



# MF BRIEFING

News and information from WCC's Chief Executive

## Welcome

May 2019

Firstly a big thank you to those of you who have attended one of the recent staff briefing events. I really enjoy these opportunities to come out and chat with you. It is a great way for me to update you on what's been going on, as well as what's coming up. It's also a really good way for me to hear your feedback directly and get a sense of both what's important to you and any issues that may be concerning you.

I'll provide a summary of the key points in this briefing so if you were unable to make a session in person you'll still get a feel for the things we talked about.

Don't forget I also want to hear from you if you have any comments or feedback on anything you read in MF Briefing, or have any suggestions for things you would like me to talk about - please use this [feedback form](#)

I mentioned in last month's briefing that I wanted you to get to know a bit more about the senior leadership team. So this month it is the turn of Mark Ryder, Strategic Director for Communities

## Meet Mark

I live in Warwick with my wife Caroline and two lively sons, Zack (13) and Jacob (12). Originally from North Devon, I joined WCC in 2003 from Gloucestershire County Council, having previously worked for both Devon and Somerset County Councils.

My professional background is in consumer law and, since starting local authority work in 1987, I have enjoyed different roles in Trading Standards Services. This front line work has given me an insight into the benefits that well run council services, focusing on the needs of communities, can have in an area, particularly



when working alongside Elected Members and partners. In recent years, I have been fortunate to have had a variety of jobs that have given me a close working knowledge of many WCC services and I have got to know many individuals and teams.

I am now learning quickly about the challenges and opportunities with service areas new to me, both in Education and the Fire & Rescue Service. I am delighted to have been appointed into the role of Strategic Director for Communities and look forward to bringing my experience to the job and continuing to make a positive contribution to Warwickshire.

Away from work, I have a strong interest in sport and currently enjoy playing football every week and have recently started running again in the hope of not embarrassing myself in the forthcoming Two Castles run. I also follow the fortunes of West Bromwich Albion Football Club with my boys but that is something we are not talking about this week!

## STAR Awards 2019

I want to start this month's briefing in celebratory mode to say a big congratulations to all of our 2019 STAR Award winners.

I had the pleasure of hosting this year's event which took place in The Old Shire Hall last week and it really was an evening where our staff could shine - individually and in teams. Recognising the efforts and achievements of our staff is extremely important to us as an organisation. In particular thanking those who go above and beyond and really put themselves out to do a great job - the STAR awards provide us with an annual opportunity to show our appreciation

Our success depends upon the passion, dedication and hard work of our employees who, whether in the front line, or in support roles, are providing services to our communities. This was our fifth STAR awards event and I am delighted to say that the excellence of our staff, shows absolutely no sign of diminishing. This year we received over 140 nominations, and the judging panel had an extremely tough job in getting to the shortlist of finalists.

The STAR award nomination categories are based on our key behaviours which set out the expectations required of all of us. And it was clear from the colleagues gathered together last week that they really epitomise being the best they can be. Congratulations to this year's finalists and winners

### **Do what we say**

- Tammy Goodwin, Environment Services - WINNER
- Laura Vesty, Environment Services
- Nathan Wilson, Enabling Services

### **Help people and communities to find their own solutions**

- Alison Banks, Adult Social Care - WINNER
- Sarah Blakely, Adult Social Care
- Amy Cooper Tutton and Tamar Green, Children & Families

**Move with purpose and energy**

- Katey Stoneman, Environment Services - WINNER
- Julie Kendall, Business & Customer Services
- Karen Cleaver, Communities

**Build strong working relationships**

- Harriet Olah, Environment Services - WINNER
- Family Information Officer Team, Business & Customer Services
- Mark Donnelly, Adult Social Care

**Focus on Solutions**

- Christina Davey, Adult Social Care - WINNER
- HR Systems Team, Enabling Services
- Martyn Stephens, Communities

**Be the best we can be**

- Holly Reed, Governance & Policy - WINNER
- Corrina Jones, Business & Customer Services
- Lee Johnson & Kelly Hands, Children and Families

**Team of the year**

- The Strengthening Families Team, Children and Families - WINNER
- Arty Tots Volunteer Team, Business and Customer Services
- School Data Protection Officer team, Governance & Policy

**Apprentice of the year**

- Umar Teerab, Children and Families - WINNER
- Ashley Chester, Business & Customer Services
- Rhiannon Simms, Governance & Policy

**Chairman's Special Award** - Leaving Care Apprentices

# Staff briefing summary

As I've mentioned it was great to see so many of you at the staff briefings over the last few weeks. I hope you found them useful. Here's an overview of the key points I covered.

**Celebrating success**

We have a growing list of achievements that have made me feel proud of Warwickshire and the work that you all put in to make the county the best it can be. Just a few recent examples include:

**Bringing home the Hoard:** The Museum Service, having met the £62,000 funding target needed to purchase the Roman coin hoard. Successful grant applications, a fundraising evening and generous donations from supporters of the Museum Service have all contributed to us hitting the target. We hope to be able to bring the Hoard back to Warwickshire Museum within the next few months so that it can be displayed at the Market Hall this summer.

**Kenilworth Station:** We have received acclaim for Kenilworth Station in the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) awards. It was highly commended in the Best Large Project Category, and is also one of only three projects shortlisted in CIHT's national Best Public Transport Project category. We know that the station is much loved locally and the recent expansion of the services offered from the station reflect its success.

**Public Health England visit:** Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England visited us recently and was moved to write a letter of congratulation to Warwickshire. He said: "Warwickshire is a national exemplar in placing the public's health at the heart of policy and decision-making." This is great to hear and especially so as 2019 is the Year of Wellbeing in Coventry and Warwickshire.

## **Transformation so far**

We kicked off our transformation programme in earnest early last year. This is about developing a new and different approach to how we do things across the organisation through the creation of our new operating model. We have achieved a great deal but there is still more to do.

This is a fast moving programme of work, we have had to keep the pace up to ensure we get ourselves in the best possible position so that we are prepared for and can meet the pressures we know are coming our way. Our new operating model enables us to achieve this.

Our new operating model has been developed with information and data about our current activity and how we work now. Using this information we have been able to identify at a high level what needs to change and how we need to change.

Since May 2018 we have been working on the detailed design of our new operating model - this means working out all of the ways in which our organisation needs to change. This has included:

- Changes to our organisational structure
- The redesign of our support functions - we are reshaping our support functions so they are agile, flexible and aligned to our new operating model. We are in the design stage for HR&OD and ICT and started implementing our Business Support and Finance models. We will have all of our redesigned support functions in place by 1 December 2019
- Demand and supply reviews - we have already completed demand and supply strategic reviews for a number of services.
- Digital and technology - we are using technology and digital solutions to enable and support the implementation of our new operating model, improve customer experiences and outcomes, enable modern ways of working to optimise the way we work.
- Developing Our People Strategy - to both value and make the best of our workforce.

## Leadership structure

April saw the completion of our leadership structure. We returned to the Chief Executive model and we have three strategic directors - with Rob Powell as SD for Resources and Mark Ryder as SD for Communities joining Nigel Minns as SD for People directorate.

We also welcomed new Assistant Directors - Ian Budd, AD for Education, Scott Tompkins as AD for Environment and Keiran Amos, our new Chief Fire Officer. There are some vacant posts and recruitment will soon be underway for an AD for Finance, AD for Communities and the Director of Public Health.

[You can see the leadership structure chart here](#)

You may also be aware we have now completed the tier 3 leadership review and we have confirmed appointments. I am very conscious that this has been an intensive programme and I do recognise that the decisions made have affected people in different ways and I appreciate your continued sensitivity.

The new structure came into effect on 1 May and where needed ADs are putting interim arrangements in place while the recruitment process for permanent appointments takes place. We will be advertising vacant roles soon - these will be open to both internal and external candidates at the same time. We will be using the same assessment and selection process for recruitment as we did for the tier 3 restructure.

### Tier 4+

In approaching the structure for Tier 4 and beyond, we will not be using the same approach as we did with Tiers 2 and 3. Neither will we be using the same assessment approach.

Instead, we will be looking at the design of services across all parts of the Council - and the approach we take to redesign and appointment to posts will vary in keeping with the needs of each service area. In view of this we expect to stagger implementation and we will continue to implement our strategy, commissioning and delivery model. Our complete structures will be live for 1 April 2020.

### Transformation: What's next

You will not be surprised to hear me say there is a great deal to do - we have a busy 2019.

### Moving from detailed design into implementation

We have completed our detailed design phase and are now moving into implementation. We are working across the organisation on our change management plan. There will be a lot of change and we will be communicating as much as possible, providing support for all aspects of the change and providing training where it is needed. We will be working hard to make implementation as smooth as possible and consistent across the organisation.

## **Our 2025 Council Plan**

This a major focus for us all over the spring and summer period. Our current OOP covers us until March 2020 and we are now working on our Council Plan 2025 and Medium Term Financial Plan. This will be our new OOP, but we will call it - The Council Plan - plain and simple. It will be aligned to our new operating model, our two priorities and 14 strategic objectives. We have managed our finances well to this point, and we need to continue to do so. You will hear more on this as this work develops through the year.

## **Digital**

We will be making changes to our systems and equipment - moving to a single operating system and set of productivity tools. Following Cabinet on 11 June we will be able to provide more information. We have a clear plan to migrate our applications to the cloud and this will increase our security and ability to maintain our disaster recovery continuity and deliver savings.

## **Demand and supply**

We have completed strategic reviews of our Children and Families Service, SEND and Home to School Transport. Currently we are reviewing Waste, Domestic Violence and Abuse. Our intention is to review everything we do over the coming months. From each of the reviews recommendations will be made about required changes or interventions

## **Performance**

We have introduced a new performance framework. As a leadership team we are clear on our 2019/20 objectives which are aligned to our outcomes and our 14 strategic objectives. The framework is a mechanism for cascading council priorities throughout WCC. From 1 April myself, SDs and ADs are working to this framework, and Tier 3 managers will follow. This is the first time we have aligned our personal objectives to our wider strategic outcomes and is a first step in developing ourselves as a high performing organisation. We will be working on a performance management approach for Tier 4+ together with refreshing the appraisal process next year to align with corporate objectives.

## **Cabinet development**

Our political leadership team is changing and developing as well, working with us to strengthen capabilities and align to our new operating model. The strong partnership between members and officers is further underlined by cabinet's commitment to the transformation programme. Having members undertake assessment and development as a team and individually is a real indicator of their buy-in to the change programme.

## **Our People Strategy**

We recognise that while we might have the best operating model in the world it will fail unless we address aspects of our culture. The implementation of Our People Strategy will enable the level of culture change that is required for the success of our new operating model. talent management, open conversations, a high performance culture.



Our People Strategy focuses on our people and our culture. By culture we mean our vision, values and behaviour. The strategy sets out a clear vision for our people and identifies five values, underpinning our existing six behaviours.



It sets out six key building blocks to achieve our vision and which align with our new operating model. For each building block we have a clear set of outcomes we need to achieve so that we can fulfill our vision and transform as an organisation in a way which is sustainable.

Recognising we can't do everything all at once we have developed a set of priorities for 2019

- **Action 1** - achieve a common understanding of our vision, goals and behaviours
- **Action 2** - launch modern working work styles
- **Action 3** - visible and approachable leadership
- **Action 4** - leadership performance framework
- **Action 5** - review of recognition scheme
- **Action 6** - develop a talent management strategy
- **Action 7** - define everyone's role and contribution levels organisational wide



# Appraisal

As I mentioned in the briefing summary, next year we will be looking to refresh our approach to appraisal. We need to ensure it ties in with our corporate approach to performance management which we have begun rolling out through our senior leadership team. But for now it's very much business as usual when it comes to appraisal and I would urge you to book some time with your line manager if you have not done so already.

Appraisals are a great tool to support employee performance. They complement 1:1 conversations as they offer opportunities to step back and critically reflect on your performance and how you have demonstrated our behaviours for the year. They also provide dedicated time for you and your manager to have focussed conversations about what needs to be delivered for the forthcoming year, any development and support you may need to deliver your outcomes, and also to consider any career aspirations that you may have.

## **Get the date in the diary**

Most of you will already have dates in your diaries for your appraisals. Ideally, appraisers should have had their own appraisals before they appraise their team so they are fully aware what they will be expected to deliver in the year ahead. For this year, especially in light of the structural changes, this may not always be possible but, at the very least, you should have a conversation with your line manager about expectations and objectives before embarking on your team's appraisals.

It is important to remember that the success of appraisals is not based on what is written on the appraisal form, but on the quality of the conversation you have.

## **How to prepare for your appraisal**

- Give yourself some time to prepare for your appraisal and to reflect on the past year
- Don't forget to think about all the things you've done well - generally people find it easier to think of the negatives!
- Focus on how you meet the WCC behaviours as well as your actions and projects
- Use the opportunity to give some feedback to your manager - both the things you appreciate and what they could do differently to support you



## What managers need to do

- Allow the appraisee to do most of the talking!
- Ask open/coaching style questions to encourage the appraisee to really give some thought to their work and behaviours
- Focus on the positive and get appraisees to explore what contributed to their successes and how they can use those actions and behaviours in future work
- Remember to give feedback - make it specific and behavioural
- Encourage the appraisee to consider which behaviours they demonstrate fully and which they find most difficult and give examples of each

## Links to useful guides and paperworks

There is a specific conversation guide that might help managers (and staff) to prepare for and conduct appraisals which offers a range of questions that you can use:

[Good Conversation Starters for Appraisals](#)

On the same page, you will find guides relating to coaching-style conversations and giving feedback which may also be useful.

You can find the appraisal template and further guidance on the Intranet: [My Appraisal](#). The appraisal form has been designed in a way that you can start to jot down your discussion points prior to your actual appraisal meeting.

Don't forget to remind yourself about Our Behaviours: [Our Behaviours](#)

Once the appraisal has been completed and paperwork signed off, It is the managers' responsibility to log this in YourHR and store the completed form securely. Guidance on how to log your appraisal date can be found by following this [link](#).

# Award winning finance partnership

Great news from our finance colleagues recently as our partnership with Oxygen Finance scooped the Solutions Partner award at the Public Finance Awards 2019 held earlier this month.

The award was in recognition of the work of the Premier Supplier Service which offers our suppliers the option of being paid early in exchange for a small discount and – in some cases, completely free for micro suppliers - gives them a way to improve their cash flow and reduce their reliance on credit facilities and overdrafts.

To date, the innovative scheme has delivered £4.5 million of fast-tracked payments to suppliers and has also resulted in fresh council funding of around £900,000 that we can put back into frontline services in Warwickshire

This is a great example of a public-private collaboration that is helping the County Council to deliver social value and also support new and local businesses.

## New staff carers network

Did you know that an estimated 3 in 5 people will be a carer at some point during their lives?

The demands of being an unpaid carer, on top of work and other family responsibilities, can have significant implications for an individual's health and wellbeing. And we are very aware that this scenario will be familiar to many colleagues around the council who face this daily juggle.

It is important that as an employer we can provide support which can make a huge difference to a carer's wellbeing

All staff carers and those with personal interest in caring, are invited to join the Staff Carers Network for support and advice. This will include how they can fulfil their caring / work responsibilities and take some time for themselves. WCC will also draw on the experiences of staff carers to create better working practices for all staff.

The first meeting of the network will take place on Tuesday 18 June, 9.30 - 11am Northgate House Conference Room. Please contact [rachelbentley@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:rachelbentley@warwickshire.gov.uk) for more information or if you would like to attend

## Cycle scheme open year round

You may be aware that as part of our staff benefits package we offer a cycle to work scheme.

Traditionally we have offered this scheme at set points through the year, but it is now open all year round. This is great news if you are considering a healthier, more sustainable way of traveling to work as the scheme can help you access a bike and cycling kit at discounted rates.

We run the government-approved scheme in conjunction with our partner Sodexo. It allows you to hire a bike and safety equipment for the purpose of commuting to and from work and for use at weekends and evenings.

You can order your bike from any participating retailer, including local stores. The bike you hire will be provided at up to 32 per cent less than the usual cost you would pay, which can result in savings of up to £320. The payments will be deducted directly from your monthly pay before your tax and National Insurance contributions are calculated.

For more information, and details on how to access the scheme read this article in the latest Working for Warwickshire: [Cycle scheme open all year round](#)

# Year of Wellbeing and Corporate Games

While I'm on the subject of getting active - hopefully you've seen lots of the pink and orange branding at WCC sites to promote the Coventry and Warwickshire Year of Wellbeing.

As I've mentioned before this is a joint initiative between the Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Boards.

It goes without saying that physical activity is an important aspect of wellbeing and this summer thousands of amateur athletes will descend on Coventry to take part in this year's European Corporate Games, and we want WCC to be part of it. There are 23 events to choose from in this massive celebration of amateur sport

So why not form a team with colleagues and take on competitors in sports ranging from golf to dragon boat racing. Or perhaps you'd prefer to go it alone and challenge yourself to some open water swimming or a 5k run.

The Corporate Games are open to everyone regardless of age, ability and level of fitness. So why not sign up, have some fun and make this your Year of Wellbeing activity.

You can find out more information about the events and how to sign up here: [Corporate Games 2019](#)

## In case you missed it...

Recent news you might not have seen yet:

[May's W4W out now](#)

[Find a remote working location](#)

[Help shape the future of WFRS](#)