

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Redesign Board** held REMOTELY on Monday, 1 February 2021 at 1.00pm.

Present:

Mr B Boyd	Mr J Gibson, UNISON
Mr R Bremner	Mr B Lobban
Mrs C Caddick	Mr D Louden
Mrs M Cockburn	Mr D Macpherson
Mrs M Davidson	Mr P MacPherson, GMB

Officials in attendance:

Mrs L Denovan, Executive Chief Officer, Resources & Finance
Mrs E Barrie, Head of Human Resources
Mr M Bailey, Team Manager, Transformation
Miss M Zavarella, Committee Officer

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr G Adam, Mr J Bruce, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr L Fraser, Mr A Jarvie, Mr G Mackenzie, Mr A Mackinnon and Mr P Siggers.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Workforce Planning & Development – Progress Update

There had been circulated Report No. RDB/1/20 dated 1 October 2020 from the Executive Chief Officer, Resources and Finance.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the comprehensiveness of the report and work of the team was commended;
- whilst some improvements to data availability could be made, delivery of all required improvements would be dependent on the overarching system issues being dealt with effectively;
- it was necessary to support the Council in delivering on the Workforce Data Project, providing focus and necessary resources;
- the review was worthwhile, and it was positive to see the progress to date;
- the management survey brought inspiration and it was suggested that the Board review Appendix 1 in detail as it provided a solid overview and understanding;

- the project was designed to be a fluid and continuous process, when reported Council it was important that it was workable, adoptable and sustainable;
- in response to a comment, the Executive Chief Officer, Resources and Finance stressed that the current Human Resources (HR) system did not provide the capability to receive all the data required and therefore there was an interim workaround in place to manage the necessary data while a new HR/payroll system was simultaneously being explored;
- as the project progressed it would require ongoing monitoring, review and feedback;
- as a result of Covid-19, a significant number of staff had risen to the challenge of moving between teams to fill critical roles and some staff may wish to remain in these roles and be further trained, it was hoped that this would be supported;
- it was suggested that a RAG system be incorporated in Appendix 1 so there was a clear indication of project status/risks and a further proposal that it be reported to the Corporate Resources Committee when appropriate;
- clarification was sought, and provided, on how the deployment portal had worked well through Covid-19;
- in response to a question, it was commented that a cultural change in the organisation was required in order to take a more rigorous approach on Employee Review & Development (ERD) and reassurance was provided that this had been identified by HR and would be taken forward;
- confirmation was sought, and provided, on the importance of consulting with trade unions on job descriptions and person specifications and efforts would be made by HR to do this work collaboratively;
- there was a suggestion that the new system needed to be viewed as a people-centred system (e.g. Human Resources or Workforce Management System) as opposed to a Payroll system, with staff aspirations being at the centre and this was agreed to be taken forward by the Head of HR;
- primary focus should be given to developing the statement of requirements to set out what functionality and outputs the new system would need to deliver, and to not rush through this part of the system replacement project;
- confirmation was sought, and provided, that the new system would be high-end, readily available and had all required functionality rather than exploring a bespoke system; and
- Members emphasised that additional resource would be required and should be made available due to the significance of the project.

Thereafter, the Board:-

- i. **NOTED** the progress of the Workforce Planning and Development Project;
- ii. **APPROVED** the detailed action plan attached at Appendix 1 and note that;
 - a. the Workforce Planning Strategy is current and fit for purpose and no amendments to the Strategy are needed;
 - b. the Human Resources Team will identify the priorities and resources needed to deliver the action plan, and the target delivery timescales for completion;
 - c. the relevant tasks contained in the Action Plan will be fed into Service Plans; and

- d. progress against the Action Plan will be routinely reported to the Corporate Resources Committee for ongoing monitoring; and
- iii. **AGREED** a RAG system be incorporated for the individual actions points outlined in Appendix 1.

The meeting ended at 1.46pm.