



Essential Reference Paper "B"

Organisational Development Strategy

2015 - 2019

*We are here to help, we work together to support each other
and we aim high to make a difference.*

Introduction

Local Authorities are facing unprecedented challenges; in particular around growing demand for services and pressure on budgets. There is an expectation from central government that the public sector will rise to those challenges and re-evaluate the opportunities for its role in service delivery.

We know that to succeed we need to focus on outcomes for residents. Simply put we must determine what is needed and secure the most effective value for money services whether through direct delivery or through partnerships.

Our mission then is to ensure our workforce can demonstrate the skills, knowledge and commitment to deliver the services required now and in the future: producing resident-focussed outcomes that represent value for money and locking into the synergies which can be gained by joining up with our public, private and voluntary partner providers.

To deliver against these outcomes requires that we attract and retain a high calibre, talented and engaged workforce. It means continuously developing our employees so they are equipped to be flexible, creative and multi-skilled. By building capacity within our workforce we will be better able to respond to the challenges we face and continue to be 'Here to help'.

In creating this strategy, we address both performance (delivery of objectives) and behaviour – *how* the objectives are achieved. We must pay attention to the tangible outcomes for our residents and also the softer issues which are demonstrated by the organisation's values and the behaviours expected from our employees as set out in the behavioural framework 'Here to Help'.

Our Vision

To improve the quality of people's lives and preserve all that is best in East Herts

Our Strategic Priorities

Being **Here to Help** is central to the Council's purpose and ethos:

- It is central to the services and support that we provide to residents and businesses and how we provide them
- It is the main driver that underlies the Community Leadership role of our elected Members
- It underpins the purpose of the **Here to Help** employee discussions and activities

We are committed to the communities we serve and delivering good quality services that reflect local priorities and resources.

Three **PRIORITIES** provide focus in those endeavours.

They are:

People – Fair and accessible services for those who use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute

Place – Safe and clean

Prosperity – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities

Our Organisation

Our message to our residents and customers is that we are 'Here to help' and to make a difference. We want to deliver the outcomes that local residents, customers and communities want, so we will always endeavour to:

- Provide efficient and joined-up services, easily accessible to the customer

- Be a gateway for access. If customers need help and don't know who to ask, we will try to help them or put them in touch with someone else who can
- Provide excellent customer service ensuring that our customers get the services or support they need whether provided directly by us or through our partners
- Work in partnership with others across the district through the East Herts Local Strategic Partnership
- Create an environment where communities feel empowered and supported to provide their own solutions

We are also clear that we cannot achieve success without the performance and contribution of our workforce. These priorities therefore shape the people requirements for the Council and will determine the skills, talent, knowledge and behaviours needed from our employees.

Our Culture

Our culture focuses on the ethos of being 'Here to help'. This lies at the root of our organisational values and behaviours demonstrated by the actions of employees and Councillors.

Our values and behaviours are:

Here to help

- We are helpful and understanding
- We listen and explain
- We are knowledgeable and informative
- We make time for our customers
- We take ownership of an issue and we try to get it right first time

We work together

- We respect and value colleagues
- We work together as one team
- We recognise each other's skills and utilise them
- We offer help and support to each other

- We support colleagues to be flexible and resilient, able to respond to service changes and developments

We aim high to make a difference

- We go the extra mile
- We take a pride in what we do
- We continually look to improve our performance
- We are flexible in our approach
- We pride ourselves on providing excellent customer service

Our workforce

The data below gives a snapshot of the Council's workforce profile in 2014/15.

This is the platform the OD Strategy will build upon.

- 2,438 delegates attended or participated in some form of corporate training.
- 100% of performance reviews for 2014/15 were completed and 99.71% of objectives for 2015/16 were set.
- Here to help programme launched corporate values and behaviours and the Here to Help workshops raised 130 improvement ideas for corporate level actions. 50% of these ideas were implemented during 2014/15. 50% are in progress/under consideration.
- Absence levels were the lowest reported from 2010 to 2015. Total absence 4.51 days (target 6.5 days), short term absence 3.47 days (target 4.5 days) and long term absence 1.05 days (target 2 days).
- Turnover rate was 8.17% against a target of 10%. Voluntary leavers' rate was 5.92% against a target of 7%.
- Women make up 68.31% of the workforce, within senior management women account for 29.4% of employees against an indicator of 41.17%.
- The percentage of employees of Black and minority ethnic origin is 3.27% (below the indicator of 5.45%). The percentage of employees with a disability is 3.27% (below the indicator of 5.21%)

- Exit interview reports were positive with marked improvement for the rating of the Council as an employer (67%); feedback on line management (92%) and feedback on promotion opportunities (75%).
- The council needed to continue to support career development and succession planning.
- Workforce planning to be developed as part of the finance and service planning process in 2015/16.
- The council needed to continue to attract and support apprentices and volunteers into its workforce
- Wellbeing initiatives had started to be implemented to support the Health and Wellbeing workplan
- Investors in People Bronze standard was achieved in 2015.
- The Council joined the National Graduate Development Programme and recruited two graduates in 2014.

What change is predicted?

Both national and local factors are altering the context and environment of local government; driving change and therefore the need to focus more on organisational development. These include:

- Customers' needs and expectations are changing. Customers have told us they want to be able to do business with us at a time and in a way that is convenient to them.
- Increasing demand on our services by customers due to economic downturn, welfare reforms, a shifting age profile and additional public health duties.
- The predicted growth in population and housing in and around East Herts bringing significant environmental impact and increasing demand for services.

- The drive to delivery effective value for money outcomes whether through direct delivery or through partners.
- Funding pressures facing Local Government – effects on the local economy and the Council’s support for residents in an increasingly demanding time.
- Strong expectation from central government about the public sector and its role in service delivery through the Devolution Agenda.
- A drive to deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and accountable organisation.
- The improvement in outcomes for customers set out in Service Plans.
- Improving our services and developing our culture through the delivery of the Here to Help programme.
- The use of new technologies to improve productivity in the way we work with each other and with our partners.
- There is a greater expectation on service quality and speed of delivery with customers’ behaviours changing as to how they access and use services along with the ever shifting regional and national agendas to consider.
- The imperative to get the most from our business processes to ensure it supports the Council’s priorities and ways of working.
- Changes in how people wish to work, focusing on giving employees the tools they need and the flexibility to work in the most efficient and creative way.

- Workforce planning, the increased risk to local government from the loss of skills in the ageing and changing workforce.
- Time for new and radical thinking in terms of embracing new models of service delivery including the commercialisation of local authority activity.

What does this mean for organisational development?

The Council's Organisational Development strategy is underpinned by the Here to Help programme. Employees during 2014 were engaged in the development of the Council's service action plans, values and behaviours. The Here to Help programme is about celebrating what is good, sharing good practice, making things better and unlocking barriers. It is about giving employees the opportunity to think about how we can improve the way we work together to deliver a high quality customer experience every time and how they can play their part in that.

In developing the Organisational Development Strategy we listened to employees about the key people requirements for success in making the Council a great place to work and meeting the pressures for change. We also looked at what our partners and peers were doing in Organisational development. We of course looked at the experts from CIPD, PPMA, EELGA and various other networks in HR and OD. Employees gave us their views through the Here to Help programme, staff surveys, liP review, pulse surveys, 1-1's with CMT, Heads of Service, UNISON, Here to Help Staff Forum and members of the Local Joint Panel and HR Committee. This is what employees collectively told us:

- Our goal is to embed the Council's values and behaviours in everything we do.
- Delivering excellent customer service is everyone's business.

- Ensuring our workforce has the skills, knowledge and commitment to deliver the services now and in the future.
- We need to ensure our workforce reflects the diversity of the local community at all levels. That we get the most from our talent and source it from a diverse field.
- We need to develop our leaders and managers as more effective people managers.
- Embrace the digital wave, using the tools available to us to enhance the work we do and allow us to connect, learn and share.
- We need to work with partners to achieve our ambitions, supporting employees to develop networks, peer groups, mentoring, coaching and sharing knowledge.
- We need to empower employees to be more efficient, creative, to challenge ways of working and drive down costs wherever possible.
- We need to be much smarter at workforce planning – predicting our people requirements.
- We need to engage and motivate our workforce and celebrate our successes.
- We want to become a learning organisation through increasing opportunities for development and investing in ourselves.
- We need a flexible, adaptive workforce able to drive change.
- We need to improve our communications with employees and engage them fully in the changing business.

- Challenge bureaucracy and give employees the organisational space to generate and share ideas.
- We need to work harder at delivering consistent people management practices within a framework of robust employment policies.
- We need to ensure key talent is sourced, developed and retained.
- We need to develop an organisational culture of continuous improvement where employees are engaged and empowered to make a difference every day. Allowing us to maximise employees' performance, promoting innovation, team working, encouraging positive behaviours and supporting employees to work in a more commercial way.
- We need to develop a reward strategy that reinforces high performance, motivation, including encouraging a total rewards approach.
- We need to ensure the health and wellbeing of our employees.

OD Strategy 2015-2019

The Strategy is the Council's framework for the delivery of people management over the next four years. The Strategy sets out clearly our approach to workforce development, recognising and articulating the essential requirements for ensuring that our workforce is appropriately trained and supported to deliver excellent services. Developing our workforce is essential to building our reputation as an employer and a service provider. Investing in our employees improves performance and secures a workforce for the future.

We must work to become an employer of choice, for example, by developing further flexible working opportunities for our workforce, and planning our workforce for the future through "Growing Our Own". Talent management and succession planning will be critical to our ongoing success and to ensuring that we meet the current and future demands of our service users.

Graduates/Apprenticeships or other new entrancy routes will assist in fulfilling future roles as well as delivering on the Council's corporate parenting obligations.

All of these opportunities will require a creative and innovative approach to ensure we deliver on future people management and workforce planning demands.

This Strategy sets out a framework to ensure that the people resource we have as a Council is aligned to the delivery of the outcomes as set out within our Corporate Strategic Plan and that we are prepared to meet the challenges of service delivery in the future.

It sets out an ambitious series of outcomes which will achieve a comprehensive, corporate approach to managing and developing our employees across all Council services, tailored to service requirements, flexible to change and accessible to all.

The Organisational Development Strategy has been developed in consultation with services across the Council and with our Trades Union colleagues and takes account of the feedback provided.

We have identified 6 key themes that will enable us to deliver the overarching outcome that:

We are here to help, we work together to support each other and we aim high to make a difference.

These themes are:

- 1. Supporting transformational change and innovation**
- 2. Sustaining and improving a skilled, flexible and motivated workforce**
- 3. Building strong leadership and management**
- 4. Planning for the future workforce and being an employer of choice**
- 5. Promoting positive performance**
- 6. Promoting equality and diversity**

Theme 1 - Supporting Transformational Change and Innovation

Outcomes – What we plan to achieve

We will create a culture where we become even more responsive to our residents and customers, through being here to help. We will create more capacity through improving our productivity.

Actions - We will deliver this by:

- Encouraging a culture of empowerment with delegated decision making and innovation to the most appropriate level
- Promoting a programme of learning and development to support transformational change, commercialisation and innovation
- Streamlining and automating processes for both the external and internal customer

- Ensuring our values and behaviours are embedded and at the heart of the way we operate
- Working with our current and future partners to improve how we deliver our services
- Becoming more business like in our approach.
- Knowing who our customer is and maximising the value of the work we do
- Giving back to our communities through volunteering and enhanced partnership working.

Theme 2 – Sustaining a Skilled, Flexible and Motivated Workforce

Outcomes – What we plan to achieve

Our workforce will be trained, qualified and experienced, to deliver quality services which meet current and anticipated service needs.

Actions – The key areas we will focus on:

- Reviewing and strengthening our 121 and Performance Development Review (PDR) process to ensure all employees have relevant performance development plans in place and an opportunity to access development opportunities.
- Reviewing and improving our employee engagement, communication and reward/recognition arrangements including celebrating success
- Valuing, recognising and rewarding our workforce. Exploring how we can get more from our reward and benefit packages that give choice to our workforce and support work life balance
- Strengthening the connection between training needs identified through PDRs and training programmes and outcomes
- Developing a culture of lifelong learning with an emphasis on work based learning
- Investing in ourselves through a wide range of learning tools - access to online learning resources including e-learning, webinars and a range of books.

- Ensuring that the learning and development resources that we use are consistent, high quality, transferable and meet the future needs of the organisation
- Working closely with our partners to maximise opportunities for shared learning and development
- Exploring further new ways of working and learning, using technology to ensure flexible and effective practices
- Developing talent for the future through “Growing Our Own”
- Supporting and enabling secondments, job shadowing and networking opportunities
- Cross service working to increase knowledge of what others do, working better together and improving our services

Theme 3 - Building Leadership and Management Capacity

Outcomes – What we plan to achieve

Our managers will lead, motivate, energise, and encourage innovation and will be viewed as role models, be highly effective, supportive and approachable.

Actions – The key areas we will focus on:

- Developing our ‘future leaders’ with the right skills and knowledge and experiences so they are well equipped to become the leaders of the future
- Developing a leadership and management development framework
- Developing our approach to mentoring and coaching
- Encouraging our managers and employees to build upon their professional networks and fulfilling their continual professional development requirements
- Giving our managers and employees the opportunities and space to be creative
- Develop our managers to model the values and behaviours of the Council

Theme 4 – Planning for the Workforce of the Future and being the Employer of Choice

Outcomes – What we plan to achieve

Our workforce will have the skills, abilities and confidence to meet the needs of services for the future and will embrace new ways of working

Actions – The key areas we will focus on:

- Build on our Investors in People Standard, raising the profile of East Herts as an employer of choice
- Adopting innovative ways of recruiting new talent
- Developing our approach to talent management
- Creating employment and training opportunities for people in the community by exploring graduate and training schemes and developing apprenticeships
- Ensuring effective workforce and succession planning processes and policies are in place by continuing to provide frameworks for the up-skilling/re-skilling of employees
- Ensuring skills and abilities are identified to meet the needs of services for the future and that they are incorporated into learning and development plans
- Encouraging and supporting employees to work flexibly to support the business need
- Providing and developing employee engagement opportunities for improving service delivery and organisation performance, celebrating our successes – Here to Help programme

Theme 5 – Promoting Positive Performance

Outcomes – What we plan to achieve

Our managers will have the skills, abilities and confidence to manage and promote the expected standard of performance.

Actions – The key areas we will focus on:

- Implementing a new HR and Payroll system, to provide accurate, easily accessible management information and launch self service to support the work of our services
- Developing and refining the current suite of management information measures to ensure they add value and evaluate outcomes
- Providing regular, accurate monthly management information on a service by service basis
- Develop staff forum group to support employee engagement
- Assisting managers to identify above and below target levels and improve poor levels of performance
- Ensuring our communications are clear, consistent and two way so that employees are engaged in what we do
- Ensuring our policies and processes are constructed fairly and applied consistently
- Enhanced Engagement with our trade union and employee forums

Theme 6 – Promoting Equality, Diversity, Health and Wellbeing

Outcomes – What we plan to achieve

We will enhance our work with community partners to promote equality, diversity, health and wellbeing; and ensure our employees, customers and partners are treated fairly and with respect at all times.

Actions – The key areas we will focus on:

- Working with the Employee Equality Forum to ensure we promote equality and diversity in our processes
- Delivering our Equality and Diversity outcomes
- Gathering and using employee information to promote equality of opportunity
- Promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in employment and training

- Actively promoting and encouraging healthy lifestyles and wellbeing programmes for the workforce, supporting the Health and Wellbeing workplan.
- Working in partnership with Health and Safety to support the commitment, achievement and evaluation of the Corporate Health and Safety plan.

How will the impact of the OD Strategy be measured?

We will set challenging targets annually. Our performance in achieving our strategic objectives will be closely monitored and measured against those targets.

Our targets will be measured through our outcomes and successes supported by the Here to Help programme; integrated finance and service planning process; workforce planning; people management information statistics; achievement of action plans; improvement in the employee and pulse surveys measures; achievement of external standards, recognition, awards e.g. Investors in People, through HR quarterly performance reports and most important by employees – what you tell us.

Progress on meeting these will be measured and reported to the Corporate Management Team and HR Committee annually to demonstrate the difference being made to the Council as a result of implementation of the OD strategy.

How will we keep the OD Strategy relevant?

Any strategy needs to be kept relevant by continuously assessing it against changing requirements and expectations within the Council and in the light of external drivers. We need managers, trade unions and employees to play their full role by commenting on and identifying any gaps that emerge over time.

Please contact the Head of HR and OD with any views or any questions about the content or applications of our OD Strategy.

References

Annual Report 2013/14

Corporate Equality Policy 2012 to 2015

Corporate Strategic Plan 2015/16 – 2018/19

Customer Services Strategy 2014 to 2019

Great Workplaces Special Report 2014

Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013 to 2018

Here to Help programme – including action plans, pulse surveys, bite size training and workshop outputs

ICT Strategy 2014 to 2018

Integrated Finance and Service Planning Process

Internal Communications Strategy 2015 to 2018

Investor in People 18 month interaction visit January 2014

Investor in People Review 2015 Medium Term Financial Plan - 18 February 2015

Pay Policy Statement 2015/16

Staff Survey July 2014

The Business Workforce Dialogue PPMA and IES 2013

The Chancellor's Autumn Statement 2014

Workforce Planning 2015