

Appendix A

T18 Staff Consultation Response



Introduction

The staff consultation document was issued on 9th April 2014. It set out a number of proposals affecting staff and we received over 100 responses from both individuals and teams.

The responses received have been considered carefully by SMT and this has taken longer than originally anticipated due to the large number received and the wide ranging issues raised. Throughout the consultation process we have continued to meet with your trade union representatives and both UNISON branches coordinated a response on behalf of their members that captured many of the issues and concerns raised by the wider staff population. SMT have responded formally to UNISON and we continue to hold constructive discussions with them. Councillors are aware of the issues raised by the respective UNISON branch and of the response provided by SMT.

SMT are very grateful for the level of engagement in the consultation process and with the insightful and challenging questions raised by staff. The consultation proved to be a robust and thorough exercise and this paper sets out SMT's response to the comments received and will form the basis of a Report to Full Council in West Devon on 24 June and South Hams on 19 June.

Where the proposed way forward is a change to the position set out in the consultation, the revised proposal is set out in ***bold and italics***.

The consultation process

There was some challenge to the proposal in paragraph 15 of the consultation paper that the new roles are not broadly similar to existing roles and that we consequently do not ring fence roles to a specific group of staff. However, after consideration and in line with support from some staff, it is proposed to allow any member of staff within the scope of the T18 Programme to apply for any post in the new operating model, subject to meeting the minimum requirements for the role.

It is also proposed in line with the consultation paper that we do not consider external candidates (including agency workers) for posts below senior management level unless there are vacant posts following the selection process.

The Future Operating Model

In general, the responses were very supportive of the proposed future operating model and welcomed the opportunities it will afford both staff and our customers and communities.

Further work has been carried out during the detailed design stage for phase 1a and the structure chart (Appendix E to the Council report) shows the proposed organisational design and number and level of roles within Support Services.

The revised structure is designed around the principles set out in paragraph 36 of the consultation document and will create a business partner approach to deliver specialist support services in Legal, Finance and HR. ***The responsibilities of the fifth Level 3 role identified in the consultation paper are transferred into the revised Support Services Manager role discussed below.***

The team will be led during the transitional stage by an Interim Head of Service who will be provided by our partners at iESE. Once a permanent Head of Service is selected as part of the senior management structure, the ***Support Services Manager at Level 3*** will be selected. This will be done in December at the same time as the selection for the other management roles. The Support Services Manager is a redesigned role that replaces the Level 4 Case Management Manager role that was set out in the consultation document and will be responsible for the day to day delivery and performance of the Support Services function.

Number, Type and Level of Roles within the new Operating Model

A number of responses received were concerned that the generic job descriptions and person specifications did not contain sufficient detail to identify where their current work activities would take place in the new model.

In response to that concern, ***we have developed a Community of Practice Purpose document for each Community of Practice.***

The Purpose document captures the main purpose of the Community of Practice and set out the main activities it will be responsible for delivering. It will also set out the broad mix of skills that the Community of Practice team members will need to hold and the level of experience and qualification that will be required to operate at each level within the Community of Practice.

There will be a Purpose document for each specialist Community of Practice and for teams within Customer Service, Case Management and service processing, Mobile Locality and Customer Enabling.

We will also review the job descriptions and person specifications to ensure consistency and to remove any reference to competencies that might not be relevant (i.e. a chain saw licence).

As we indicated at paragraph 40 of the consultation document, the final organisation design will be subject to the detailed design work that will be carried out for each Phase.

However, in response to comments received ***we propose to adjust the role of Customer Services Manager to Level 3 and the role of Customer Services Team Leaders to Level 5 to reflect the importance the roles will have in the new operating model.***

In ICT and HR in particular, it is acknowledged that there may be a requirement for additional support during the transitional period and will make sure ensure that adequate

levels of resources are allocated to support the T18 Programme and to maintain an effective level of service in the interim period.

Pay and Grading

Whilst we acknowledge the concerns of UNISON that the proposed framework is not a nationally recognised job evaluation scheme, **we propose to adopt the Job Level Assessment framework set out in paragraph 48 of the consultation document.** We will also publish the equality impact assessment on the framework and keep it under review to ensure there is no unforeseen detrimental impact on any group of people.

In response to comments received **we propose to introduce a fourth level of Specialist at Level 6** to reflect the specialist nature of work carried out by technical staff and provide an entry level specialist role for graduates and people undertaking professional training and development.

There was strength of feeling in the responses received that we should retain the professional identity of officers within their job title. We understand and accept this point and **propose to include the profession in the job title.** For example, we now propose to use the title Specialist Accountant and Senior Specialist Environmental Health Officer.

On pay and grading, we did receive some comments that the current SO2 grade had been removed and that this would have a detrimental impact on some staff. However, in order to adopt a leaner pay and grading structure that better reflected the nature of the new roles it was necessary to make some changes and reduce it from 12 grades to 7 (below senior management level).

We wanted to maintain a consistent approach with 5 spinal column points within each new Level and to keep to the National Joint Council (Green Book) pay spine. As a consequence we did need to omit some spinal column points from the proposed structure. At the current SO2 level, it is anticipated that people will have the choice of applying for a Specialist post or a Case Manager role where the Level and salary would reflect the migration of the more technical parts of the job to the Specialist.

After consideration, we propose to adopt the salary bands set out in the consultation document at paragraph 49.

Creating the new culture

Since the publication of the consultation document we have carried out further work on developing the proposed behaviour framework and propose a slight amendment.

In order to better reflect the overarching importance of putting the customer at the heart of everything we do, we propose to embed a robust customer focus to each of the six behaviours. We therefore propose to change the current 'customer focus' behaviour to 'outcome focussed' to better reflect the new approach to delivering services to our customer and communities.

In addition, we consider that 'respectful' is more successfully integrated as part of the way we interact with others in 'communicative', 'challenging' and 'co-operative' and is a value, rather than a behaviour. We therefore propose to replace 'respectful' with the new behaviour

'adaptable' to reflect the requirement to be flexible and the ability to respond positively to change.

We therefore propose **to adopt the amended version of the IMPACT behaviours below.**



Responsible – We take ownership of our actions and are accountable for our performance, finding a solution to every problem and making appropriate decisions

Communicative – We express ourselves clearly, respectfully and with enthusiasm, varying the way we communicate to ensure the message is understood

Adaptable – We maintain a positive outlook and we are adaptable and show flexibility in the way we work

Challenging – We are innovative, challenging the status quo to drive continuous improvement in everything we do

Cooperative – We work collaboratively with colleagues and partners, building and maintaining effective working relationships with a range of people

Outcome focussed – We deliver timely and excellent results focusing on quality outcomes for our customers

Agile Working

The proposed domestic allowance is in line with the rate set by HMRC and is an appropriate level to compensate staff in the majority of instances. However, ***in exceptional circumstances, SMT will consider meeting unavoidable additional domestic expenditure where it is in the Councils' financial or operational interest, either as a one-off payment or in the form of an increased allowance.***

Similarly, SMT do not propose to offer a domestic allowance to flexible workers but will ***consider a payment in exceptional circumstances where a flexible worker incurs an unavoidable domestic expenditure and it is in the Councils' financial or operational interest.***

We are still in negotiations with UNISON about changes to the Travel and Subsistence policy and any changes will be subject to the outcome of those discussions. However, in response to concerns raised by some members of staff, we will work with UNISON to ensure that all staff are treated equitably. For instance, we will amend the policy to ensure that a person based in Tavistock would not have to deduct the home to Follaton House mileage when undertaking a business journey to a site closer than Totnes. Instead, ***we will apply a***

common sense approach that will require people to only deduct the normal mileage between home and the nearer of the Kilworthy Park or Follaton House when undertaking a business journey to or from home.

In response to comments received, ***we no longer propose to withdraw the essential car user allowance to everyone other than Mobile Locality Officers.*** Instead, we will retain the current practice of assessing each role separately and deciding whether the nature of their role requires an essential user payment to be made.

It is also proposed in response to comments received to ***compensate people who are required to move their fixed place of work with a disturbance allowance based on 100% of the excess mileage for a period of 12 months, rather than the 40% proposed in the consultation document.***

It is accepted that in some cases it would be operationally and/or financially advantageous to provide a council vehicle. We will consider this on a role by role basis and keep it under review.

In acknowledgement of concerns raised by some people about broadband capability in some rural locations we are currently working with potential partner organisations ***to identify a number of touch down centres where you can log on to our system and access information etc.*** Initially this work is focussing on sites within West Devon.

It remains our intention to provide touchdown facilities at Follaton House on a 6:10 ratio and the experience of other organisations is that this ratio is sufficient once people get used to flexible working arrangements. In addition, we will maintain a number of fixed and touchdown facilities at Kilworthy Park.

It is not the Councils' intention to require any person to work as a fixed home worker and wherever possible we will work with people to ensure that they have appropriate and efficient working arrangements that suit both the individual and the Council and its customers.

There is no intention to make financial savings by requiring people to reduce their working hours in the new operating model.

Redundancy

A number of people took the opportunity to express an interest in voluntary redundancy. SMT will consider the requests in line with each phase of the programme, although in a limited number of instances, it has been possible to agree to the early release of staff from phase 1b or 2 where it is financially and operationally in the Councils' interest.

We can confirm that a person who does not put themselves forward for selection will be issued with a notice of redundancy and will leave the Council on the grounds of redundancy unless they are able to secure an alternative position. We can also confirm that the level of redundancy compensation will be the same irrespective of whether the person volunteers for redundancy, does not put themselves forward for selection or is unsuccessful in the selection process.

In the Future Operating Model Blue Print, a total of 97 full-time equivalent posts were identified at risk of redundancy, representing a 24% saving for the Councils..

Selection process

We are now in a position to confirm how the selection process will work and details will be published on the intranet, along with information on how to apply for a role and details of a series of familiarisation workshops and HR drop-in surgeries.

We do not envisage placing people on probation in a new role unless they accept a role that will require them to display a significantly different set of skills than in their current role.

Senior Management Team

A Council report on the Senior Management Team has also been published and is available on the T18 pages of the intranet.

Conclusion

The publication of this response coincides with the release of details of the roles and organisational design of phase 1a and of the selection process and therefore marks a significant stepping stone on our journey. I would like to thank you all for your continuing contribution to the transformation programme and the development of our new way of working.

Tracy Winser

Executive Director

13th June 2014