

ORGANISATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL 2018

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ORGANISATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL 2018

Present:

Councillor D Skinner	Chair
Councillor J Barry	Councillor L Robinson
“ A Dale	“ R Welton
“ B Ridgway	“ B Wright

Also Present

Lee Hickin – Strategic Director – People (Min No 681)
Sara Gordon – HR & OD Manager - BDC & NEDDC Transformation (Min No 680)
Sue Veerman – Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Alan Maher – Governance Officer

674 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor T Mansbridge.

675 Declarations of Interest

Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

No declarations of interest were submitted.

676 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee held on 4 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

677 Exclusion of Public

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item of business to avoid the disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

678 Scrutiny Review

Members considered a draft report on the Committee's review into job evaluation and associated benefits. The review had looked at whether the Council had the right policies and practices in place to both attract and retain employees. The report summarised what the Committee had found out and the conclusions which it had reached, based on this evidence. It also included several proposed recommendations, that Members were asked to consider and approve.

The Committee was reminded that it had met with office and outside based staff and discussed with them their views about the Council as an employer. What became clear from these discussions was that they valued working for the Council. In particular, they welcomed the flexi time scheme and its contribution to a work/life balance, the support which the Council offers for training and personal development, as well as the job satisfaction that can often come from serving the public.

The employees also told the Committee about a range of things that could be improved about working for the Council. These were mainly around issues such as health and wellbeing, limited opportunities for career progression and the lack of facilities for employees.

Members discussed the draft report and its recommendations. There was a consensus that it had set out accurately the evidence which they had received and the conclusions which the Committee had reached. Members also supported the proposed recommendations, which they felt were in line with the evidence they had received and their overall conclusions.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Committee endorses the draft report, its findings and recommendations.
- (2) That the report be submitted to Cabinet so that it can consider and respond to the Committee's findings and recommendations.

(Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

679 Re-admission of the Public

RESOLVED – That the public be re-admitted to the meeting.

680 Health and Wellbeing and Morale Scrutiny Review

The Committee received an update report from the Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager, Sara Gordon, on the Committee's review into Employee Health and Wellbeing and Morale. Members were reminded that the Committee had carried out this review during the previous municipal year and had made a number of recommendations. Following on

from this, a number of actions had then been agreed by Cabinet, which were included in the Review Action Plan.

The report was wide-ranging and outlined the latest position on different issues. Members heard that many of the actions had either been achieved or were in the process of being achieved. In this context, they were told that the service manager forums had been revived and were now held four times a year. Individual Manager-Staff, as well as larger team meetings, now take place across most of the Council and the Committee also learned that the Minutes of the Strategic Alliance Management Team (SAMT) and staff meetings were now published so that employees could read them.

They also heard that more social activities for staff have been organised, such as the lunchtime yoga sessions, to help improve the worktime experiences and that work was continuing to improve and make more useful to staff the Council's Intranet Site.

The meeting was told about the progress towards developing a Leadership Development Programme for staff, using the skills of internal officers to deliver the training and identify content. Members supported this approach. It was suggested that there might be scope to use training materials developed by the trade unions and other bodies in the Leadership Development Programme. It was agreed that this should be explored.

The Committee welcomed the improvements highlighted in the update report. However, Members were keen that those who work outside of the main Council offices should benefit from any improvements, especially the ways of accessing support services and facilities.

Specific mention was made in this context of how to engage staff who work outdoors. One suggestion, that the Committee thought it useful to explore, would be to organise any engagement meetings at different locations around the District rather than solely at Wingerworth, so that these employees could also attend.

There was a consensus that improvements to the Council's intranet should also play an important part in helping to engage staff along with more effective use of information communications technology. In particular, Members felt that more use should be made of mobile phone technology as a way for staff to access employee services and functions, such as booking leave etc.

During the discussion, the Committee received clarification about a range of points. These included, the use of air conditioning in the main Wingerworth office building, also what progress had been made on upgrading facilities used by the public and staff in the building.

The Committee thanked the Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager for her contribution and agreed to note the update report.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Committee notes the report.
- (2) That the Committee received further update reports on the Employee Health and Wellbeing and Morale Review Action Plan at a future meeting.

681 Transformation Programme Update

The Committee received a presentation from the Joint Executive Director – People, Lee Hickin, on the Council's Transformation Programme. He began by advising Members that the Council would have to work in different ways in the future if it was to bridge the ongoing budget shortfalls that it now faced and to meet the needs of the District's growing population. The Council, he explained, had already had to make significant budget savings because the amount of support which the Council receives from Central Government has reduced. This reduced support was likely to continue. Consequently, more spending reductions would follow unless the Council can find ways of generating additional income and reducing operating costs, by working in new more innovative ways.

The Committee was told that in order to meet the financial shortfall and change the way in which the Council works it had launched the Transformation Programme. The hope was that the Programme would be driven by a change in the 'culture of the Council', with employees taking the lead in identifying, championing and delivering new ways of working. A lot had already been done to encourage and enable staff to do this and they had submitted over 500 ideas, suggestions and proposals for changing services. These ranged from small scale improvements to substantial alterations in how the Council operates and how it provides specific services or carries out its functions.

Members welcomed the high level of engagement with staff in the programme and hoped that it could continue and be built upon.

The Committee heard that the large scale business transformation proposals which have been suggested, could help to achieve significant financial savings. In this context, Members heard how the Council was already on track to achieve significant savings, by transforming how it works. In particular, the decision to bring the procurement process back in-house and then potentially sell parts of the service to other organisations, would help to significantly reduce North East Derbyshire's costs. Again the Committee welcomed this.

Members were then informed about how the Transformation Programme would be taken forward. Lee Hickin made it clear that there needs to be a clear process in place which sets out how ideas will be included and that all staff need to be aware of this process.

The Joint Director explained that organisational arrangements for assessing the different suggestions are currently being developed. In particular, the Council is looking to establish a Transformation Governance Team consisting of both Members and officers. It was stressed that any decisions on what changes to make would have to be taken through the normal Council decision-making structures, rather than through these Transformational Governance arrangements.

The Committee discussed the Transformation Programme. A number of key points emerged from the discussion. In particular, Members highlighted the role of Management and Team Leaders in encouraging staff to participate in the Transformation Programme.

It was generally felt that staff who cannot or do not wish to make suggestions for transforming how this works should be re-assured that this is would not be held against them. The Committee believed that participation in the Transformation Programme should be something staff choose to do rather than have forced on them.

Again, the Committee felt that improvements to the Intranet and more effective use of ICT would help to play a crucial role in enabling this to happen. Members were especially keen that mobile phone technology should be used as a way of ensuring that staff can participate in the programme.

Members suggested that staff representative groups, such as the Trade Unions, be brought into the Transformation Programme. Lee Hickin agreed to look at ways for this to happen.

Members were told about extensive information and analysis upon which the programme was based. The Committee felt that it would be helpful for it and other Members to have access to this information and analysis. The Joint Director explained that the data was currently being updated and that he would share the revised version of the information and analysis with Councillors. At the conclusion of the discussion, Members thanked the Joint Director for attending the meeting and for his participation in the discussion.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted the latest position on the Transformation Programme.

682 Monitoring of Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations

Members considered monitoring information on action taken to date in response to Scrutiny Committee's recommendations. Members noted that there was no outstanding action that was required in order to respond to Organisation Scrutiny Committee recommendations.

RESOLVED – That the Committee notes the monitoring information on Scrutiny Committee recommendations.

683 List of Key Decisions – Issue No 72

The Committee considered Issue No 72 of the List of Key Decisions which set out the major decisions being taken over the next few months.

No forthcoming issues were identified for Scrutiny to look at.

684 Work Programme

The Committee considered the Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year. Members noted that today was its last scheduled meeting and the Work Programme had been completed.

685 Additional Urgent Items

There were no additional urgent items.

686 Date of Next Meeting

Subject to confirmation by Council of the proposed schedule of meetings for the 2018/19 Municipal Year, the next meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee will take place on Wednesday 4 July 2018 at 3.00 pm.

The meeting finished at 4.50 pm.