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| <b>Committee(s):</b> Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee  | <b>Date:</b> 24 November 2021 |
| <b>Subject:</b> Staff Values and Behavioural Framework   | <b>Wards Affected:</b> All    |
| <b>Report of:</b> Jonathan Stephenson, Chief Executive Officer   | <b>Public</b>                 |
| <b>Report Author:</b><br>Name: Phil Drane, Corporate Director – Planning & Economy<br>Telephone: 01277 312500<br>E-mail: philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk | <b>For Decision</b>           |

### Summary

The Council's Corporate Strategy is primarily delivered by our number one resource: people. The delivery of any strategy is dependent on people and their organisational culture. As part of encouraging a positive team culture and to consider how we can deliver strategic objectives, a staff Values and Behavioural Framework has been developed.

Following workshops led by a range of staff across the organisation and subsequent internal consultation, we have arrived at four corporate values:

- Nurture
- Belong
- Smart
- Dynamic

These values are defined and supported by behaviours (Appendix A).

It is recommended that Members endorse these values and consider how they might be formally implemented in Council policy and guidance regarding member/officer engagement.

### Recommendations

**Members are asked to:**

**R1. Endorse the Values and Behavioural Framework for staff, set out in Appendix A.**

**R2. Approve that the Council considers ways to integrate the values and behaviours as part of officer and member engagement, through the review of relevant Council policy and/or guidance, and to be reported back to Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee.**

## **Main Report**

### **Introduction and Background**

1. In January 2020 the Council approved its Corporate Strategy 2020-2025 (Item 335, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, 22 January 2020). To deliver the key priorities and objectives set out within the Corporate Strategy, the Council reviews performance annually and has produced several supporting strategies.
2. The Council's number one resource for the delivery of corporate objectives is our people (or staff, or officers). Therefore, it is important to develop a positive culture that supports people and prioritises the delivery of corporate objectives. In order to do so, a Values and Behavioural Framework for staff has been prepared (Appendix A).
3. An officer working group was set up in July 2020 to start working on a set of values that represent what it means to be part of "Team Brentwood". The group was made up of a range of people from across the organisation. The group researched the importance of values, both from a personal and organisation perspective. This included several workshops designed to identify a set of values and behaviours through the following stages:

#### **a) What Are Core Values?**

Focussing on how core values are the fundamental beliefs of an organisation, providing guiding principles that dictate behaviour. The working group looked at examples of private and public sector values and case studies of how they have (or have not) worked.

#### **b) Brainstorm**

Discussion to help the working group list values and behaviours that are important to the Council. It involved exercises to identify the Council's best attributes, exemplars of best practice and moments when the authority has been most proud. This helped to identify trends that were the foundation for defining the values.

#### **c) Condense and Finalise**

Shortlisting this data helped to identify the standout values by combining words and experiences that were similar and eliminating those not considered strong enough. This stage continually tested assumptions to stand up to scrutiny as it was agreed that the values would not be credible if staff could not believe or understand them.

4. Over time this process helped to shortlist the values down to four:
  - a) **Nurture**  
This means that we empower others, courageously building relationships so that we all grow.
  - b) **Belong**  
This means that we have purpose and meaning, aware of how each role contributes to the bigger picture of what we are working together to achieve.
  - c) **Smart**  
This means that we are a small organisation that punches above its weight, finding innovative solutions to responsibly deliver ambitious priorities.
  - d) **Dynamic**  
This means that we enthusiastically embrace positive change, adapting to meet the needs of each other and our borough.
5. Each value is underpinned by a behavioural framework, providing an explanation about what the value means and how staff can be expected to behave. A behavioural framework helps staff to live the corporate values each day. It clearly communicates how the organisation like to do things. This is for current and prospective colleagues, customers and partners. It helps staff to work well with each other and communicate what is expected, providing a means to challenge behaviour that does not fit the values.
6. These were shared with all staff in June 2021 for feedback, which included an online survey and other ways to share thoughts. When collating feedback there was overall strong support for the four values.
7. The next stage is to bring these values to life. The values and imagery for how these are to be communicated were launched at the staff celebration event in October 2021. Going forward, these will be used to review the personal progress of staff through each year, as part of training and development opportunities, and in the recruitment and on-boarding of new staff, among other things.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

8. Much effort has been made to identify and communicate these values, including ongoing work to achieve staff buy-in. It is important that Members endorse the

framework as part of integrating the values in a positive Team Brentwood culture and to make them more prominent across the organisation.

9. There is an opportunity to consider how these values can be expanded to apply to Members when engaging with officers. Therefore, it is recommended that this be further considered and reported back to Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee.

### **Consultation**

10. A working group was set up in July 2020 representing a range of staff from across the organisation. A draft Values and Behavioural Framework was shared with all staff in June 2021. Helpful feedback was provided, and majority agreement expressed for the proposed values and supporting behaviours.

### **References to Corporate Strategy**

11. For the Council to deliver the objectives set by the Corporate Strategy 2020-2025, it is important that a consistent set of values and behaviours are embedded within a positive team culture.

### **Implications**

#### **Financial Implications**

**Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) and S151 Officer**

**Tel/Email: 01277 312500/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk**

12. Production of the corporate values and behaviours has been undertaken internally. The cost of this work has been covered by identified budgets.

#### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) and Monitoring Officer**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312500/amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk**

13. Consideration of how the values and behaviours could be incorporated into Council policy and guidance regarding member/officer engagement will require updates and consultation with Members. This is to be brought back to Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee for decision or information as appropriate.

### **Economic Implications**

**Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning & Economy)**

**Tel/Email: 01277 312610/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk**

14. A new set of values and behaviours for staff underpins the Council's efforts to grow the economy, along with other corporate objectives. Specifically, the values "smart" and "dynamic" express the ability to do more with less and to be positively flexible when it comes to economic growth, among other things.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

**Name/Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager (Communities, Leisure and Health)**

**Tel/Email: 01277 312500/kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

15. The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful;
  - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
  - c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
16. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
17. The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic. The consideration of equality and diversity has been a key theme when setting the staff values and behavioural framework, which is specifically expressed by the value "belong".

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

None

## **Background Papers**

- Item 335, Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, Draft Corporate Strategy 2020-2025, 22 January 2020

## **Appendices to this report**

- Appendix A: Draft Values and Behavioural Framework (November 2021)