

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Report to: Public Services Reform Policy & Accountability Committee

Date: 2 September 2020

Subject: H&F Way Progress Report

Report of: Dawn Aunger, AD People and Talent

Summary

The H&F Way is the Council's internal culture change campaign where staff work together to shape how we do things to be at our best, by creating a movement for change by our staff and for our staff. This report updates the committee on the progress made to date and plans for taking the H&F Way programme forward.

Recommendation

1. That the report be noted.
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Wards Affected: ALL

H&F Priorities	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Priorities
Creating a compassionate council	The H&F Way seeks to improve workplace behaviours, develop a healthy workplace, create an inclusive workplace, improve how we appraise performance and consider future reward and recognition initiatives. It is an organisational culture change programme based on doing things with our staff, not to them.
Taking pride in H&F	The H&F Way's purpose is to make positive changes to organisational culture that will in turn increase employee engagement, morale, job satisfaction and pride in working for LBHF

Contact Officers:

Dawn Aunger AD, People and Talent

Veronique Vermeer, H&F Way Programme Lead, People and Talent

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

Appendix 1 - The H&F Way; Analysis of the H&F Way Staff Engagement” report, produced by The Campaign Company, October 2019.

Detailed information

1. A positive organisational culture is vital for our continued success. We are one of the few local authorities that have invested in the ‘Best Companies’ system for driving organisational development. This has given us a very clear view on how we need to improve.
2. The H&F Way Report, an independent report by The Campaign Company (attached at Appendix 1) sets out five key themes set in the context of the H&F vision, values and people strategy. These themes were identified through engaging with staff at drop-in sessions held at 3 locations across 8 days in October 2019, 22 focus groups, and through an online survey. These themes are:
 - **Behaviours** that create a great place to work are genuinely and consistently understood, lived and recognised
 - **An inclusive workplace** where everybody’s needs are recognised and respected and all have the same opportunities to be involved in decisions and career progression and access to tools to do the best job that they can
 - **A Healthy workplace** to help make our workplace healthier, happier and more productive
 - **Appraising performance** where regular review meetings are meaningful & valued whilst simple and focussed on recognising contributions
 - **Reward and recognition** of everyone’s contribution in a way which makes them feel valued and is seen as fair, transparent, flexible and consistent
3. The H&F Way culture change programme is a staff-led ‘change movement’ which focusses on the 5 themes and seeks to deliver on the following aims:
 - Highly engaged staff that express higher levels of satisfaction
 - Significant improvements with productivity, wellbeing, recruitment, retention and equality at work.
 - A greater understanding of our unique organisational character and identity – what makes us the best, what are our biggest challenges, how do we best tackle them and what makes us different and special

The H&F Way is delivered in house rather than through external consultancy facilitation. People and Talent are funding a part-time H&F Way programme

manager post which has been created within existing budget limits as part of the service restructure in February 2020.

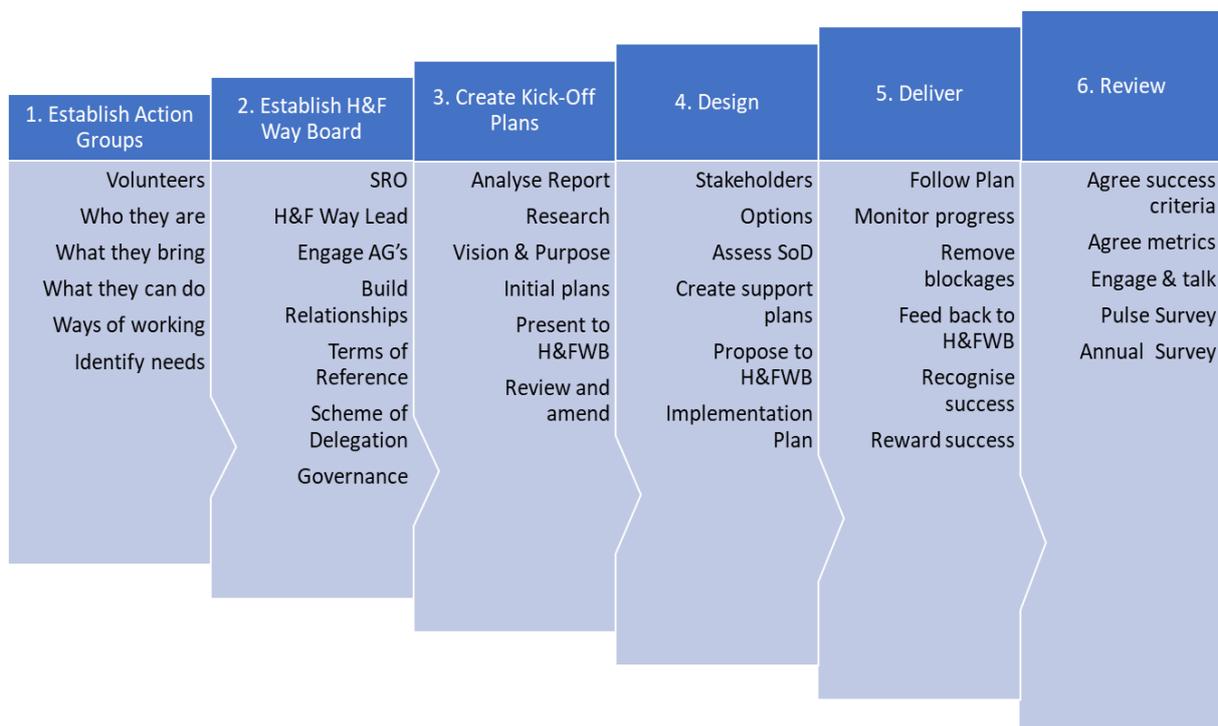
4. The Chief Executive, Kim Smith, is the project sponsor for the H&F Way and provides strategic leadership support for enabling its success. Dawn Aunger, AD People & Talent, is the senior responsible officer accountable for the H&F Way meeting its objectives, delivering project outcomes, and realising required benefits. All culture change proposals are reviewed at the H&F Way Programme Board.
5. The programme board is made up of the AD, People and Talent, the H&F Way programme manager and the employee leads for each of the H&F Way themes. The H&F Way Programme Board meets monthly (with the exception of a 4-month gap due to Covid-19) to set direction, manage cross cutting opportunities, discuss the viability of the work plan for each group and across all groups, decide what to stop, start or continue and put forward ideas and proposals to SLT. The leads contribute to a monthly highlight report which is reported to the Major Programmes Board to ensure SLT oversight.
6. The H&F Way has no end date as it's about changing our culture, however, the first phase is expected to complete by December 2020. Priority themes will then be reviewed taking account of feedback which was collected and analysed by the Campaign Company prior to the launch of H&F Way in October 2019.
7. This report provides an overview of progress made to date and priorities for the continuing programme.

Progress to date

8. Following the H&F Way launch workshop on 26 November 2019, 5 action groups, aligned to one of the themes were established. The groups are made up of 68 staff volunteers of varying experiences and skills but with a similar passion to make a difference. Rather than setting roles within the group by traditional grade and title hierarchy, people selected their roles, including that of group leads, according to their passion, self-assessment of their skills and qualities and understanding of others in the group.
9. New H&F Way staff volunteers are being encouraged to join groups via World Class Managers (WCMs), Future Leaders, the Managers' forum, existing H&F Way group advocates and promotion at staff events such as "Grow, Reward and Give Back" held in February 2020 and the Black Lives Matter staff conversations and Inclusion Matters blog by the Chief Executive in June and July 2020.
10. A "Let's Talk Culture" workshop was held in January with the Leadership Forum (ADs and Directors) to engage them and identify what changes they could own and lead through behavioural nudges, quick wins and short and medium-term change activity. Feedback on the H&F Way and how to improve links with departmental priorities was sought from the Managers' Forum (top

150) held in February. A key observation was how the H&F Way programme and the People Strategy align and relate.

11. Until mid-March 2020, H&F Way workshops were run every 4-6 weeks which allowed all H&F Way group volunteers to come together to share progress, achievements, advice and support. Monthly meetings with group leads restarted on 15 July and the next whole group session is planned for 9 September.
12. Progress will be measured against the following 6 stages (see below). The process was drawn up in collaboration with the H&F Programme Management Office.



13. During the early months of the pandemic (March-June 2020) the H&F way groups continued to network virtually and support colleagues online through MS Teams. Although normal get-togethers were suspended each group still acted as a 'staff voice' and sounding board to assist the People and Talent team with the huge challenge of maintaining wellbeing and resilience of our workforce.
14. Some of the contributions made by the H&F Way during the lockdown period include:
 - Appraising performance group – designed the new 'Appraisal Lite' performance conversation document to replace the performance management appraisal, given the time constraints placed on staff during the pandemic but the need, possibly more than ever, to continue

encouraging performance and development. An online, fit for the future, appraisal solution will be designed for 2021.

- Healthy Workplace group – researched a Healthy Workplace charter to inform best practice for building resilience and staff wellbeing.
- Reward and recognition group – acted as a sounding board for People and Talent on special recognition for front line workers. The group are involved in developing alternative options to the annual Star awards and developing virtual recognition solutions.
- Inclusive Workplace group – created an equalities action plan in March that is due to be considered by SLT in August. The group lead is liaising with the AD People and Talent on the establishment of 4 new race equality working groups following the Black Lives Matter conversations led by the Chief Executive.
- Behaviours group – created a values-led behaviour framework. This is something we hope to take forward later this year so that managers and staff understand what is expected of them as an employee of H&F Council.

Reframing the H&F Way due to Covid-19

15. The 5 H&F Way working groups were stood down during the Covid-19 response period, when staff were deployed onto critical service delivery only. Our third H&F way workshop has been rescheduled for 9 September to regroup and reframe the H&F Way working groups and to keep all our existing and new volunteers highly engaged. Emerging group action plans will be considered to take the H&F Way forward and to realign the focus with the Road to Recovery (Covid-19) programme.
16. Key elements of the workshop will include:
 - Building capacity within the groups to increase staff involvement
 - Identify cost & benefits and new implementation plans
 - Develop communication and staff engagement work to support culture change
 - Refine short, medium- and longer-term outcomes and success measures across all groups

Developing a corporate strategy for delivering the full scale of benefits of the H&F Way

17. The work of the H&F way groups are underpinned by the People Strategy and will continue to be informed by staff engagement surveys, the new ways of working (WoW) staff survey and staff wellbeing surveys. The future H&F Way programme plan to support further cultural change as a result of Covid-19 and new ways of working is in development.

Return on investment

18. Staff see the H&F Way as an opportunity to make a difference, to have a voice in improving the employee experience at H&F and many see the

working groups as a development and networking opportunity. Trade Union representatives are fully supportive, and some have become active H&F Way group volunteers.

19. Due to the operational pressures of Covid-19, the H&F Way programme manager has been redeployed to workforce efficiency project activity, reporting to the AD People and Talent to support the delivery of workforce efficiency initiatives and Covid-19 workplace readiness projects. The programme manager retains a light-touch facilitation role for the H&F Way groups and coordinates the governance arrangements and monthly highlight reports.
20. Independent monitoring and evaluation through informal feedback, pulse surveys and workforce analysis will inform our continued focus and pace of change. Measures to assess delivery of the programme are currently being developed.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - The H&F Way; Analysis of the H&F Way Staff Engagement” report, produced by The Campaign Company, October 2019.