



REPORT TO: SPECIAL CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 4 OCTOBER 2023

SUBJECT: WORKFORCE CULTURE

BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the findings of the Chief Executive into the existing frameworks and options available to facilitate engagement between Elected Members, Chief Officers and recognised Trade Unions on matters of mutual interest in relation to workforce culture.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (27) and (30) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to formulating, supervising the implementation of and review as necessary the policy and practices of the council for employees in relation to the recruitment, training and development, health, safety and welfare and practices of the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- i) note the findings set out in para 3.5 and 3.6 of this report;**
- ii) authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council Leader and Head of HR, ICT & OD to establish, an arrangement to facilitate either:**
 - a) informal but structured engagement between Elected Members, Chief Officers and recognised Trade Unions on workforce culture;**
 - or**
 - b) to adapt an existing forum for this purpose; and**
- iii) note the outputs of the Culture Working Group and to formally bring the Culture Working Group to a close in light of recommendation 2.1 (i).**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** This Committee at its meeting of 25 April 2023 (para 10 of the minute refers) considered a report on workforce planning and in doing so:
- a) noted the progress made against the 2020/2022 interim workforce plan; and
 - b) approved the workforce and organisation development strategy for 2023-26
- 3.2** During the course of discussion clarification was sought on the retention of the Culture Working Group.
- 3.3 After discussion it was agreed the Chief Executive would speak to all Groups to look at the options and existing frameworks available to:
- a) develop and maintain a positive workforce culture
 - b) developing common understanding of the current workforce culture
 - c) identify the changes that might provide improvement
- 3.4 In the circumstances it was agreed to defer bringing the Culture Working Group to an end until after the final findings of the consultation.
- 3.5 The existing frameworks are set out for information in the Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.6 Following a period of limited consultation (see para 3.7 of this report) the finding is that there is a wish amongst Elected Members for a facility for informal engagement on a structured basis on a regular frequency with recognised Trade Unions and Chief Officers for the purpose of providing assurance of a positive workforce culture.
- 3.7 Independently, recent work on the Council's approach to best value overlapped with the consultation. It transpired one of the considerations arising from this work is supportive of established regular meetings between Elected Members, Chief Officers and recognised Trade Unions given the importance of maintaining excellent employee relations, given the pressing business of the Council and the decisions which require to be taken.
- 3.8 It is therefore proposed the Chief Executive in consultation with the Council Leader and Head of HR, ICT and OD be authorised to establish, such a facility in order that both Elected Members and Chief Officers can be assured on the current workforce culture by an exchange of information and views and through meaningful discussion.
- 3.9 As was agreed at the meeting of this Committee of 25 April 2023 (para 10 of the minute refers) the work of the Culture Working Group is progressing as a core part of business as usual and it is proposed to bring the Culture Working Group to an end. To provide further assurance to Elected Members there is attached to this report an Appendix setting out the work produced by the

Culture Working Group (**APPENDIX 2**).

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The work noted in this report supports the Council in achieving the objectives and priorities in the Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan, and sets out how the Council will meet the challenges in making best use of our workforce and resources. In particular, the actions will ensure continued progress towards the aims and ensuring an engaged workforce with a positive culture.

(b) Policy and Legal

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

The links to workforce planning and demonstrating best value are important considerations for the Council.

(c) Financial Implications

There are no financial implications from this report.

(d) Risk Implications

Risks associated with the workforce culture are around the consequences of leaving the culture issues unaddressed and the complexity and challenge of dealing with cultural issues.

(e) Staffing Implications

Where there are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications from this report.

(g) Equalities/Social Economic Impact

There are no equality/social economic implications from this report.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impact

There are no implications for climate change or biodiversity arising from this report.

(i) Consultations

In consultation with Council Leader, Chair of this Committee, Corporate Management Team, Head of HR, ICT and OD and Committee Clerk.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The findings, supported by recent independent work on the Council's approach to best value are both indicative of a strong desire for there to be a means for a discussion to take place on a regular frequency between Elected Members, Chief Officers and recognised Trade Unions to provide appropriate assurances of the positive workforce culture.**

5.2 This requires further work such as the role; remit; membership and frequency of meetings and authority is sought for the Chief Executive to undertake this in consultation with the Council Leader and Head of HR, ICT and OD.

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Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-1108985784-899 / SPMAN-1108985784-903 /
SPMAN-1108985784-900