

Reorganisation Support

North East Derbyshire District Council

North East Derbyshire District Council has become one of our most recent clients. Following a reorganisation of their senior management team, the Chief Executive decided that they needed some external support to reinforce the revised working arrangements and develop their management skills.

The programme focused on the recently established Extended Management team, which comprises the Chief Executive, Directors and the next level of senior Council Officers. It is intended that the principles covered will be cascaded through managers and staff at all levels in the council.

The central objective of the programme was to develop a shared commitment to the Chief Executive's Change Vision and to develop the capabilities to enable this to be successful.

The vision is

- To fully integrate Second Tier Officers into the strategic management process so that strategic decision making can take account of operational considerations and enable more effective service delivery.
- To align Directors and Second Tier Officers to the development and effective implementation of the organisation's corporate strategies and goals.
- To improve organisational performance through the commitment and motivation of Directors, managers and staff to the strategic direction of the District Council.

The development programme was delivered over a six-month period and was structured to help the Extended Management Team to come together as a high performance team so that the decision making processes can be better informed by operational issues and enhance service delivery.

The programme included a strategic planning workshop to establish the link between the overall purposes and objectives of the organisation and the delivery of services to residents.

There are plans to integrate Councillors into the programme to ensure that it meets their objectives and supports the intent of delivering best value to the community. To this end, we also facilitated a joint member / officer meeting focused on improving the already strong and effective relationships. The approach was based on the Improvement and Development Agency publication *"Effective member / officer relationships"*

"... excellent at distilling the key essence of our contributions and providing simple but effective feedback. This has helped us clarify our thinking and decide what needs to be done."

Delegate

Services Provided

Initially, we undertook a Training Needs Analysis [See Service Outline] to: -

- Assess skills and knowledge
- Identify organisational and cultural influences
- Identify preferred learning styles

Through a process of one to one interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions, these factors and some key organisational issues were drawn out and used in the design of a tailored management development programme. The approach builds on the council's existing performance management system and complements their recent award of the "Investors in People" Standard.

Subsequently we have delivered a series of Management Development Workshops focusing on the areas identified in the Training Needs Analysis.

The topics covered included.

Strategic Planning and Policy setting

Change Management

Effective Management and Leadership

Time management

- Effective delegation
- Stress management

Effective Teams

Coaching and Mentoring

Communication skills

- Personal
- Organisational

In parallel with the training workshops, a separate residential workshop was held. This focused on developing a shared understanding of the strategic issues facing the council. To ensure that this had a practical focus, the activities centred on preparing for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and developing effective member/officer relationships.

Outcomes

The impact of the programme is currently being assessed on a formal basis, however it is clear that significant improvements have been achieved with enhanced team working, greater cross-functional co-operation and increasingly pro-active problem solving.

Additional Services

We subsequently provided ongoing support for the change management programme and provided support and input into the design of a competence based appraisal process.

The Customer's View

"... were able to strike a good balance between theory and practice so that it was easy for us to understand how to apply what we learned. They were able to listen to my particular objectives in running the programme and were then able to tailor the content and the style of their programme to meet those objectives.

"It is amazing how far we have come in such a short time – It has been much better than I expected. You see real changes in attitudes and behaviour.

I wish we had done it sooner"

HR Manager

Case Study

"They structured the programme so that it acted as a refresher and an update for those who needed that and an effective introduction to those with less management experience and training without making the latter group feel embarrassed and vulnerable.

On top of this, they used the management development programme as a framework to help us build a strong team spirit and commitment."

Carole Gilby – Chief Executive