

## Wiltshire Council

### Cabinet

7 November 2017

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**Subject:** People Strategy (2017 – 2027) priorities - progress on staff engagement, recognition & communication

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Richard Clewer, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts and Tourism

**Key Decision:** No

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#### Executive Summary

1. The focus on improving staff engagement is a key priority in the new people strategy. This strategy was approved by Cabinet in July and defines how we will manage our most important asset, and aims to ensure that we are able to attract, retain and motivate our staff to continue to develop great outcomes for communities and achieve the council's vision and deliver the business plan priorities.
2. Steps to improve staff engagement started in 2016 and this included the development of our employer brand and a range of social media platforms to improve communication and engagement with both prospective employees and our workforce, and the Grow system (learning & performance management system) was developed to allow staff to communicate socially. In addition the annual staff in November 2016 were redesigned and rebranded in line with the employer brand pillars, (empowering people, innovation and collaboration), and were reformatted to focus on interaction with staff.
3. The staff survey results in 2016 showed that some of these improvements were having a positive impact with overall staff engagement increasing by 2% to 58% since 2014, with some services showing engagement levels of 85%.
4. However, despite the positive overall results of the staff survey results they also identified areas where further work was needed to improve staff engagement to ensure the council has the positive culture needed to deliver the business plan priorities, and to meet the challenges that the council continues to face in respect of both finance, but also the increasing demands on our services. As a result, a staff engagement group to develop new initiatives that would further embed the employer brand and improve staff engagement was proposed.
5. The staff engagement group launched in February 2017. The group are called **#EPIC** after our employer brand pillars of **E**mpowering **P**eople, **I**nnovation and **C**ollaboration. The work is led by HR&OD and the group meet monthly to discuss and progress ideas to improve staff engagement. Since the group launched in February 2017 they have launched two new staff engagement initiatives, EPIC Impressions and EPIC Ideas.
6. New initiatives are planned for 2018, including a focus on communication, staff recognition and improving the visibility of senior leadership all issues identified in the 2016 staff survey results and in the feedback from staff at the 2017 staff engagement forums.

### Proposal

That the cabinet:

- endorses the actions and initiatives being taken to deliver the priorities in the new People Strategy to enable the council to attract, retain and develop staff.
- recommends that Officers proceed with the new initiatives planned for 2018, including a focus on communication, additional staff recognition and continuing to develop alternative approaches for improving the visibility of senior leadership.

### Reason for Proposal

Staff engagement is a key priority in the People Strategy 2017 – 2027. The strategy defines how we will manage our most important asset, and aims to ensure that we are able to attract, retain and motivate our staff to continue to develop great outcomes for communities and achieve the council's vision and our business plan

**Dr Carlton Brand, Corporate Director**