

PEOPLE STRATEGY

Agenda Item

Contact Details:- Helen Krischock
Designation:- HR Manager
Ext. No:- 2711
E Mail Address:- helkr@braintree.gov.uk

Background Papers:- Braintree District Council Direction and Ambition, Shaping up for Excellence Improvement Strategy and Plan, Local Government Workforce Strategy 2007.

Financial Implications:- n/a
Equalities Implications:- n/a
Legal Implications:- n/a
Options: n/a
Risks: n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The People Strategy sets out the strategic people priorities for the Council over the next 4 years. These are to:

- Optimise employee performance
- Promote innovation
- Change attitudes and behaviour
- Support staff to work differently/more flexibly
- Attract and retain talent
- Plan for succession
- Involve and engage staff positively
- Have excellent people management practices
- Recognise and reward appropriately

Our vision is to be an organization that is recognized for giving value, excellent customer service and satisfaction through continuous improvement and performance.

The Strategy supports the Council's Shaping up for Excellence Corporate Improvement plan and, together with this, underpins the Council's Direction and Ambition.

The actions supporting each priority of the People Strategy are set out in the Council's Workforce Development Action Plan 2008/09. This also incorporates the Investors in People (IiP) Action Plan. There will be subsequent plans for the life of the Strategy and the Shaping up for Excellence Corporate Improvement Plan (2008 – 2012).

The Trades Unions have been consulted and support the People Strategy. Senior Managers are currently being consulted.

DECISION: That the attached People Strategy be endorsed.



Braintree District Council



PEOPLE STRATEGY

2008 - 2012

CONTENTS

1. Our vision
2. ‘Shaping up for Excellence’ - Corporate Improvement Plan
3. So how will our people ‘Shape up for Excellence’?
4. The way the Corporate Strategy fits with the People Strategy and ‘Shaping up for Excellence’
5. Why do we need a People Strategy?
6. The strategic priorities
7. Making the Strategy a reality
8. Leadership and Responsibilities

1. OUR VISION

Our vision for our organisation is simple. We want to become an excellent Council, not in CPA terms, but in customer service, performance and value.

We want our Council to be a great place to work because we are delivering great outcomes for the people and communities we serve.

We want high performance, customer centred, skilled and motivated staff, who are proud to work for Braintree District Council.

We want to be seen as a 'can do' organisation where excellent performance is encouraged, supported and rewarded. Where people are developed and provided with the skills that enable them to meet the challenges of the future.

Our Corporate Improvement Plan – Shaping up for Excellence – sets out our approach on how we will continue our improvement journey. The key to change is the culture of the organisation – the way in which our values, behaviour and leadership all align to enable us to deliver excellent services. All of our employees need the support of a culture that is empowering and consistent in its approach from top to bottom, that recognises the contribution that all staff make to the performance of the organisation in a variety of ways, that decides what to do and does it quickly and without changing its mind, and sees performance management as an integral part of management practice.

These are challenging times for all of us but they are also extremely exciting. I know that all of you will rise to the occasion because we all share in wanting our organisation to be:

- A place where people help shape the community
- A place where reputations are built and skills developed
- A place where people and services are responsive and challenges welcomed
- A place where success improves people's lives, the environment and prospects for future generations
- A place that encourages and rewards success

And finally - A place where people are *proud* to work.

Allan Reid
Chief Executive

2. SHAPING UP FOR EXCELLENCE CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Our goal is to become a leader in public service in all aspects of our business and that we gain a reputation for delivering excellence.

To achieve this we need to ensure focus, clarity, capacity and capability. We start our journey from a strong base – our Core Values: We can all expect to:

- **Perform well and get things done**
- **Respect and value customers and staff**
- **Improve and learn**
- **Deliver that bit extra and be,**
- **Effective and efficient.**

Our approach will be one of continuous improvement with a focus on the ‘how’ of delivering the new Corporate Strategy over the next 4 years. The Council’s Direction and Ambition sets out our commitments for the period from 2008 – 2012 and is very clear:

We will ensure that people enjoy growing up, living and working in the Braintree District because it is a place where:

- The environment is clean and green
- Business is encouraged and local economy prospers
- Everyone can enjoy a healthy lifestyle
- Housing and transport meet local needs
- People take pride in their local areas
- We deliver excellent, cost effective and valued services.

The final statement gives a clear focus on *how* we will deliver the services that achieve the aspirations of the Corporate Strategy. It provides the basis for how we are going to Shape up for Excellence.

Six objectives have been set under that theme which we will achieve by 2012. They are:

- All our services will have been robustly reviewed and improvements put in place
- People will find it easier to contact us and we will provide speedier responses
- Greater use will be made of our website and more transactions will be able to be dealt with electronically
- People will be able to access a range of public services through a shared ‘one-stop shop’ office and customer service facility
- People who come to the District will be easily able to find out about the District and the services that are provided here
- Our citizens will be more satisfied with how they feel about the Council and about whether we provide value for money.

3. SO HOW WILL OUR PEOPLE SHAPE UP FOR EXCELLENCE ?

How will we, as an organisation, achieve these objectives and know that we have achieved our goal?

By driving forward four improvements:

- Customer Service
- People and Performance
- Communications and Engagement
- Innovation and Efficiency

The People and Performance theme is most pertinent in relation to the People Strategy. It is aimed at ensuring that our organisation recruits, manages and develops staff that demonstrate excellent performance, commitment and leadership where appropriate, achieving both their own, and the Council's overall objectives. This will result in improved service and value to the customer.

We will have:

- **A highly motivated and performing workforce with high satisfaction**
- **A responsive and flexible work force able to adapt to changing requirements and to deliver services differently**
- **Increased ideas and innovation from staff to improve service**
- **A good CPA/Direction of Travel report**
- **A skilled and developed workforce that is prepared for the challenges of tomorrow**
- **Staff who are focussed on what needs to be achieved and how they contribute to this.**

These objectives inform the Council's Workforce Development Action Plan. This plan, together with improvement plans for the other 3 themes, will set out what actions will need to be taken in order for us to complete our Shaping up for Excellence journey. In turn, the Shaping up for Excellence Corporate Improvement Plan will deliver the Council's Corporate Strategy in a way that both staff and residents can be proud of. This will be simply because we will be doing the right things, at the right time and in the right way.

Our strategic vision is to be an organisation that is recognised for giving value, excellent customer service and satisfaction through continuous improvement and performance.

Becoming excellent requires us to:

- **Modernise delivery practices and remove unnecessary processes or bureaucracy that stifle innovation and flexibility**
- **Agree flexible terms and conditions that support innovative and responsive solutions to local needs**
- **Develop a culture that engages staff and rewards a high performance approach to work**

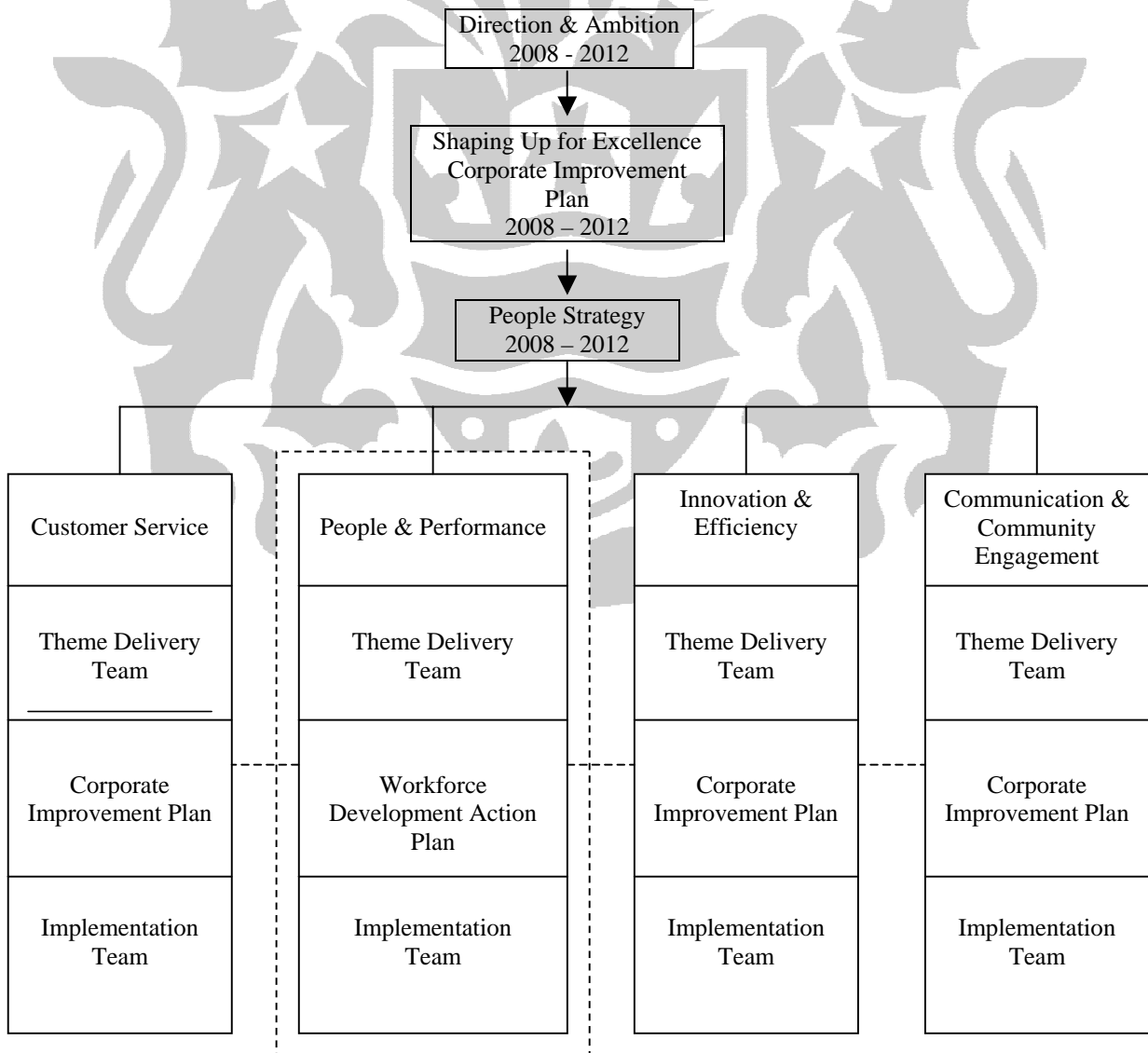
- **Attract and make the most of the talents of a diverse section of the community**
- **Work closely with partner organisations**
- **Be more nimble and responsive – commissioners and enablers of services**
- **Be focused on innovation, problem solving and community engagement.**

The Shaping up for Excellence Corporate Improvement Plan together with the People Strategy and the Workforce Development Improvement Plan will enable us to manage the process of change that will keep us all moving toward the vision.

Everyone has a contribution to make in our services, teams and as individuals. We will continue to build on success to date by becoming, faster, fitter, more flexible, accessible, customer focussed and always looking to improve.

In this way the organisation can be an ‘Employer of Choice’ and enjoy an excellent reputation as a great place to work.

4. THE WAY THE PEOPLE STRATEGY FITS WITH THE CORPORATE STRATEGY AND SHAPING UP FOR EXCELLENCE



5. WHY DO WE NEED A PEOPLE STRATEGY?

The Council has set out its vision for a different future where service delivery will be more adaptable and flexible for customers needs and many of our people will carry out their work in a different way.

We want to be an excellent Authority with motivated employees who are proud to work here and make a difference to people's lives. We need to use our resources wisely and develop the talent and skills we have in the organisation to become excellent in everything that we do.

On a wider front, all Councils, including our own, face new issues such as climate change, an increasingly global economy, a growing elderly population, greater diversity and rising migration.

We have to respond to complex, crosscutting issues such as social exclusion, poor skills, and anti-social behaviour. These changes, and the Council's response to them, mean changes for workforce practices, skills and jobs. We also face these challenges in a context of tighter resources.

Braintree will need to:

- **Optimise employees performance**
- **Promote innovation**
- **Change attitudes and behaviours**
- **Support staff to work differently/more flexibly**
- **Attract and retain talent**
- **Plan for succession**
- **Involve and engage staff positively**
- **Have excellent people management practices**
- **Recognise and reward appropriately (including family-friendly policies and flexible working practices)**

6. THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR BRAINTREE

These are set out below and align closely with the Local Government Workforce Strategy 2007 – “The Place to Be, the Place to Work”.

1. ***Organisational development and employee engagement*** – building workforce support for new structures and new ways of working to deliver customer-focussed and efficient services. Engaging people in the business and change process, in the design and delivery of our services, in their own development and the development of the organisation. People need to know where they fit in the organisation.
2. ***Leadership and management development*** – building visionary and ambitious leadership
3. ***Skills*** – developing skills and knowledge in an innovative, high performing, partnership context

4. ***Recruitment and retention*** – working with partners to address current and future skills shortages, promoting jobs and careers, identifying, developing and motivating talent, planning for succession and addressing diversity issues
5. ***Pay, performance, recognition and reward*** – reviewing systems to ensure they reflect new structures, new priorities and new ways of working and to reinforce high performance. Strengthening individual performance reviews, tackling poor performance, reducing sickness absence.
6. ***Diversity*** – Recognising that equal treatment and positive action are necessary in counteracting discrimination. Commitment to ensuring fairness and equality of access to employment and to making sure that diversity is embedded in all policies and procedures.

7. MAKING THE STRATEGY A REALITY

The actions supporting each priority are set out in the Workforce Development Action Plan 2008/09 in Part 2 of this strategy. They incorporate the Investors in People Action Plan. A range of performance measures including Best Value, Corporate Health, Value for Money and Service Indicators have been developed. There are also a number of success measures in relation to Investors in People. These are all also set out in part 2.

Performance against the action plan will be reviewed quarterly, half yearly and annually and reported to Management Board, Senior Managers and Trades Unions, and Cabinet. This will be linked to the timing of the Corporate Performance report.

There will be Workforce Development Action Plan in place for each year for the period 2008 – 2012 to support the People Strategy and the Shaping up for Excellence Corporate Improvement Plan.

8. LEADERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strong leadership, clarity of vision and purpose from the Senior Management Group and Cabinet will be required to drive this People Strategy forward.

There are also a number of other key stakeholders with responsibility for implementing the People Strategy and ensuring that our services are delivered by well managed, motivated, skilled, competent and committed staff who have a real customer focus.

These include all Members through their Employer status, the Chief Executive and Management Board, Service Managers, HR specialists – and Trades Union representatives.