

## **Staffing Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:** 25 April 2019

**Report Title:** Brighter Future Together (Culture) Programme

**Senior Officer:** Sara Barker - Head of HR

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### **1. Report Summary**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Staffing Committee since the last meeting, held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019, of progress in terms of the programme. Overall delivery against the planned phases of the programme has been completed, outlined in Appendix 1. Through the programme significant progress has been made in addressing the recommendations following the Local Government Association's independent culture review, outlined in Appendix 2. Key activity and next steps are detailed in the briefing information within this report.

### **2. Recommendation**

2.1 To note the continued good progress on this programme.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 To ensure Members are kept up to date with the progress on the Brighter Future Together (Culture) Programme.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

4.1 Not applicable.

### **5. Background**

5.1 Following the Local Government Association's independent culture review and acceptance of the report recommendations, good progress has been made working closely with the Council's partners Sticky Change to co-create the Council's Brighter Future Together (Culture) Programme.

5.2 The programme focuses on defining the Vision for the Council's workplace culture and behaviours, aligned to the Council's FIRST values (Flexibility, Innovation, Responsibility, Service, Teamwork). This allows the Council to build on strengths and the behaviours role modelled by staff and members

that are reflected in the Employee Deal, to ensure that the vision for the workplace culture is realised, implemented and embedded for the future.

5.3 The Brighter Future Together (Culture) Programme is a key part of the Council's overall Brighter Future – Transforming Our Council Together programme to deliver the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy and will both inform and influence related programmes and projects. As the journey evolves it will touch every part of the Council as the outcomes are implemented and embedded, creating the new workplace culture.

5.4 The Brighter Future Programme work that has been co-created and delivered with Sticky Change was phased over a 12 month period as follows:

5.4.1 Phase 1: Starting the Conversation and co-creation

5.4.2 Phase 2: Developing the Deal and mobilising the Champions

5.4.3 Phase 3: Engaging everyone for working for a Brighter Future

5.4.4 Phase 4: Broader alignment and development

5.4.5 Phase 5: Inform, sustain and embed

5.5 The key deliverables for each phase are outlined in Appendix 1.

5.6 The programme included key enabling projects to ensure that the Vision for Workplace Culture, the revised behaviours and the Employee Deal are implemented and embedded across the organisation. The focus of the enabling projects is outlined in Appendix 3.

5.7 The recommendations included in the Local Government Association report are addressed through the work that the Council is undertaking with Sticky Change and through the enabling projects. This is reflected in the table in Appendix 2.

## **6. Briefing Information**

6.1 The briefing information provides an update on phases 4 and 5 of the programme and a summary update with reference to the enabling projects and the Members' Forum.

### **6.2 Phase 4: Broader alignment and development**

6.2.1 Following feedback from the Brighter Future Community; the My Conversation Toolkits have been shared with a pilot group of 25 teams from across the Council. The pilot group have been using the conversation toolkits within team meetings and one to one meetings and have been asked

to provide their feedback on look, feel, style and content in addition to commenting on the impact of the conversations.

- 6.2.2 The pilot ended on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and feedback is being collated in order to make any appropriate changes to the content and process. Initial feedback suggests that there are some minor improvements that could be made to the document layout and style but overall the conversations have had a positive impact on those that have participated in them.
- 6.2.3 The conversation based approach will continue within the Performance Development process which will be launched and embedded in 2019/20 with the recording system going live in 2020/21. The inclusion of 360 feedback will start with a pilot group to ensure the chosen process is fit for purpose to be offered for all staff in 2020/21.
- 6.2.4 The existing coaching programme has been aligned to the vision, values, behaviours and employee deal. Coaching Toolkits are being developed to complement the My Conversation Toolkits to ensure a joined up approach and encourage tone and style aligned to the behaviours.
- 6.2.5 Feedback has been sought from recruiting managers across the organisation to understand how the recruitment process can be improved. This has informed the development of a recruitment toolkit that includes a revised policy and procedure, new Managers' Guidance, a new template for job descriptions, behavioural based questioning for use in the selection process and an interview 'scoring matrix'. New training will also be offered to recruiting managers in using the toolkit.
- 6.2.6 An adapted 'What's the Conversation' session has been added to the Corporate Induction programme to ensure that all employees joining the Council are introduced to the vision for workplace culture, the Council's values, behaviours and employee deal. The first session took place in January and positive feedback was received.
- 6.2.7 A leadership and management skills programme has been designed and developed incorporating feedback from the leadership skills audit and aligned to the Brighter Future Together (Culture) programme.
- 6.2.8 The programme has been approved by the Corporate Leadership Team and commissioning is in progress.
- 6.2.9 Training sessions are scheduled and being offered across the organisation.
- 6.2.10 A new HR surgery calendar has been developed that will offer drop in sessions on HR related matters for all managers to access.

6.2.11 The current recognition programme has been aligned to the Vision, Behaviours and Employee Deal and renamed Making a Difference for a Brighter Future Together. Numbers of 'Made my Day' instant recognition have significantly increased following the implementation of the 'What's the Conversation' sessions and engagement in the monthly and annual recognition schemes is strong.

6.2.12 The SBB (Stop Bullying Behaviour) helpline went live on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018 and is a dedicated helpline provided by Workplace Wellness, an independent supplier which also manages the Council's Employee Assistance Programme. In the period from August 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 five calls were made to the helpline. It is not possible to identify the gender, age or Directorate/Service that the callers work within, due to the confidential nature of the service.

### 6.3 Phase 5: Inform, sustain and embed

6.3.1 The Council's partners, Sticky Change delivered a Master Class for the leadership team that built on the learning from the 'Having the Conversation' training and focused on creating an organisational climate that has a positive impact on staff and organisational performance.

6.3.2 A second pulse survey was carried out between 25<sup>th</sup> February and 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The focus of the survey was to take a 'temperature test' of how it currently feels to work at Cheshire East Council. The results are expected at the end of March and will be communicated to stakeholders.

6.3.1 The Brighter Future Community is made up of the Brighter Future Together Team, 38 staff from across the Council and 115 Brighter Future Champions who will continue to meet on a monthly basis to support the Council in embedding the culture programme work.

6.3.2 The programme team and the Council's partners Sticky Change attended a meeting to reflect on delivery of the Brighter Future Together (Culture) programme. Observations from this meeting have informed the embedding plan. Appendix 4

### 6.4 Enabling Projects

6.4.1 Progress made with the enabling projects is detailed in Appendix 4.

### 6.5 Members' Forum

6.5.1 Delivery of 'A Conversation for all Members' has been completed. 55 members participated in the training.

- 6.5.2 The Member Forum was updated on the induction programme for new members, that has been designed by the Member Technology & Development Panel. The programme will include a session on workplace culture, values and member behaviour.
- 6.5.3 Two Councillors from the Member Forum attended the Brighter Future Community Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to continue the conversations between the two forums in order to further develop closer working relationships between Members and officers
- 6.5.4 It was agreed at the Member Forum held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019 that the Forum would continue following the elections in May 2019. It was agreed that the Terms of Reference would be reviewed at this time to ensure that they reflect the formal role of the Member Forum to continue to support the embedding of member behaviours and in fostering and maintaining good relationships with officers and the Brighter Future Community. Thus enhancing the understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of members and officers to support working together as one team and one council to deliver the service for our customers.

## 6.6 Next Steps

- 6.6.1 To implement the embedding plan and track progress through the Steering Group.
- 6.6.2 To review the latest pulse survey results, and include any actions within the embedding plan.
- 6.6.3 To continue to measure progress via the Brighter Future Together (Culture) programme score card and test employee engagement via a full survey later in the year.
- 6.6.4 To continue to work with the Brighter Future Community to embed the culture work into business as usual activity.
- 6.6.5 To schedule a Member Forum meeting following the elections in May to review and revise the Terms of Reference and develop future action plans as appropriate.

## 7 **Staffing Committee's Assurance Role**

- 7.1 Staffing Committee successfully completed their assurance role of the programme on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Updates of the outstanding actions from the final meeting are detailed in Appendix 6.

## **8 Implications of the Recommendations**

### **8.1 Legal Implications**

8.1.1 There are no legal implications for the Council at this stage.

### **8.2 Financial Implications**

8.2.1 Funding to engage with the Council's partners Sticky Change was agreed at a total cost of £151,460, funded from the Council's Transformation budget.

### **8.3 Human Resources Implications**

8.3.1 The outcomes of the programme will inform and influence service redesign and restructuring and 'the deal' for our employees.

### **8.4 Risk Management Implications**

8.4.1 Key risks and mitigating actions have been identified with input from the Programme team and Member Forum and are detailed in Appendix 5.

### **8.5 Dependencies**

8.5.1 A dependency map has been developed.

### **8.6 Rural Communities Implications**

8.6.1 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

### **8.7 Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children**

8.7.1 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

### **8.8 Public Health Implications**

8.8.1 There are no direct implications for public health.

## **9 Ward Members Affected**

9.1 No specific wards affected.

## **10. Access to Information**

10.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer.

## **11. Contact Information**

11.1 Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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