

**NON EXEMPT**

**EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL & HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**JOINT HUMANR RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE**

**6 December 2017**

**STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES/ORGANISATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

**Michelle Wakefield, HR Business Partner**

**Portfolio Holder: Governance & Logistics  
Cabinet Lead: Governance & Organisational Development**

**Key Decision: Not Applicable**

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**1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 This report provides Joint HR Committee (JHR) with an overview of current Strategic Human Resources (HR) and Organisational Development (OD) activity being undertaken to support the delivery of the Councils overarching strategic aims.

1.2 The report also provides an update to JHR Committee members of the planned activity for Q4 2017/18 and confirmation of resources needed to deliver this activity.

**2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 For JHR to note the contents of this report.

**3.0 Introduction**

3.1 Strategic HR and OD activity across the Councils has been planned to support the Councils to achieve their strategic aims. Key areas of focus for 2017/18 have been, and will continue to be;

- Preparing line managers and staff members for changes arising from outsourcing arrangements;
- Supporting the senior leadership team with their individual performance and overall contribution to the Councils
- Greater staff engagement to understand any employee/organisational issues with a view to enhancing the performance of the Councils
- Exploring key issues which underpin a successful organisation

## **4.0 Subject of the report**

- 4.1 The report provides further detail in respect of the Strategic HR and OD inputs noted in 3.1 above.

### **Executive Coaching**

Arrangements have been made to provide individual coaching for Heads of Service through a professional organisation which has extensive experience of working with leadership teams in the public sector. Since the implementation of the senior review in March 2016, Heads of Service have in many cases taken on broader roles and increased responsibility/decision making. The purpose of this coaching facility is to ensure Heads of Service are able to operate efficiently and effectively in challenging roles, and work successfully with the changing landscape of public service delivery.

### **Skills Programme**

Enhancing individual skills has been identified as a critical feature of working with external service providers. Working with a representative group of Heads of Service and Team Leaders, a modular programme of HR skills was designed to ensure line managers skill and understanding of people management matters is complimentary to the Capita HR Service delivery model. This training is being delivered in two phases. Phase one includes Heads of Service and Team Leaders who report directly into a Head of Service. Phase two will include all other members of staff who have line management responsibility. The key aim of the training is to equip managers with the skills to deal effectively with lower level staffing issues. The training also aims to provide managers with the confidence needed to deal with these types of staffing issues with minimal referral to HR. Having a cohort of managers who are more confident in dealing with staffing matters will ensure that staff are managed in the right way and where issues do arise, matters can be nipped in the bud quickly to avoid further escalation.

In addition to the above, a skills programme has been designed to educate staff members in respect of business and commercial practices, for example, understanding a strategic perspective of service delivery, writing effective bids for work, and strong financial management. This programme supports the requirement to work in business focused way for greater efficiency and cost effectiveness. Doing business well is the key driver for this six modular in-house training programme which is being delivered by senior managers who have the skills and expertise to share with others. It is envisaged that this programme may be able to be offered externally to other councils who would also benefit from developing their business skills further. This will be a key focus for 2018/19.

### **Stress Survey**

Acknowledging the personal challenge of delivering public services, and that workplace stress can have a detrimental impact on individuals and therefore the performance of and organisation overall, all staff members were given the opportunity to feed back their experience of the work environment in a survey. The HSE Management Indicators survey was used which gives data into the following

potential personal stress indicators; Demands, Control, Change, Peer Support, Manager Support, Relationships and Role. Overall, the survey results indicate that the majority of respondents experience a positive work environment. A small number of responses against each indicator highlight that there are areas of focus, to create a working environment which is personally fulfilling. In conjunction with the Health and Safety team members, an action plan has been drawn up which will attend to areas of concern. A range of stakeholders will be included in the execution of the plan, such as Health and Safety Champions, Culture Change Champions and UNISON. Heads of Service will be supported by the Health and Safety team in raising awareness of wellbeing in their service areas.

## **Employee Engagement**

The level of engagement employees have with their employer has a significant influence on the success of the organisation. Engagement work undertaken has had two key themes to date and will continue to do so in future; staff engagement with the senior leadership team/Council per se, and engagement between services and colleagues.

The Councils have two established peer groups in place which support the strategic aims of the Councils. These peer groups are known as the culture change champions and the staff focus group representatives. Both peer groups are valuable to the organisation and ensure that there is a regular level of communication between the organisation (Strategic HR) and the staff, identifying where there may be issues or concerns which need to be addressed.

In recent months, the Culture Change Champions have considered practical actions to address blockages to efficient working, and to promote positive examples of success, for example teams who are embracing change and risk or individuals who have created a successful career in either Council. The Staff Focus Group have recently reviewed their terms of reference to better support internal communications and strengthen communication channels between the senior leadership team and the organisation.

A platform for services to share their work, gather ideas and update the wider staff group was launched during 2017. Teams are encouraged to host a 'brown bag lunch' as an informal gathering with other teams or individuals who would like to attend. To date, a wide range of topics have been covered during these sessions, to the benefit of the team hosting and to staff attending. Colleagues have also been invited to take part in a demonstration of Action Learning Sets to see the benefits of working through a problem or issues with supportive colleagues in a confidential setting. The demonstration showed how this particular peer process can help to resolve operational matters and for personal development. Action Learning Sets are also being rolled out as part of the HR Skills training programme, to connect colleagues and create a peer support network.

## **Leadership Conference**

A conference has been held annually in recent years. The conference is an opportunity for line managers across the Councils (referred to as 'leaders' in this context) to take time away from the working day and discuss and reflect on wider issues. This year's conference will focus on high performing organisations, and

specifically, look at aligning three critical areas to organisational success; service delivery goals, work conditions, and skills and behaviours. The Councils will be engaging with the Local Government Association to deliver this year's conference, which will result in a diagnostic report for the Councils in respect of the current level of alignment of the areas. This will enable the Councils to focus on how they can maximise organisational success as they move into 2018/19.

The theme and outputs from the conference will result in a corporate focus requiring Heads of Service to draw on their existing skills and support from executive coaches, raise awareness of the importance of staff engagement and people skills in making changes, and highlight the work of the Culture Change Champions in creating working conditions which match service delivery needs.

## **5.0 Implications**

### **5.1 Resource**

HR Business Partners are focused on the Strategic HR and OD aims in conjunction with other Officers directed by the Head of Organisational Development. Staff members from across the Councils volunteer their time to participate in the Staff Focus Group and Culture Change Champion's work.

### **5.2 Financial**

Direct financial costs of Strategic HR and OD interventions are factored into the HR budget each year. There is no additional spend anticipated as a result of the initiatives detailed in the paper.

### **5.3 Legal**

There is a legal responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all employees. The Councils are meeting this aim by the proactive actions they are taking to ensure employee welfare remains a priority for all.

### **5.4 Strategy**

Strategic HR and OD activity is intended to ensure that the Councils are able to meet their strategic objectives. Activity identifies supports these aims.

### **5.5 Customer access**

None to report.

### **5.6 Risks**

The Councils require engaged, knowledgeable, healthy and skilled staff to deliver public services and meet strategic aims. Failure to focus on these areas may compromise service delivery.

### **5.7 Communications/Public Relations**

Each area of activity is supported by internal communications.

## 5.8 East Hampshire/Havant

Strategic HR and OD activity is undertaken for both Councils.

## 6.0 **Links to other projects**

The Strategic HR and OD activity noted within this report are areas of work which contribute to the overall Organisational Development business plan, as directed by the Head of Organisational Development.

## 7.0 **Conclusions**

7.1 Strategic HR and OD activity to date and into the future will be required to support the Councils in reaching their goals.

Agreed and signed off by:

Legal:	30 November 2017
Head of Service:	28 November 2017
Finance:	30 November 2017

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