

## **Cabinet Lead Reports – Full Council 23 September 2020**

### **Councillor Lulu Bowerman: Cabinet Lead for People and Organisational Development**

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Strategic HR and OD continues to support the strategic aims of the council;

#### HR Service

Following the withdrawal of the HR services from the 5 Councils' contract, the HR services returned fully in-house on 1 April 2020. Accordingly, payroll and HR administration have been run successfully by the in-house team since this time, in addition to HR Advisory services which returned in-house in September 2019.

#### Learning and Development

A learning and development programme is in the process of being developed to reflect the current ways of working due to Covid 19. This programme will support all members of staff in their personal and professional development and will take a blended learning approach to learning. Members of staff will be required to complete a range of mandatory subjects, however, will be signposted to a wide range of additional learning resources including podcasts, articles, books, websites, online learning etc. In this sense, the programme departs from a traditional learning and development programme, in that the emphasis will be placed upon self-directed learning by everyone. The programme also reflects the current demand for remote and flexible learning, arising from the pandemic.

#### Project Support

HR support has been provided to several corporate projects, including the broader transformation programme. The HR workstream for the transformation programme includes development of the 'one workforce' approach and ensuring all relevant negotiation, consultation and employment law aspects are attended to.

#### Pay and Reward

National negotiations have been concluded for 20/21 and the pay award will be implemented in October 2020.

The HR team have implemented a revised job evaluation method (Gauge) which is fully aligned to the National Joint Council. Gauge is a fully automated system, freeing up resources previously dedicated to in-person job evaluation panels attended by several officers.

#### Covid 19

The HR service has contributed significantly to the council's emergency response arising from the pandemic. There has been a focus on wellbeing support with several initiatives rolled out to the workforce. HR support has been provided to enable mobilisation of the workforce including redeployment into temporary key functions including support to the Hampshire Helpline, and

enabling homeworking. An employee wellbeing survey was undertaken in May to gain insights into staff wellbeing and several actions have been taken as a result of this information, including discussions with individual Heads of Service and highlighting available support within corporate communications.

The annual review of Risk Assessments took place in April, these all now include reference to Covid 19.

All staff working from home have completed Display Screen Equipment self-assessments, to ensure their working arrangements and set up are in line with the regulations. Each form has been reviewed by H&S, where required equipment has been provided in the way of an office, chair, desk, footrest etc.

Following a requirement from the Government to ensure all office spaces were Covid secure and in line with Government guidance, a review took place of the office areas and measures were introduced to ensure 2 metre social distancing and hand hygiene measures were complied with. This resulted in the compilation of a generic office risk assessment, signage, reduction in the desk capacity, enhanced cleaning regime, building induction and health form for staff and the production of an office handbook (circulated to all staff).

Monitoring from a health and safety perspective continues of all our contractors in line with the Health & Safety at Work Act to ensure all requirements are met.

Training continues to take place with all new starters receiving an initial building induction followed by Basic Health and Safety training ideally within six weeks of commencing employment, these are being carried out virtually and have been well received. During this training awareness of wellbeing is raised, reminding of a healthy work life balance.

The Corporate Health and Safety teams workplan is progressing and preparations are underway for 2020/21 workplan.

We continue to support colleagues with the Beachlands issues at Hayling, which we have been involved in. These relate to flooding, beach huts and the general environment. We have been supporting Beach safety and have been part of the consultation with the RNLI and other partners.

The Councils Out of Hours service at EHDC and HBC, continues to offer support, advice and guidance to member of the public and partners when the offices are closed.

The Councils Health and Safety policy was approved by the Joint HR Committee and has been circulated to all staff.

## Business Continuity (BCP)

Prior to lock down all services reviewed their BC Plans and we supported teams with this work. Line managers were asked to carry out a desk top exercise and we will continue to repeat this exercise over the coming months.

Business Continuity awareness training has taken place with some members of the Corporate Management Team and the remainder will be invited to a future session (postponed due to Covid), Training is being rolled out to Managers and Team leaders, so they have a better understanding of business continuity, this training will be delivered virtually.

We will be circulating a survey to understand how teams used their BC plans during the Covid incident to date, what arrangements are underway in relation to recovery for their service and what preparations are in place for a 'reasonable worst case scenario'.

## Emergency Planning

The annual training programme will shortly be underway for the Emergency Control Centre staff. New roles and arrangements are being introduced within the (ECC) across the County.

We are continually monitoring the weather situation and where required passing on information as and when required. Recent storms Ellen and Francis required support with sand bagging across both Councils and the installation of the flood boards at Hayling, two weeks earlier than usual.

We are reviewing the Adverse Weather Plan in conjunction with several other teams. Primarily relating to snow and the impacts on services, like waste, streets and grounds

A Councillors Masterclass was held on the 12th March 2020, led by colleagues from Hampshire County Council, Emergency Planning team. Councillors were invited to come along and gain a better understanding of their role in an emergency. We raised awareness of the Councils Out of Hours service and what services are available.

## Legal & Democratic

Democratic Services have now joined with legal services. This change has coincided with one of the most significant temporary changes in legislation that allows remote meetings in Councils. Committee and full council meetings have resumed with both remote and hybrid meetings taking place facilitated by the Democratic Services. The in house cameras at the Plaza are now being used for meetings although some technological challenges remain. The constant potential for change in meeting numbers can be challenging, at the time of writing further proposed changes to the number of people were being discussed.

Legal Services has seen more changes both in staff and working practices. The Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer, David Brown will be leaving the council in October and this opportunity is being used to implement a new structure for the team supported by refreshed case management system. The Deputy Monitoring Officer Mr Daniel Toohey will be moving these reforms forward. Our thanks to David Brown for his service since February 2019

Legal Services support on the major work in relation to the Constitution has progressed and it is hoped a draft version for consultation with members in early October for members to consider and make any observation in good time for the Constitution Committee to perfect the final version for approval at full Council in November.

### Capita

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, Capita staff continue to deliver the majority of contracted services through home working. The main exception to this is the front office reception team, who have worked flexibly to support the recent opening of Havant Borough Council offices.

Performance of the contract, as measured by the Performance Indicators (PIs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), has remained broadly consistent throughout, with the majority of the PIs and KPIs being met, despite the significant challenges faced. There have been some shortfalls on call answering times for customer service lines. These have primarily been driven by unforecasted spikes in volume, relating to waste services and Covid-19 actions such as the issue of Council Tax Hardship funds. Performance concerns here are being addressed.

Discussions continue with Capita on the future of service delivery within the wider contract, with a view to improving performance going forward.

A review of the business grants process is being undertaken across the 5-councils partnership, with input from Capita, and findings will be made available to each of the councils later in the year. As at 8 September 2020, the Authority had paid £16.5M of business support grants, to 1380 local businesses.

A meeting of the 5 Councils Joint Committee is scheduled to take place on the 7th October; the meeting is hosted by Mendip District Council and will be held virtually.

### Transformation

Extensive work has begun on this project headed up by Cllr Wilson. Meanwhile Cllr Briggs and I have been working with the officers in the planning for the shaping of our future as a council. Covid has changed so much about how we work and the location and this has obviously reflected in the plans coming forward for consideration at Full Council on 23 September.

On Monday 14 September the Chief Executive and the Chief Financial officer will be presenting the history of how we have worked with East Hants District Council since 2009 and the shared services we currently have in place and the savings that these have brought to HBC in the last 11 years. They will also identify what other opportunities there could be for other shared services in the future and the benefits and opportunities these could bring.

### Councillor training

The first meeting of the Councillor Development Panel took place virtually on 17 August with a full agenda to discuss. Members were updated about such subjects as the new training provider for staff members and councillors, Premier Partnerships and the E-learning courses they are able to offer, virtual working and meetings and the South East Employers Charter Review which is due to take place later this year and the preparation that will be required for this. Training for the DMC members is being successfully delivered by the Planning team with a full programme of topics due to the changes coming forward from central government.

The Panel also discussed the use of the 360 Feedback Tool which had previously been agreed to pilot before lockdown in March. This scheme is offered by Inspire Change Ltd and was accessed online under the title of Councillor Competency framework until the end of September. It is hoped that the offer of this training can be extended to allow a wider participation to all councillors