Meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

4 September 2023

Responses to Recommendations/Actions

Strategic Workforce Plan

Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee made the following Recommendations:

1. The Committee recommended that the circular graphics at the top of page 13 of the *Delivering together, Our Strategic Workforce Plan 2023-2028* (page 175 of the Committee's public Agenda pack) showing the percentages of staff working in each of the five areas of the authority, also reflect the level of vacancy or completeness of workforce in each Directorate. In relation to the turnover rate of staff the Committee also recommended that the same page also reflect the general turnover rate of staff not just new starters leaving within their 1st year (up to 31 March 2023).

   Officer's Response

   We do not hold vacancy information for all services; however this is something we have identified as a key requirement of workforce planning and have begun work to capture and maintain an accurate position.

   The slide on turnover rate has been updated to clarify the position, extract below:

2. The Committee expressed concern regarding the corporate oversight responsibility and the possibility of a fragmented process towards monitoring and delivery of the Plan. The Committee therefore recommended that consideration be given to establishing a HR strategic group to include Officers from across the authority and Trade Union representatives to monitor and drive forward the delivery of the plan and that they report to CCMB.

   Officer's Response

   The Plan will be monitored by Head of Services Group with information being fed through to Corporate Management Board, and a quarterly report to CCMB.

3. The Committee expressed concern regarding the lack of citizen focus within the Plan and recommended that the Portal analytical tool be developed/progressed as soon as possible in order to evaluate the areas of dissatisfaction and themes arising from Member referrals and customer

queries regarding repeat matters, in order to inform the Workforce Plan. Once completed, the Committee recommended that they receive a Members Briefing regarding the analytical capabilities of the Portal.

Officer's Response

The development of the reporting capability of the Portal is being undertaken as part of an overall review of information management and reporting across the Council.

Once agreed, members can be briefed on the developments.

Additional Information

Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee requested:

4. Information on how the workforce structure in Bridgend compares to other Welsh local authorities and whether its levels of management are typical of other local authorities in Wales.

   Officer's Response

   Each local authority's management structure will reflect their own organisation structure and services they deliver. This information isn't readily available and will require support from WLGA to gather and collate the information.

5. Whether the Venture Graduate Scheme overseen by the Cardiff Capital Region could be accessed by students by other higher education establishments, especially Bridgend College.

   Response from the Leader

   I have checked with Cardiff Capital Region colleagues and it has been confirmed that:-

   "Graduates with degree level qualifications or higher from **all** institutions are eligible to apply for roles advertised via the Venture Graduates programme."

   This includes graduates from Bridgend College.

Corporate Plan Targets

Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee requested:

6. That the narratives in the Rationale for Targets be revisited to ensure consistency, to better reflect the reasons why a target has substantially increased or decreased and to include brief information regarding the circumstances surrounding the change.

   Officer's Response

   This is being completed in preparation for Cabinet and Council consideration in coming weeks.

7. That consideration be given to a gradual move away from static Key Performance Indicators in favour of Objective and Key Results which drive ambitious, realistic and proportionate targets.

   Officer's Response

   As we have outlined, the new Corporate Plan Delivery Plan includes clear aims, commitments and PIs and has moved us a long way towards a less static, more comprehensive approach – closely in line with the principles of Objective and Key Results (OKR).

   OKR at this stage is unproved in the world of local government and it is unclear how the approach alone would work to support the delivery of our corporate plan. One consequence is that it would remove the ability to compare performance information over time and with other authorities. More work and research is required into the merits of fully embracing this approach and at the current time it would draw attention and resource away from priority areas identified by the team, internal audit and audit Wales such as improving data quality and accuracy and user perspectives. However, we have stated that our approach to performance management will continue to evolve and further refinements can be implemented in future years.

ICT Resilience

Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee requested:

8. Copies of the Service specific and overall ICT Business Continuity Plans, for information purposes.

   Officer's Response

   A working group is looking to enhance resilience across the Council through the oversight of the implementation of the revised Business Continuity

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Management Programme, ensuring it is effectively embedded across all directorates and service areas.