

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT
BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

Key Information

Assessment Type	Review
Investors in People Practitioner	Martin Smith
Visit Date	30 th November – 2 nd December 2016
Assessment Enquiry Number	ENQ-100826-V131G0

Conclusion

The Regulation and Enforcement Division of Birmingham City Council has demonstrated that it satisfies the 39 mandatory evidence requirements of the Investors in People Standard and has therefore once again met the requirements for Investors in People Accreditation.

As part of the requirements of the Investors in People Standard, the organisation will need to undertake Review of Continuous Improvement activities with the Practitioner during the coming accreditation period, before coming forward for the next full review by 2nd December 2019.

The review in 2019 will be against the new Investors in People Framework that was introduced in September 2015.

The organisation has a number of strengths which are outlined in the following pages. There remains potential for some further improvement in a number of areas; some of these are described in the following narrative, and a suggested “Continuous Improvement Plan” is provided within Appendix 1. It is recommended that the organisation considers requesting assistance from EMB / the Investors in People Practitioner in taking forward some of the issues highlighted in this Continuous Improvement Plan.

Milestone Dates

Review of Continuous Improvement	2 nd June 2018
Date of Next Full Assessment	26 th November 2019



Martin Smith

Investors in People Practitioner
5th December 2016

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1 Executive Summary

The Regulation and Enforcement Division of Birmingham City Council, like all Local Authorities, faces extremely strong financial challenges. The organisation has experienced very significant changes and severe budgetary constraints in recent years, and it will be continuing to identify opportunities for further ways in which to deliver increased efficiencies.

Given all of the uncertainties that the above brings for staff, the Division has successfully maintained reasonably good morale. Indeed, interviewees reported a sense that the organisation is quite open and transparent, is seeking to engage employees to a reasonable extent, and that the senior management team is striving to maintain high standards in the ways by which it leads, manages, develops and supports staff.

Interviewees made comments about how they believe that the senior team is committed to continuing to improve the ways that people are led, managed, developed and supported. People recognise that the leaders of the Division and also the wider management team have a strong desire to deliver the Council strategy and still try to maintain and improve the way that they manage and support staff across the organisation, despite the severe financial constraints.

Although the organisation continues to meet the Investors in People Standard, in some areas it still has potential for improvement. In addition, although there are issues where the organisation is maintaining approaches and methods that will help it to deliver services in the short term, there are other matters which may result in longer term challenges if not addressed. Whilst some of these matters have been highlighted in this report, these should not detract from the overall finding that the leaders and managers continue to manage people well considering the context of the financial constraints under which the Division operates. It is also worth noting that some of the issues that may cause longer term challenges relate to working practices and approaches that are determined centrally by the Council, and are not under the direct control of the leaders of this Division.

The organisation has a number of strengths, some of which are highlighted throughout this report. Those areas where there is considered potential for improvement are highlighted within the text of the report and specific issues are summarised within the Continuous Improvement Plan (Appendix 1).

All those interviewed spoke of a good level of trust in the leadership team of the Division. Whilst acknowledging the ever increasing levels of pressure to deliver, people still spoke of the organisation as a good place to work, where there is a transparent and open working environment, and where people display a significant pride in the services that they provide.

2 Strengths of the Organisation

The Regulation and Enforcement Division of Birmingham City Council has a number of key strengths.

People feel committed to the organisation and as highlighted earlier, a number of interviewees clearly take great pride in the services that they provide.

The organisation continues to maintain a strong focus upon learning / training / development activities that will directly support the operational objectives of the organisation.

People value the training and development that they receive, and feel that the Division remains committed to their development; the provision of a range of learning, training and development opportunities continues to be seen by employees as a real strength of the organisation.

There are a number of other positives, some specific issues noted during the interviews include:

- The organisation is perceived as having an open and transparent leadership team
- Most senior managers are seen as visible throughout the organisation, and are regarded as approachable and accessible by all those interviewed
- Communication is perceived as relatively good by most employees
- Investment in learning, training and development for all employees has largely been maintained; the organisation ensures that people are able to acquire, maintain and develop the core skills and capabilities that are essential for working successfully in this sector
- The organisation uses a variety of methods to deliver learning, training and development in an effective manner
- People feel that everyone is treated equally and fairly, with equality of opportunity being recognised by the workforce

Whilst some of the following narrative includes mention of areas where the Division may be able to *improve* the manner in which people are managed by the organisation; it should still be noted that there are clearly already a number of areas of strength, and the organisation should be proud of its performance during the period since the previous Investors in People Review.

3 Key Issues Identified

During the planning discussions that preceded the visit, no specific issues were identified for the Practitioner to focus upon. However, during the interviews, the following matters arose and might be considered to be worthy of further consideration:

- ***The degree to which the formal Appraisal process currently contributes towards performance improvement across the organisation***

Both managers and staff have welcomed the simplification of the formal Appraisal process in use by the organisation. All interviewees felt that the historic approach had been unwieldy, too time consuming, and required too much effort in requiring significant evidence gathering activities prior to any such conversations.

For the most part, interviewees are comfortable with the new “streamlined” process, feeling that it is easier and require much less time and effort. However, many identified significant shortcomings in the limited *outcomes* from the process.

At the end of the process, an appraisee is either deemed to be “achieving” or “failing”. Interviewees observed that there have been very few individuals who are placed into the latter category, despite a number of people expressing a view that there were clearly a number of colleagues who were not performing at satisfactory levels, and were in their views being “carried” by their stronger performing colleagues. Some could not understand why a number of “underperforming” colleagues were not being dealt with by managers.

Whilst *some* of the managers interviewed during the assessment stated that in their view, all of their staff were indeed performing at a satisfactory level, others confessed that although they could identify members of staff that were not performing at this level, these individuals would still be deemed to be “achieving”. When challenged as to why this was the case, managers stated that to follow the prescribed performance management process that would be required by “failing” an individual in a formal appraisal would involve a very significant amount of time and effort, with no guarantee of any positive outcome at the end of the process. Such managers asserted that they were under such personal pressure themselves that they could not afford to spend this amount of time trying to improve the performance of a poorly performing member of their team – and that by awarding an “achieving” Appraisal outcome; they could focus upon other more urgent issues instead.

In contrast, many interviewees could clearly see that no matter how hard an individual works, and no matter how much their performance is “over and above” what might be expected of them, they could not achieve anything more than an “achieving” outcome from the appraisal process. People also observed that there will no longer be any scope for the award of salary increments for high performers, and that there will now be a “freeze” on any monetary awards related to performance for the next three years. As a result, a large number of people now perceive that there is no incentive to strive for higher levels of performance.

The overall outcome from all of the above would appear to be that a significant population of people now perceive that there are no longer any real consequences for underperformance, and no longer any incentive for improving performance. It is appreciated that the organisation is under huge financial pressures, and that the Appraisal process that is used has been mandated across the whole of the Council, but the longer term consequences of the above need to be very carefully considered when set against a need to continuously deliver more results with fewer people.

- ***The longer term development of the entire management population within the Division***

The Council has clearly been losing large numbers of staff in recent years, as it strives to make cost savings and efficiency improvements in all areas. Many interviewees commented upon the extreme levels of pressure and stress that many people are now experiencing in trying to meet service delivery objectives.

A significant number of interviewees in many areas felt that a key feature of the reduction in staff numbers has been the “de-layering” of certain teams, with the loss of people in “team leader” roles being of particular note. (These were seen to be individuals who had been employed in relatively senior roles, but had not yet reached managerial positions.)

Many interviewees in officer positions now perceive that there is a much more significant “step up” required in order to be considered for any future managerial vacancies that arise. People also commented that they felt that they did not have the necessary skills and experience to make such a transition in one single step, and because of this, they did not feel that it was a realistic hope for them to be promoted to a managerial role. People also went on to comment that they did not feel that the organisation would be likely to invest in the required learning and development activities that would help them to develop the requisite skills and capabilities to be considered for such a “step up” in responsibilities. Many also observed the increasing pressures that are being experienced by those in managerial roles, and are consequently deciding that they would no longer even *wish* to become a manager.

The above sentiments are troubling, especially when considering the context of an organisation with an ageing managerial population in many areas. In an area where managers require detailed technical and operational experience, one individual commented: “We can see that in the next couple of years, three key managers will be retiring – and we just can’t see where any replacements are going to come from”.

The need to make operational efficiency gains is clearly of very real, urgent and continuing importance to the organisation. However, in considering the longer term implications of the changes that have been made and continue to be implemented, it is recommended that in order to continue to provide effective service delivery in the future, maintaining and developing a skilled and experienced leadership and management population will be of key importance. Although it has been stated that the Division is already considering an exercise in succession planning, the importance of this exercise cannot be overstated, and this should form just the start of a process to develop a broader plan to develop skills and experience amongst officers, in order to provide individuals with the potential to become the managers and leaders of tomorrow.

- ***The degree to which internal communications are seen as effective by employees***

In many organisations, the issue of internal communication is often seen as a source of complaint amongst many employees. People often state the organisation is poor at ensuring that they have the information that is required for them to undertake their roles, and does not inform them of key changes and decisions in an appropriate manner.

When considering the nature and degree of change that has been experienced by employees within this Division, the feedback from interviewees was, to a large extent, relatively positive.

People were able to describe the range and nature of channels used by leaders and managers to keep everyone informed. Outline descriptions were provided of how staff would receive email communications from the Senior Management team of the Council, and how there was a clear “cascade” of information by means of team meetings and occasional senior management briefing

sessions in many areas. People also described how they would be updated at “away day” events, by their line manager in regular formal and informal one-to-one discussions, and that there was a significant amount of information available on the intranet and HR portal.

In general, people were reasonably positive about the amount of information that they received, and the timeliness of its delivery. Given the nature of the changes made in the organisation in recent years, this should be considered as quite an achievement.

With regards to the issue of internal communication, the only negative comments made by some individuals were:

- That there were far too many emails being sent out to an “all staff” list, where the nature and content of the messages were often not relevant to the majority of recipients and
- That some of the top leaders displayed little appreciation of the pressures that staff are under. A number commented that there had been a briefing at the local theatre, where all staff had been invited to “clear their diaries” so they could attend. Many interviewees felt that although there was a positive intent for leaders to be seen to be accessible and open in their communications, the way that the invite had been expressed demonstrated a lack of understanding that large numbers of employees could never just “clear their diaries” because of the huge volumes of work they were being expected to deliver.

4 Further feedback against the requirements of the Standard

Key Issues:

- **Strategic / Business Planning**

The Council has developed and communicated a Vision ('A Future Council for the 21st Century') that outlines its broad future ambition and aspirations. This statement is underpinned by two overarching ambitions underpinned by four themes. Within this, the leader of the Council has set out a number of Strategic Priority areas.

The Division has taken the above contextual information and drawn up an overall business plan for its areas of responsibility, consisting of a number of Service Plans that can be seen to directly support the future achievement of the wider objectives. In so doing, the Division strives to ensure the existence of a "Golden Thread" that allows every individual to see where their own specific role contributes towards the overarching ambitions of the Division and the Council. It has also set out a number of Key Performance Indicators within these plans in order to help monitor progress. The service plans were developed and informed by discussions within departmental meetings that identified how management and staff felt that the Division could develop. The leaders also hold regular meetings with Unison representatives in order to maintain a consultative relationship.

Each individual within the organisation then has the ability to agree (with their manager) their own personal objectives in line with the overall plans for the organisation. The approach provides a clear "line of sight" that links each individual to the performance of the Council.

People generally feel that the communication of information from the top of the organisation has been maintained well in some difficult times for the Division. Progress and development is shared with all employees through a cascade of regular manager briefings and team meetings, providing staff with opportunities to raise issues and contribute suggestions.

The above is also complemented by 1-2-1 meetings with line managers, and frequent email communications from management. Information is also made available through the Council intranet.

- **Learning, training and development**

The organisation continues to invest significant resources in the development of its people. Interviewees believe that it remains committed to ensuring that the Division as a whole, as well as every individual within it, continues to have the skills and expertise to deliver the services that are demanded.

There is clear evidence of the planning of activities at both an individual level (e.g. through one to one discussions and appraisals with individual members of staff), and also at an organisation level through discussion amongst the senior leaders, followed by the planning of activities to ensure that the organisation meets any wider requirements for delivering its services.

The Service Plans of the various teams within the Division are used to inform analysis with regards to the needs for specific training and development activities, and this process helps to determine the priorities for the delivery of such activities.

A Training Management Group (TMG), consisting of a group of Senior Managers drawn from across the Division, meets regularly to plan the provision of learning, training and development and to review its effectiveness and impact on performance.

The organisation has developed a comprehensive on-line e-learning facility, and a wide variety of modules are made available for managers and employees to “self-select” if they feel that specific topics would be useful for their development.

Although some external course based learning does still takes place, the financial constraints experienced by the Division now limit the amount to which such solutions are used. As a result, it is clear that the organisation has increased the focus on other ways for people to learn and develop, including the use of internal colleagues to provide training, coaching, and mentoring. In addition, on-line resources, secondments, and “learning on the job” activities are widely used.

The Division continues to support Continuous Professional Development activities where these are necessary / appropriate for specific individuals, and also ensures that any training that is mandatory for specific roles continues to be provided.

Those individuals who have joined the organisation relatively recently (or have changed roles within the Council) confirmed that there was a structured process in place for induction into the organisation / a new position, and that this helped them to adjust and adapt to new responsibilities.

Interviewees were able to explain and give examples of how their training and development had provided them with the skills and knowledge to improve the delivery of services, and also reported that there is some reviewing of the results / benefits being achieved from investing in people’s learning, training and development. The reviewing of activities that have been undertaken has resulted in changes to the delivery of some activities in order to maximise the benefits that accrue from these activities.

Most participants at training / development events have broad objectives agreed with line management in advance (although there were some interviewees who reported that this was not always the case in their specific teams), and the majority also have subsequent conversations after the event regarding their experiences, but there may be potential to formalise this with a more structured approach to the matter so as to better establish any tangible benefits for the organisation that arise from such activities. Improved objective setting / post event reviewing has the potential to yield information that could be used by the TMG to better determine exactly how effective different training / development activities have been, and if there is any further scope for improving the delivery of similar activities in the future.

People were able to confirm many examples of how learning, training and development has helped them to work better and more effectively, and how this has helped the Council to continue to provide services despite now having a greatly reduced workforce. In general, it is clear that the organisation has an approach which now ensures that it is developing the expertise of employees in ways that will contribute towards its plans for the future.

- **Leadership & Management Development**

The organisation seeks to maintain an effective leadership and management cohort across the organisation, and some individuals have in recent years benefitted from attendance at specific training courses aimed at improving management effectiveness.

The organisation seeks to complement externally delivered leadership development activities through the provision of on-line learning modules that are available across the Council; these are seen as an

economic way to develop new skills / refresh existing capabilities for individuals throughout the organisation as and where these are seen to be needed and appropriate. Development is also supported through informal coaching of managers by their more senior colleagues.

The leaders of the Division have a clear understanding of the capabilities, knowledge and behaviours required of the managers within the Division, and were able to articulate these with specific reference to the expertise of each area and also to the wider Values of the Council (Putting Residents First, Acting Courageously, Acting true to our word and Achieving Excellence).

Managers are provided with feedback and guidance on their performance through regular one-to-one discussions with their immediate manager, and through a formal annual appraisal process. The appraisal form used by the organisation supports discussion in relation to the achievement of objectives and also provides reference to developing and role modelling against a defined framework of desirable competencies / behaviours that are expected of all employees; these discussions are then used to enable an overall outcome of either “achieving” or “failing” to be determined. Discussion during appraisal meetings is also used to help identify areas for development and any training or support that may be needed by managers to carry out their roles more effectively.

In *general*, people felt that the organisation strives to maintain and improve the leadership capabilities of individuals across the organisation in a reasonably effective manner. However, some interviewees still highlighted a view that staff could identify a relatively small number of specific individuals in leadership / management roles who were felt to be lacking in some key capabilities. People have a good understanding of the capabilities needed to be an effective manager, but some spoke of a small number of individuals who they had believe have scope to improve some of their “softer” people management skills (communicating, engaging, motivating, change management, working effectively with peers etc.)

In addition to any internal e-learning opportunities available to all managers employed by the Council, it may also be worth exploring other on-line learning and development opportunities that could support the wider development needs of leaders and managers within the Division. One such opportunity that could be considered is the programme of activity provided by The Open University and the Chartered Management Institute, which can be found at the following address:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/programs/management-leadership>

Although the approach taken by the Council currently enables leaders to maintain an effective management population in the shorter term, Section 3 of this report has already highlighted the challenges faced in the longer term with regards to maintaining a skilled and capable management cohort across the Division, and the difficulties faced in developing officers to enable people to be ready for promotion to managerial roles as and when future vacancies arise.

- **Performance Management**

Managers reported that they provide feedback and support to their people in regular “one to one” meetings, in informal day to day discussions, annual performance appraisals / reviews and also in regular team briefings.

People were able to confirm that annual structured performance appraisals are held with all individuals across the whole organisation. As mentioned earlier in this report, the appraisal process has been streamlined and is now much simpler and less time consuming than the previous approach, which had been unpopular with both managers and staff alike. The new approach takes up far less time, but although it is much simpler, managers were able to explain how the structure remains

capable of supporting a discussion that encompasses the achievement of objectives, the competencies and behaviours of the appraisee, and the identification of any learning and development needs of the individual concerned. In this respect the appraisal process is clearly still a key and effective means by which managers seek to provide staff with feedback on their performance and seek to help individuals develop. As mentioned earlier in this report (Section 3), the binary outcome (Achieving/Failing) may not be the most effective way to deal with underperformance or to motivate/incentivise improvements in performance, but this is something that could be examined further. Other key areas of focus might also be to investigate the comments from different managers that the amount of work involved in following the formal process for managing underperformance (and also the rules relating to the management of sickness and absence) does not encourage managers to make use of these procedures in view of the perceived time, effort and complexity involved.

The majority of interviewees felt that most managers were effective at leading them, developing their skills and capabilities, providing specific feedback on their performance and supporting them when they needed help and guidance through the use of all of the methods outlined above. Many spoke of individual managers taking a close interest in their performance on a daily basis whilst also helping them to meet their longer term career aspirations within the organisation. Specific examples were given by interviewees of how their managers had helped them to develop knowledge and skills required in their roles, and how this had helped them to provide a better service through becoming both more effective (meeting people's needs better) and more efficient (responding quicker).

- **People Management**

Interviewees felt that everyone is treated equally and fairly, and that the organisation has adopted policies and approaches that help to ensure that staff are all treated equitably and have appropriate and fair access to learning and development opportunities. People consistently reported that they felt that the Council is a meritocracy and that people progress, are provided with opportunities and are broadly rewarded according to their abilities and performance.

Some individuals reported examples of how management actively supported them through being sensitive to their personal needs and circumstances, and by being flexible in changing working arrangements in such a way as to ensure that they continue to be treated equally and fairly by the organisation. Examples included managers being flexible and accommodating changes in working patterns / shifts to help those with childcare commitments, and a strong approach to making reasonable adjustments for those with health related challenges.

People from all areas of the Division have access to an on-line "portal" which offers a wide variety of training modules that can be accessed at a time and location that suits the recipient, and this resource also provides wider information on learning and development to help individuals plan their future development. Individuals also confirmed that managers ensured that everyone also had equal access to the all activities aimed at delivering learning, training and development.

Although no issues / problems were reported with regards to the equal treatment of all employees, it might still be worth considering the provision of "refresher" training on Equality and Diversity issues, to ensure that such matters continue to be considered by all employees across the Division.

All employees are encouraged to contribute ideas and suggestions for how the organisation can improve performance; opportunities are provided in one to one discussions, team meetings, involvement in specific issues / projects, and the availability of a suggestion scheme.

- **Involvement and Engagement**

A reasonable degree of consultation and involvement was reported by interviewees as taking place through various channels, including:

- An open approach to the development of the Service plans in each area
- Union representatives having regular meetings with senior management
- Regular Team brief sessions and section meetings
- Appraisals and other informal 1-2-1 discussions
- Occasional exercises across the whole Council to consult on key issues (e.g. any potential changes to terms and conditions of employment)
- One off exercises to look at potential changes within individual teams (e.g. a working group being set up within Registrars to examine potential changes and improvements to the issue of Certificate production)
- Senior managers being visible and directly accessible to all staff, and being willing to listen and act upon the views of employees

At a team / day-to-day level, people felt that most of the management population encouraged involvement and debate prior to decisions being made; the majority of managers were perceived to be open to ideas and suggestions if employees chose to come forward with any such issues, and people believed that discussions with their line managers provided them with opportunities to discuss any ideas that they may have. However, some interviewees felt that the overall approach to this was still a little passive, suggesting that although most managers made it clear that they had an “open door” policy for listening to suggestions, some in management positions did not always demonstrate *pro-active* actions that might suggest that they really valued and were keen to hear any such suggestions. There was perhaps a perception by employees in some areas that their managers were far too busy keeping on top of day-to-day service delivery issues to have time to devote to exploring the merits of suggested changes to working practices.

A large majority of those interviewed felt that they were trusted by managers to take decisions that were appropriate for their roles and levels of responsibility, although a few noted that their decisions could often be overridden if a local Councillor put pressure on management to change priorities / deal with issues in a different way. Although this was considered frustrating, most interviewees were reasonably pragmatic about this; people feel this is an issue that can become very “political”, and is not one that could easily be challenged by the managers of this Division in isolation.

• **Reward and Recognition**

In general, people feel that they are rewarded appropriately for their core roles and responsibilities with salaries that remain broadly commensurate with their positions, although a number of people interviewed expressed strong frustration that there is now a three year freeze on salary increments.

Interviewees were aware that the local government sector does not offer the highest salaries when compared to the private sector, but most also commented that this was compensated for by other factors.

A range of measures are in place that reward / recognise the contribution of staff across the organisation; in describing how they were made to feel valued for their contribution, people provided a range of examples, including:

- Managers explaining how regular performance appraisals are used to praise and thank people for their performance
- Occasional “token” celebrations to recognise significant milestones / successes (e.g. bringing cakes in to reward specific achievements)

- Senior managers thanking and praising specific actions / successes in briefings, team meetings or in person
- Recognition of achievements in the Chamberlain Awards, and with occasional buffets held by a member of the senior management
- Mentions of specific staff efforts in emails, senior management briefings, periodic newsletter (Registrars) etc.

Although all of the above were highlighted during interviews with managers and staff, the most frequently mentioned factor in making individuals feel valued and appreciated was when managers “noticed” when individuals worked especially hard / performed exceptionally well, and thanked people in person. Interviewees felt that most managers were good at doing this, and that this was a key factor in motivating people and maintaining morale, but it should be noted that some interviewees felt that there were still a small number of managers who could be better at displaying their appreciation of the efforts made by individuals in their team.

All of the above were all appreciated by interviewees, but another frequently mentioned and appreciated benefit of working for the organisation was seen as the on-going commitment of the Division to invest in the development of the skills, capabilities and expertise of each and every member of staff. People gave a strong impression that all employees really valued the sense that (despite the very significant financial pressures faced by the organisation) the Council was still prepared to “invest in me”, and help people to acquire, improve and retain skills and knowledge that would be useful to them not only in their current role, but in helping them to achieve longer term aspirations and ambitions in their careers and outside lives.

Most interviewees felt that the combination of all the above measures made for an organisation for whom they continue to enjoy working, and one in which they remain proud to serve. It would however, be a worthwhile exercise for the Division to revisit this topic; as challenges continue to mount for the Council, it would be worthwhile ensuring that *all* managers remain aware of the importance of ensuring that employees are made to feel appreciated for their efforts, and ensure that every effort is made to recognise the efforts of people across the organisation.

- **Continuous Improvement in how people are managed**

Management has sought to establish the view of employees through means such as:

- Informal, day to day discussions with members of staff
- Establishing views during appraisals and regular one to one dialogues
- Listening to people’s opinions in meetings (team meetings, senior managers’ briefings etc.)
- Undertaking a periodic survey of all staff

The new approach to Investors in People Assessments is now incorporating the deployment of an On-Line Assessment questionnaire as part of the 3 Year Assessment process, and it may be that this same approach could be adopted by the organisation in between such Assessment activities, to “track” views on the same issues over time. The organisation might wish to consider the use of this On-Line Assessment to help it prepare for the next Investors in People Assessment in 2019, perhaps as an alternative / complementary exercise to the existing survey.

People were able to confirm many examples of how they believed the organisation had listened to their views and had been improving ways in which employees are led, managed and developed. Examples included:

- Streamlining the appraisal process to cut down on the time and effort required of both managers and staff in undertaking this annual review

- Some areas becoming more “open and transparent”. Some individuals with the Environmental Health team felt that their management briefings / meetings had become more inclusive and engaging than had been the case in the past
- A greater degree of consultation on some key issues
- Introduction and development of the e-learning facilities available to employees

When prompted for any suggestions for how the organisation could improve still further, interviewees struggled to come with any specific ideas. Some people were however very negative about what they perceived to be the very poor support for IT facilities, and many managers complained that they now spend a great deal of time undertaking work that was once the responsibility of central HR/Finance teams (and that this distracted them from managing their teams and the services they are providing),

The only other issue mentioned by a few individuals was the perception (as mentioned earlier in this report) that the leadership style of a small number of line managers could be improved, and that these individuals should be helped to develop stronger “soft” leadership skills in areas such as communication, motivation, engagement, change management and recognition of their staff.

Many of the interviews concluded with assertions from individuals that although they felt that the Division was having to implement very significant cost saving initiatives, they remained very proud of the services that are being provided by the organisation and are committed to their on-going provision.

Appendix 1 – Continuous Improvement Plan

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions – How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who
The degree to which the formal Appraisal process currently contributes towards performance improvement across the organisation	Consider any alternative / complementary methods by which levels of performance can be identified and communicated, finding ways in which to manage underperformance and sickness more effectively whilst also recognising higher levels of performance	Addresses a building perception that there is no “downside” or consequences to underperforming, and that there is “no point” in striving for higher levels of performance if they are not likely to be recognised	Medium – but within the next 6 months	Senior Management team
The longer term development of the entire management population within the Division	Undertake the planned Succession Planning exercise to better identify and understand the size and nature of the challenge. Develop a strategy for the development of current and future managers to meet this challenge.	Avoids critical skills and experience shortages in the future Ensures a planned and co-ordinated approach to ensuring the continuity of skills and experience amongst the leadership and management population in coming years	Low – but within the next 12 months	Senior Management team
Preparing for the transition to the new IIP Assessment framework and approach	Progress “self-diagnosis” activities to examine the new Generation VI IIP Assessment approach and establish how this might stretch the organisation further	Continues to develop people management activities, prepares the organisation for a new, more challenging approach to being assessed in 2019	Low – but activities should still commence at least 12 months before the 2019 Assessment becomes due	Leadership team / HR Manager with assistance from the IIP Practitioner if required. Consider attending EMB Workshops aimed at helping with the transition to the new approach

Appendix 2 – Assessment results summary

The Investors in People Framework

The Evidence Requirements

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
The Indicators	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																							
	2	✓	✓	✓	✓																								
	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																							
	4	✓	✓	✓																									
	5	✓	✓	✓	✓																								
	6	✓	✓	✓																									
	7	✓	✓	✓																									
	8	✓	✓	✓																									
	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																							
	10	✓	✓	✓																									

The number of evidence requirements met is **39**

Key:



The Core Investors in People Standard



Your Choice from the Investors in People Framework



Not part of the Investors in People Framework