

Rother District Council

Report to: Human Resources Committee

Date: 15 April 2024

Title: Rother District Council Fit for the Future Programme – People Strategy

Report of: Lorna Ford (Chief Executive)
Tim Normanton (interim People Programme Manager)

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Report: To provide the Human Resources Committee with an update on the People Programme of work, including the draft People Strategy and Workforce plan framework, and to recommend adoption of Rother District Council Values.

Officer

Recommendation(s): It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) progress on the People Programme be noted;
- 2) the recommended approach to develop the People Strategy and Workforce Plan framework be approved; and
- 3) the Rother District Council Values and Behaviours framework be reviewed and approved.

Introduction

1. The Human Resources (HR) Committee are aware that the Rother District Council (RDC) Fit for the Future (FftF) programme includes People Strategy as a key workstream, enabling delivery of the other workstreams that are focussed on financial resilience, asset management and digital transformation. A high-level illustration of the programme is included at Appendix 1.
2. In February 2024, additional capacity was bought in with Tim Normanton joining RDC on an interim basis for six months to drive the People Strategy programme of work.
3. The agreed deliverables for the People Programme are:
 - 1) **People Strategy** (underpinning approach to Organisational Development; Values & behaviours); **workforce plan and development** programme informed by **workforce data**.
 - 2) **Operating Model - Organisational Design** setting out a proposed Leadership & Management structure – ensuring required capacity and capability, whilst exploring Shared Service/ Partnership opportunities.

- 3) **People Policies** – policy modernisation to deliver People Strategy priorities.

Analysis / Details of the proposals

4. A review of the People Programme was undertaken in February 2024 and workstreams proposed – set out in Appendix 1 – to accelerate activity and ensure key deliverables are achieved by Q3 2024/25.
5. Overview and Scrutiny received a presentation on 18 March 2024, providing assurance of progress on the outstanding Audit recommendation to develop and implement a Workforce Plan for RDC during 2023/24.
6. The approach to the People Programme was shared with Corporate Management Team (CMT) and agreed by Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in February. A People Strategy Working Group (drawing on a cross section of staff, along with trade union representation) - PSWG – met on 26 March 2024 to review the first six weeks of programme activity and consider:
 - a. Workforce data aligned to Draft People strategy pillars and outcomes.
 - b. Draft People Strategy.
 - c. Draft Values and Behaviours.
 - d. Draft Workforce planning priorities.
7. The draft outcomes and pillars of the People Strategy were shared with the PSWG and at the Officer away day on 27 March, for feedback which will be collated by late April. Following SLT support for the proposals, a draft People Strategy framework has been prepared – set out at Appendix 2.
8. The draft Workforce Plan priorities were developed following a review of workforce data, service plans and meetings with SLT, CMT and key stakeholders. The priorities set out in Appendix 3 have been shared with the PSWG for feedback, which will be provided in late April.
9. The draft Values and Behaviours detailed at Appendix 4 have been developed based on work undertaken in late 2023 with staff and managers, to capture views on organisational values. This was grouped under the mnemonic 'ROOT' with a memorable visual linked to the RDC logo and analogy in that our values 'are the root from which we grow'.

Options

10. There are three options for the Committee to consider:
 - Option 1 - Do nothing/no further action.
 - Option 2 - Note and approve the recommended approach to developing People Strategy and Workforce planning framework; approve the adoption of the draft RDC Values and Behaviours.
 - Option 3 - Commission a delivery partner to undertake a comprehensive organisational assessment via a procurement process.

11. It is recommended that Option 2 is agreed by the Committee, on the basis that the approved FftF programme People workstream is a critical aspect of the overall RDC change programme. This option has funding allocated and contributes to both resolving an outstanding audit recommendation, as well as improving organisational performance.

Conclusion

12. Officers reviewed these options and determined the following:

Option 1 - As set out in paragraph 1, the People programme is a critical enabler within the FftF Programme. If this work is not progressed, there is a significant risk that the FftF programme will not deliver its aspirations of improved colleague experience, leading to improved organisational performance and sustainable finances.

Option 2 - Utilising the work to date delivered with existing funding and commissioned resource will provide visible progress and accelerate the pace of organisational change.

Option 3 - This option was discounted due to the cost and time implications of a potentially expensive and lengthy procurement and then diagnostic through to implementation programme.

13. The recommended Option 2 is the best balance between cost and pace, making progress on this priority activity in Q1/2 of 2024/25 enabling benefits delivery starting Q3/4 of 2024/25.

Implications

Financial Implications

14. The financial implications are detailed within the body of the report; there is no additional financial commitment beyond agreed consultancy expenditure (funding the Programme Manager).
15. In June 2024, it is expected that a costed action plan will be developed and this will enable the HR Committee to review priorities and determine if there is a business case to invest to accelerate delivery of aspects of the programme (considering the value of investing in a new HR / Payroll system, Leadership and Management development, Pay policy / staff benefits etc).
16. Aspects of the programme may deliver savings – the Salary Sacrifice lease car scheme projects potential for c£10k savings per annum and a wider review of pay structure, recognition and reward is expected to reduce expenditure on interim, consultant and agency resource.

Legal Implications

17. There are no substantial immediate legal implications in this report.

Human Resources Implications

18. The Human Resource implications are significant as detailed in the report.

| Other Implications | Applies? | Other Implications | Applies? |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Human Rights | No | Equalities and Diversity | Yes |
| Crime and Disorder | No | External Consultation | No |
| Environmental | No | Access to Information | No |
| Risk Management | Yes | Exempt from publication | No |

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|-------------------------|--|
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|-------------|---|---|
| Appendices: | 1 | RDC People programme outline & progress to 28/03/24 |
| | 2 | Draft RDC People Strategy Framework |
| | 3 | Draft Workforce planning priorities |
| | 4 | Draft RDC Values & Behaviours |

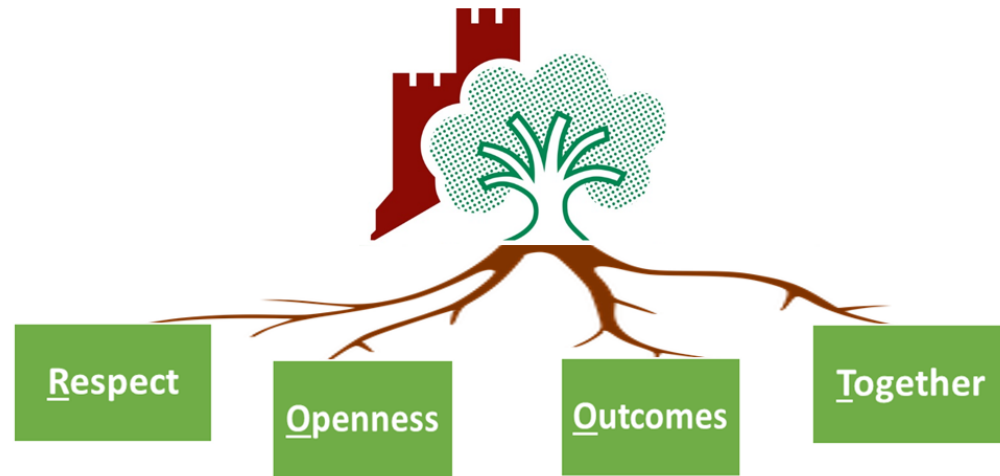
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| Relevant Previous Minutes: | None |
| Background Papers: | None |
| Reference Documents: | None |

Appendix 1 – RDC Fit for the Future Programme



Appendix 3 – DRAFT RDC People Strategy framework

- 1) DRAFT Council vision and Rother Plan priorities -
 - Green to the core
 - Live well locally
 - Resilient economy
 - Fit for the Future
- 2) Local context/labour market insights
- 3) Our **Values and Behaviours**



| Value | Behaviour | Description |
|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| Respect | Professional | Maintaining high standards – in line with professional/regulatory requirements and Nolan principles* |
| | Value others | Ensures that people are given opportunity to contribute, appreciate and acknowledge that contribution |
| | Empowering | Enabling and encouraging people to take opportunities to influence and make decisions |
| Openness | Trusting | Rely and put confidence in others to do as they say |
| | Listening | Makes time to hear what people are saying, checks understanding |
| | Feeding back | Sharing observations and perception to improve understanding and performance |
| Outcomes | Responsible | Being accountable and reliable, doing what you have said you will do |
| | Innovative | Creating and trying new ways of doing things |
| | Prioritises | Organise, clarify what is most important and focus on that |
| Together | Communicates | Shares information in an accessible and timely way with people who need to know |
| | Collaborates | Cooperates, identifies, and brings in people who can work together to help |
| | Relationship focus | Taking time to build connections and get to know other people |

4) Our People Strategy Outcomes

| Outcome - The RDC Workforce is: <i>Colleague experience</i> | Activity – To achieve this RDC will: |
|---|---|
| High performing <i>'I know I am contributing and doing good work'</i> | Ensure customer centric services Provide clarity of purpose/role/ expectations (including values & behaviours) Modernise People policy and processes |
| Inclusive and connected <i>'I feel I belong here'</i> | Attract and retain a workforce that reflects our communities Champion and support disadvantaged groups Modernise People policy and processes |
| Innovative and skilled <i>'I have the skills and knowledge to work, and grow'</i> | Implement a Workforce & Development plan that ensures capability and capacity required Develop Leadership & Management skills, knowledge and behaviours Ensure regular feedback and linked with appraisal |
| Engaged and supported <i>'I feel valued and recognised'</i> | Implement an Engagement & Communication plan Review and align pay and benefits with priorities and values Ensure effective wellbeing support |
| Working in partnership <i>'I work with others to get things done'</i> | Co-produce services with stakeholders Collaborate to identify development opportunities working across partner organisations |
| Making a wider contribution <i>'I have an impact beyond my role'</i> | Implement a volunteering policy Provide employability support and Apprenticeship opportunities Understand, promote and reduce the climate impact of service delivery |

5) Implementation & measures



| People Strategy Pillars → | Recruit | Invest | Support | Excel |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| People Strategy Outcomes ↓ | | | | |
| High performing <i>'I know I am contributing and doing good work'</i> | Time to hire * | Appraisal – completion rates *and colleague feedback # | Staff Survey – clarity purpose/role/values * Staff Survey – employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) # | Customer Survey – feedback on staff * Appraisal – completion rates * and colleague feedback # |
| Inclusive and connected <i>'I feel I belong here'</i> | Diversity reports – recruitment demographics/ conversion # | Diversity reports – workforce demographics vs citizen demographics # | Pay gap reporting * Staff survey – Inclusion/belonging *; eNPS by demography # | |
| Innovative and skilled <i>'I have the skills and knowledge to work, and grow'</i> | Workforce plan reporting – priority roles Recruitment & Retention # | Development plan reporting – Development impact – induction, progression, retention # | Training and development - Mandatory completion *; courses booked/attended; training ROI; delegate ratings; delegate feedback on impact # | Priority roles - talent and succession impact # Staff survey – colleague experience * |
| Engaged and supported <i>'I feel valued and recognised'</i> | Candidate experience survey # | Pay, Reward & Benefits benchmark #; Staff survey perceptions * | Staff survey – wellbeing; pay/recognition satisfaction * Support/benefits offer utilisation */ performance; EAP uptake/insights # | Wellbeing reports – attendance (short/long term absence) # Celebration event engagement # |
| Working in partnership <i>'I work with others to get things done'</i> | Secondment data # | Training and development – proportion of partnership/co-produced training # | | Stakeholder survey # |
| Making a wider contribution <i>'I have an impact beyond my role'</i> | Candidate source data * | Number and destination of apprentices */# | Workforce Climate impact reporting – grey fleet/low carbon travel; Climate L&D; agile working */# | Days of volunteering # Celebration event engagement # |

Appendix 4 – Draft Workforce planning priorities

| Roles | Challenge | Action |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| All | Perception of poor reward | Review pay structure; rejoin NJC; Enhance and promote wider colleague benefits; refresh Appraisal |
| All | Perception of inconsistent colleague experience | Leadership & Management development; review People policy to improve consistency – particularly absence/attendance; refresh Appraisal |
| All | Declining engagement/ morale | Leadership & Management development; Staff survey action plan; Recognition and reward review; refresh Appraisal |
| All | Impact of agility/flexibility on colleague experience, relationships and wellbeing | Review flexible working – standardise and simplify; Wellbeing support review and enhancement |
| EHO qualified professionals | Challenging national labour market | Build - Monitor & Sustain existing grow your own schemes; Bind - Explore market rates and attraction/retention options |
| Legal | Shared Service performance | Borrow – Review current shared arrangement, Buy – recruit to increase RDC capability |
| Digital | Staff capacity; Retention and market rates for digital skills | Bind - Explore market rates and attraction/retention options |
| Planning - DM | Challenging national labour market; Agency costs | Build/Boost – review and promote career pathways; Buy – explore incentives to transition from agency to employee |
| Finance | Hard to recruit vacancies; Agency costs | Buy – recruit to vacancies; Build – Finance career pathways; Bind - Explore market rates and attraction/retention options; Bot – digital solutions for financial transactions |
| Regeneration – Estates/PM | Hard to recruit vacancies; Agency costs | Buy – recruit to vacancies; Build – Project management career pathways; Bind - Explore market rates and attraction/retention options |
| Revs & Bens | Hard to recruit vacancies | Buy – recruit to vacancies; Build – R&B career pathways; Bind - Explore market rates and attraction/retention options; Bot – digital solutions for R&B transactions |

Workforce supply options - the 7 B's of workforce planning supply –

1. Build: Developing internal talent (medium/long term)
2. Buy: Acquiring the necessary external talent (recruitment)
3. Borrow: Contracting, outsourcing or bringing in other units (agency/interim/consultant OR Strategic Partnership/JV, shared services etc)
4. Bind: Retaining key employees and capabilities (development or remuneration incentives)
5. Boost: Accelerating progression (increments in grade or via career pathway)
6. Bounce: Moving employees on (via performance management or redundancy as appropriate)
7. Bot: Technology to improve productivity or reduce demand (digital solutions to workforce challenges)

Appendix 5 - DRAFT RDC Values & Behaviours



Draft RDC values:

Respect - Treating people well, in a **professional** way regardless of their background, status or position, expecting the same in return. Creating an environment where people feel **valued** and respected. We empower colleagues to share opinions, make decisions and shape their work, leading to higher job satisfaction. RDC is an environment that fosters creativity and innovation, **empowering** colleagues who understand their services best, to do the right thing for our residents.

Openness - Crucial in building **trust**, confidence and a supportive, proactive culture. We are an organisation that **listens** and ensures transparency of decision-making whilst giving, and receiving timely, honest and considerate **feedback**. Openness is also awareness and **acceptance of the need for change**, a willingness to support it, **and make** positive contributions.

Outcomes - We expect colleagues to be **responsible**, ensuring efficient and effective services, encouraging creative solutions and **innovative** thinking. We will be flexible in delivery with a focus on citizen outcomes and ensure we are clear on **priorities** and the contribution every colleague makes, focused on making Rother a place to live well locally – balancing support and challenge to achieve this.

Together - Fostering **effective communication** working across teams, and organisations, for the benefit of citizens. We **collaborate** to develop colleagues, enhance productivity, create supportive networks and generate fresh solutions. We promote open dialogue and work as one team dedicating time to build **relationships** and recognising the contribution that colleagues make.

DRAFT RDC behaviours:

| Value | Behaviour | Description |
|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| Respect | Professional | Maintaining high standards – in line with professional/regulatory requirements and Nolan principles* |
| | Value others | Ensures that people are given opportunity to contribute, appreciate and acknowledge that contribution |
| | Empowering | Enabling and encouraging people to take opportunities to influence and make decisions |
| Openness | Trusting | Rely and put confidence in others to do as they say |
| | Listening | Makes time to hear what people are saying, checks understanding |
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*Nolan Principles:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership