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To: Chair & Members of the
Employment and Personnel Committee

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Monday 19th June 2023

Dear Councillor

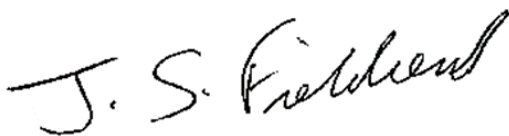
EMPLOYMENT AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Employment and Personnel Committee of the Bolsover District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 28th June 2023 at 14:00 hours.

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised on page 3.

Yours faithfully



Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

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- **Phone:** [01246 242424](tel:01246242424)
- **Email:** enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
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- Call with [Relay UK](#) - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our [offices](#) at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

**EMPLOYMENT AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

*Wednesday 28th June 2023 at 14:00 hours taking place in the Council Chamber,
The Arc, Clowne*

Item No.		Page No.(s)
1.	Election of Chair 2023-2024	
2.	Appointment of Vice Chair 2023-2024	
3.	Apologies for Absence	
4.	Urgent Items of Business	
	To note any urgent items of business which the Chair has consented to being considered under the provisions of Section 100(B) 4(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
5.	Declarations of Interest	
	Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non-Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of:	
	a) any business on the agenda	
	b) any urgent additional items to be considered	
	c) any matters arising out of those items	
	and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
6.	Minutes	4 - 7
	To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 2 nd November 2022	
7.	Improving Employee Engagement and the creation of an Employee Engagement Officer post	8 - 32

EMPLOYMENT AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment and Personnel Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room 1, The Arc, Clowne, on Wednesday 2nd November 2022 at 1400 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Duncan McGregor in the Chair

Councillors Mary Dooley and Deborah Watson.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive), Theresa Fletcher (Section 151 Officer), Jim Fieldsend (Assistant Director and Monitoring Officer), Wayne Carter (Leisure Operations Manager) and Alison Bluff (Interim Governance Manager).

EMP36-22/23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Sandra Peake.

EMP37-22/23. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

EMP38-22/23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Duncan McGregor declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 7 – Creswell Heritage and Wellbeing Centre Staffing Proposal, and would stay in the meeting for consideration of the item.

EMP39-22/23. MINUTES – 6TH JULY 2022

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of an Employment and Personnel Committee held on 6th July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

EMP40-22/23. PROPOSALS FOR MANAGING THE HOUSING STRATEGY DUTIES

Committee's approval was sought for the separation of the joint Housing Strategy Team structure with North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) and to reallocate the duties and responsibilities for housing strategy across the Council's Planning Policy Team and Housing Management Team.

The joint Housing Strategy Team with NEDDC, was responsible for preparation of strategic housing policies, housing stock analysis and work on empty homes, as well

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as undertaking the duties relating to homelessness, rough sleeping, private sector lettings and tenancy strategy.

Due to the strategic nature of the work required within the team, which was based on local housing needs, it had been agreed that the roles and responsibilities of the team should be separated back within each council. This would provide greater focus on the housing requirements of each council, better use of resources, and the delivery of initiatives using local data specific to the needs of Bolsover residents.

Following discussions with NEDDC, it had been agreed that the team should be separated and the BDC budget allocation of £82,828 divided equally between the Planning Policy Team and the Housing Management Team, to enable the Council to respond to these new duties. Existing staff within the joint team would remain with NEDDC, enabling BDC to shape its own housing strategy resources.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley **RESOLVED** that (1) the Joint Housing Strategy Team with NEDDC be separated and the allocated budget returned to BDC. All existing staff within the team would remain with NEDDC as agreed,

(2) the structure for the Planning Policy Team, as outlined in the report, be implemented to include the responsibility preparation of strategic housing policies, housing stock analysis and work on empty homes,

(3) a post be created within the Housing Management Team to undertake the remaining duties relating to homelessness, rough sleeping, private sector lettings and tenancy strategy.

(Assistant Director of Development and Planning/ Assistant Director Housing Management, Enforcement and Customer Services)

EMP41-22/23. HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL RESTRUCTURE

Committee's approval was sought for a restructure of the Human Resources (HR), and Payroll sections, and also to change the arrangements with North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) for the provision of HR services.

Since 2016, Human Resources (HR), had been a shared service of the Strategic Alliance where some staff and costs had been shared equally by Bolsover District Council (BDC) and NEDDC. In addition, Payroll had operated as a separate joint service providing payroll services to BDC, NEDDC, Rykneld Homes, and a number of parish councils. Payroll was staffed by both BDC and NEDDC employees.

Now that BDC and NEDDC were no longer linked by senior management, it was important that BDC had an HR team that reflected BDC's vision and ambitions. It was therefore proposed that the Payroll and HR teams were brought back together and this would result in a HR team where the staff would be able to focus on Bolsover matters alone.

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The proposed BDC HR & Payroll Team would see the following revised structure;

HR & Payroll Manager (Grade 9/10) reporting to the Assistant Director. This post would manage the HR & Payroll Team consisting of:

- HR Advisor - Grade 7
- HR Advisor - Grade 5
- Senior Payroll Officer - Grade 6
- Payroll Officer - Grade 4
- HR Assistant PT - Grade 3
- NEDDC Payroll Assistant x2

In addition, it was proposed to appoint an HR Business Partner (Grade 10) who would also report directly to the Assistant Director. The HR & Payroll Manager and HR Business Partner positions would need to be subject to job evaluation.

The current Payroll apprentice was at the end of his apprenticeship and it was proposed that he would be offered a Payroll Officer position. This post had already been job evaluated at Grade 4.

The proposal would see the service being a one stop shop for Council staff for payroll, pensions and HR, and would remove any confusion as to where to go for advice.

Unlike HR, the Payroll side of the department would continue to provide a payroll service to NEDDC, Rykneld Homes and some of the NEDDC parish councils. At some point NEDDC intended to deal with payroll internally, in which case the two NEDDC Payroll Assistants would transfer back to their employing council. Until then BDC would continue to provide the service.

Both councils had undertaken a consultation process in accordance with the Policy & Procedure for Organisational Review.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley
RESOLVED that the changes to the Human Resources and Payroll Sections as set out in the report be approved.

(Assistant Director & Monitoring Officer)

EMP42-22/23. CRESWELL HERITAGE AND WELLBEING CENTRE STAFFING PROPOSAL

Committee's approval was sought to create 9 new posts within Leisure Services to enable the Council to effectively manage the new Creswell Heritage and Wellbeing Centre.

In conjunction with Creswell Heritage and Wellbeing Trust, Elmtown with Creswell Parish Council had been pursuing the construction of a new leisure facility in Creswell for a number of years.

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Officers from the Council had been advising and assisting the Trust on the design, construction and operation of the new facility, which would consist of a 2 x badminton court sports hall, 27 station gym, group exercise studio, soft play area, indoor caving system and a café.

The construction phase was nearing completion and the Trust had approached the Council to operate the site on their behalf until the customer base was established and the site was reputable and fully operational.

In order to effectively manage the site, the Council would need to establish 9 positions within Leisure Services being;

- 3 x Supervisors - Grade - 5
- 3 x Reception Staff - Grade - 3
- 3 x Café Staff - Grade - Living Wage

Staff would be on a shift rota, covering opening hours between 7am – 9pm and weekend shifts accordingly. Management support and cover will be available from the Go Active facility.

Creswell Heritage and Wellbeing Trust would be responsible for the financing and operation of the facility and would effectively be 'buying in' the services of the Council to staff the site.

There would be no financial risk to the Council as a detailed Service Level Agreement would be drafted between the Creswell Heritage and Wellbeing Trust and the Council, this would also be endorsed by Elmton with Creswell Parish Council whom would have ultimate responsibility for the site should the Trust ever get to a position where they were unable to continue to operate.

In response to a Member's query, the Leisure Operations Manager confirmed that the posts would be advertised internally and externally.

Moved by Councillor Mary Dooley and seconded by Councillor Deborah Watson
RESOLVED that the establishment of the posts as detailed in the report be approved.

(Leisure Services Manager)

The meeting concluded at 1415 hours.

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Employment and Personnel Committee on 28th June 2023

Improving Employee Engagement and the creation of an Employee Engagement Officer post

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

Classification	This report is Public
Report By	Peter Wilmot, HR Business Partner.
Contact Officer	Peter Wilmot, HR Business Partner.

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To seek approval from Council to create and fund a new position of Employee Engagement Officer.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 In December 2022, the previous joint HR & OD service created under the Strategic Alliance with North East Derbyshire District Council ended and a newly restructured HR including Payroll service was set up.
- 1.2 Since the above review the Senior Leadership Team received a report from the Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement which provided insight and feedback from employees and managers with regard to the effectiveness of the Council's communication and engagement with its employees. The report was originally developed as part of the Assistant Director's level 7 Senior Leader apprenticeship course. The report is included as appendix 1.
- 1.3 The report also referenced the Local Government Association Peer review in 2019 which highlighted that internal communication was an issue for the Council. Recommendations were made including reviewing communications, improving engagement, to make managers more accessible and removing inconsistencies in how staff are communicated with.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The report provides insight and feedback into the following areas:
 - a. Leadership and Management

- b. Political Culture
- c. Media and Methods
- d. Two way Communication
- e. Financial Implications
- f. The Benefits
- g. Recommendations and Next Steps

- 2.2 The feedback identified shortfalls in most of the above and a key finding and recommendation of the report is that for the Council to truly invest in engagement with its employees a dedicated officer would need to be employed to drive the required improvements. The Senior Leadership team considered the possibility of the projects and initiatives identified in the report being spread out amongst existing managers and internal services, but came to the conclusion that this was unrealistic and likely to be ineffective in the long term as extra duties over and above the individuals and service area's substantive duties would always be the priority and agreed with the report in that to implement the recommendations contained, a post would need to be created.
- 2.3 Consequently a job description and specification has been developed in consultation with the Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement and the Assistant Director of Leader's Executive. The documents are included as appendix 2 and 3 respectively. The post would need to be job evaluated but it is anticipated that the post would be graded at around Grade 6 (with oncosts £36,258 - £39,344).

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 It is considered that the creation of such a post would have a huge impact and add significant value to the Council and its HR and Payroll Function as employee engagement and related communication processes would significantly improve. This will in turn ensure the workforce and managers are engaged with the Council and its leadership.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 The Council elect not to support the creation of the post and the identified shortfalls in processes and engagement are delegated out to existing managers and officers. However it is considered this would limit the effectiveness of the identified measures.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

To agree to the creation of a new permanent, full-time post to be added to the HR and Payroll establishment, funded via the Council's general fund at an estimated cost of up to £39,344 including on-costs.

Approved by Councillor Moesby Portfolio Holder for Resources

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details: The cost for the creation of the post per annum is between £36,258 and £39,344 including on costs and subject to pay award, provided the job evaluation process determines the role to be grade 6.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details: There are no legal implication arising from this report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment:

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details: n/a

Staffing: Yes No

Details: The Council's policies and procedures will be followed for recruitment to this post

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	(please state which wards or state All if all wards are affected) n/a
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Details: Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

Providing excellent services

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1	Exploring Effective Internal Communication in a Local Authority Report
2	Employee Engagement Officer Job Description
3	Employee Engagement Officer Person Specification

Background Papers

(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).

Victoria Dawson
9043856

APPLIED BUSINESS INVESTIGATION
TASK 2 - BUSINESS REPORT

Exploring Effective Internal Communication in a Local Authority



Word Count = 4022

Including title page and references

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1. Introduction

The Local Government Association Peer Review in 2019 (Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge, Bolsover District Council Feedback Report 2019) highlighted that internal communication was an issue for BDC. A number of recommendations were made including reviewing these communications, improving engagement, to make senior managers more accessible and removing inconsistencies in how staff are communicated with.

In addition the researcher was eager to explore this further having identified from personal experience a lack opportunities to communicate with senior leaders and share ideas, as well as a lack of cascade of internal communication to lower level tier officers.

This report presents the findings and recommendations from an Applied Business Investigation into effective internal communication within a local authority setting. By seeking a variety of perspectives into this subject area, this report is able to set out a number of recommendations to Bolsover District Council (BDC) to improve internal communications, to enhance employee engagement and create an effective forum for two way communication.

The report provides an overview of the context and rationale for undertaking the project, looks at stakeholder involvement, presents key findings and examines financial implications. This report concludes with a discussion about how this impacts the council and provides a number of recommendations.

2. Context and rationale for the project

To shape the aims and objectives, discussions took place with the Executive Director with responsibility for communications and human resources. This was to seek agreement with the research project but to identify what corporately BDC wanted to achieve and to explore his ideas for the project as well as what he felt needed to be discovered from officers in order to take this further. This Executive Director also agreed to be interviewed as part of the process.

The research investigation aimed to examine the communication at BDC with a view to identify if officers felt there was an issue as suggested by the LGA, and to seek their opinion as to where there needed to be improvement. The aim of the research project was therefore defined as *“to have more effective internal communication within Bolsover District Council and to have two way flow of information and communication between officers and Senior Leadership Team”* with the specific research objective to

- To understand what internal communication within the public sector is
- To identify the enablers and challenges to effective internal communication
- To review and identify what internal communication is needed from senior managers to increase employee engagement, enhance employee level of commitment, to achieve better decision making processes aligned to the aims and ambitions of the Council.
- To establish an internal communication plan by which internal communication is delivered within Bolsover District Council taking into account the purpose and process needed.

A literature review was undertaken which examined what is already known about internal communication. The literature recognised there was a number of definitions for this type of communication, all of which acknowledged it is fundamental to effective management and employee engagement, with benefit to both the organisation and employees alike. The term internal communication was adopted.

Literature suggests that internal communication is largely concerned with working towards the achievement of a common goal, however primarily from a management perspective, with top down communication to command, instruct or persuade someone to do something without the opportunity to feedback and comment.

The general consensus was two way communication between senior managers and employees is possible and leads to engaged employees but how this should be done is widely debated.

Employee voice is critical to employee engagement and consideration should be given as to how this is heard and responded to as well as consideration as to the form of media used when communicating. In addition there is the need for reciprocity and a genuine organisational commitment to enable two way communication.

Whilst the literature wasn't very specific with regards to this within a local authority setting, rather this was aimed at profit making companies, the majority of principles and more importantly the benefits could be applied to BDC. It was widely recognised that effective internal communication has many benefits to an organisation, including staff retention, increased productivity and engaged staff. This identified gap in the research has helped drive the research project.

3. Engaging with stakeholders

Stakeholder management involves identifying stakeholders, analysing their needs, expectations and engaging with them. Staff are important stakeholders in this project with high power and high interest in the internal communications of the council. They therefore require full engagement.

Whilst the LGA had recommendations as to what needed to be done with regards to internal communications this was based on a small selection of open discussions with officers in a group interviews.

To achieve a greater understanding as to the perception of what internal effective communication is with a local authority, and specifically BDC, 12 semi structured interviews were carried out.

These participants were selected from a number of different departments and levels of seniority within the council to seek multiple perspectives. Some were specifically chosen with the knowledge they had worked at other local authorities so could offer some insight into how this works in different organisations.

In the majority of cases there was an established relationship between the researcher and the participants. This was needed to some extent as given the researchers

position within the authority some members of staff if picked randomly may not have been honest in their answers or comments. In order to ensure that a cross section of officers were interviewed participants were selected from multiple levels within the authority, some new and some very long standing (40 years service), and some based away from the main site, some managing officers working from home or those without email access.

The interviews were structured around the research objectives and included specific questions on;

- What the participant understood effective internal communication to be and how they received this
- Two way communication, what this meant and if it was important
- To identify enablers and barriers to internal effective communication
- And to seek suggestions and experiences as to when it has worked well, and not so well

The two Executive Directors were supportive of the research project having both expressed the desire to improve internal communication especially the two way communication and how to actively encouraged service managers to report back to senior leadership team.

In addition the researchers work based mentor, a member of SLT, was very supportive of the project, recognising that there were improvements that could be made.

4. Ethics

Prior approval was sought from both BDC and Sheffield Hallam in undertaking this research project. Participants were given the reassurance of anonymity and confidentiality in the process, and were given multiple opportunities to withdraw from the process if they changed their minds.

5. Key findings

In order to develop strategic priorities for improving effective internal communication the results of the interviews were subject to focused coding and thematic analysis.

This identified a number of themes which all suggested that there needed to be more effective and meaningful two way communication.

5.1 Leadership and Management

Leadership and management were prominent themes with participants suggesting that the flow of information was only as good as the manager above them. Some participants felt very informed, some felt they were not told anything. It seemed to be service managers that reported this, suggesting SLT were creating a communication blockage. The findings suggested that service managers tended to be much better at communicating. Importantly there was inconsistency in the approach to team meetings and one to ones which offer the individual an opportunity to feedback, and up, to more senior managers. Time and availability was also discussed with the suggestion a consequence of being a lean council meant often people were just too busy to be able to communicate.

5.2 Culture

Culture was a key theme with most suggesting there needed to be an improved culture of sharing information, being open and receptive to feedback for improved internal communication to take effect. One senior manager reflected historically this wasn't very good and that this needed to change but acknowledged we needed to do more about this. This correlates with participants acknowledging that there was a need to have the right culture within the organisation, yet only 2 of the 12 suggesting we had this already.

5.3 Political

The culture of the council is significantly linked to the fact BDC is a local authority and hierarchically in nature. The decision making process is often taken by those at the top and in order to encourage two way communication we need to look to be a listening authority with a flattened hierarchy and a means to encourage and seek officer feedback and a way to listen to the employee voice.

5.4 Method and Media

The method and media used for communication depending on the message was a key finding. Unsurprisingly most indicating face to face was the preferred method of

communication. Many participants gave examples as to how this has worked historically at BDC and within other local authorities, with the roadshow style question and answer session with Executive Directors and SLT being a very popular approach. Other findings which need exploring further were finding a balance in the amount of communication, and the need to tailor to the audience both in terms of content and media used. Comments were made about the increased use of emails and the culture of being copied into everything and that this meant sometimes important things got missed.

5.5 Two way communication

All the emerging themes led to one overarching theme, the importance of two way communication, as many people do not feel listened to. It was clear that officers had a good understanding of what this was, with all recognising its importance yet most did not feel this was working as it should within BDC. The inconsistencies with team meetings and one to ones meant that for some there was very limited opportunity two way communication with their line managers and more importantly no clear way of two way communication with SLT.

6. Impact to the organisation

Employees are key stakeholders in the council. Where the employee feels connected to the organisation they work for, feel part of the decision making process and understand the goal they are working towards the literature shows there is increased productivity for the organisation.

The findings have clearly demonstrated that officers at different levels within the council feel distant and disconnected from senior management, and this is felt more the further down the hierarchy. The vast majority making suggestions as to how this could be improved, suggesting they already had an opinion on this.

The research has highlighted that there is more that the council, specifically executive directors and SLT can and should be doing, to improve internal communication and to facilitate a two way flow of communication between them and officers at all levels.

Employee engagement is most effective when it becomes part of an organisations culture and should not just be a once a year event. There needs to be a significant culture shift within the council, to recognise staff as our biggest investment and prioritised accordingly. For any change to be effective it needs to be fully supported by the senior leaders to lead this change with a commitment to deliver even though some may feel uncomfortable about this new way of working.

For BDC an engaged workforce, who have a commitment to the authority, would enhance staff retention, lead to greater productivity, and everyone working to achieve a common aim. Put simply this means getting more work done within the same amount of time or resource. As stated above the council is facing austerity measures and the need to do more for less has never been so important.

When employees care about doing a good job, this comes through in the conversations they have with customers, for the council this is the residents of the district who can then be advocates for the council when it comes to selling the services, whether this be a profit making element of the council or encouraging new people and businesses to move into the district. All of which has a positive financial implication for BDC.

The participants interviewed were all seeking meaningful communication with the senior leaders and showed a willingness to engage if the opportunities were there. It was however acknowledged that some officers merely want to ‘turn up, do the job and get paid.’ This would need to be considered carefully as some officers will not want to engage and that will be difficult to change, however dependent on the nature of the role that may not be required to the same extent as others.

7. Financial implications

7.1 Costs

For the council to have effective internal communication which allows for meaningful two way communication there needs to be an investment in implementing the recommendations below.

Literature referred to transformational leaders and having the right culture. For these recommendations to be implemented at BDC, there will need to be a culture change, by SLT and service managers. Inconsistencies in how managers communicate and conduct team meetings suggest there may be a need for some training as to how to communicate effectively, and we should be looking to invest in officers to create future leaders.

The council is facing increasingly difficult financial decisions in an effort to be lean, self-sufficient and more importantly to be able to deliver statutory services. However a real investment, both time and money into officers will always lead to increased productivity and performance as well as unity of council aims and ambitions. This initial investment is likely to be incredibly effective and a return on investment is possible.

The general consensus was that senior leadership is not always as available as it should be and that face to face communication or interaction is much better. The examples given by participants of 'chief briefs' and roadshows events would require officers and senior leaders to attend a joint meeting. This could range from a few hours every 4-6 months or something more frequent but smaller scale which the SLT time was used but less officer time needed. Whichever route were to be chose, would mean time away from the day to day role, this would carry with it a financial cost in officer time and productivity.

Ownership of the process was an issue, with some confusion as to who does or should have conduct of the internal communications, on some occasions this was the communication team, the HR department or various assistant directors. A decision would need to be made corporately who is responsible for the internal communications and whether this can be picked up within existing staffing resources. For these recommendations to be implemented and be truly effective the reality is at the very minimum a dedicated officer would need to drive this. With on costs this would likely be £50,000 per annum.

7.2 Benefits

The Transformational Fund, is a pot of money the Council hold and which can be used for transformational 'invest to save' type projects. Where possible with a return on investment. It is suggested that this could be used to recruit a project manager who could lead on the actions listed within the action plan below. This post will be instrumental in leading a programme of cultural change and leading on the development and introduction of an Internal Communication Strategy.

A benefit of engaged officers is often better staff retention. By reducing the turnover of staff and the need to recruit and train can also have a financial impact on the authority so by limiting staff turnover this can be reduced.

With all officers working towards one common goal, we are more aligned and joined up in thinking and approaches. If officers and SLT are engaging with each other, and breaking down silos, ideas will be shared which has the potential to lead to joint cross department projects. Cost savings by joint projects and procurement can also be achieved.

8 Recommendations and Next Steps

The research has identified the need for more direct communication from executive directors and SLT to operational levels, and thereby removing some hierarchy. In addition, a clear method of communication depending on the nature of the message and whom it affects, as well as a way of encouraging two way communication across all levels. These changes could be captured within a clear internal communication strategy.

An internal communication strategy allows the council to set out where we want to be in terms of having an engaged workforce with increased employee satisfaction, greater staff retention and to ensure staff are aware of the councils ambitions, with us all working towards one goal. It should be simple and deliverable with SMART objectives should so we can measure success of the strategy.

There are a number of relatively straight forward changes that could be implemented, with minimal costs and time resource needed, for example circulating SLT minutes, even if some of these are abridged due to sensitive items, and ADs to attend team meetings once a quarter and Executive Directors to attend every 6 months for one agenda item as a minimum which actively seeks staff feedback. Actions that will need more time and thought given to them are who takes ownership for internal communication and to appoint a project manager to lead on this.

There are some medium term actions which involve seeking the views and opinions of staff. One survey would be focused specifically on service managers and what forum they feel is most conducive to two way communication with SLT. Another survey, to all staff to identify the preferred method of communication based on subject, the frequency of communications and the ability to feed back in a quick and timely manner.

Some medium and longer term actions which will be necessary, which need a financial commitment to be successful. These will include training for SLT and service managers on communication skills, a roadshow style event with SLT and the Executive Directors and setting up a staff engagement panel.

As stated above it will be essential for the Council to invest in this project if it is to achieve meaningful two way communication with staff, and by having a dedicated officer to lead on this shows a true commitment to staff that the Council has listened to feedback on this subject.

These actions all ultimately feed into an Internal Communication Strategy for the Council, which would set out the council's goals in communicating with officers, plans the actions required to achieve these goals with realistic time scales and will ensure everyone is aware of what is accepted. It is important that this is a meaningful document and not merely a tick box exercise.

A series of SMART objectives would need to be established with KPIs that can be reviewed over time to evaluate the success of the Strategy. Annual audit could be

achieved in follow up surveys to see if messages have had an impact on staff, and in focus groups.

Suggested KPI would include, increasing survey participation rate within the first 6 months, increasing staff retention measures over 12 months and decreasing absenteeism. A specific KPI could also be around future leaders and monitoring internal promotions.

The proposed short, medium and long term recommendations are pulled together with time scales, priority rating and resource implications in the Action Plan below.

		Task	Time frame	Priority 1 – low to 5 – high	Resource/ Funding required	Action Owner
Short term	1	Consider creating a role for internal communication coordinator who could lead on the actions suggested below	1 month	5	Costs of recruitment and annual salary approximately £50K per annum	SLT, internal approval needed for new post and use of transformation fund
	2	SLT minutes to be circulated to Service Managers and placed on ERIC, redacted where needed.	1 month	5	Minimal – minutes taken already, no additional resource needed to share these	SLT Admin
	3	Establish a staff engagement panel with volunteers from all levels, HR, Comms and SLT champion	2 months	4	Officer time and admin for minute taking	SLT, HR and Comms – coordinated by SLT champion
	4	Team Meeting frequency and agenda to be reviewed, section specifically on inviting feedback from staff	2 months	2	Minimal could be done within SLT and team meetings with a deadline to report back to a nominated officer to analysis data	Staff Engagement Panel

	5	Regular attendance by SLT and Executive Directors at Team Meetings	2-4 months	2	Officer time only	SLT/ED
	6	One to one frequency and process to be reviewed, section specifically on inviting feedback	2 months	5	Minimal could be done within SLT and team meetings with a deadline to report back to a nominated officer to analysis data	Staff Engagement Panel
	7	Meeting with HR, Comms and SLT to decide who takes ownership of internal communication. Agree format for urgent all staff emails and subject style	2 months	3	Minimal HR and Comms rep could be invited to attend SLT and discuss	SLT champion and ED
Medium Term	8	SLT members, including Executive Directors to attend corporate inductions to show SLT are approachable and we are an inclusive, listening	3-6 months	3	Inductions take place approx. every few months and this should be trialled for 3 months and if successful permanently adopted. Officer time only – 30 mins every 2 months and could be on a rota basis	HR (with new post when in place)
	9	Survey to service managers to identify what information they feel they need from SLT, how they would like to	3-6 months	3	The performance team undertake regular internal and external survey so could undertake this piece of work at no cost to the authority	Performance Team (new post when in place)

		comment and feedback, what they liked from the service managers forum, what they didn't like and if they have any suggestions as to how it could work better				
	10	All staff survey re preferred method of communication based on subject, frequency and the ability to feed back in a quick and timely manner.	3-6 months	3	The performance team undertake regular internal and external survey so could undertake this piece of work at no cost to the authority	Performance Team (new post when in place)
	11	Relaunch the service manager's forum based on information from the surveys Dates of the year to be sent for each year and attendance to be mandatory	6 months	4	Officer time for attendance will be required. This would be 1-2 hours every 2 months so wouldn't adversely impact on resource	Staff Engagement Panel/SLT champion and new post when in place
Long term	12	TRAINING re for SLT and Service Managers on communication and listening skills.	6-9 months	4	Financial cost of external training, offer time. SLT could be within an SLT meeting and SMF within SMF meeting	New post

	13	Plan and launch a chiefs briefs – surveys will feed into the format, frequency and location. Local elections in May 2023, after this the 1 st event could be to explain councils ambitions	6-12 months	4	There would be a resource costs based on officer time away from the day job. This is likely to be 2 hours every 6 months initially	New post
	14	Internal Communication Strategy	12 months	5	We may was to commission this piece of work which will have a financial cost as well as costs associated with staff consultation	New post

Job Description

Job title	Employee Engagement Officer
Reports to	HR Business Partner
Direct reports	N/A
Grade	TBD
Salary range	TBD

Job purpose

To assist the HR Business Partner with ensuring the highest levels of employee engagement and internal communication to develop a positive culture within the Council so that employees feel valued, are committed, motivated, informed and involved through regular opportunities for positive two-way dialogue.

Duties and responsibilities

1. To develop and deliver an Employee Engagement strategy with the Council's HR Business Partner.
2. Take the lead role on championing on developing initiatives which supports and promotes employee health and wellbeing.
3. Work closely with the Council's Communications team to ensure a consistent approach to all internal communications
4. Manage and co-ordinate the employee surveys and the responses
5. Improving the involvement of staff in shaping and influencing the direction of the Council.
6. Develop channels of communication relevant to the needs of the workforce.
7. Making sure all employees have a voice that is listened to.
8. Collaborating and working with partner and external organisations where appropriate.
9. Plan and implement employee events and internal communication campaigns
10. Work with service managers to arrange and co-ordinate a quarterly Managers Forum in relation to logistics and content.
11. To establish communication mechanisms for employees to facilitate improvement for the Council and its workforce.
12. To engage with managers to encourage consistency of approach and best practice

Working conditions

Office based role with some external liaison.

Physical requirements

Sedentary role with driving required.

Corporate Duties and Responsibilities

To familiarise yourself with the principles of, and key Council documents and policies relating to:

- Health and Safety at Work.
- Equality and Diversity.
- Data Protection (Employees must at all times abide by the principles of the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act and Council policy and guidance)
- Customer Service.
- Community Safety (Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act requires the Authority and individual employees to consider how community safety can be improved when the functions of the Authority are exercised).
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- Child Protection Policy.
- Risk Management.

This job description sets out a summary of the key features of the role. It is not intended to be exhaustive and will be subject to review (on an annual basis).

Any other duties commensurate with the grade as determined by management.

Any job description provided to you by the Council will not form part of your contract of employment.

Approved by:	
Date approved:	
Reviewed:	



APPENDIX 3

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title: Employee Engagement Officer	Section: HR & Payroll
Directorate: Corporate and Legal Services	

Essential Requirements	Desirable Requirements
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Knowledge	AM		AM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of employee engagement, communication practices and standards Workforce Health and Wellbeing Issues Awareness of communication strategies and campaigns 	a, i & c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of local government issues and challenges 	a & i
Qualifications			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 GCEs Grades 4 to 9 including English or equivalent 	a & c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A professional communications qualification or Working towards this. 	
Experience			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of internal communications and/or workforce engagement Facilitating events to meet corporate and/or service requirements Supporting transformation and culture change 	a & i		
Skills			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent verbal and written skills Excellent interpersonal skills ICT Skills Project Management skills Organisational skills Creative and innovative skills Presentation skills 	a & i		

Other Requirements:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate commitment and enthusiasm • Ability to interpret complex information • Ability to multi-task and work on own initiative • Have a real passion for making a positive difference to the workforce. • A willingness to Council events, sometimes potentially on evenings and weekends. • Capacity to adapt to changing priorities 	a & i		

Key to Assessment Methods (AM); (a) application form, (i) interview, (p) presentation, certificate check (c) (o) others

Equality Act 2010

The ways in which a disabled person meets the criteria for a post must be assessed as they would be after any reasonable adjustments required had been made. In accordance with the Equality Act, candidates will be asked if they have any specific requirements relating to the selections process.

Schedule 9 Part 1.1(1) of the Equality Act also permits targeted recruitment on grounds of Genuine Occupational Requirement.

Approved by:	
Date approved:	
Reviewed:	