

# THE MPG CHRONICLE

*Organisational excellence in the public sector*



## Why Not Make Change a Positive for Your Organisation?

*By Scott Mead, Director*

All organisations are challenged by the need for change. Whether driven by external or internal imperatives, an organisations' success is largely based on how well change is managed.

Essentially organisations have three ways of dealing with change.

- 1 Ignore the need for change.
- 2 Allow ad hoc and isolated action by individuals in responding to change.
- 3 Manage change in a proactive and structured way that has a definitive aim of delivering improved outcomes.

On the positive side, the first two options require little in the way of organisational resources, however the failure to respond proactively to change drivers will inevitably impact on organisational performance. In the current challenging Local Government environment, Councils cannot afford to sustain below optimum performance in any of its functional areas.

### KEY ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESS

DEFINITE TIMELINES

EXECUTIVE SUPPORT

RESOURCES

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

STAFF RECOGNITION



### **Project Elements**

Once the projects have been identified and prioritised the individual projects will follow the methodology of a Business Process Review and will consist of three main elements. They are:

#### **1. Current Analysis:**

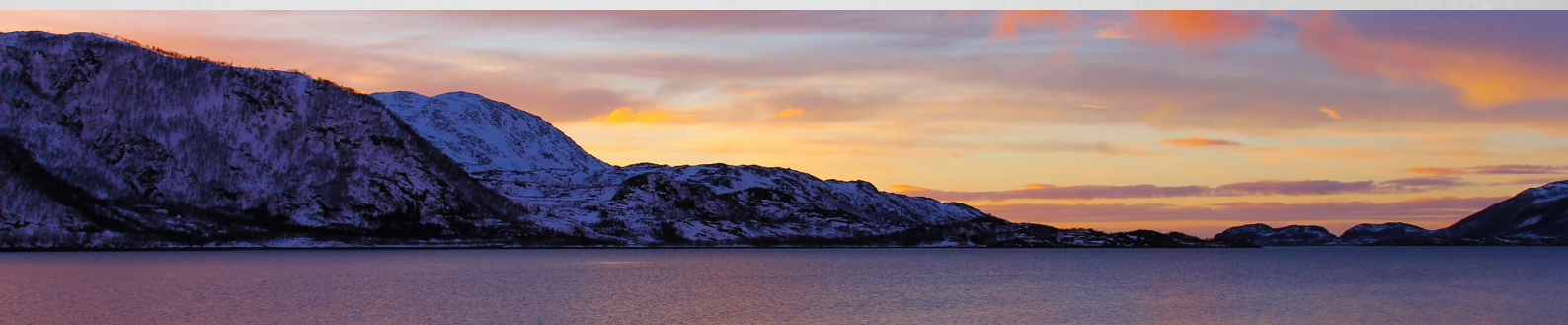
- The project team will document how the process is currently being completed. The aim is to document the process, rather than identify the best process;
- Gather historical information that has been collected on the process, so this information is not lost, but rather documented for potential future use;
- Identify the advantages and disadvantages of the current approach;
- The documented information will be presented to the Senior Management Team, so that they, as well as the project team will have a clear understanding of current process.

So how can the need for change be identified and managed effectively? Firstly, the areas that require change need to be identified and prioritised.

This can be delivered as part of a broader organisational review or through a process of issue identification. The key aspect of this process is that it should be inclusive of all areas of the organisation and if necessary, stakeholders. This will ensure that all pressing issues are identified. The likelihood that the list will be quite long means there is a need to prioritise which matters will be addressed first.

The next steps are to:

- 1 Fully scope the projects ensuring that internal stakeholders have a clear understanding of what is required to be delivered and the costs to deliver that project;
- 2 Select project teams from a cross section of staff who have some involvement in the process on a day to day basis; and
- 3 Work with the project teams to assist in their delivery of the project outcomes and milestones.







### Key elements for success

#### Definite timelines

Ensure that project timelines are determined and adhered to. Ideally a project should be complete within three months to ensure that energy is sustained and the process does not drag out.

#### Executive support

It is vital that all executive team members are seen to support the project and support their staff in meeting their obligations to the project.

#### Resources

As these projects will take staff “off line” for some time during the project, there is a need to ensure sufficient resources are available to support them and the project team in working on the project.

#### Project management

It is vital that the project is managed by an individual who can coordinate the project and keep participants “on track” and provide them with guidance and support as they work through the project.

#### Staff recognition

It is important that the contribution made to the project by staff is recognised by management and Council.

MPG senior consultant, Mr John Perry said that he “believes that a well managed change project will not only deliver clear improvements to organisational performance within a set time frame but is a great personal and professional development opportunity for staff involved and it also brings a greater sense of team work and understanding across the organization.”

## 2. Future Vision:

- The importance of Senior Management Team input is highlighted during this phase. The project team is required to identify how the process may work in the future and assuming that financial or staff resources have not been an issue. There are to be no restrictions on the aim to have the best process;
- A presentation is made to the Senior Management Team on the project team’s vision for the future. It is important the management team use their knowledge and own vision to ensure the project team has identified all the potential options for best practice.

## 3. Implementation Plan:

- During this phase, the project team must consider the best approach for moving forward to achieve the process vision. The aim is for quick wins, that will maximise financial benefit to Council, create and easier process for staff to use and encourage staff to adopt a positive attitude towards the change program.

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