Whilst the underlying principle behind each of the expectations is clear, the method of delivery and achievement will need to be appropriate to local service needs. The consultation period will help in this regard.
16. It is intended that progress against each of the actions within the report will be monitored through a range of forums over the next three years including the Council's Trade Union/Management Change Forum and also through the means of on-going representation and involvement from each of the engagement working groups.
17. The key challenge will be to ensure that momentum is maintained and the range of commitments achieved. The early delivery of key actions will ensure that confidence in the process is maintained, engagement levels are increased and the continuing challenges of the Reshaping Services Programme are supported.
18. Important work over the next few months will be to ensure that the Staff Charter is refined in the light of feedback from the consultation process, the early commitments in the Charter are delivered and the method for monitoring, evaluating and benchmarking outcomes is refined.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

19. The main resource implications relate to the continued involvement of staff from service areas in the continuing engagement process and the development and achievement of actions within the project plan. This will be managed in accordance with existing resources.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

20. There are no sustainability and climate change implications arising as a result of this report.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

21. There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

22. There are no crime and disorder implications arising as a result of this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

23. One of the underpinning aims of the Staff Charter is to ensure that there is greater consistency in the accessibility of internal communications, in the way training and development is accessed and in everyday management practice. Products being developed as a result of the Staff Charter will be subject to Equality Impact Assessment on a case by case basis.

Corporate/Service Objectives

24. The delivery of the engagement strategy will help to support service delivery and the meeting of the integrated planning objectives set out in the Corporate Plan.

Policy Framework and Budget

25. See Paragraph 19 and 24 above.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

26. The approach to the engagement programme to-date has been subject to on-going and comprehensive consultation with staff from all service areas and the recognised trade unions.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

27. Corporate Resources.

Background Papers

None.

Contact Officer

Reuben Bergman - Head of Human Resources

Officers Consulted

Corporate Management Team.
Representatives from Project Working Groups.
Leadership Café Representatives.
Recognised trade union representatives.

Responsible Officer: Rob Thomas - Managing Director