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REPORT TO: CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
DATE OF MEETING 16 SEPTEMBER 2002  
REPORT FROM: PERSONNEL & DEVELOPMENT MANAGER  
MEMBERS'  
CONTACT POINT: J WILLOUGHBY EXT. 5729  
SUBJECT: INVESTORS IN PEOPLE – PROGRESS REPORT

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## 1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To report on the progress the Council has made in its attempt to become an Investor in People.

## 2.0 Detail

### 2.1 **Preparation for Assessment**

As part of the Human Resource Best Value Review, Personnel & Development explored the issues identified in the Corporate Plan relating to valuing our employees, and supporting a performance management culture. These are the key principles within the Investor in People Standard.

2.2 The organisation signed up its commitment to the standard many years ago, with no significant action undertaken to directly address its progression. However, there has been some important underpinning work undertaken that has provided some of the building blocks towards its achievement over the last 2 years.

2.3 The standard has been revised since the Council committed to it. It now has four main principles with sub-indicators providing greater detail. The four principles are:-

- ❖ **Commitment** – An IIP is fully committed to developing its people in order to achieve its aims and objectives.
- ❖ **Planning** – An IIP is clear about its aims and its objectives and what its people need to do to achieve them.
- ❖ **Action** – An IIP develops its people effectively in order to improve its performance.
- ❖ **Evaluation** – An IIP understands the impact of its investment in people on its performance.

2.4 During our work on the HRM BV review, one of our members from the Learning Skills Council informed the Personnel & Development Manager of an opportunity for some funding to assist our progression in achievement towards the standard. Their organisation would pay for the Council to undergo an IIP assessment, around end June 2002 against the required indicators. For any of the indicators we could evidence to the assessor, we would get accreditation for. We would then be given a checklist of the areas requiring further development. We would be expected to then achieve these areas requiring development by February 2003. Should we do this we would then be accredited with the standard. The timeframe is limited for achieving the areas not accredited, as otherwise the earlier accreditation would become meaningless if assessment were left any longer.

- 2.5 Corporate Management Team agreed to take up this opportunity, as it would provide the authority with a clear plan of outstanding work to be done & support/advice from the Learning Skills Council in terms of implementation and a timeframe to work to for achievement. The fee for assessment would have been approximately £3000, and clearly this approach meant the Council would also benefit by the LSC making this payment on our behalf.
- 2.6 This approach is a critical success factor that the organisation has identified in our corporate plan. Therefore any of the things required to be evidenced by the standard are really issues we would have needed to address anyway. So the efforts to achieve the standard should help the organisation to meet our corporate objectives.
- 2.7 The Personnel & Development Manager, then undertook a series of presentations and feedback sessions with all employees across the organisation, to communicate what the Council was intending to do in preparation for the assessment, during April and May 2002.
- 2.8 The IIP Assessor attended the organisation between 6 & 11 June 2002. She undertook one to one interviews, and group interviews, with a cross section of employees from all departments and at all levels in the organisation. She also assessed a range of corporate policies and procedures.
- 2.9 Interim Assessment report**  
The interim report was received on 14 June 2002, and demonstrated that significant progress in the organisation had been made.
- 2.10 *It suggests that the Council 'has come a long way since the crisis of two years ago, and there is a clear vision of where they want to be. The workforce are committed to the future of the Council and are keen to be involved. Recent history means that there is still some uncertainty and trust needs to be built up again. Improved communication at all levels should help in this.'*
- 2.11 *The report adds that the 'processes which have been introduced have been done well and the route to the IIP standard is being used for the benefit of the organisation, not a badge gaining exercise...time has been insufficient to enable the Council to fully meet all the indicators of the standard. Although not necessarily perceived as such by all employees I believe that there is a commitment from senior management to the development of people in the council regardless of their role.'*
- 2.12 Strong Aspects of Evidence of achievement identified were:-
- Good teamwork enabling groups to deliver effectively
  - Communication to Divisional Manager level
  - Commitment of employees to delivering a good service and their desire to be involved
  - Forward looking and professional HR department committed to introducing appropriate change for the right reasons
  - Good working relationships between management and unions
  - Progress has been made so far
- 2.13 Areas for continuous improvement that were recommended to be addressed are:-

- Managing realistic expectations during PDR interviews and improving speed of return of documentation to interviewees.
- Review and improve communication process with employees. Deliver service plans to all employees by the Divisional Manager in a way that is understood by all, plus encouraging minimum ongoing communication requirements.
- Continue use of staff meetings by Chief Executive in a timely manner.
- Inclusion of all in team planning
- Including training and development needs in service plans, and evaluating how effective the training has been in assisting to deliver the service plan.
- Encourage managers to give positive feedback on an ongoing basis as appropriate
- Consider ways of improving cross-council communication, so that people understand and appreciate others successes and issues.
- Consider ways of evaluating the impact of employee development in a systematic way at employee and organisation level.

2.14 We have currently completely achieved 6 of the 12 indicators, and have partially achieved a further 3 indicators. So at initial assessment, 65% of individual sub-indicators have been achieved.

2.15 There is a further review planned for early next year. New guidance is to be issued shortly to managers on the service plans for next year, which are to be prepared for the November committees, and work is underway on developing systems to improve communication, which should address some of the above issues.

2.16 An Action Plan is being developed with Corporate Management Team to enable us to make further progress with this award. However, for this goal to be achieved, the greatest issue for every organisation is attaining the commitment of every manager / team leader to contribute to its success.

### **3.0 Conclusions**

3.1 The HRM Best Value Review identified an opportunity for accessing external funding and support to assist the organisation in progressing its commitment to achieving the Investor in People standard.

3.2 This has provided a pre-assessment and modular accreditation approach to the award.

3.3 We are required to address the areas not accredited by February 2003 following an initial assessment in June 2002.

3.4 We have achieved 65% of the sub indicators at the initial assessment, and are preparing actions to address the outstanding issues.

3.5 This will clearly require everyone's commitment to drive through these changes. However the changes required are important if we wish to achieve our objectives in the Corporate Plan.

