



Organisational Development Summary Briefing Paper Kate Brown, Head of Organisational Development

Background

1. Pre-covid, engagement had taken place with the Council's 'wider Management Team' (CEX, Directors and Heads of Service) and with the Employment Committee to agree the approach to Organisational Development (or also known as our "Great People" approach).
2. RBBC has had to change and adapt rapidly over the last fifteen months or so in order to respond to the crisis – we have had to maintain our core services and also evolved new services to best support our Borough residents, particularly supporting the most vulnerable, and supported the businesses in our Borough.
3. Although we are still responding to the crisis, we must think to the future and new ways of working and now is the right time to reflect on developing the organisation and our approach towards its Great People.
4. This paper sets out for the Employment Committee where the Great People programme of work got to pre-covid (the pre-covid priorities we had started to focus on).

What is Organisational Development at RBBC? (Pre-Covid)

5. As mentioned, following engagement with the Employment Committee and Council's Management team, our approach to Organisational Development (aka our Great People approach) had been agreed.
6. It is appreciated not all Employment Committee members have seen the definitions around Organisational Development or Great People so it will be useful to provide this background information here.
7. There are a many ways that 'Organisational Development' (OD) can be defined. One way to define it, is as a systematic approach **to improving organisational effectiveness** – one that aligns strategy, people and processes.
8. OD can enable an organisation to be ready for the future by taking steps which create an environment that allows employees to understand, embody and deliver the organisation's objectives.
9. OD involves both "hard" issues – strategy, policies, structures and systems – and "soft" issues those that develop appropriate skills, behaviours, attitudes, culture and a style of leadership that will enable organisations to deliver optimum performance.

10. Management Team as well as the Employment Committee, discussed and agreed the approach for OD at the Council (see separate attachment “Great People Engaged People .pdf”), which has Employee Engagement as the key outcome. Great People at the Council = Engaged People. The approach or strategy is represented in a diagram form at this stage on one page. It has the outcome of Engaged People in the centre, with enablers (i.e. what helps make people engaged at work), in the boxes around the centre.
11. It has been recognised that the term ‘Organisational Development’ is confusing (even for those in the profession!) and it won’t mean anything to many of our employees. Given that for us, the OD approach has “Great People = Engaged People” at the centre, it was agreed that “Great People Programme” will be used to communicate the approach to managers, staff and to Members. Great People is a brand that is internally recognised already – it was developed as part of our original Organisation visioning work when our values and behaviours were designed with staff approximately six years ago.
12. It is important to understand the benefits of having an engaged workforce. Research shows that organisations with high levels of employee engagement are more efficient and effective and that highly engaged employees:
- are more **customer focused**, find they are more **creative** at work, and **take less time off** sick;
 - care about the future of their organisation and put in **greater effort** to help it meet its objectives;
 - feel proud of the organisation they work for and are inspired to **do their best** and **motivated** to deliver the organisation’s objectives.
13. This approach to OD will help shape our culture, develop our leaders and ensure we are the best organisation we can be, with the best people, skilled to deliver our ambitious Corporate Plan priorities.

Great People Priorities (Pre-Covid)

14. As was agreed and supported by the Employment Committee pre-covid, the initial next steps for our Great People Programme of work was to be broken down into **three immediate baselining priority areas** as outlined –
- a. It was agreed that we needed to undertake some **‘baselining’ activity** – i.e. checking in with staff to get their views on the organisation, what is working well, what in their view would make working at RBBC better, how they perceive leaders and managers in the organisation, their individual motivation levels and ultimately how engaged they currently feel at work. This is important as it would help identify priority areas of work for our Great People Programme (the co-designing of the priorities with our workforce). A combination of **engagement methods** were being scoped to compile baseline data including running a **staff survey** and data gathering through team meetings run by Heads of Service. This would result in a mix of quantitative and qualitative data obtained during this baselining exercise. A preferred supplier for an ongoing engagement tool had been identified and supported by the Employment Committee and the procurement preparation had got underway pre-covid.
 - b. The second priority area agreed was **‘Revisioning’ work**. This is a review of our Organisation Vision, Values and Behaviours – for all staff to consider and input into

our organisation values and behaviours – what is important to who we are, our core organisational values. We need to review and make sure our vision, values and behaviours are still correct (do they reflect who we want to be?), understood and accepted through the organisation (as referenced above, these are what make up our Great People brand).

Work had started on this revisioning, working with an organisation called [Loving Monday](#). Their approach to help us consider our re-visioning exercise was to work through how we want people to *feel* at work (and conversely how we don't want people to feel) and this will help determine the right Corporate Behaviours, Values and the Vision of the organisation and how this needs to be considered when thinking about the employee lifecycle at work. The first part of this work started just a week or so before lockdown in March 2020 – the Management Team plus Heads of Service had an Away Day with the Loving Monday consultants. The outcome from that day was an agreed 'top 5' list of the 'wider Management Team's' view of the positive feeling we want people to have at work and those we do not want people to experience.

Top 5 positive feelings Management Team want our people to experience:

- Happy
- Supported
- Inspired
- Kind(ness)
- Valued

Top 5 negative feelings Management Team want to ensure our people do not experience:

- Powerless
- Paralysed
- Alone
- Intimidated
- Uncaring

We were in the process of working out the next steps of how to get a view from the rest of the organisation on their 'top 5 lists' when the covid crisis paused our work in this area.

- c. The final piece of the initial Great People baselining work that had started was a review of how we attract Talent to the organisation (aka Talent Acquisition) – **a review of the Council's recruitment and resourcing approach.**

An organisation called OMNI (strategic resourcing specialists) was identified to help us carry out a strategic review of our recruitment approach, providing us with valuable insight into the effectiveness of our resourcing approach and help us identify areas where improvements are required and develop plans to transform the way we recruit for the better, ensuring that our approach is fit to deliver and recruit the talent we need to deliver our business objectives. Another outcome from the review was to include a recommendation as to how the organisation resources 'recruitment' long term (e.g. what dedicated resource in HR we need longer term to support the organisation acquire the best talent possible).

OMNI carried out this review in March, just before lockdown, working with our Wider Management Team, HR, recruiting managers, new recruits and applicants. The review was concluded during the pandemic response last year but the consideration of their recommendations and next steps had to again be paused whilst the organisation responded to the pandemic.

15. From the analysis of the data coming out of the initial three baseline areas of work, it was expected that our priorities for our Great People Programme would be shaped – we'd be listening to the views of staff in the organisation and where it is practicable address the issues raised – i.e. identify priority Great People projects.
16. Each Great People project will have its success measures but in terms of overall success measures for the Great People approach, we would continue to measure and expect to see lower/healthy turnover rate, lower/stable sickness levels, fewer employee relation issues, productivity increases, higher motivation amongst staff and engagement scores increase.
17. As has been discussed with the Employment Committee, it is worth highlighting that measurement of success of our Great People approach is difficult though as many benefits are intangible/unquantifiable – it is around **influencing our organisational culture**. Consider that 'Employee Engagement' is about:
 - our employees feeling pride and loyalty working for us, being a great advocate of the organisation to our clients, users and customers, going the extra mile to finish a piece of work, loving coming to work.
 - drawing on our employees' knowledge and ideas to improve our services and be innovative about how we work.
 - drawing out a deeper commitment from our employees so fewer leave us, sick absence reduces, accident rates decline, conflicts and grievances go down, productivity increases (can be measured – as outlined above).
 - organisation actions that are consistent with the organisation's values. It is about kept promises, or an explanation why they cannot be kept.
 - influencing our Employer Brand – helping us attract talent.

The Great People Approach (During/Post Covid)

18. As explained, the response to the covid crisis has paused the Great People 'baselining' work but in terms of the immediate Great People focus during the pandemic, Staff Wellbeing has (and continues) to be an immediate Organisational Development priority – when considering the enablers to Engaged staff on the Great People diagram.
19. Responding to the pandemic has given us immense challenges but also opportunities to review how we want the organisation look, feel and operate in the future – for staff and for Members. The biggest Organisational Development priority for 2021/22 will be the 'Enabling Hybrid Working' Programme of work. The Employment Committee will receive a verbal update on this workstream being scoped which inevitably will have a number of Organisational Development strands of work that will need to be prioritised.