

REPORT TO:	Appointments Committee 27 April 2022
SUBJECT:	Positive Action Talent Development Programmes
LEAD OFFICER:	Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Callton Young Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance
WARDS:	All
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

The report sets out the council’s work to develop our internal talent, using positive action talent development programmes to improve workforce equality, diversity, and inclusion, and in turn to improve services to residents.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2020-2024

Include here a brief statement on how the recommendations address one or more of the Council’s priorities:

- *The talent development programmes aim to improve and enhance equality, diversity, and inclusion as this will help support the council’s focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough*

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report and costs of a from the talent development programmes will be met from within existing budgets with expenditure and commissioning overseen by the Learning and Development Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To:

- 1.1 note the report and the recommendations for reactivating talent development programmes to support the personal development and advancement of staff to create a more representative, diverse, and inclusive workforce, who are skilled to meet residents’ needs; and
- 1.2 Provide views and feedback on the proposed talent development programmes.

1. DETAILS

1.1. Background

1.2 Early work to enhance talent development in the workforce commenced in late 2021 with the launch of the 'Crossing the Threshold' culture change programme initiative – it is expected this initiative will further inform decisions about Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) learning and development; with the first development being a 'Valuing and Embracing Difference' programme to support managers and equip them with greater skills in managing their diverse teams. The organisation had twice previously sought to commission this type of programme in 2018 and 2020; with the process being halted on both occasions for budgetary reasons

1.3 Current work in progress, in collaboration with Employment, Skills and Economics, includes: -

- (a) Designing a future Leaders' apprenticeship programme aimed at anyone seeking personal advancement opportunities. The council is consulting LSBU and Roehampton University about their leadership apprenticeship programmes to shape some of the modules; and the aim is to deliver a leadership apprenticeship programme by the autumn of 2022, supporting the council's talent into leadership roles and developing our own talent pools
- (b) Creating a Black Asian and Minority Ethnic apprenticeship programme at level 7, designed for those aspiring to be senior leaders and to develop diverse talent pipelines for senior management roles
- (c) Scoping the apprenticeship offer around career aspirations
- (d) Offering 1-2-1 talent development discussion sessions for our colleagues
- (e) Creating leadership talks from internal and external public/private sector representatives for our internal apprentices (all of which will be designed to raise aspirations) and inspire lifelong learning. We will work with our networks to deliver these talks, with CALAT shaping the plan.

1.4 Alongside formal talent development, the council will also develop talent through other methods, with scope to consider opportunities for development and growing our own leaders as part of an overall talent management scheme, other than formal training, such as:

- (a) Creating a shadow CMT to develop leadership skills
- (b) Reverse mentoring
- (c) Strengthen shadowing opportunities
- (d) Reinvigorate our mentoring offer i.e., offer for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic staff, including the pan-London leadership development programme, utilising this as a positive action intervention
- (e) Succession planning initiatives, identifying talent from the organisation and disadvantaged groups for areas of future workforce need

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1.5 Over the past two years the council has taken extensive endeavours to create diverse/inclusive and trained interview panels, with that work is ongoing. This was reiterated in January 2022 in the weekly message from the Chief Executive. Improving consistency of recruitment practice across the organisation will remain a focus for the coming year to ensure appropriate positive action measures are reflected in talent acquisition and talent development. HR will be undertaking spot checks to ensure appropriately diverse panels are in place and will take corrective action together with senior line management, where there is a lack of compliance.

1.6 Future development and considerations

In terms of positive action interventions in the future, it will be a pre-requisite that:

- a. each programme responds to specific issues linked to the identified target group.
- b. the identified target group should have a representative voice to spell out the rationale for a particular course or programme.
- c. the programme should be designed from the basis of a strong evidence base, e.g. workforce data, recruitment data, specific sector/profession insights.
- d. It will also be important that any interventions integrate with the larger, overarching People and Culture Transformation strategic plan, which also aligns with the Croydon Renewal Plan; so they take place in a structured, planned, coordinated and timely way.

1.7 With a smaller workforce and flatter structures, the potential for career opportunities will be more limited than in the past. Therefore, if traditional routes to progress or develop, such as promotion, are limited, the organisation will need to promote career progression differently, and offer alternative skills pathways for professional development, aligned to organisational design and clear career pathways. Two initial reports (i) positive action talent development and (ii) skills and career pathways, were presented to the March EDI Board and further work to develop a systemic approach to talent development and advancement will be integral to the new People and Culture Transformation Strategy.

1.8 Line managers have a key role and responsibility for supporting the development of their team members; both through our recently released formal, specifically targeted training offer for managers, and through informal opportunities to learn, such as shadowing, involvement in new activities, stretch objectives, etc. This expectation is now reflected in our appraisal as an objective for all people managers.

1.9 In addition, the People and Culture Transformation strategy will include a talent management scheme and needs to reflect our organisational intentions for all staff with a particular emphasis on under-represented groups, i.e. Black

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Asian and Ethnic Minority staff, women, young people, and disabled staff, as key underrepresented protected characteristic groups.

- 1.10 With increasingly fewer resources, we need to prioritise talent development initiatives, as well ensure opportunities for career movement is viable once the talent programmes are developed and the participants have developed as a result. The latter point has been absent in the past, a key lesson learned, and a challenge will continue as the council's establishment diminishes.
- 1.11 Integral to the talent development programmes will be the articulation of a psychological contract making clear to everyone participating in advance what the deal is and to manage staff expectations realistically.

2 CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Initial consultation has been via the council's EDI Board including senior managers, staff network chairs, and cultural ambassadors, with a report to considered at the March 2022 meeting of the EDI Board.
- 2.2 This report also serves as a means of consulting the appointments committee to ensure members' views are factored into the ongoing development of talent programmes.

3 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

- 3.1 All costs have been met within existing budgets and the Learning and Development Board has been established to ensure effective commissioning and expenditure controls are in place.

Approved by: Nish Popat for Director of Finance

4 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the interim Director of Legal Services that the report is for noting and there are no additional legal implications arising.
- 4.2 Approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer

5 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 5.1 The HR impact is covered in the main body of the report
- 5.2 Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer

6 EQUALITIES IMPACT

6.1 The equalities impact is addressed in the main body of the report.

6.2 Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer

7 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

7.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

7.4.1. The recommendations contained within this report will not directly involve the processing of data

Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer

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APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Appendix one – detailed analysis of previous positive action talent development programmes

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Positive action talent development report,

Appendix One – details of previous talent development programmes

Positive action programmes 2015 - 2020

From 2015-20 the L&OD team developed and delivered a range of activities to support the organisation's goal to improve the representation of staff from minority groups in management roles. The representation of women in senior management roles increased significantly during the early years; while the same level of success has not been achieved with Black Asian and Minority Ethnic senior managers, evidence shows that career progress was achieved by many who completed the programme, but many were lateral or vertical moves and most exited the organisation because they were unable to see vertical opportunities for them at the council.

The organisation hit a hiatus in 2020 with the dual challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and later in the year significant budget constraints, which stopped delivery of the programmes that were in place, or ones that were to be commissioned.

Prior to that time, in the period 2015 - 2020 three distinct leadership programmes had been designed specifically to address the issues of under-representation within the council's management workforce:

- Realising your Potential and Career Development Programme for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Aspiring Managers
- Women's Aspiring Leadership Development Programme
- Authentic Leadership program for staff living with disability

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees' leadership development

Context

- The need to develop and implement a new positive action leadership offer for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff was originally set out in the People Strategy 2013-15.
- The rationale for developing the aspiring leadership programme included:
 - Black Asian and Minority Ethnic staff were under-represented at management levels, particularly at senior levels where there were only three Black Asian and Minority Ethnic directors out of 23 (13.04%) and 1 out of 6 (17%) on the top team.
 - The desire as an organisation to grow its own talent.
 - Drive from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Network Sponsor and the network's members.
 - Boosting the performance of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates during interviews (internal and external candidates).
 - It was the right thing to do, given the issues voiced, the concerns needing to be addressed and the inequalities evidenced in the demographic data.

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- The Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Staff Network, recently renamed the Race Equality Network, contributed to and supported this important development initiative and feedback from a Black Asian and Minority Ethnic staff Survey in late 2015 provided additional ideas about content and delivery methods.
- An external facilitator, David Weaver, was commissioned to develop and deliver the 3 core modules, with input from a selection of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic managers.

Realising Potential Programme for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Aspiring Managers

- A fundamental feature of the programme design was that it was a phased programme comprising a variety of events over a number of months, rather than being a single block of training days. The programme included 3 one-day modules, two-hour practical workshops between the modules to reinforce learning and focus on the next module and recommended additional self-directed resources available on Croydon Learning. One of the modules included a focus on providing recruitment interviewing guidance and practise.
- This 5-6 month blended positive action programme was launched in 2016, facilitated by an experienced Black Asian and Minority Ethnic facilitator and supported by an internal consultant who acted as co deliverer and a coach.
- An outline of the programme content is in Appendix A.
- Eight cohorts completed the programme from September 2016 to March 2020, with up to 18 places available on each.
- 125 participants started with 111 completing their programme (88.8% completion rate).
- The programme delivered tangible benefits to individuals and the organisation. Three participants gained multiple success, meaning that 45.9% of participants achieved some form of career progression within or outside the council.
- Whilst capable people will achieve success, we believe the programme had supported participants to apply for roles and succeed at interview.
- Demand for this programme had been declining with the latter programmes needing significant additional effort to promote so that participant numbers made the programmes viable.
- As of June 2020, career development and progression success for the programme was:

Started programme	Completed programme	New Job / Contract	Interim Role	Secondment	Shadowing	External Role
125	111 (88.8%)	24	2	19	7	9

Leadership Effectiveness Programme

- In addition to the above programme, a similar development activity aimed at more senior Black Asian and Minority Ethnic managers was piloted in 2016.
- The target audience was Black Asian and Minority Ethnic managers who had attended the (then) senior leadership programme, 'Leading the Croydon Way' (LTCW). Of the 38 Black Asian and Minority Ethnic LTCW participants invited to attend the pilot Leadership Effectiveness Programme, only 5 signed up for and

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completed the 2-day programme.

Women's leadership development

Context

- As with the aspiring leadership programme, the need to develop and implement a new positive action aspiring leadership offer for women was originally set out in the People Strategy 2013-15.

Women's Aspiring Leadership Development Programme

- This was an 8-month phased programme, using a range of learning and development approaches. Core topics were delivered through 3 structured 1-day workshops supported by female line managers sharing their experiences and part-day facilitated sessions. In addition, eLearning courses were available via Croydon Learning.
- The programme was supplemented by participants having the opportunity to receive mentoring support or work shadowing, developing a rigorous PDP and completing a 360° review to increase self-awareness.
- A female external facilitator was commissioned to develop and deliver the core modules of the first programme, in 2016. After this, our internal L&OD team took responsibility for managing and delivering this blended programme.
- An outline of the programme content is in Appendix B.

- 68 women started, while 63 women completed the Women's Leadership Development programme between 2016 and 2020 (92.6% completion rate)
- Based on the cohorts that were surveyed in April 2018 to check career development:
 - 32% had gone on to secure new job roles within the council.
 - 34% had gone on to take up interim, job secondments within the council.
 - 92% had stayed with the council.

- As of late 2020, career development and progression success for the programme was:

Started programme	Completed programme	New Job / Contract	Interim Role	Secondment	Network chair	External Role
68	63 (92.6%)	19	14	2	3	3

Authentic Leadership program for staff living with disability

Context

- Staff living with disabilities are underrepresented at the higher levels of leadership and management within the council. This gap has been recognised resulting in positive action being taken to offer a leadership training program. Specifically, to address the learning needs of those living with disability in the organisation.

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- The rationale for this program was supported by the council's 'Workforce Development Plan 2017-2018. In addition, the 'Workforce strategy (2019-2022) Priority 3', demonstrates a commitment to a leadership program for those staff with disabilities.

Authentic Leadership program for staff living with disability

- This aspiring leadership programme seeks to support and encourage staff living with a disability or long-term health condition to gain confidence to move into management and leadership roles.
- We partnered with an external consultant to develop this programme and consulted members of the staff Disability Network. The intention was for joint delivery between us and our external provider on a train the trainer basis enabling future in house delivery of the program following a pilot event.
- The pilot programme was scheduled to run between April and December 2020, followed by a thorough evaluation activity being completed before further programmes being scheduled.
- The pilot programme was not implemented in response to a directive to cease all training courses that were not mandatory or statutory to fulfil local authority commitments.
- An outline of the programme content is in Appendix C.

Other development initiatives

CALAT aspiring leadership programme

Context

- From 2019, due to financial constraints, along with pressure from Members to demonstrate better utilisation of the council's funding of the Apprentice Levy; L&OD partnered with CALAT to develop and deliver a Level 3 Team Leader/Supervisor Apprenticeship. This is a generic, foundation leadership development programme which is designed for supervisory or first-line managers to attend.
- At that time, consideration had been given to developing a core aspiring leadership programme that was accessible for all staff, rather than only to staff from protected characteristics groups, and which would provide a foundation of core leadership skills.
- It was envisaged that this programme would encompass generic and useful leadership skills; that could be supplemented with separate modules for under-represented groups, e.g., Black Asian and Minority Ethnic, Disabled and/or female staff.
- These modules could have a particular focus on 'what's different' being in these groups. In addition, providing support with applying for new roles and navigating the recruitment process could be an additional module available to all participants on the programme. However, no further work has been undertaken in 2020 to create such modules.

Recruitment and selection e-Workshop

- The practical Recruitment and Selection e-Workshop has been running in its current form since January 2020. As at 19/01/2022, 326 participants have completed the training, with 32 booked to attend future events.
- The revised content follows a new Recruitment and Selection Policy that outlined several mandatory requirements and changes to the procedures to support a fairer and impartial recruitment process.
- Positive action is explained, including explaining the difference between positive action and positive discrimination. This section of the training focuses on equality and diversity in the recruitment process.
- Participants are advised of the council's 'Disability Confident Employer' status and that we use the 'double tick' standard in our advertising as positive action to encourage an underrepresented group such as people with disability to apply.
- Participants are reminded that it is important to remember that positive discrimination (as opposed to positive action) is unlawful in the UK.
- Participants are reminded that the council collects and analyses equality monitoring data for employees and therefore they have access to the Workforce Profile via the council's intranet.

Unconscious bias eLearning

- Two eLearning course were developed in 2017 and launched in 2018. The 'Unconscious Bias – An Introduction' course, designed for staff and 'Unconscious Bias – In Practice', designed for managers. Both courses were mandatory training at the time.
- The managers' course had a focus on work-based decision-making situations where bias might occur. The seven areas covered are: recruitment and promotion; performance management, appraisal and reward; providing development opportunities; delegating or allocating work; decision-making; in meetings and dealing with residents / customers / partners / suppliers.
- Both courses were updated in 2019.

Alternative flexible development opportunities

- Since 2016 we have had an internal mentoring scheme.
- Mentoring was promoted to participants of the Black Asian and Minority Ethnic and Women's aspiring leadership development programmes. It was established as a brokering service, linking mentees seeking support with potential mentors. The responsibility for driving the process lay with mentees and whilst those that actively sought and gained a mentor benefited from the relationship; a challenge was having sufficient willing mentors to meet the demand.
- In 2017, the mentoring process was re-designed to become more of a self-managed approach. Detailed mentoring guidance was made available on the intranet and the process focused on advising mentees looking at potential mentors to contact them directly to seek their support.
- In 2019 the programme was reviewed, the mentor list was refreshed, and evaluation was undertaken which gave positive feedback highlighting positive impact of the programme.
- The programme was suspended in 2020 due to COVID and changing L&OD priorities to support the organisation. The online access continues to be available

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for all but needs to reviewed and reinitiated.