

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 20TH JULY, 2023

REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 26TH APRIL, 2023

“953 PEOPLE STRATEGY AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 27th February, 2023 as contained within the agenda was presented by the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, the purpose of which was for the Committee to consider the report and appendices as part of the six-week consultation process. Key points included:

- The People Strategy closely aligned to the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s Corporate Plan, the Equalities Plan and Project Zero, in order to set both the strategic direction and to support Council staff to be the best that they could be in delivering the wellbeing objectives to the communities that the Council served.
- The Strategy was split into three key themes:
 - Redesigning for Responsiveness
 - Driving Employee Experiences
 - Striving for High Performance
- The supporting policy documents, appended to the reference and report, aligned with the Strategy and included:
 - Strategic Workforce Implementation Plan
 - Hybrid Working Strategy
 - Learning and Development Plan
 - Volunteer Policy
- The consultation on shaping the Strategy involved a wide range of groups including Trade Unions, the Joint Consultative Forum, the various diversity and staff networks, etc.

Following the presentation of the reference and report, the subsequent questions and comments were raised by the Committee:

- On Councillor Haines’ query on measuring staff performance, it was explained that the Chief Officer Performance Appraisal Scheme had recently been introduced, which would entail close monitoring of their performance, plus peer and 360-degree review. Going forward, this system would be rolled out to all (non-education) staff.
- On the Councillor’s follow up question concerning hybrid working and the importance of including its carbon impact and to highlight its challenges (i.e. isolation), as well as the benefits of this way of working, it was explained that it would be challenging to measure the carbon output for hybrid working and this way of working did help reduce commuting to work and rationalise office

space, both helping to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council. In terms of the challenges around hybrid working, the Hybrid Working Strategy did emphasise the need for collaboration and to encourage staff to attend the workplace to achieve this and to mitigate feelings of isolation, etc in conjunction with the Council's other wellbeing activities.

- The Chair emphasised the need to have this flexibility (via hybrid working) in place in order to support recruitment and retention of staff and that hybrid working was entirely voluntary and would not be applicable to all roles in the council, where other forms of work flexibility may be offered instead.
- The Vice Chair felt that the Youth Service should be engaged with as part of the consultation for the Strategy, as well as potential collaboration, i.e. the possible use of young person apprenticeships and to showcase to young people the job opportunities in the local government sector, which the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development would look to engage with.
- On the Vice Chair's other queries on comparative staff data and the updates on the Staff Learning Framework, the comparative data would be developed, with the new Oracle Fusion system being able to assist with this, and in terms of staff learning, a new 'Welcome to the Vale' induction programme had been introduced for new staff and the inclusion of required learning from a health and safety perspective had also been added to the Council's online learning.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the reference and the report, subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T, as part of consultation process, the Youth Service also be engaged with in order to seek their comments and views on the Strategy, as well as potential collaboration, i.e. the possible use of young person apprenticeships and to showcase to young people the job opportunities in the local government sector.

(2) T H A T, the following comments be reported back to Cabinet as part of a future report reflecting on the wider consultation with staff and partner organisations:

- The need to highlight both the benefits and challenges around hybrid working, as well as to explore measuring the carbon impact of this method of working.
- It was also important for the Vale of Glamorgan Council to highlight its agile and hybrid working policies, in order to maintain its competitiveness and attractiveness in terms of recruitment and retention of Council staff.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) In order to consult with the Youth Service and young persons as part of the Strategy and to help secure future recruitment and retention of potential Council staff via apprenticeships, etc. in order to help inform the Cabinet's consideration of the Strategy.

(2) To inform Cabinet of the comments made by the Committee as part of their consideration of the final version of the People Strategy and associated documents.”