

	
Corporate Scrutiny and Management Committee	9 th September 2013
Report of the Assistant Director, Customers & Employees	

EVALUATION OF THE “SERVICE TO CITY” DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2012-13

Purpose of the report

1. To provide Members with an evaluation of the ‘Service to City’ development programme as requested at the meeting of this committee held on 15 July 2013.

Background

2. Over the past 4 years, the shape of the organisation, particularly at a senior management level, has changed significantly. Between 2008 and 2013, the number of Chief Officers (Assistant Directors and Directors) has reduced from 28 to 17, whilst the scope of the organisation’s work has broadened. The effect of this on Chief Officers has been to create wider portfolios and a need to focus to a much greater extent on strategic issues across service areas. The development needs of Chief Officers were considered throughout the phases of the Organisational Review.
3. It was recognised that there has also been an impact on Heads of Service, not only in terms of reduced numbers, but in the nature of the role. If, in the past, a Head of Service could have been expected to focus on their own service, whilst it was an Assistant Director’s responsibility to look at the wider operating context of that service (accepting this is an over-simplistic generalisation), this is certainly no longer the case. There is a need for Heads of Service to be focussed more broadly on the links between service areas and their collective potential to provide joined up services for and with the community. This was characterised as filling a void between Heads of Service and Assistant Directors, and changing from “head-down” management of a service to “head-up” leadership within the city. This group of middle- to

senior-managers has had little structured development in the last five years.

4. As an outcome of ongoing staff engagement exercises and workforce analysis, the council's Workforce Strategy identified leadership development as a priority to sit alongside a corporate and improved core training offer for all staff. This core offer has been launched this year through the council's Workforce Development Unit.
5. The "Service to City" Programme was launched in July 2012 and is designed to develop leadership capabilities of Heads of Service by harnessing and strengthening the diverse range of skills, knowledge and experience already within the council at a senior management level, and critical to effective delivery by the organisation. The programme also provides a wide range of perspectives from external partners and individuals to provoke thought and discussion at a strategic level within the group.
6. The aims of the programme were to:
 - Develop the strong group of leaders at Head of Service level, operating as a collective unit, cognisant of and responsive to the required contribution to organisational and city priorities;
 - Initiate wider cross-service working to maximise the effectiveness and agility of organisational initiatives;
 - Equip people to lead change and innovation;
 - Build capacity for change and innovation within and between services;
 - Position Heads of Service to provide leadership at senior manager level and close the gap between them and Chief Officers
 - Support individual Heads of Service to provide more visible leadership;
 - Ensure self awareness and a focus on personal development;
 - Shift our thinking towards having a shared organisational and city-vision as the key driver for defining service priorities;
 - Strengthen a support network of peers;
 - Develop a shared ambition to collectively drive the organisation (rather than individual services) forward;
 - Provide an external perspective on issues critical for the city and identify opportunities for partnership working.
7. The programme was delivered for the council's Heads of Service, each leading and managing a specific service of the council, with Assistant Directors and Directors also able to take part.

Programme Content

8. The programme ran for 12 months, and was based on a modular formula where managers attended modules every two months.
 - Foundation Module: Leadership for future local government
 - Module 1: The Leadership Challenge in York
 - Module 2: Working in a political environment
 - Module 3: Building Stronger Communities
 - Module 4: Equality in the 21st Century - unlocking the potential of people & places
 - Module 5: Communicating a Vision: developing a narrative and managing the message
 - Module 6: Managing Performance
9. These modules took the form of a 2-3 hour session, with guest speakers drawn mainly from the senior levels of partner organisations within the city, such as the military, Aviva, University of York and Science City York. Speaker's contributions were balanced with workshop-style activities and attendees were given suggested reading before and after the session.
10. The programme also offered participants;
 - *Action Learning Sets* - three action learning sets were established within the council and were independently facilitated for four sessions. Each of the groups have decided to continue meeting and are self-facilitating.
 - *Mentoring* – 13 mentees have been paired with an external mentor from across the city and beyond.
 - *Specially convened sessions* - a session was held around building personal resilience, in response to an identified need.
 - *1:1s with the Chief Executive* - a commitment was made for every Head of Service to have a 1:1 with the Chief Executive, and these will continue throughout this year.
 - *Lunchtime Drop In Sessions* - a series of sessions were held with the Chief Executive and the Heads of Service to informally discuss any issues the cohort had or any ideas for the organisation.

- *Publications and Information* – throughout the programme participants have continually shared useful information with each other via a dedicated email distribution list.
 - *Women in Leadership* – two sessions were held for women Heads of Service covering a range of topics including career coaching.
11. The programme was delivered entirely internally, using free venues as far as possible, and speakers drawn from across our professional networks. The cost for the whole programme was less than £15,000 (against a total training budget of over £716k). As a comparison, similar programmes provided externally generally carry fees of approximately £1-2k per head.
 12. The average attendance on the six modules was 54. 17 people took part in the action learning sets, 13 were paired with external mentors and an average of 20 women senior managers participated in the Women in Leadership sessions.

Feedback

13. The programme concluded in July 2013, and an on-line survey was used to ask managers for feedback. 51 managers responded to the survey, which is a 50% response rate based on the entire group or a 94% response rate based on the average number that attended the six modules.
14. Participants were asked to what extent the programme had supported them with respect to the stated aims:
 - 90% agreed that the programme had supported them to develop as a strong group of leaders.
 - 75% either strongly agreed or agreed that Service to City helped them to initiate wider cross-service working.
 - 86% either strongly agreed or agreed that the programme had enabled them to strengthen their support network of peers.
 - Almost 90% strongly agreed or agreed that the Service to City programme supported them to develop a shared organisational and city vision.
15. This positive feedback is represented in the following comments:

“...the programme has provided the opportunity to bring the group together to hear the 'same' messages, some exposure to cross-Directorate working and a focus to Council Plan priorities and good

practice. The most useful element for me personally has been the opportunity to get to know people from across the Council and 'to do business' in a smarter way either in or out of the sessions."

"I have particularly valued the opportunity to develop my peer network and time to focus on my personal development. I have enjoyed listening and learning about other perspectives, have benefitted from being a member of an action learning set and having a mentor. And I have enjoyed being given permission to take time out and focus on my career, its not often you can do that. I have enjoyed hearing from colleagues, made new friends, and it has challenged some of my thinking."

"The Service to City network enabled me to organise a spin off session attended by representatives of the group in order to take stock around Equalities work. I was able to network with peers and meet other managers who can contribute to the work I am doing. Attendance at sessions also enabled me to get a greater understanding of where the organisation was going and how the shape of the organisation would change to meet current challenges we face."

16. Two aspects of feedback provided ideas for future development of the programme:

- 42% believed that the programme did not support participants to build capacity for change and innovation within and between services.
- 25% disagreed with the statement that the From Service to City programme allowed participants greater strategic input.

17. Respondents were asked for any further comments about the programme. The majority of the comments were extremely positive, including:

"... just well done really. Has been some great sessions. Would like to see it continue."

"Quality internal speakers have created the most interesting and informative sessions in my view."

"I have really enjoyed and benefited from the Action Learning Sets."

"It's always good to hear from inspirational speakers ... their inputs were also relevant to what we do in different ways."

Future Plans

18. The feedback above suggests that the programme has been well received and is considered to have been valuable by the delegates themselves.
19. Within the feedback, there are very useful suggestions of areas which either were not fully explored within the programme (innovation is noted in the summary above) or that people would like to discuss further in the future.

“I have enjoyed the programme and the range of speakers but I think we need speakers who either can speak at a strategic leadership level or specific to some of the issues and challenges we are facing. Hearing about some of the Council projects would also be helpful.”

“The best companies have lots of knowledge of customer handling, managing staff, incentivising staff etc and this would have made a useful contribution to the discussions. It felt sometimes that too much of the debate was among allies and didn't bring in other perspectives.”

20. This feedback has directly helped to shape the development of a new phase of the programme. We are launching in October with a short Master Class programme, developed in partnership with Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH) (see Annex A). The programme has attracted funding from the LGA, so we are able to offer it to managers at a low cost, and they will have the opportunity to attend the programme with managers from the other councils within the LGYH region.
21. The modular sessions will be replaced with quarterly extended Corporate Leadership Group meetings (a meeting of Directors/Assistant Directors), including Heads of Service. These will be themed to address key issues or subjects of particular relevance to the city. Partners will be invited where appropriate. Following feedback received from the Service to City evaluation, the theme of the first session will focus on innovation.
22. To supplement the programme, we will be offering an extended Mentoring scheme in conjunction with Yorkshire Accord, where managers will have a broader choice of a mentor including from the private sector. It is anticipated that this will also open access to mentors to the level of staff below Heads of Service.

23. 1:1 sessions with the Chief Executive will continue, along with the Lunchtime Drop In Sessions.
24. Heads of Service have also been invited to attend Council Management Team meetings as observers, to get a more complete view of the governance processes within the council.

Implications

Financial – there are none for this report, all costs are managed within existing budgets.

Human Resources – as described in the report.

Equalities – as described in the report

There are no specific legal, crime and disorder, IT or property implications.

Recommendations

25. Members are asked to:

- a. note the feedback received in the programme evaluation
- b. note the plans for Phase Two of the programme.

Reason: To ensure Members are kept informed of progress in the council's leadership development.

Contact Details

Authors:

Tracy Walters
Head of Strategic
Human Resources and
Organisational
Development
Tel No: 07538 744150

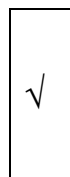
Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Pauline Stuchfield
Assistant Director, Customers & Employees

Ian Floyd
Director of Customer & Business Support
Services

Will Boardman
Office of the Chief
Executive
Tel: 553412

Report Approved



Date 30 August 2013

Annex 1: Collaborate to Innovate Masterclass Programme