

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE CASE STUDY: GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL INVESTS IN PEOPLE

Gloucestershire County Council has successfully managed a programme of change, implemented an effective approach to management and given staff confidence in their abilities.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Recent major strategy and policy changes, both nationally and locally, have meant adjustments to structures, priorities and funding on projects. As a result, the management of change was a major focus for a new management development programme.

The programme focused on team leadership skills to motivate, enthuse and develop staff to create an environment driven by the desire to deliver high quality services within set budgets.

To ensure the change process was a success, communication was fundamental. Staff were encouraged to get involved and were consulted in developments.

The organisation has a long-term commitment to Investors in People (IiP). Its established business planning process links corporate objectives and individual performance.

Gloucestershire County Council helps individuals within its 5,500-strong workforce understand how their role impacts on the organisation's objectives.

This approach is underpinned by clear aims, objectives and a genuine commitment to staff learning and personal development. Direct links between business objectives and the resources available mean that skill sets can be reviewed, broadened and refined. As a result the workforce can continue to make a valuable contribution to the council whilst remaining stimulated because they feel there is a future and a career path.

Staff commented: "Ongoing training helps to keep people motivated and enthusiastic about their job." "You feel more professional and more confident because of the training."

The benefits to the council have been evident across the board. A manager said: "We've had lots of staff who've gained qualifications; you can see them growing in confidence and wanting to progress." Another stated: "We've put in more resources and staff training, as a result we're now going against the trend by reducing the number of claims against the council."

Gloucestershire County Council has taken a building-block approach to Investors in People corporate recognition. There are six directorates at the organisation in total. One directorate went through the Investors in People assessment at a time. The success of the Social Services directorate was notable because of its sheer size, with 2,600 staff. In 2005, for the first time, every directorate within the council had achieved IiP recognition.

Investors in People Assessor Aileen Fairclough reported that the whole organisation is committed to continuous improvement through a structured review and action planning process. Cross-organisation communications, better individual communications, the council's approach to work/life balance and the involvement and say that staff have in shaping procedures are all contributing to helping the organisation move forward.

The Chief Executive of the Council, Peter Bungard, is a champion of improvement through people – and views liP as an important tool to encourage and recognise achievement. He said: “To be a well run Council, we are committed to work with staff so they can understand and be focused on the Council’s priorities and be business like, customer focused and deliver quality in their work. As part of this we can ensure staff are proud of the services we deliver and their contribution.”

Head of Human Resources, Sue Scrivens, acknowledges the benefits of liP and the potential in supporting the major change programmes the Council is undertaking over the coming five years.

She commented: “We are working closely with managers and staff to identify how the organisation can change so we individually and as teams meet the many challenges over the coming years.”

“We know we need to have more flexible structures and individual roles, quality leadership, development more owned and driven by individuals and active communication with our people. All these changes fit so well with liP and can help us move forward.”

Background information

Investors in People is all about recognising that people are at the heart of organisations. Getting the best out of staff has a direct impact on the success of organisations.

The Investors in People accreditation helps organisations identify and implement proven methods to help staff achieve organisational objectives. Thousands of organisations across the South West continue to recognise the value delivered by Investing in People today.

Quality South West are the Investors in People Assessment & Recognition Centre for the South West. Contact our Advisory Team on (01452) 413641 to find out more.