

PE1423/D

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Your Ref: PE1423
Our Ref: SM1/210512

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**PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF PE1423
QUESTIONS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Dear Sirs,

I write on behalf of Glasgow City Council to provide a response to Petition 1423, raised by Gordon Hall on behalf of the Unreasonable Learners, which was set out in the Public Petitions Committee letter of 1 May 2012.

If you would like to discuss any of the contents of this response in greater detail then please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours faithfully

Sharon McKechnie
Organisational Development Manager

**PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF PE1423 QUESTIONS
ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS
RESPONSE FROM GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL**

Our people are key to the delivery of services to the citizens of Glasgow and improving skills and capability is a core element of our strategy. During these challenging times where resources are shrinking and demand for improved services is increasing we are committed to taking an inclusive approach to public service delivery by being less bureaucratic and really encouraging ideas from all individuals within the organisation.

Our Shaping the Future Strategy aims to promote innovation and enable staff to work collectively across traditional service boundaries. It encourages staff to be empowered and have permission to make real improvement changes. Although our organisation is complex with a diverse range of responsibilities we believe that it is possible to set a cultural tone that will permeate through to the frontline and encourage all employees to challenge the status quo.

As part of the programme the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Deputy Directors have explored and analysed the external and internal environment. This began with a meeting with leading Economist John McLaren, from the Centre for Public Policy for Regions, on the financial challenges facing the public sector over the next few years. This analysis has enabled the senior teams to consider the possible consequences for the city and to plan on how to mitigate the risks while maximising the many opportunities identified.

This was followed by the Shaping the Future Seminar which brought together all senior managers from across the council. The Chief Executive outlined the work already undertaken and shared his thoughts on our strategic opportunities. This group was then tasked with suggesting and discussing any innovative ideas they had for transforming the organisation. They were advised to think big, be innovative and not just settle for austerity.

This model is now being rolled out across the organisation with the intention that representative groups of staff from all grades will be meeting to discuss their ideas. There will also be smaller working groups of front line staff meeting to explore their ideas further.

This approach to ideas management should generate a range of ideas from large corporate initiatives that will form part of the Service Reform Programme for 2012/2013 and beyond to front line operational initiatives that staff will be empowered to implement. There will be central governance in place to track progress.

All of the Shaping the Future Strategy is underpinned by a robust Learning and Development Strategy where all staff have the opportunity to build their personal capability by working on live projects that will have a positive impact back at their work place. A brief overview of our programmes as follows:

PE1423/D

- Shaping the Future Master Classes – A range of Master Classes where we work with partners from the Private, Public and Voluntary Sector, these focus on three key topics:
 - Understanding and Influencing Organisational Culture
 - The Power of Collaborative Leadership
 - Building Personal Resilience
- Leading with Impact is our leadership programme for senior managers where they work across traditional boundaries on a live project that is sponsored by a member of the Corporate Management Team. Once completed leaders become part of the Leadership Consultancy Pool and will have opportunities to work on Service Reform Projects with colleagues from across the organisation.
- Delivering Tomorrow's Council is a programme for middle managers where they focus on learning new skills but also sharing their experience with colleagues from across the organisation. The key focus is on Managing Change, Continuous Improvement and Building a Learning Culture.
- The First Line Management Course offers foundation level management skills to junior managers and tasks them with coming up with a continuous improvement opportunity within their work place and working with their teams to deliver the desired outcome.
- Our Employee Development Framework offers on line tailored learning opportunities for all staff and internal and external e learning courses. This is in addition to the technical training required for each role.

All of the learning and development activity within Glasgow City Council is tracked via the Personal Development Plan which is completed in full annually with at least one review per year. There was a full review of the process in 2011 following feedback from the staff survey.

There are several other initiatives in place that I believe supports the view of the petitioner. The Chief Executive has an on line facility for any employee to put forward ideas they may have for the organisation. Employees also have the opportunity to engage with him directly and ask any additional information on initiatives that they are interested in.

The Chief Executive and members of the Corporate Management Team host regular events where staff from the Delivering Tomorrow's Council Programme are invited to meet with them and can ask them any questions they may have about the organisation or put forward their views and ideas. This has had a positive response from employees and there are plans to consider extending this further to include other programmes.

The Chief Executive also believes that the organisation should celebrate success and give staff recognition for their hard work so every year he hosts the Flourish Awards which are in house and celebrate the work of teams that have delivered exceptional projects or initiatives for the citizens of Glasgow. In addition there are Staff Awards that also recognise the achievements of individuals throughout the organisation.

PE1423/D

All of this work has been undertaken to demonstrate that the Chief Executive has real belief in his work force and that every individual has an opportunity to think differently and bring real and lasting innovation to the organisation.

As with any large and complex transformation programme it will take us time to affect a cultural shift throughout the organisation. We understand that communication and feedback will be critical in keeping staff motivated and involved and will work hard to overcome these barriers.

What the petition is calling for is fundamental to the modernisation of Scotland's public sector management. Glasgow City Council fully supports direct engagement with staff to harness their innovation while moving away from the traditional workings of a bureaucratic organisation.

We are keen not only to transform our own organisation but to also take opportunities to work in collaboration and share experiences with others. We have actively engaged with Police, Fire Service, Local Authorities and the Scottish Government. Renewing Scotland's Public Services will require all organisations not to transform in isolation but to modernise leadership across Scotland as a whole.