

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 31 AUGUST 2006

REPORT BY INTERIM DIRECTOR OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

6. DRAFT SELF ASSESSMENT FOR IDEA PEER REVIEW

WARD(S) AFFECTED: None

RECOMMENDATION: that -

1.0 Purpose/Summary of Report

1.1 To obtain feedback from Human Resources Committee on the attached draft self-assessment. Specifically comments are sought on the **Position Statement** (see Appendix 'A6' (Pages 6.6 to 6.32)) and areas to explore further (see Appendix 'A6' (Page 6.32)). **It should be noted that this is still a draft document and therefore there is still outstanding information to be added.**

1.2 The overall purpose of the Peer Review is to ascertain the effectiveness of people management across the organisation and the contribution by the Human Resources (HR) function to this and the transformation of the Council. In preparation for the Peer Review a draft self assessment has been prepared to identify areas where the council is performing well and those aspects of people management in need of improvement.

2.0 Contribution to the Council's Corporate Objectives

2.1 The Peer Review will contribute towards ensuring the Council meets the following objectives:

Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.

Objective: Provide adequate, effective and sustainable resources to deliver council priorities, with 2.5% efficiency each year and a Council Tax increase under 5%.

Objective: Ensure effective performance management is used to deliver success and continuous service improvement year on year by 2% overall.

Objective: Improve overall resident satisfaction with the Council by 2% and staff satisfaction by 2% (using the most recent Best Value Performance Indicator Survey, our Residents Survey and our Staff Survey as the measurement tool)

3.0 Background

- 3.1 East Herts Council has agreed for the IDeA (Improvement and development Agency) to conduct a Peer Review of our Human Resources policies and processes and how we manage people across the organisation. This review is of key importance, as East Herts needs the right Human Resources policies and processes to be in place, as part of re-organisation.
- 3.2 IDeA is an independent body owned by the Local Government Association, to provide expertise and guidance to local government. IDeA, in partnership with Excellence in Business (EiB), will be conducting this review on the 7th and 8th of September Normally this would cost approximately £8,000 + expenses; however IDeA have launched an initiative to provide every Council in the district with one free peer review. HR responded to this request and therefore we received this peer review free of charge. We are the first Council to have an HR peer review through this partnership project; therefore the peer review is a pilot for the IDeA and EiB partnership.
- 3.3 Prior to the Peer Review's on site inspection, they have requested the Council complete a self assessment (Appendix 'A6' (Pages 6.6 – 6.32)), to give the background information on the Council and also to identify where we think our strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement are, and the areas we wish the Peer Review to focus on.
- 3.4 The key part of this self assessment is the Position Statement against the Corporate People Management Framework (Appendix 'A6' (Pages 6.6 to 6.32)). The Corporate People Management Framework is a model of excellence, developed by EiB, for people management and the Human Resources function. The other key area is on Appendix 'A6' - Page 6.32 which details the specific areas that the council would like them to explore further.

4.0 Report

- 4.1 The Chief Executive has commissioned the IDeA, in conjunction with consultancy Excellence in Business (EIB), to conduct a Peer Review of the Council's Human Resources policies and processes and how we manage people across the organisation.
- 4.2 It is acknowledged that the Council's level of performance in these areas has not historically been strong and therefore should be a key focus for improvement. Improvement in these areas is also essential in order to facilitate the organisation becoming excellent.
- 4.3 Commissioning the Peer Review is a positive sign that East Herts is a council that is looking to continually improve and open itself up to rigorous external challenge in order to improve. The self assessment is an open and honest evaluation of our current position in order that the Peer Review is a meaningful exercise. This is in line with the Chief Executive's desire to transform the culture of East Herts Council to one that is open, empowered and externally focused.
- 4.4 After their inspection, the Peer Review will produce a report identifying the key issues that need to be addressed, presenting this on the 29 September. From this officers will develop an action plan to implement the findings.
- 4.5 The results from the Peer Review will feed into the Council's overall Change Management Programme, which includes key projects such as the Transformers Group (draft terms of reference in Appendix 'B6' (Pages 6.33 – 6.35)) and the Management Development Programme (Appendix 'C6' (Pages 6.36 – 6.37)). The purpose of the Transformers Group is for staff to help shape the future of the Council by reviewing the changes we need in order to move us to being an excellent authority, and thus creating an open, empowered and externally focused organisation. The Management Development Programme is in the course of preparation. It will begin this Autumn with an Awayday for directors and heads of service. The programme will consist of a number of strands to be provided over an extended period, this includes:
- Career coaching for senior managers directly affected by the pending structural changes (to be delivered in Autumn 2006)

- HR skills training for managers in respect of the new policies and procedures e.g. how to prepare a disciplinary investigation and how to manage absence (to be delivered in September/October 2006)
- Workshop 'leading a modern Council' to be delivered October 2006

These events will commence the larger management development programme, details of which are attached as Appendix 'C6' (Pages 6.36 – 6.37).

4.6 The Peer Review Team is made up of people who come from a variety of backgrounds:

- Councillor Alan Dean, Liverpool City Council, Elected Member;
- Paula Grainger, IDeA, Regional Skills & Capacity Advisor - Yorkshire & Humberside;
- Jonathan Hambling, Warrington Borough Council, Human Resources Manager;
- Richard Roddie, Review Manager, Partner, Excellence in Business;
- Kelly Sandiford, IDeA, Assistant Director (Skills & Development);
- John Williams, Malvern Hills District Council, Corporate Performance Manager.

4.7 The Review Team will conduct interviews and focus groups from a cross section of staff and members.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 The Chief Executive, Interim Director of Organisational Development and the Head of Human Resources have all been consulted on the attached self assessment.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications directly related to the Self Assessment. Although there may be legal implications from the findings of the Peer Review, related to ensuring the Council has the correct policies and processes in place, delivers value for money and to support the restructuring process and enable the Council to become 'excellent'.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications directly related to the self assessment. Although there may be financial implications from the findings of the Peer Review, related to ensuring the Council has the correct policies and processes in place, delivers value for money and to support the restructuring process and enable the Council to become 'excellent'.

8.0 Human Resource Implications

8.1 There are no human resource implications directly related to the self assessment. Although there may be human resource implications from the findings of the Peer Review, related to ensuring the Council has the correct policies and processes in place, delivers value for money and to support the restructuring process and enable the Council to become 'excellent'.

9.0 Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no risk management implications directly related to the self assessment. There is a risk that without conducting a Peer Review and implementing the findings, the Council will not have the right Human Resources policies and processes in place, including people management processes, to support the restructuring process and enable the Council to become 'excellent'.

Background Papers

None

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