

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	22 January 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Internal Comms and Employee Engagement – update
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/24/023
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Lindsay MacInnes
REPORT AUTHOR	Sandie Scott, People Development Manager
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To update Committee on progress and activity on our approach to Internal Communications and Employee Engagement – and how this is applied to support employees through organisational change.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

- 2.1. Notes the continuing progress made on our approach to internal communications and employee engagement to support all employees through organisational change.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1. Organisational change can be unsettling to employees. Change often brings uncertainty and ambiguity, which can cause stress and anxiety. Employees may be concerned about how the change will affect their job security, roles, responsibilities, and relationships with colleagues. They may also feel a sense of loss for the way things used to be and may need time to adjust to new ways of working.
- 3.2. Our Occupational Health Report 2023 shows that change remains a significant cause of work-related stress for our employees, although it has decreased from 24% to 18% since 2022.
- 3.3. And yet change is inevitable in any organisation, whether it is due to internal factors, such as financial pressures, restructuring, changes in leadership; or external factors, such as market shifts, societal changes, customer demands, or technological innovations. Change can also be highly desirable for employees, but the means of delivery can negatively affect its reception if people feel that it has been poorly communicated, or ‘done to’ them.

- 3.4. Communication and engagement are therefore essential for employees during periods of change, as they can help them cope with uncertainty, build trust, foster collaboration, enhance performance, create a positive work culture, and facilitate change and innovation.
- 3.5. Aberdeen City Council is a large, complex and diverse organisation, delivering a huge array of services in locations across the city. Like any local authority, we have experienced challenges in communication and engagement with our workforce, particularly those in our Frontline Operational Services Job Family. We have over 1000 colleagues in a Frontline Operational role, who by the nature of their work have limited digital access and may work remotely without regular one-to-ones with their managers (for example Refuse Loaders, Cleaners, Gardeners).
- 3.6. To address the need and challenges for communication, engagement and support during organisational change, we are committed to a holistic approach to change which is inclusive and engaging for employees in all our job families. This approach, approved by the Committee in January 2023, as part of Workforce Delivery Plan to support Target Operating Model (TOM) 1.2, is based upon international best practice in change management from Prosci, ADKAR:

The Five Building Blocks for Successful Change



- A** Awareness

- D** Desire

- K** Knowledge

- A** Ability

- R** Reinforcement®

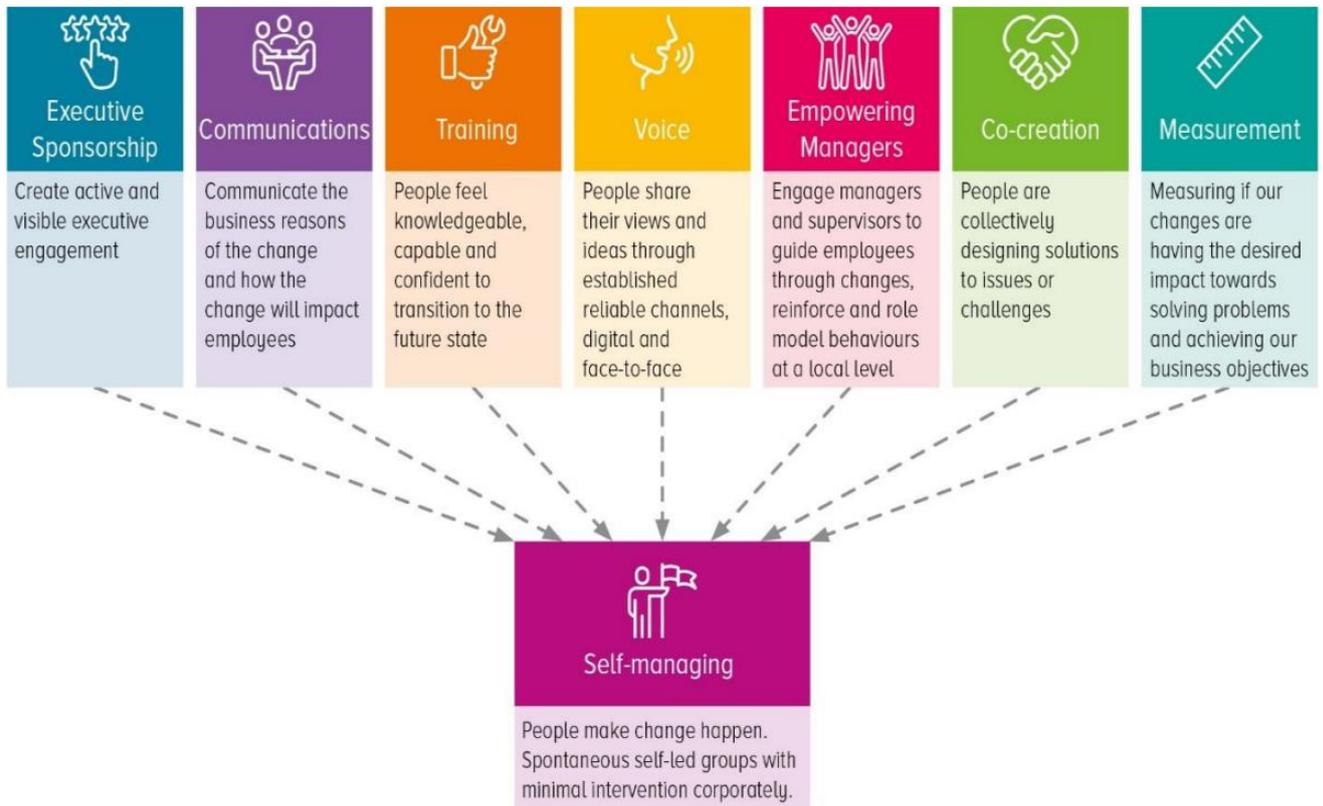
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Prosci

ADKAR

- **Awareness:** we ensure that employees are aware of the change
 - **Desire:** employees understand the business reasons for the change and feel a personal motivation to embrace the change
 - **Knowledge:** employees are equipped with the skills to work in the required new ways
 - **Ability:** employees are given the opportunity to put their skills in practice
 - **Reinforcement:** managers are role modelling, coaching and supporting their employees at a local level.
- 3.7. Our ACC Approach to Change Management therefore takes the theory of ADKAR to achieve culture change and provides practical resources under

seven key areas for leaders of changes to implement. These seven pillars are not sequential – they must all be used repeatedly and concurrently throughout a change programme, if the ultimate intention is to have self-managing employees, who no longer require any support or reinforcement to thrive in the new desired way of working.



- 3.8. It provides a structured approach to change management and is flexible so it can be scaled to meet the size and type of organisational change – and has successfully been implemented on a wide range of projects.
- 3.9. The approach has been developed through collaboration with international change management specialists in Prosci™ and employee engagement specialists from Engage for Success; and through in-depth engagement with employees to understand the barriers to communication and the best way to cascade information and so takes account of the different ways our job families work and need to be communicated with.
- 3.10. Aberdeen City Council’s approach to change is now well-established, and this report provides an update on the ongoing progress to support employees through organisational change, via the seven pillars.

Progress Update

Executive Sponsorship

- 3.11. Chief Officers play a crucial role in leading the organisation and their Cluster through change. They need to provide a compelling vision and narrative for

the change, remain visible and authentic through their communications, and inspire and empower their people to deliver it. To clarify the significance of this role and ensure acceptance and consistency of experience across the organisation, the required capabilities for Chief Officers are set out in the **Chief Officer Capability Framework** (appendix 1). There are a variety of capability indicators relating to a Chief Officer's role in change, with examples as follow.

- *Proactively leads transformation within the organisation, acting as an effective project sponsor when needed.*
- *Leads through active communication, motivates and inspires people to achieve shared outcomes for the organisation.*
- *Communicates clearly and in a structured way, persuading others effectively.*
- *Works effectively in partnership with Trade Unions and resolves conflict effectively.*
- *Values people voices which is demonstrated by engaging, encouraging them to share their perspectives, listens and takes action.*
- *Takes care of their people - takes active steps to promote health and wellbeing initiatives.*
- *Displays empathy and genuine concern - takes time to find out how challenges and pressures feel from the perspective of others.*

3.12. As part of **Extended Corporate Management Team (ECMT) Development**, all Chief Officers were required to undertake a self and team evaluation against their Capability Framework, including the indicators relevant to change set out above. From this a development programme was developed, tailored to their individual and collective needs, which includes the following development interventions:

- *Focusing on Resilience and Wellbeing (for self and others)*
- *Leading People Change and Transformation*

3.13. As part of their role as leaders of organisational change, a Chief Officer is named as sponsor for each project within our Transformation Programme. This provides a visible point of accountability for employees, and their profile is used to raise the profile and credibility of a project. The benefit is that they are seen as knowledgeable, approachable and trustworthy and acting in the best interests of the city. They also play a role in building pride by celebrating success and achievements within the project – appreciating and recognising the work of individuals and teams.

3.14. We are also preparing our senior leaders of the future to lead change effectively by equipping our **Aspiring Senior Leaders** with clarity on the capabilities required of them – and providing them with a development programme to achieve these capabilities. They were recruited for, and developed during, the programme using an adapted version of the Chief Officer Capability Framework (see appendix 2 for Aspiring Senior Leader

Capability Framework) with indicators relevant to leading change as follows:

- *Communicates clearly and in a structured way, persuading others effectively.*
- *Connects and inspires others behind shared strategic outcomes.*
- *Shows personal initiative in transformation and digital leadership.*
- *Builds effective relationships with partners to achieve shared outcomes.*
- *Takes a collaborative approach to problem-solving and decision making.*
- *Displays empathy and genuine concern – takes time to find out how challenges and pressures feel from the perspective of others.*

3.15. To support and develop our Aspiring Senior Leaders to achieve these capabilities, they also undertake the following development interventions.

- *Leading people through change and service design*
- *Effective Partnership Working with Trade Unions.*

3.16. In addition to their collective development programme, our leaders are also supported to play their role as Executive Sponsors of change through dedicated **one-to-one change management support** from People & Organisational Development Advisers to follow our Approach to Change, using best practice from Prosci on the role of a senior leader in change, undertaking the ABCs of change leadership:

- **Be Active and visible:** Chief Officers are supported to be highly visible to their Cluster and the wider organisation via intranet blogs, webinars, face-to-face events, and engagement sessions.
- **Build a coalition:** Chief Officers are supported to work closely with their service managers to ensure that middle management are then able to play their role (see Engaging Managers below).
- **Communicate about the change:** Chief Officers are supported to communicate regularly about the change with the people they lead, through a variety of means, for example emails, Teams messages and paper-based newsletters, depending on the communication needs of their services. Employees need to feel that their leaders and managers are honest, transparent, and dependable, especially during times of change. By communicating frequently and openly, leaders and managers can demonstrate their commitment and accountability, as well as their respect and appreciation for their employees. Communication also allows leaders and managers to acknowledge the challenges and the emotions that employees may face, and to offer support and guidance. See more in Communications below.

Communication

3.17. Communication is essential for employees during any periods of change. Employees need to know what is changing, why it is changing, how it will affect them, and what they need to do differently. By providing clear and consistent information, we can help employees understand the rationale and

benefits of the change, as well as the expectations and the roles they have to play.

- 3.18. It is critical therefore that we provide communication platforms for our employees that are accessible, regularly updated with relevant and useful information, and written in a way that is relatable for them.
- 3.19. Since the establishment of the Internal Communications and Employee Engagement team within People & Organisational Development in June 2019, great progress has been made in building a range of employee communications platforms that each serve a different function.
- 3.20. Our **SharePoint-based intranet** draws upon the latest Microsoft365 technology to provide a tailored, dynamic, integrated experience for employees. It has a hub-site, managed by the Internal Comms team, and is used to cascade corporate communications to all employees, including the Chief Executive's regular blog; but has a multitude of sub-sites which are owned by employee networks and subject matter experts to ensure a diversity of employee voice on the intranet, including:
 - [Transformation Hub](#): to inform and engage employees on our transformation programme to deliver TOM 1.2.
 - [Customer Academy](#): to provide information, guidance and discussion points for all things relating to Customer Service.
 - [People Anytime](#): information, resources, guides and more relating to employment with Aberdeen City Council and employee health and wellbeing.
 - [Digital Workplace](#): to share news and training on our digital resources.
 - [Green Workplace](#): to share knowledge, practical tips, ideas and opportunities to get involved in our Climate Change and Environment agenda.
 - [Elected Members](#): for Elected Members' information and development.
 - [Leadership Forum](#): to keep People Managers informed on key developments; provide a space for them to get actively involved in what is happening and to involve their teams; and facilitate collaboration, sharing and problem solving for leaders all over the council.
 - [Mental Health & Wellbeing](#): To ensure that we are making resources for employees having a negative response to change as easily accessible and available as possible, we also have a dedicated SharePoint intranet site for Mental Health and Wellbeing. These pages accompany and are promoted whenever we publish a blog relating to organisational change.
- 3.21. **Viva Engage**: To ensure wide and direct dispersal of corporate communications and avoid the bottleneck associated with the traditional top-down email cascade, we have shifted our method of sharing urgent and important news bulletins to announcements via **Microsoft's Viva Engage** (previously known as Yammer). The significant advantage of this communication method over email is that it also reaches **all frontline employees** who have opted to use their own device and install the Viva Engage app. The 'All Company' community (shown below) consists of our entire workforce and has 9459 members, providing us with an effective and

direct means of cascading corporate communication with all employees. We can also measure how many employees a notification has reached, as can also be seen below:

Members • 9,459

This is the default group for everyone in the Aberdeen City Council network
Edit description

Info

This Yammer community is used to share important news and updates for all employees.

For more informal questions and information sharing, you may like to use:

- **Ask a Colleague:** Ask anything! Get your questions answered by colleagues from all across Aberdeen City Council
- **Digital Workplace:** For digital news, tips, training, questions and problems
- **People Anytime:** For HR related news and queries
- **We value each other:** For sharing a bit of praise, recognition and appreciation for your colleagues
- **Classifieds...**

All Company Restricted

Conversations About Files Events

Share thoughts, ideas, or updates

Discussion Question Praise Poll

All conversations Recent posts

Suzie Watt Fri at 12:52 PM Seen by 3,233

The pay award information has been updated to include craft workers and chief officers. You can find out more on [Pay Award 2023/24 - Updated \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Paula Fullerton Nov 27 Seen by 3,996

Understanding our workforce diversity data is important to us. It lets us identify areas of the organisation where we might have diversity gaps and then we can then address this with targeted actions and initiatives. To help us understand this information better, we have updated the diversity questions on Core HR. Please take a minute to go in and update your information.

More information and instructions can be found on the intranet - [The way we capture diversity data has changed on CoreHR. Please check and update your information \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Like Comment Share Nazif Abdullah and 2 others

Write a comment

Announcement

Paula Fullerton Nov 24 Seen by 5,282

[Carry Forward Annual Leave - opens Monday 4th December \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

It is key that, in terms of mental health and wellbeing, we use our entitlement to annual leave for time away from work and the rest that we all need. As part of this, it is important that our annual leave is adequately spread across the calendar year to avoid workload

3.22. **Accessibility:** To meet our Public Sector Equality Duty and create equity in the experience of our internal communication platforms, we seek to continuously improve the design of the intranet to increase accessibility. This includes the use of alternative text on images, selective use of PDFs (which cannot be read by screen readers) and choice of graphics, images and colour. We also ensure heading text is set up correctly, adding plain text beside infographics for ease of reading, minimising the use of text over

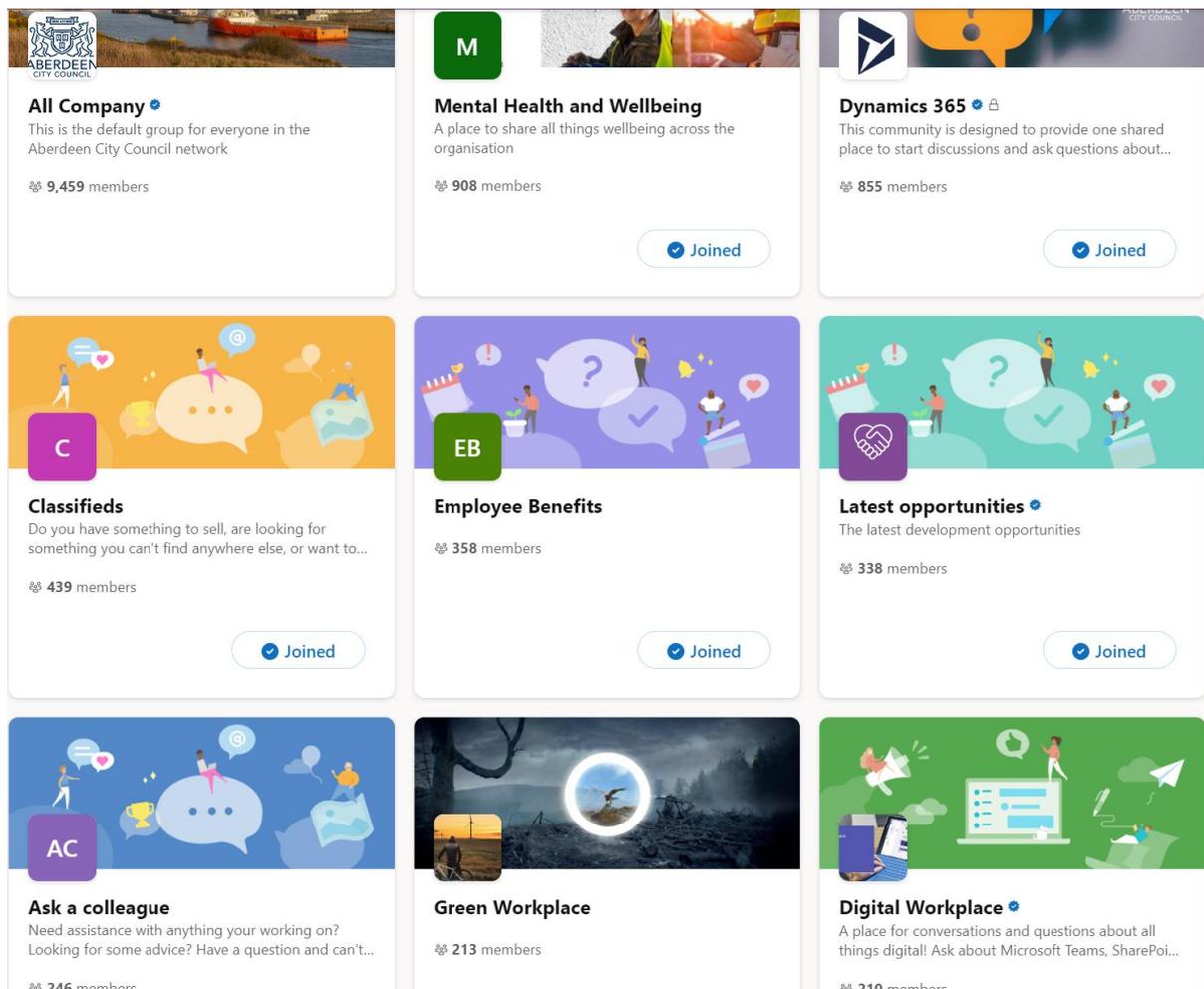
images and using clear fonts with high colour contrasts. Additionally, videos and recordings include closed captions and the option to download transcripts.

- 3.23. We are creating an accessibility hub on the intranet. This is a single area of information that covers all accessibility features that exist on our intranet, website and within all the Microsoft programmes we use.
- 3.24. **Paper Newsletter:** whilst Viva Engage enables us to increase the speed and measure the impact of communications, the paper-based newsletter continues to play a useful role in communication and engagement with our frontline colleagues. Feedback from union colleagues has identified that this remains a popular and effective means of communication with frontline colleagues. So, the content for frontline newsletters is co-designed with the services to ensure a useful and relevant combination of service-specific good news stories, and corporately available resources, such as wellbeing support, development opportunities and council-wide news. These are available digitally and in print at depots. A 'Transformation Special' newsletter was also made available to communicate and engage with frontline employees on the proposed organisation redesign.

Voice

- 3.25. Employee voice is the facility for employees to express their opinions, concerns, suggestions, or feedback to the organisation about issues or decisions that affect them. Employee voice is important during organisational change because:
- It can help to identify and address gaps, risks, and opportunities in the change process and outcomes by tapping into the collective wisdom and experience of the workforce.
 - It can improve the quality of change decisions by providing diverse and relevant perspectives, insights, and ideas from frontline staff.
 - It can reduce negative emotions and help to manage reactions of employees to the change by allowing them to express their feelings, concerns, and needs at each stage.
 - It can increase the acceptance and commitment of employees to the change by giving them a sense of ownership, involvement, and empowerment.
 - It can foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation by stimulating creativity, learning, and collaboration among employees.
 - It can support the well-being and resilience of employees by creating a positive and supportive work environment where they feel valued, respected, and heard. It can also help to reduce stress, burnout, and turnover by addressing the root causes of dissatisfaction, frustration, and resistance to the change.
- 3.26. It is equally important that, when employees take the time to share their feedback, there is acknowledgement of this through a personalised response where possible, or a playback of the findings from the engagement – and transparency about what will be done or has been done as a result of their input.

- 3.27. We have a wide variety of established and well-used corporate employee voice mechanisms at Aberdeen City Council – formal and informal, open and anonymous - so that employees can raise issues, questions or concerns at any time in a way that is safe, direct, transparent and participative with any and many employees able to join the discussion.
- 3.28. **Viva Engage** is our most open employee voice platform, with over 60 employee communities. The 'All Company' community is our main corporate communication channel and not only enables us to communicate directly with all employees – it also facilitates two-way communication, where employees can ask any follow up questions for clarifications. It provides us the opportunity to gain a temperature check on how employees are reacting to news posts, as they can use emojis to indicate their response to a news post. Where an employee asks a question or provides feedback on any of our corporate channels, the Internal Communications team will always collaborate across the council to seek an informative response, before responding openly on Viva Engage to facilitate group learning to the question.
- 3.29. The majority of Viva Engage communities are very much employee-owned and provide an unfiltered forum for employee voice and opinion. This facilitates collective problem solving, self-help from employees reducing demand on our service desks, and builds cohesion and sense of community across our diverse and dispersed workforce. It creates a culture and climate of trust, respect, and openness that encourages and values employee voice.



3.30. **Employee Surveys:** to ensure that employees also have a safe and secure platform to share more confidential feedback, there are also targeted employee surveys to support specific change interventions – and also wider corporate initiatives. Irrespective of the scale of the survey, summarised feedback is always presented back to the leaders of the change (for example Chief Officers) to agree actions and next steps, and then to the group surveyed, so that they know that they have been heard, their feedback considered, and what actions are being taken as a result.

3.31. For an organisation-wide survey, the intranet is used to present results so that everyone can see how their views fit into the bigger picture. Rather than take a traditional, ‘you said, we did’ approach to presenting results– we seek to empower employees to take action through ‘Me, We and us’ – which sets out for all employees:

- Me: the things I can control
- We: the things we work together to achieve
- Us: The things that enable us to do our jobs.

3.32. By presenting the results of employee voice interventions in this way, it means that we can inspire employees to take action at an individual level during a change process (‘Me’), provide ideas and opportunities for them to collaborate with each other to make change happen (‘We’), and provide

clarity on the aspects of their working life that they may have less direct control over or input into, or which may require committee decisions, business cases, funding or approval from others.

3.33. The 'Me, We, Us' approach to presenting employee voice results to employees at a corporate level can be seen demonstrated in [the results of our 'Future of Work' survey](#), which was undertaken in 2020/21 to understand the employee reaction to the enforced changes to the way we work, as a result of the pandemic.

3.34. **Employee Networks:** play a key role in many of the pillars in our approach to change:

- **Communication:** Networks can do peer-cascade of messages in a way that is more relatable than corporate communications.
- **Training:** People trained up become champions that can then deliver training to their cluster and service area
- **Empowering Managers:** For Networks to flourish, they need members with supportive managers who endorse time away from work to support corporate initiatives. But in return, they can support their managers to rollout initiatives.
- **Co-creation:** They play a role in collaboration and building new ideas.
- **Voice:** They provide a forum for feedback – more established employee networks can have a sense of trust and developed relationships, so they can be a highly valuable forum for gathering honest and thoughtful feedback. They also collect, provide and return feedback on behalf of their cluster or service.

3.35. Highly successful examples of employee networks at Aberdeen City Council include:

- **Digital Champions**
- **Equality Ambassadors**
- **Green Champions**
- **Leadership Forum**
- **Mental Health First Aiders**

3.36. These employee networks are frequently, though not always, facilitated by a member of People & Organisational Development – to ensure alignment with corporate initiatives and so that ideas and feedback can be taken forward to improve these. They are often a hybrid of face-to-face meetings, Teams meetings and ongoing digital communities on **Microsoft Teams**, to enable ongoing communication and collaboration between meetings.

3.37. A more formal way of gathering employee voice is through consultation. Our **Consultation Protocol** has been developed in consultation with all recognised trade unions to ensure consistency of approach and ensure the Council has an organisation-wide consultation framework as part of its transparent and open ways of working and it is this that underpins our approach to formal consultation when undertaking organisational change.

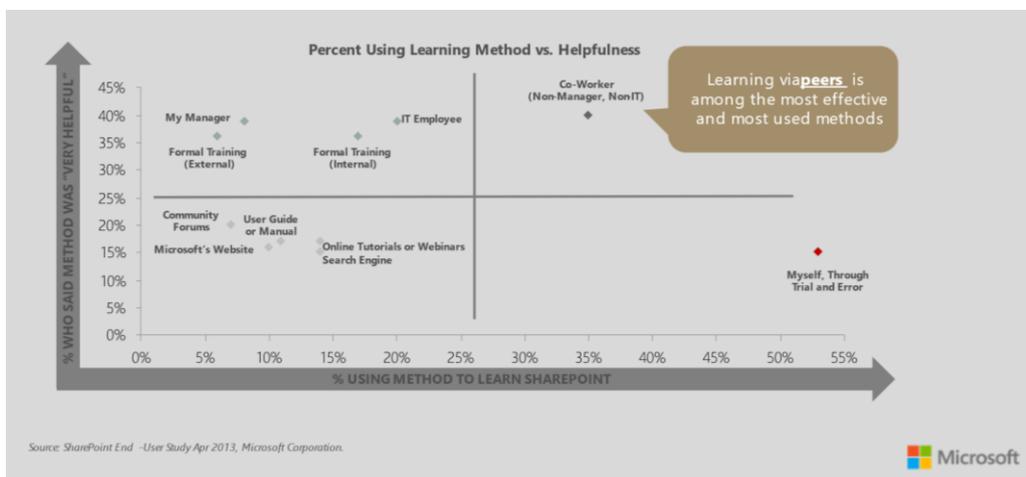
- 3.38. A full review of the Consultation Protocol was undertaken during 2022 in collaboration with trade union colleagues to ensure that this was up to date and provided clarity on expectations. An overview of the Adoption and Change Management (ACM) template and the 7 Pillars was shared with the trade unions at this time, providing assurance of the areas and activities to be considered and included to ensure successful change, with a focus on early involvement and engagement of employees prior to reaching the stage of formal consultation. An enhanced consultation resource pack, inclusive of manager checklist, How To guide and template letters, has also been introduced via a new [Consultation Protocol SharePoint page](#) launched in October 2023, which forms part of a wider suite of resources and tools on organisational change, of which includes our ACM Plan.
- 3.39. Trade Unions also provide a valuable means of elevating voice for their members and their reactions to proposed changes, through regular Director/Union Engagement (DUE) meetings. These happen once a week, and are attended by at least one director, the Chief Officer of People & Organisational Development, the Employee Relations & Wellbeing Manager, and Case Work Lead as well as representatives from all the trade unions. The Chief Executive will also attend at regular points across the year. The purpose of the meetings is to allow for information from both sides to be shared at an early stage, for informal discussions to take place on a wide variety of topics and for the directors to hear first-hand of any concerns the unions are finding their members are raising. They have proved extremely helpful in building mutual trust and respect and have been very well received by both the Corporate Management Team and Unions.

Training

- 3.40. Training is the fourth of the seven pillars in our approach to supporting employees through change. It is an essential and strategic component of landing change successfully and effectively. Training can enhance the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of employees and managers to cope with change, improve their performance, and increase their commitment and engagement. Training can also foster a culture of learning and innovation, which can facilitate continuous improvement and adaptation.
- 3.41. Training can help employees and managers understand the reasons, goals, and processes of change, and how it will affect them. Training can also provide them with the necessary skills and tools to deal with the challenges and opportunities of change, such as communication, problem-solving, decision-making, teamwork – or any specific new technical skills required by the change, for example in adoption of digital change. Training can also help them cope with the emotional and psychological aspects of change, such as fear, anger, frustration, and resistance.
- 3.42. The People Development team has developed a multi-faceted approach to training in support of organisational change.
- **People Development led training interventions:** for more advanced behaviour-change workshops that require coaching and facilitation, the People Development team deliver sessions directly to employees who

play a critical role in the change. They deliver the ACC Approach to Leading People through Change – this is both an open programme in our Inspiring Leadership programme for Service Managers and is also a targeted intervention for managers at all levels as part of a specific change project, so that managers are clear on their role in change and can carry it out effectively.

- **Subject-matter led:** where a change project requires employees to learn skills to adapt to new ways of working, then the People Development team work closely with our in-house experts to bring this expertise out into the organisation. We support them with this by enlisting them on our ‘Designing and Delivering Effective Presentations and Training’ course, coach them directly to build their skills and confidence in delivering training courses, and co-design engaging training interventions with them. Then co-ordinating and promoting their training intervention. Specific examples of this include Climate Literacy for Service Managers – designed and delivered by the Sustainability Team; Integrated Impact Assessments – our Public Sector Equality Duty – designed and delivered by the Equalities team and Legal colleagues. The added benefit of this is that it builds the skills of a wide range of colleagues in presenting and responding to challenge from course participants – which is in itself a form of engagement.
- **Peer led:** We have also established a highly successful model of training where colleagues across the organisation take responsibility for upskilling their colleagues in new ways of working. This has been identified by Microsoft as the most effective way of building skills during change, as employees rate ‘learning from their co-worker’ as their preferred way of learning.



3.43. This method involves either self or Chief Officer nominated champions spending time with the People Development team to gain their ‘learning’ for the week/month, then having a week/month to share their learning with their peers in the way that works best for them. In this way we have successfully upskilled substantial numbers of employees – far more than could be reached if only the People Development team were delivering training directly – in the following change projects:

- **Digital Super Champs** – for the Microsoft Teams Cloud Navigator Programme. This was recognised by the Scottish Government’s Digital

Office as best practice in upskilling a workforce to respond to change and was presented by Council Officers to an audience of public sector organisations throughout Scotland. It has also been recognised by Microsoft and has been presented by Council Officers to local authorities across the UK.

- **Dynamics 365 Coaches** – for the Dynamics 365 programme in Social Work.
- **Green Champions** – for the Council’s Climate Change Plan.

3.44. **Self-led:** we also curate learning resources to support people through change, that is accessible and available anytime, anywhere. This is available via our eLearning platform, ACC Learn:

- **Understanding Change:** This module is designed for anyone experiencing change – and provides practical steps to embrace change and uncertainty.
- **Supporting Staff to be Resilient:** This module is designed to help managers to support staff through uncertainty and conflict, whilst avoiding burnout.
- **Leading Change:** Aimed at third-tier managers, this digital learning resource supports learners to self-assess their approach to change; covers practical steps to lead through change and manage stress in teams.
- **Stress Awareness for Managers** – This course is to help managers understand and be aware of work-related stress and provide help and advice on how to avoid and minimise its negative impact on staff.
- **Building Resilience** – This course explores what we mean by resilience, stress and pressure. It allows managers and leaders to not only understand personal resilience and pressure but more importantly what these might mean for their teams and how to support those experiencing excess pressure and lower levels of resilience.

Empowering Managers

3.45. Managers are important during organisational change because they act as the link between the senior management and the frontline employees, and they have the authority, responsibility, and influence to facilitate change within their teams and departments. They are required to reinforce the change at a local level by role-modelling the required ways of working themselves, coaching employees directly, managing resistance and building resilience. Managers need to develop and demonstrate various skills and competencies that enable them to communicate, engage, motivate, support, monitor, evaluate, and model change effectively. By doing so, managers can contribute to the success and sustainability of the organisational change and enhance their own and their employees’ performance and satisfaction.

3.46. To support our managers to effectively undertake this role, we first clarify the expectation in the Capability Framework – where change management is a core capability for all People Managers with a range of indicators.

- 3.47. We then provide the means for them to develop these skills through the [Online Change Management Toolkit](#), to enable managers to follow best practice when conducting their own local changes.
- 3.48. ACC Approach to Leading People Through Change workshop: a training course, available face-to-face and virtually, is designed around our ACC Approach to Change and is aimed at people managers who manage teams affected by change and provides managers with the soft skills and practical tools and methodology required to support or lead change effectively.
- 3.49. Our 'Leader and Manager as Coach' workshop is also essential for all service managers and provides a structured model for managers to follow to manage the performance of their employees during change.
- 3.50. And to support them with their own resilience and to support others during change, there is Mental Health Awareness for Managers: a course designed for anyone who is responsible for staff, to provide guidance for supporting employees with their wellbeing, including common mental health problems, reducing stigma and bias, applying emotional intelligence, signposting appropriately, making reasonable adjustments, self-care and recovery.

Co-creation

- 3.51. Co-creating is a collaborative approach to designing and implementing change in an organisation. It involves engaging and empowering multiple stakeholders, such as employees, customers, partners, and leaders, to co-create solutions that address their needs and aspirations.
- 3.52. It is an important tool in supporting employees through change because it provides them ownership over collectively designing solutions to issues or challenges.
- 3.53. It ensures that the 'future state' is designed with employees in mind. This not only improves the quality and efficiency of services, but increases employee engagement, builds pride in the end product and increases the sustainability of a change.
- 3.54. Recent examples of this in practice are:
 - **Dynamics365 for Social Work:** this project to digitalise processes within and across social work was very much led by a coalition of social workers who stepped up to become 'Product Owners'. These Product Owners worked closely with colleagues from Microsoft to bring their own expertise and insights about the way social workers work – and design the online platform around their needs, and also build into the product checkpoints to ensure compliance with legislation.
 - **Service Design Champions:** officers from across the council are being trained in the Scottish Government's 'Scottish Approach to Service Design,' which seeks to ensure that 'the people of Scotland are supported and empowered to actively participate in the definition, design and delivery of

their public services (from policy making to live service improvement)’. This approach has already been used internally to reform services across Customer Experience and Housing – with plans to extend this in the new year. By upskilling council officers with hands-on experience of delivering services in the Scottish Approach to Service Design, we actively engage them in the change process, give them ownership over the new ways of working – but also critically engage citizens in the redesign too, ensuring that the public services we provide are better focused on meeting their needs.

- **Organisational Redesign 2023:** In response to the instruction from Full Council to the Chief Executive to report back with the recommended TOM 1.2 amended structure, Service Managers have participated throughout 2023 through face-to-face events in co-creating a new organisational structure, considering the lived experiences of the needs of our services and the challenges within the current structure.

Measurement

3.55. To ensure that our initiatives to support employees through change are successful and sustainable, it is essential to measure their impact, outcomes and effectiveness. So ‘Measurement’ is the final pillar in our approach to change management. This measurement can be either quantitative – such as through collecting and analysing performance and productivity data; or qualitative – such as through sentiment surveys and pulse checks. Measurement can help us to:

- Assess readiness for change of a group of employees.
- Use [ADKAR](#) to understand and identify what aspect of change is a barrier or risk.
- Monitor and track the progress and results of change initiatives and compare them with the baseline and the targets.
- Target or improve communications, support, training etc to specific teams or groups of employees.
- Learn from the feedback and data and make adjustments and improvements as needed.

3.56. Measurement is not a one-time activity, but a continuous and iterative process that is embedded into our change projects.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Any training needs arising will be funded by the Corporate Training budget held within People and Organisational Development.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The approach to internal communications and employee engagement outlined in this Report assists the Council fulfil its statutory duties to inform and consult with its employees.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No known environmental implications arising from this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	None		L	Yes
Compliance	None		L	Yes
Operational	None		L	Yes
Financial	None		L	Yes
Reputational	None		L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None		L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>Valuing our Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that the Council depends upon its staff to deliver the services it provides and believe the Council must properly reward, train and support its staff. Engage regularly with staff and trade union representatives. <p>These proposals take forward the enabling strategies and transformation programme articulated within the TOM 1.2, and form part of the next steps for delivery of the outcomes and commitments.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	Our approach to Internal Communications and Employee Engagement supports all stretch outcomes through providing a platform and methodology for the communication and engagement with the workforce on the LOIP.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	As above.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	As above.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	It is confirmed by Interim Chief Officer, Lindsay MacInnes, that no integrated impact assessment is required for this report. This report does however link to the existing draft IIA of Organisational Redesign.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Workforce Delivery Plan](#)
- 10.2 [Job Families and the Capability Framework](#)
- 10.3 [Workforce Plan Progress Update](#)
- 10.4 [The Four Enablers - Engage for Success](#)
- 10.5 [The Scottish Approach to Service Design \(SAtSD\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

11. APPENDICES

- A Chief Officer Capability Framework
- B Aspiring Senior Leaders Capability Framework

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Sandie Scott
Title	People Development Manager
Email Address	sascott@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	Find me on Microsoft Teams 😊

Appendix A: Chief Officer Capability Framework

Core Capabilities: Chief Officers

1. Delivering outcomes for our customers	2. Change & Improvement	3. Working with Others	4. Accountability	5. Care
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates involvement in setting the strategic vision and outcomes for the organisation Effectively involves appropriate stakeholders internally and externally (multi -agency) when developing strategic programmes Demonstrates personal commitment to agreed organisational outcomes and role models this for others Communicates clearly and in a structured way, persuading others effectively Leads through active communication, motivates and inspires people to achieve shared outcomes for the organisation Reviews services, undertaking radical transformation when needed, applying the principles of Design Thinking to service redesign. Considers the wider context and the long term impact of a decision Consistently demonstrates exemplary standards of integrity, honesty and fairness, acts with moral courage and ensures the decent thing is done. Uses an understanding of the volume, nature and costs of demand on services, the council and its partners to manage demand and reduce costs. Operates with a strategic purpose, clearly linking personal and team activity to the agreed strategic aims and outcomes of the organisation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Leads and supports a culture of data driven decision making throughout the council and with partners Uses Improvement techniques to build a culture of continuous and sustained service delivery improvement Proactively leads transformation within the organisation, acting as an effective project sponsor when needed. Adopts and champions the latest technology to allow the organisation to move forward Actively engages with the market within which our council services operate, to develop its capability Harnesses a culture of innovation and positive disruption by encouraging original thought, radical solutions to break new ground in striving for opportunities to improve council performance. Sets the culture for risk appetite in which I and those I lead analyse and mitigate against risk when exploring opportunities and making decisions. Offers a leadership view on any topic that comes before ECMT, in service of shared agreed outcomes, regardless of professional background. Makes time to engage in activities which relate to their personal growth and resilience as a leader, encouraging constructive feedback from others. Works as a preventor of demand 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitates system-wide collaboration to achieve improved outcomes for the people, place and economy Motivates and successfully manages multi-functional programme teams Takes a team-orientated approach to problem -solving and decision making - drawing internal and external stakeholders together to agree how they can most usefully contribute to achieving important goals Deals with the complexities, challenges and tensions that emerge in shared leadership - not shying away from tough conversations Works proactively and effectively across all elected members to support, challenge, advise and drive towards our LOIP outcomes Actively identifies "political issues" which Elected Members will wish to know about and to have input into, and facilitates effective engagement of Elected Members at all levels. Leads and facilitates effective negotiation with a diverse range of partners across private, public and third sectors Works effectively in partnership with Trade Unions and resolves conflict effectively Provides constructive feedback and uses radical candour to challenge and support others in service of agreed organisational outcomes Puts the needs of the organisation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Takes an active role in the commissioning cycle and the balancing of the budget including identifying budget balancing initiatives Demonstrates mutual accountability with partners for shared outcomes – holding others to task and demonstrating personal delivery shared outcomes Ensures the services for which I have responsibility are complying with data protection and information governance requirements Creates clear, comprehensive and outcomes -focused delivery plans Understands all elements of ACCs financial regulations and leads sound financial management My emergency planning responsibilities Reacts to issues as they arise and decisively deals with crisis situations Ensures clarity of expectation and holds to task individuals who are not delivering agreed outcomes, tackling poor performance and inappropriate or unproductive behaviours when needed. Makes environmental sustainability 'business as usual' Demonstrates accountability to Elected Members through effective use of governance structures 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently acts and speaks in a way that is positive, motivating and encouraging. Takes time to notice, recognise and celebrate the good work of others - both in one -to-one chats and on an open forum, for own area and across the wider organisation Values people voices which is demonstrated by engaging, encouraging them to share their perspectives, listens and takes action . Understands the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion agenda and current best practice and actively champions this across the organisation and with partners Takes care of their people - takes active steps to promote health and wellbeing initiatives. Self-reflects and takes care of own wellbeing, so that they can take care of others. Displays empathy and genuine concern - takes time to find out how challenges and pressures feel from the perspective of others Empowers others, uses coaching techniques to increase the capability and confidence of team members Invests and cares about the individuals, development, work and collective leadership aims of ECMT Promotes successes across the organisation and regularly communicates the successes and

Appendix B: Aspiring Senior Leaders Capability Framework

What are the capabilities of a potential Chief Officer?

1. Delivering outcomes for our customers	2. Change & Improvement	3. Working with Others	4. Accountability	5. Care
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrates visionary and strategic thinking 2. Engages and influences stakeholders 3. Considers the wider context and the long term impact of a decision 4. Communicates clearly and in a structured way, persuading others effectively 5. Consistently demonstrates exemplary standards of integrity, honesty and fairness, acts with moral courage and ensures the decent thing is done. 6. Connects and inspires others behind shared strategic outcomes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shows personal initiative in transformation and digital leadership 2. Makes confident evidenced based decisions on data 3. Analyses and mitigates against risk when exploring opportunities and making decisions. 4. Demonstrates original thought, seeks and identifies opportunities for creative solutions, is willing to consider radical solutions to break new ground in striving for opportunities to improve council performance. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understands and adapts to the political environment in which they work 2. Builds effective relationships with partners to achieve shared outcomes 3. Takes a collaborative approach to problems-solving and decision making 4. Provides constructive feedback and uses radical candour to challenge and support others 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensures compliance with governance 2. Demonstrates sound financial management of balancing the budget 3. Reacts to issues as they arise and decisively deals with crisis situations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Empowers and encourages others to increase their capability and confidence 2. Notices, recognises and celebrates the good work of the council and colleagues 3. Displays empathy and genuine concern- takes time to find out how challenges and pressures feel from the perspective of others 4. Shows self-awareness, is committed to their own personal development 5. Sets high personal goals and is ambitious for progression 6. Able to be resilient e.g. understanding and acceptance when things go against you