

Dear Colleague,

I hope you are all keeping well and looking forward to taking some well-earned rest over the summer months. My usual Monday update is a little late this week as I wanted to use the opportunity to update you on a key decision that was agreed by Cabinet this morning, which will help shape our organisation.

Cabinet considered and endorsed a key report regarding Corporate Reviews as part of our ambitious Team Caerphilly transformation programme.

As you know, we had already begun an exciting journey of transformation well before the coronavirus pandemic struck, but the lockdown has really helped push the pace of change and we are now motoring ahead.

The positive gains we have made over the past few months, albeit out of necessity, cannot be lost. I truly believe that now is the time to embrace transformational change and shape our organisation so it is fit for the 21st Century, and I know you want to be part of an organisation that values its staff so they are able to make that difference, each and every day.

With this firmly in mind, the Cabinet report that was agreed today sets out our intent to undertake 10 corporate reviews which will turn the council inside out and ensure that our DNA (our policies and principles) support our ambition to be a modern, 21st century council that is able to proactively respond to the challenges – be them global, national or local.

Each of these 10 reviews will be led by a member of the Leadership Team and whilst some of these reviews will be undertaken quickly, others will take a little longer. An organisation like this is a big ship and it will take a bit of time to fully turn!

I've attached the link to the report below for you to take a good look at. Let me know if you have any questions. Maybe you can pose them to me and CMT at our next scheduled Caerphilly Cwtch?

<https://democracy.caerphilly.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=128&MIId=12226&LLL=0>
(see item 6)

Here is a link to a news story on the matter:

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/News/News-Bulletin/July-2020/Ambitious-transformation-programme-takes-another-b?lang=en-GB>

Looking further ahead, Cabinet will also be considering a key report about flexible working later in the autumn. We need to formalise the positive gains we have experienced over recent months, so the report will look at all aspects of flexible and agile working.

The feedback from the recent survey you completed is helping to shape this report and it is clear that the progress made and the lessons learned over the past few months will now directly shape the blueprint for future service delivery and redesign.

I'm conscious that in the short term we need to ensure consistency in the way we apply our flexi scheme so, following discussions with the trade unions, we have agreed that staff working away from the office will be asked to seek line manager approval in advance to work longer than their contracted hours. This will help ensure consistency across the workforce and is a means of ensuring the ongoing wellbeing of our staff

This interim adjustment will not restrict staff from being able to accrue time off in lieu, but it will help managers ensure that workloads are being appropriately balanced while staff are operating remotely.

I know that many of you are concerned that the flexi time system will be taken away. Clearly, we will need to have a look at how the flexi system will work alongside our new ways of working. We want to strike a balance between managing the needs of the service whilst achieving a work/life balance through flexible working, based upon trust and relationships. As we work through this and other policies and practices over the next few months, I can assure you that, any changes, will be done with you not to you. Engagement with trade union colleagues will continue throughout this process.

We certainly have some exciting times ahead and I know that you are all up for the challenge. However, I also fully appreciate that agile working is not for everyone, nor does it work for all service areas, so it is unlikely that we can ever achieve a 'one size fits all' approach. Instead, a blended approach is being proposed that ensures the needs of all staff, services and customers can be met. Think of it as one of the tools in our toolbox!

Let's keep being Bold, Brave and Brilliant!

Regards

Christina