South Lakeland District Council
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
2 February 2018

EXECUTIVE REPORT

REPORT FROM: Cllr Brenda Gray, Council Organisation and People Portfolio Holder

Portfolio Responsibilities

The implementation and renewal of the Council Plan.

The Council Plan objectives in relation to quality of service and high performance culture.

The organisation of the Authority relating to the Council’s central services including Member Services and Employee relations.

Policies, Plans and Strategies:

- Council Plan (Incorporating the Five Year Strategy)
- Performance Management
- Equality Scheme
- Emergency Plan
- Member Development and Training Plan
- Workforce Plan

Key Areas:

- Community strategy/ area planning/ development of recovery group
- Emergency Planning
- Performance Management
- Legal and Committee Service and HR Services
- Member Services
- Member Training and Development
Council Plan (2018 Update)
The 2018 update to the Council Plan was approved at Council on 19 December 2017 which set out the vision for South Lakeland supported by the four priorities. This has now been adopted across the organisation and shared with partners.

The update incorporated the progress achieved over the last 12 months and details the key projects that contribute to achieving the four priority areas. The measures of success have been amended in the recent update to reflect progress and will continue to be reported on a quarterly basis.

The results from the 2017 Quality of Life Survey showed that 52% of residents are satisfied with the way South Lakeland District Council run things. This is a 6% increase from 2016 result which was 46% satisfaction rate.

The 2017 Staff survey results showed that 90% of employees are aware of the Council Plan priorities which is a 1% increase compared to the results in 2015.

The Council Plan strategy runs from 2014 until 2019, therefore a full review of the plan will begin in the next upcoming months.

Community Development of Recovery Group
The Community Flood Recovery Group has now reduced the scale of meetings undertaken. The next meeting is to be confirmed, the previous meeting was held in June 2017.

The group continues to share strategic and partner updates, identifies any issues that may be escalated and develop resilience activities for the community.

Monthly statistics show that in December 2017, a total of 1325 flood grant applications had been received to date and 1055 have been approved.

Emergency Planning
The Council continues to monitor weather warnings to prepare for any potential incidences by receiving updates from the Environment Agency, Met Office Weather Warnings and participating in Cumbria Resilience Forum teleconferences.

A ‘Community Resilience across South Lakeland’ document has been produced for all community resilience groups within South Lakeland. This document provides communities with links to established resilience tools and contact details for other established community resilience groups across South Lakeland.

Performance Management
The Performance Management Framework and the Risk Management Process will be reviewed for annual updates in Quarter 4.

Legal Services
Legal and Committee Services continue to provide advice and support to the whole organisation.

Across 2017/18 the Legal Services team have;
- Successfully recovered significant outstanding sums due in relation to lake encroachments
• Undertaken a number of successful prosecutions in respect of fraudulent flood grant applications
• Introduced an electronic case management system for the day to day management of work
• Provided training to members in respect of licensing, planning and code of conduct

Committee Services continue;
• Increasing the number of Members who are now working paperless
• Organising and servicing a number of additional, high-profile meetings at short notice
• Increasing the level of Member engagement with the IRP process

HR Services
The HR Service continues to support the Customer Connect Programme with professional advice and expertise in relation to the people elements of the project. Following some issues raised in the staff survey, communications around Customer Connect programme have been further developed with a session for Operational Managers and Principals and focus groups with a cross section of employees to show how the new ways of working will support employees using their skills and abilities to the full and more local decision making to support the customer service of the council.

A decision has been made not to continue with the Investors in People accreditation. Whilst this accreditation has been seen as a benchmark of good people management, the cost of accreditation continues to increase, the organisation has achieved Silver status. The Council is continuing to invest in employees by exploring more innovative and relevant customer-facing accreditations. The existing employee working group is being retained to ensure that the ongoing employee development is supported across the organisation and this will be reflected in the action plan.

The new Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) was launched on 1 October 2017, to provide a range of support mechanisms to employees and their families and includes 24/7 counselling services, legal and consumer information services, financial and debt management, serious illness and accident support, health and wellbeing resources to support healthy lifestyles etc. The provision of the EAP is a positive addition to the employee benefits package and it is designed to support the health and wellbeing of our employees, however it also delivers benefits to the Council as an employer, through reduced absence and increased productivity.

Member Training and Development
Following the successful award of the North West Charter Level 1 in October 2017, work is due to commence to achieve the Level 2 Scrutiny award in next upcoming months. The Level 2 award is looking at how training and development has impacted on the work of the Council and its decision making, particularly in community development and robust decision making.

There has been a number of member training events completed and scheduled across 2017/18 and the Member training programme for 2018/19 is currently being reviewed.

To date Member Required Training has been undertaken across the organisation that included the Code of Conduct, Member/Officer protocol training, Audit, Standards and Licensing. Training for committee members in Planning is undertaken for all new members are part of their induction.
Following the implementation of the Children’s safeguarding policy across the organisation members were invited to attend various training events, to date 25 members have undertaken the Children Safeguarding training. Officers will soon commence work on implementing an Adults Safeguarding policy of which members will again be invited to attend a training session.

A member Customer Connect briefing session was held on 12 October 2017 for all members to attend to gain an insight and further understanding of the programme moving forward. This session proved popular with a total of 27 members in attendance. A further briefing has been scheduled to take place on 27\textsuperscript{th} February 2018.