

Yesterday's meeting of the HR Strategic Delivery Group was brilliant. What we lacked in numbers we made up for in great energy and drive enabling us to make significant progress. I'd like to thank everyone for their contribution, particularly to Siobhan who travelled from Anglesey and Karen who hosted the event. I really enjoy working with you all and always take so much away from our conversations.

For those of you who couldn't make it this time, I think you will find the notes of the meeting of interest when they are completed and circulated.

In summary, we built on the discussions that we had at our initial meeting in January and gave further consideration to HR's role in the transformation of Housing in Wales.

We agreed that each housing association has its own identity, culture and way of doing things and, if this isn't broken, there's no need to fix it. However, we believe that we can be stronger and achieve more if we get behind a common purpose, share our strengths and work together to be innovative. To put this into context, we reflected on the British Army where each soldier has a sense of belonging to their own regiment and every soldier is in the job to serve Queen and country.

We agreed that the outcomes of our work over the next 12 months would be:

1. Culture we will determine what distinguishes us (Housing Wales) from others – our shared purpose, values, beliefs and way of being.
2. Brand having defined our culture (who we are), we will establish a clear identity and develop a way to present this, which can be used for recruitment, marketing, engagement with others etc.
3. Leadership we will define the leadership required to inspire and lead others to deliver our purpose, conduct a SWOT analysis of current leadership and identify the gap so that we can develop a plan for bridging it.
4. Skills we will identify the core skills (and behaviours) needed for the future in order to deliver our purpose, conduct a SWOT analysis of current skills, identify the gap and develop a plan for bridging it.

Caroline, Phillipa and I are attending the meeting of Strategic Delivery Group Chairs and Vice Chairs on Friday morning and we will share the progress that we have made so far, whilst checking how this aligns with the objectives of the other groups. We will feedback to you.

As we were meeting at Monmouthshire Housing's offices, we took the opportunity to hear from John Keagan (CEO) and learn his views on the role of HR. It was interesting to compare this to the views shared by Ian Thomas (CEO, Trivallis) at our last meeting. We will continue this trend by asking a CEO to speak at every meeting so that we can build our knowledge of the shared/contrasting views whilst ensuring we position ourselves as an enabling group who can, and should, play a key role in the strategic direction of Housing.

With this in mind, we extended a last minute invitation to Stuart Ropke (CEO at CHC) so that we could discuss the Public Accounts Committee's recommendation that Welsh Government (WG) play a key role in ensuring that the pay setting process is robust and that there is appropriate disclosure of Housing Associations' senior management pay. Ian Williams (WG) is attending the CEO's meeting to discuss transparency and accountability and we had learnt that he would be sharing WG's proposals for publishing senior salaries, providing an opportunity for the CEO's to influence WG's thinking on this. It was obvious to us that HR can support these discussions by providing the CEO group with data, information and options. So Stuart accepted our offer to provide a paper on this,

which Donna, Phillipa and I agreed to lead on. We will share this with you so that you can discuss it with your CEO in advance of their meeting.

Important dates for your diary

- 2nd & 3rd May HR & L&D Conference, Swansea
- 20th Sept HR Strategic Delivery Group meeting, North Wales

More details will be sent to you about these events. I really hope you can make it and continue to be a part of the Housing HR movement (!)

Warm wishes

Maxine