

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

DATE: 10th December 2020

REPORT AUTHOR: Paul Bradshaw, Head of Workforce and Organisational Development

SUBJECT: SWAP Audit Report concerning Learning and Development

REPORT FOR: Noting the contents of Report

1. Background

- 1.1 There has been significant change in the Workforce and Organisational Development (WOD) service over recent years, with a lot of staff in the wider service and the OD team having left and a number having been replaced.
- 1.2 Following the commencement of a new Head of Service during January 2019, a senior managerial post in the OD team was established and filled from within the team, a 2 year vision and plan for the service developed, a Workforce Futures Transformation Board and programme developed and a People Strategy developed and launched.
- 1.3 The vision and aforementioned plans, already incorporated many of the actions referred to in the audit report, which have either been implemented or form part of the planned programme of work, as outlined in section 2 below.
- 1.4 The OD team is very much a corporate resource and is responsible for Leadership and Management Development (including team climate and team development), apprenticeships, corporate mandatory training, corporate mandatory e-learning, and some statutory learning and development activities. The various service areas have their own training budgets in place for developing their workforce in service specific learning and development activities.
- 1.5 Over the past 18 months the primary focus of the OD team has been on supporting services in workforce planning, to ensure that the Council has the right workforce in the right place at the right time. A key component of which, was to work corporately and with services to deliver the learning and development activities required to equip employees with the necessary skills to undertake their roles successfully, whilst providing succession planning opportunities for the future.
- 1.6 The audit by SWAP relates to a number of areas the OD team is responsible for, as follows:
 - Leadership and Management Development
 - Corporate Mandatory Training
 - Appraisals

- Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and the use of training resources and budgets

2. Purpose of the Audit

The audit reviewed employee development within the Council.

3. Key Points to Note

3.1 The OD team have developed an appropriate and robust workplan, a programme of work, and a People Strategy. To support the programme funding was provided to engage two additional staff to help deliver the programme and a Workforce Futures Board was established in the early part of 2019 to oversee the delivery of the programme

3.2 In reviewing the findings of the audit it was reassuring to note that most of the actions recommended by SWAP, had either been completed or were identified as part of the service's programme, for example:

- The Learning and Development Policy has been completed and will be presented to the Policy Forum shortly. The policy includes reference to mandatory training.
- Mandatory Training is currently being monitored and reported at a senior level (EMT), with the numbers of staff who have completed their mandatory training having increased significantly for some service areas, as laid out below:
 - GDPR – 75%
 - VAWDASV – 73%
 - Office Manual Handling – 49%
 - Office Health and Safety – 49%
 - Equality and Diversity – 50%
- Refresher reminders have been built into the TRENT system, to remind staff and their line managers to complete their next round of training on time. To this end, GDPR needs to be refreshed annually and the other modules every 3 years.
- The previous level of Appraisal completions had already been looked at and steps taken to increase completion rates. Completions have increased from 2% in 2018 to 57.1% in 2019 and to an average of 83.3% across the Council at the point this report was completed, which is above the stretch target set at 80%.
- The OD team had already conducted TNAs with all service areas during 2019/2020 which enabled the Council to identify, plan and budget for a corporate training and development programme. It also supported each service in developing their service specific training plans. The TNAs currently being developed for 2021/22 will also identify succession planning routes in each service and will challenge managers to identify what training is required to ensure there is a potential successor in place for each key role. This process

will be conducted annually and reviewed to ensure what is delivered meets the needs of the Council, with factual evidence to support delivery.

- Training Evaluation was an area of weakness and had been conducted on an ad hoc basis. A digital evaluation form is currently being developed using Microsoft Forms, which will be sent / e-mailed to all staff in attendance once training has been completed. This will ensure the Council can capture feedback on all training delivered and to evaluate the effectiveness.
- The OD team is also considering introducing evaluations for managers especially where there has been significant investment. This will enable them to evaluate whether they have seen a corresponding change in performance / behaviour and hence whether the investment was worthwhile.
- A corporate induction programme has been developed and was to be launched from April 2020. All new staff will be required to attend a corporate induction session and whilst the pandemic has delayed the face to face delivery of this, we are now exploring whether it can be delivered digitally. New employees will be able to book their place on the induction through TRENT (our HR system), which will enable checks to be made re compliance.
- To support the corporate induction process a digital Corporate Handbook has been developed, which provides a good overview of relevant information and corporate documents.
- The OD team already offers a line managers induction programme which has been in operation for 2 years and provides line managers with the information they will need in order to be effective in their new role.
- To aid the service specific induction historically provided by service's the OD team have developed a Manager's checklist, to help ensure all essential induction information has been provided. A simple tick-off checklist is included for this purpose. Both the manager and member of staff are asked to sign the document to confirm the induction has taken place.
- The OD team is in the process of reviewing the booking and completion of training to ensure accuracy and completeness of record keeping.
- When considering how third-party contractors can best be managed in respect of mandatory training requirements, the OD team has worked with the Procurement Team to establish a suitable approach. Procurement have suggested that there is a mixed approach to mandatory training and are confident that all agency staff (particularly in social care) complete corporate mandatory training. They advise that for contractors this obligation rests with the appointed contractor to comply with all legislative requirements and companies generally have their own arrangement for undertaking all statutory and other training as required. Whilst SWAP suggested that the requirement for undertaking mandatory training be built into contracts, the Procurement Team have advised that there isn't currently a Council policy, which requires suppliers to undertake the Council's training and logistically they question whether this would be practical, given the number of suppliers the Council engages.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 As stated most of the actions recommended by SWAP had already been actioned or were included in the service's 2020/21 work programme, some of which have since been implemented. Whilst a small number of planned actions have regrettably been delayed due to the pandemic, significant progress has been made over the past 18 months.
- 4.2 Overall the Council in a much more robust and healthier position than it was and has; a vision, corporate work plan, People Strategy, 12 service areas workforce plans, a corporate development plan, and 12 Training Needs Analyses in place. Pleasingly as part of this, the Council is in the best position it has been in regards to staff appraisal, with the number of completed appraisals running at 83.3%, ahead of the stretch target of 80% set by EMT.
- 4.3 The WOD service would like to thank the officers of SWAP team for their work on the audit and the recommendations and reassurance offered through the audit.

Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation
That the committee note the findings of the report and the resulting plans.	To advise the committee about the report / findings of the audit and the plans in response to the recommendations.

Relevant Policy (ies) :	Learning & Development Policy		
Within Policy	Y/N	Within Budget	Y/N N/A

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