

Employee awards and recognition

Purpose

The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the introduction of an updated employee recognition awards and provide examples of how the Council can embed ongoing recognition throughout the year.

Background

1. The current staff awards scheme was first launched in 2010 and was rebranded in 2016 as the Achieving Excellence awards. There are currently two categories, team and individual, of which there is usually one winner and a highly commended award. Award ceremonies are held quarterly, with nominations open for two to three months preceding this.
2. The shortlisted employees are invited to a simple ceremony on one of the balconies at County Hall where the winner is announced. Winners receive a card, badge, balloons and a cake which are presented to them by a director.
3. Feedback on the Achieving Excellence Awards was sought from across the organisation by the HR business partners and #TeamEPIC. Further feedback has been sought from the engagement and wellbeing workstream of the Organisational Recovery programme to ensure alignment and recognise lessons learned through the COVID pandemic.
4. Following the launch of Our Identity we now need to integrate this into the award scheme to ensure the organisation recognise and reinforces how staff are expected to work to deliver outcomes.

Main considerations

5. The proposal takes on board the feedback provided and aligns with Our Identity, specifically that we Celebrate Success and Reward Achievement and deliver a High-Performance culture. A strong employee recognition scheme will support the embedding of Our Identity throughout the organisation in how we work, and will ensure staff feel valued and engaged, improving both wellbeing and retention.
6. It is proposed that the award categories reflect and embed Our Identity, see Appendix I for the category criteria.
7. To give the awards meaning and show that we celebrate success, it is proposed to host one large end of year celebration event rather than 4 small events. This option is preferred because the grand scale of the event gives it more significance, ensuring the winners feel valued and are visibly recognised for making a difference. Alongside this it would be an incentive for others to aspire to as it amplifies positive stories and behaviours across the council.
8. Research has indicated that many other councils host an end of year staff awards event which they receive sponsorship for. It is proposed that we ask businesses to sponsor an

award category for a set amount e.g., £500-£1,000, this approach is aligned with other councils and previous large scale council awards such as the 2011 corporate awards.

9. It is proposed that following the ceremony all category winners will receive:
 - an additional day's leave (a one off to be taken within 12 months)
 - a £50 voucher for a local Wiltshire business
 - recognition on a digital wall of fame
 - the opportunity to attend a small, informal virtual meeting with the Chief Executive and/or a member of CLT
 - be given access to learning and development opportunities such as their PPA, coaching and mentoring and the opportunity to be involved in organisational wide projects
10. As the purpose of the awards ceremony is for recognition and engagement, it is proposed to recognise both long service awards and successful apprentices at the ceremony.
11. In addition, the Councils extended workforce (volunteers, foster and shared lives carers) support the organisation to deliver its strategic priorities. It is proposed that we recognise these groups, specifically those who have gone above and beyond or for a long service award. It is proposed that those nominated would receive a video thank you message from the relevant Director and a digital certificate. The relevant service areas would be responsible for organising any additional celebration events for these groups
12. Ongoing recognition will embed a culture of celebrating success which increases staff motivation, engagement, and retention, helping to achieve a high performing culture. It also helps to learn from successes and create best practices for delivering the business plan.
13. A suite of tools will be created that can be used for recognition to foster a culture which continuously celebrates success. This suite would utilise both existing and new tools, such as: Director/HOS toolkit to run their own staff recognition events, expanding long service awards and EPIC impressions.

Reason for changes to the policy

14. This proposal, if agreed, aims to align recognising good performance with the elements of Our Identity to help embed it across the organisation in how we work and deliver outcomes. Introducing a values-based recognition scheme will support the organisation to achieve a high performing culture by rewarding achievement, recognising effort, and celebrating success.
15. Alongside this, the proposal identifies how to recognise our extended workforce - volunteers, foster and shared lives carers - in order to engage, motivate and retain them. Celebrating the work, they do to support the council and residents will help them to feel valued, which both increases retention and the likelihood of them recommending these roles to others.

Environmental impact of the proposal

16. The staff awards and ongoing recognition will utilise digital technology to support a green workplace.

Equalities impact of the proposal

17. The staff recognition awards will be taken through EIA in January and any feedback will be incorporated.

Risk Assessment

18. It is important to integrate Our Identity into the new awards. Without this alignment, there is a missed opportunity to create and reinforce the high-performance needed to deliver organisational outcomes and risk not embedding the ways of working required, as well as impacting staff engagement and well-being and the capacity and capability to deliver the organisations recovery plans.

Financial Implications of the proposal

19. We recognise the financial challenges, however, in order to support and embed Our Identity and how we want to work as an organisation, some expenditure will be required to ensure the awards are meaningful. The finances required to enable us to hold an annual celebration event for all winners would be sourced via sponsorship, however if this is not forthcoming, the event would be adapted to a lower-cost option

Recommendations

It is recommended that Staffing Policy Committee approve the changes to the employee recognition awards.

Joanne Pitt
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Appendix I: Draft nomination criteria

Innovator of the year	An individual who has identified an opportunity to improve the way we work, resulting in improvements to our services and customer experience, harnessing the opportunities created through digital technology.
Collaborator of the year	An individual who has worked effectively alongside other services and partners to achieve positive results. Building excellent working relationships, sharing information, and working together to find solutions.
One council award	For two teams that have come together to drive improvements to deliver our priorities. Working as one to improve efficiencies and effectiveness in how we work.
Making a difference award	An individual who has been focused on improving services to deliver the best outcomes, which has made a significant difference to a resident or service we provide.
Agile award	For someone who has been working flexibly to support the organisation, responding, and adapting quickly to challenges, change and opportunities to ensure we continue to deliver great services.
Outstanding performance award	An outstanding individual that demonstrates Our Identity in everything they do. A consistent high performer, who is outcome focused and demonstrates evidence-based decision making
Unsung hero	An individual who consistently supports others to do their jobs well, contributing to their team and the people they support. They live our values of excellence, responsibility and trust and respect and help to create an inclusive and supportive work environment.
Newcomer award	Recognises an individual who's shone in a new role (apprentice, new starter or recent promotion) and is already demonstrating significant value in their new role.
Outstanding leadership	A manager, head of service or director who embodies Our Identity. Developing staff talents and inspiring the team to explore new ways of working to maximise service delivery and improve partnership working. Provides support and encouragement to the team, valuing their differences and the benefits they bring.
Inclusion champion	An individual who has implemented strategies/initiatives to create a more inclusive workplace and/or accessible services

We couldn't do it without you award	This award is to celebrate and recognise the hard work of a volunteer, foster or shared lives carer. Please nominate someone who has gone above and beyond to enable us to support our communities or to recognise their long service.
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