



Council Overview Board
3 November 2016

HIGH PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Purpose of the report:

This report provides an update to the Board on outcomes following the external evaluation of the High Performance Development Programme. This followed a request from Members to understand the return on investment from the programme agreed by Cabinet in May 2014.

Introduction:

1. Following the huge success of the coaching programme launched in 2009, Surrey County Council wanted to build on this success by truly developing a rounded leader. In October 2014 a new programme was launched, focusing on supporting senior leaders and managers to develop their performance in dealing with difficult issues, with confidence.
2. Following a pilot programme with 66 senior leaders, the High Performance Development Programme (HPDP) went live to the wider leadership and management community with the specific aim to 'Achieve service excellence for residents', by focusing on the following outcomes:
 - i. Challenging unacceptable behaviour, address conflict and poor performance;
 - ii. Creating a no blame culture;
 - iii. Seeking feedback on performance and being open to constructive challenge;
 - iv. Being aware of how mood can impact on others: emotional intelligence;
 - v. Leading a team inspirationally, in particular in difficult times;
 - vi. Involving and empowering people through inclusion in decision making.
3. Senior leaders and managers were faced with continued challenges relating to both financial and people resource pressures and they needed to have the resilience to be able to lead and implement unprecedented transformation and still keep services performing well on a day to day basis.
4. The HPDP was designed to support the organisation deliver this scale of challenge. It was to run over a period of three years commencing October 2014 and was aimed originally at the wider leadership and management community, including Cabinet Members.
5. The programme was widened in October 2015 to also include a short programme for staff, an introductory coaching programme for all leaders and

managers and a programme for HR to support managers in dealing with issues through a restorative approach. Please see the diagram below detailing the six elements:



6. Data relating to the 2015 Staff Survey around the specific category of Leadership and My Manager, had showed that staff believed that:
 - a. Senior Leaders were continuing to 'tell' staff and appearing not to listen;
 - b. Senior Leaders do not truly live the values;
 - c. There was some confusion around who was the Leader; and
 - d. Middle managers talk open and honestly.
7. With the staff survey data now available, in April 2016 we embarked on a programme of evaluation for the HPDP. In order to keep it impartial Surrey Business School, part of Surrey University, were engaged to conduct the process.
8. For the purposes of the evaluation, we identified the two original programmes for the senior leaders, delivered by WillisClare Coaching and leaders, delivered by Penna to be in scope. These programmes were identified to potentially have the largest impact, with the largest attendance and cost.
9. The smaller programmes which were added will be evaluated through an in-house process and so were out of scope for this piece of work.

Data:

10. To date 681 people have attended either the senior leader or leader programmes. Spilt between 250 people on the senior programme and 431 on the leader programme.
11. Directorate attendance over the three year period (October 2013 to October 2016) is as follows:

	Leaders	Senior Leaders	Total
Adult Social Care	91	58	149
Business Services / Orbis	101	76	177
Chief Executives	16	18	34
Children, Schools and Families	134	50	184
Customers and Communities	8	8	16
Environment & Infrastructure	45	26	71
Legal & Democratic Services	33	6	39
Other (directorates not recorded)	3	8	11
	431	250	681

12. The data sets which were used in relation to the evaluation of the HPDP ran from October 2013 to April 2016, as this is when the evaluation process commenced. In the last six months we have had an increased attendance from front-line directorates.
13. The total cost of these two programmes over the three year period (since October 2013) has been just over £1million. This equates to a cost of just over £1,500 per head.

Findings:

14. The final evaluation report was completed in September 2016 and provided recommendations and conclusions relating to both qualitative and quantitative data in four main areas:
- i. **Scope and impact of the HPDP:** The data collated on attendance on the HPDP, showed that the programme had great attendance overall, however, in relation to Directorate size, there was a higher level of attendance from senior leaders and managers who do not manage front-line staff, and therefore may limit the impact on service delivery
 - ii. **Understanding the nature of the impact of the programme:** The general pattern of results in the evaluation showed areas of contradiction. Services with higher attendance on the HPDP report higher satisfaction with their manager, with qualitative data reporting happier teams. However, these services are also associated with a mild increase in absenteeism and grievances. As the programme focuses on shifting leadership to high performance, this would involve management addressing areas of poor performance and this may be viewed as an inevitable consequence of the programme.
 - iii. **Assessment and data management:** The HPDP highlighted a number of issues around data compilation and management. The data was analysed by the University and they found a number of areas where the council could make improvements to data systems, which would support future decision making for management easier and clearer.

- iv. **Content of the HPDP:** Qualitative data from the evaluation showed that managers felt more comfortable in undertaking difficult conversations and addressing areas of low performance. However, this was just one aspect of developing performance and the evaluation identified that managers needed more support around the management of high performance, for both staff and teams.

15. Overall the University felt that the high-level findings showed that the council can be confident that the introduction of the HPDP appears to be resulting in a shift of leadership style to high performing. However, there are still some areas to focus on with a number of recommendations highlighted in the Executive Summary of the report. (Annex One)

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

16. Note the findings of the evaluation report and the positive difference the investment has made in starting to develop the shift in culture of the organisation.
17. Supports plans in place to re-focus the leadership and management programme to continue this journey to service excellence; building on areas identified in the evaluation as needing more attention.

Next steps:

18. That the Human Resource and Organisational Development Service prepare an action plan around the key areas identified in the evaluation:
 - a. **Scope and impact of the HPDP:** For any remaining programmes look to target attendance around services that are front-line and for areas where performance has been identified as lower.
 - b. **Understanding the nature of the impact of the programme:** Undertake further research and monitor the impacts of the programme in the longer term to establish the reasons for a slight increase in absenteeism and grievances.
 - c. **Assessment and data management:** Undertake a review of the organisation's performance review data and how it's recorded and provided to managers so they can make evidence-based decisions.
 - d. **Content of the HPDP:** Review the current leadership and management offer to ensure it covers content identified in the evaluation such as: managing teams; evidence-based decision making and high performance work systems.
19. The HR & OD Service will also interrogate the data relating to the potential disparity between the 2015 Staff Survey results and the findings in the evaluation as it is clear that more work is needed to address the development of our leadership culture.

20. Design, develop and procure an updated programme to launch in April 2017, which takes into account feedback from the HPDP Evaluation and both the 2015 and new 2016 staff survey results.

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Sources/background papers:

- HPDP Evaluation report – Surrey Business School
- PPDC Report March 2014

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