REPORT FOR DECISION

Bury COUNCIL

DECISION OF:	**Cabinet**
DATE:	**12 July 2013**
SUBJECT:	**Bury Behaviours**
REPORT FROM:	**Councillor John Smith**
CONTACT OFFICER:	**Guy Berry, Assistant Director : Human Resources**
TYPE OF DECISION:	CABINET (NON KEY DECISION)
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	Within the public domain
SUMMARY:	The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet on the development of a Bury Behaviours framework.
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	Cabinet are asked to support the introduction of a revised 'Bury Behaviours' framework which has been drawn up having identified what skills and behaviours will be essential for the council to meet its aims going forward. The framework will be used to make recruitment, employee review, learning and other people processes more effective and targeted towards the key behaviours.

IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	Executive Director of Resources to advise regarding risk management
Statement on impact on Resources:	The strategy will be implemented from existing resources. The framework was drawn up internally with support from an occupational psychologist within budgeted resources

Equality/Diversity implications:	Yes The framework has a positive impact on Equality/Diversity as it identifies 'Values, Ethics and Diversity' as critical to the organisation
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes
Wards Affected:	None directly but all indirectly as affects all employees of the Council
Scrutiny Interest:	None

TRACKING/PROCESS   EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES: Mike Owen

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Cabinet Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
10/06/2013			
Scrutiny Committee	Committee	Council	
	JCC 11/06/2013		

1.0   BACKGROUND

1.1   This project was set against the context of Bury Council's three year People Strategy and the Plan for Change.

1.2   Research has shown a strong link between people knowing what skills and behaviours are required and high levels of employee engagement   .

1.3   Research has also shown a strong link between organisations that identify these key skills and behaviours and measure them effectively and high levels of organisational performance.

1.4   The purpose of the project was to identify what behaviours and core skills are the most critical for all Council employees to demonstrate.

1.5   Underpinning the project was the belief that in order to support the Council's vision and values and achieve the outcomes all employees must be aware of these key behaviours. We also need to know how to identify these, measure them and develop them.

1.6   The project focussed on identifying behaviours and core skills that every employee should demonstrate regardless of the role they work in.   It recognises that to date we have focussed primarily on specific technical skills for specific roles whilst not developing the more generic behaviours and skills in a systematic way.

1.7 It was recognised that in the current adverse climate maximising the potential of each employee was critical as was minimising the risk of poor recruitment decisions and having development needs that are left unaddressed.

1.8 This project was designed therefore to give managers a tool in the form of a 'competency framework' called Bury Behaviours to help make better recruitment decisions and to help managers and employees better identify development needs and strengths.

1.9 Whilst the Council is diverse in terms of occupational roles that naturally demand wide ranging skills, experience and knowledge, this project addresses the belief that a contributory factor for success in all roles is the display of key behaviours and that these are common to people whose roles in other respects differ greatly.

1.10 Bury Council already had a set of management and employee competencies that were drawn up in 2008.

1.11 These were out of date given the rate of change within the organisation and were therefore due for review.

1.12 The fact that the climate is now so different reinforces this need as the behaviours and core skills which may have been most appropriate in the past may not be those we need to develop in the coming years.

1.13 Although the current competencies were used as part of the employee review process their use was patchy across the organisation.

1.14 They were drawn up in house and as such have not been validated or benchmarked against other organisations.

1.15 There were only two levels of competencies within the previous framework and in an organisation of the complexity of Bury Council this was unlikely to meet our needs which may also explain the inconsistent use of the framework.

1.16 The project to redesign the competencies was designed to address these weaknesses in the current arrangements.

1.17 It aimed to develop a set of standards that people could relate to, that accurately reflected 'what good looked like in Bury' and would therefore be used by employees and managers.

1.18 To achieve this, a key stage of the project was an extensive and thorough job analysis through visionary interviews with senior managers and elected members and focus groups with employees at different levels of the organisation.

1.19 To develop the framework we have worked in partnership with an occupational psychologist with expertise in the field of competency design.

1.20 This approach was taken to address the weakness of the current framework which was designed without validation and without benchmarking against other organisations.

2.0 **ISSUES**

Bury Behaviours Framework (Appendix 1)

2.1   The Bury Behaviours framework has been designed with the input of over 300 employees from the Council who took part in the job analysis stage of the project to make sure that we captured what behaviours were really key for Bury going forward. These employees attended visionary interviews and focus groups and since attending have had the opportunity to comment on draft proposals and input into the framework as it currently stands. This was seen not as only as critical to getting the framework 'right' but also as key to employee engagement.

2.2   The framework has been endorsed by SLT and JCC have been consulted.

2.3   The framework has been designed as a tool for managers and employees across the organisation to use potentially as an aid in employee review and other processes such as recruitment, coaching and workforce planning.

2.4   The framework incorporates the key behaviours that have been identified as most important for people to display. There are nine main behaviours and there are four tiers recognising different levels within the organisation.

2.5   Each behaviour at each tier is divided into a number of examples of what constitutes that behaviour and examples are given of what positive behaviour would look like and what negative behaviour would look like for each element.

2.6   An FAQ guide has been developed and is a work in progress as more queries are raised that need clarification. **(Appendix 2)**

2.7   Interview guides have also been developed to act as an aid to managers and employees when using the framework.

2.8   Workshops are being developed to equip HR teams and managers in the first instance with the skills to use the framework. We plan to develop aids to assist employees to gain maximum benefit from the framework.

2.9   The framework can help employees in employee review to more accurately identify development needs that will develop transferable skills essential to the organisation.   It is recognised as key to supporting both the employee engagement and learning agendas.

2.10 An implementation plan has been drawn up with a view to having the framework in use by April 2014 though it will be used in pilot areas prior to this date.

3.0 **CONCLUSION**

3.1   Research has shown a strong link between high levels of organisational performance and employee engagement when employees are aware of the key skills and behaviours that are required and are supported in demonstrating these.

3.2   The Bury Behaviours project was designed to address the need to identify these key skills and behaviours that are critical to success, to engage employees in the process.

3.3   The immediate challenge is to ensure that managers and employees are supported in using the framework to help make effective recruitment decisions, to carry out effective employee reviews and identify appropriate development interventions.

3.4   The challenge going forward will be to extend the application of the framework to inform workforce and succession planning for the organisation.

List of Background Papers:

Bury Behaviours Framework
User Guide: Bury Behaviours

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