

By: Eric Hotson – Cabinet Member for Corporate & Democratic Services
Amanda Beer – Corporate Director People and Communications

To: Personnel Committee **Date:** 4 June 2019

Subject: Leadership Strategy

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: This report provides a short update on KCC's Leadership Strategy. A presentation will provide further detail and summarise learning from Year 1.

1. Background

1.1 To achieve our vision and deliver our strategic outcomes, we need to support our Managers as they lead their teams through complex, challenging change. KCC's leadership strategy has been designed to develop leadership skills and behaviours which support a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement. It is the leaders in the organisation who shape the culture by what they do; what they value, what they monitor and the behaviours they role model.

1.2 The leadership capabilities have been developed with the Extended Corporate Management Team to deliver a collective leadership strategy that is right for KCC and evolves as the organisation transforms. Over time, this will mean that leadership becomes the responsibility of everyone in the organisation which will reinforce our core values.


2. Principles

2.1 The leadership strategy is based on a number of key principles which underpin an annual leadership plan. These principles include:

- Recognition that leadership and management are different; both are fundamentally important
- Leadership is not limited to grade or role but must start with senior leaders
- The leadership strategy supports the People Strategy and will be integrated into people policies
- It builds on existing good practice and supports continuous improvement
- There is a greater focus on assessment and evaluation, improved customer service and cost savings.

3. Leadership Capabilities

3.1 A comprehensive plan was put in place to ‘test out’ the capabilities at all levels of management and develop an understanding of our current leadership capability.

Leadership Capabilities	Leadership Plan
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define leadership capabilities with senior leaders 2. Annual 360 assessment to provide a baseline and support personal development 3. Spotlight existing good leadership practice and develop case studies 4. Action research to develop leadership capabilities of future senior leaders 5. Leadership development programmes to develop capability 6. Communication and engagement events to ‘bring to life’ the leadership capabilities

3.2 A copy of the leadership capabilities and descriptors is attached. Appendix 1.

4. Leadership Plan – Highlights from Year 1 (2018/19)

360 degree assessment

- Feedback on 790 managers by 5,326 evaluators
- 2 questions per capability and free text (strengths / further development)
- Managers KR13+ and all Kent Managers invited to take part

Identifying best practice and starting leadership conversations

- Trained an internal team to run Appreciative Inquiry workshops
- 115 participants identify leadership at its best
- Collated and themed 700 examples

Action Learning and Action Research

- 12 future senior leaders developing leadership practice
- Action research to investigate innovation and resilience
- Excellent engagement and feedback

5. Conclusion

5.1 The leadership strategy provides a framework for developing current and future leaders aligned to our People Strategy. The approach is based upon outcomes and responsive to the changing needs of our services and people.

5.2 Evaluation data from year one confirms that the leadership capabilities are right for KCC. Year two will further embed these capabilities within our management population and future managers.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 Personnel Committee is invited to note this report and receive the presentation at its meeting.

Julie Cudmore
Head of Organisation Development
03000 417212

APPENDIX 1

KCC LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Clear, Authentic Leadership

As a leader, I need to be self-aware. I need to demonstrate and commit to our collaborative leadership strategy. To deliver this strategy, I need to nurture a culture of openness and understand and call out poor behaviour when I see it.

What It is:

- Communicating a clear purpose and taking collective responsibility for decisions
- Understanding my own strengths and weaknesses
- Having political antennae – i.e. understanding the role of Members in KCC and how to manage the Political environment effectively
- Being prepared to challenge and be challenged
- Being honest and straightforward
- Rewarding the right behaviours and challenging poor behaviour (and ensuring consequences for continued poor behaviour)

What It Isn't

- Based upon grade or job title
- Being the loudest voice in the room
- Ignoring or accepting poor behaviour
- Blaming others when things go wrong

Customer Service

As a leader, my primary focus must be on the customer or service user. I will ensure the customer or service user experience is central to my work and I will consider the impact of service changes on the customer or service user in delivering change, I will always remain focused on customer or service user outcomes and apply commissioning principles appropriately

What It is:

- Listening and engaging with customers or service users to understand their changing needs
- Creating a culture which encourages high quality customer service
- Using metrics and customer information to improve services
- Considering the impact of changes on the customer

- Making sure systems and processes drive improved service delivery for the customer or service user
- Is relevant to the whole authority – front line and back office

What It Isn't

- Just relevant in frontline services
- Paying lip service to customer service
- Collecting customer or service user feedback and not using it

Trusted Partnership Working

As a leader I need to work collaboratively across organisational structures and boundaries. I need to develop open and honest relationships to ensure that everyone understands and owns what we are collectively trying to achieve. A trusted partnership is inclusive and respectful of all stakeholders.

What It is:

- Working together to develop shared outcomes
- Developing relationships built on trust and respect
- Recognising differences and possible conflict and working collaboratively to overcome these
- Ensuring the right level of staff are attending the right partnership meetings to be able to take decisions

What It Isn't:

- Just attending or chairing meetings
- Always saying yes and being agreeable to every request/opinion/task without question
- Focusing on the success of any one partner to the detriment of others

Continuous Improvement and Innovation

To deliver better services for our customers or service users I need to advocate continuous improvement. This involves supporting innovation and creativity, leading and sustaining change and maximising the use of technology.

What It is:

- Communicating an on-going commitment to continuous improvement
- Putting forward small practical suggestions as well as big ideas
- Encouraging and welcoming challenge to existing practices
- Making time and creating the opportunity to learn and innovate
- Applying and sharing learning gained from colleagues and external experts
- Developing talent
- Optimising the use of technology

What It Isn't

- Just going through a process
- Just doing lots of training

- Change for the sake of change
- Using new technology whilst working in the same way

Understanding and nurturing organisational culture

Successful change needs a focus on both process and people. I will therefore understand and nurture organisational culture and be a cultural change leader where necessary. I will engage staff through story-telling and conversational practice to understand and nurture our cultural strengths and barriers to create the conditions for success.

What It Is:

- Being able to engage with and respect individuals' emotions and feelings
- Communicating through conversational practice and story-telling
- Being able to create the right conditions in which individuals feel able to change
- Being able to facilitate shared values
- Ensuring that staff look beyond their own self-interest for the wider KCC benefit
- Ensuring culture change is embedded

What It Isn't:

- Telling people to change how they feel
- A single or quick-fix change
- Just reorganisation or restructure

Building Resilience

As we continue to change, I will personally develop my resilience and support others in developing theirs. I will develop my own emotional intelligence to understand and recognise the impact my actions have on others and ensure a continued and clear sense of purpose.

What It Is:

- Communicating effectively to reduce ambiguity and help others plan for change and understand what is required
- Creating a supportive environment which brings out the best in people
- Being comfortable with constant change
- Remaining motivated even after setbacks
- Knowing what support and resources are available in KCC to support resilience and promoting these to others

What It Isn't:

- Working long hours
- Presenteeism, i.e. coming to work despite illness, injury, etc., and/or working longer hours than necessary, often resulting in reduced productivity
- Making excuses for not meeting deadlines
- Working in isolation