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APRIL 2017

The next chapter

Caroline Nugent,
incoming PPMA
President, promises
a challenging but
rewarding year for the
sector

I am so proud to be serving as PPMA President 2017/18. I have spent my whole career in public service, starting as an apprentice and working my way up to HRD in fabulous organisations.

At the start of my career, I never imagined that I would one day be President of a national organisation representing so many talented professionals in the UK. I also could never have predicted the amount of change that has happened in public service and society as a whole.

The world is so different now and sometimes it's hard to grasp how much has changed even over the last five years. What hasn't changed is my belief that HR and OD colleagues are an incredibly powerful force within organisations. I salute all of the efforts that our members put in day in and day out for their organisations. We know we are often the service in every organisation whether private or public who people moan about –

but that's because we challenge the status quo.

You don't come into HR/OD if you are faint hearted. This year we will need all of our heart, our common sense and our years of knowledge, experience and resilience to support some profound national changes. Brexit is going to affect the public service workforce in multiple ways – likely some of which we haven't yet grasped – and the impact may be huge for service delivery. Other legislation, such as the new

apprentice levy, IR35 rules, and the likely cost increase involved and the constant competition for resources along with the restrictions in the Exit Cap is going to really challenge us.

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I will be spending my year on a number of areas that are close to my heart, but also to PPMA as a whole. I will be working with board colleagues and other key stakeholders to further increase our national profile. We are open to membership across the whole of public and third sector and as we work more closely together we need to make sure we reflect all the views of those in public services.

We also recognise the valuable role of independent consultants and sister associations, such as the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. I will also

continue our lobbying efforts to make sure government policy is better informed by understanding the implications that policy ideas can have on our workforces – public

sector is not all the same.

An area particularly close to my heart is the ongoing development of our current and future HR and OD colleagues – and of those people in our organisations who have specific responsibility for leading and managing teams. I'm also a proud member of the CIPD, the SOLACE Women's Leadership network and Diversity UK and want to look at how we increase our offerings to all. Our new PPMA Apprentice of the Year, Matthew Wallis, has some great ideas on diversity in apprenticeships we will be looking at through my presidency.

My own experience working as an apprentice (my daughter is also a HR apprentice in Central Government so I must be doing something right in encouraging our next generation!) and undertaking my professional qualifications and graduate study has instilled in me a lifelong passion for learning.

I'm very committed to supporting the development of apprentices and making sure that across our profession we have the next generations of President, Vice President and Regional Chairs already being developed. So watch out – we need you and we are after you.

The trust that you have placed in me inspires and humbles me. Being your President is such a privilege and professional honour. I look forward to serving the organisation. You can contact me on president@ppma.org.uk – please keep in touch; I'm always keen to hear from you.



Caroline Nugent is Director of HR and OD at OneSource and incoming PPMA President



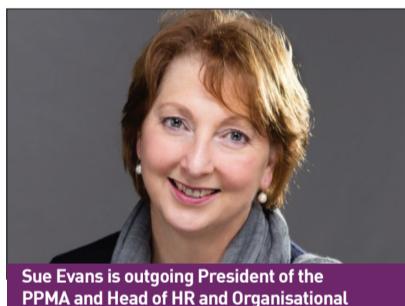
We've only just begun

Sue Evans reflects on an exciting term in general for the PPMA as President and looks forward to an action-packed future under Caroline Nugent

Last June I was privileged to assume the role of PPMA President. And what a wonderful experience it has been – making connections, launching new initiatives and reshaping the Business Plan. Looking back through my diary it has been a whirlwind of meetings, conferences and events, all of which demonstrate how busy we are across public services and how involved HR and OD are in transformation, challenge and change locally, regionally and nationally.

It has been tremendously exciting as well as demanding and it has been wonderful to see the impact of your work across the country. There is more to come and I am in no doubt that this year will be just as busy and interesting for Caroline Nugent as she assumes the Presidency for 2017-18.

We launched into the year with the Annual Seminar at Aston University with a series of speakers and workshops focusing on the hot topics of the time. In particular, Lucy Adams from Disruptive HR, inspired me to embrace the new world of HR in challenging



Sue Evans is outgoing President of the PPMA and Head of HR and Organisational Development at Warwickshire CC

the status quo and bringing a new style of HR for the new and ever-changing world [replacing the annual cycle of appraisal with a more continuous performance culture, reducing bureaucratic and over-long policies of the past with guidelines that recognise our workforce as adults and human beings].

In Warwickshire we are seeing and feeling the benefits of this more modern and less rigid approach. Others are on this journey too so a lasting legacy which will drive new thinking and approaches and a different feel for HR and the workforce.

Staffordshire Chief Executive, John Henderson, reminded us that values and leadership are critical and we have seen a real focus on cultural and behavioural change right across our organisations. Challenging the way our workforce think, engage and respond to new and different demands; greater collaboration and increased productivity to ensure that public services are responsive and ready for the changing demands; bringing values and behaviours into recruitment and selection. A new-feel public sector is emerging and it is good to see HR and OD professionals at the heart of this transformation.

Peer into the Future, Rising Stars and the Apprenticeships Programme have all continued to flourish this year, confirming our commitment to talent and future HR and OD capability. Identifying and developing the workforce for the future must remain a high priority for us all – both for our own profession and more widely for public services. The work on *21st Century Public Servant* has given us *Walk Tall* which is a real celebration of

the breadth and reach of the public service workforce. It is great to see this in use in many organisations as they reshape and refocus the notion of public service and the people who remain at its heart and critical to its future.

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Austerity has become business as usual and our ability to innovate and create new ways of working has become essential to our survival. More than ever we are seeing organisations thriving on the challenge and developing new and better responses to the needs of our communities. Health and social care integration, the advancements of digital solutions and technology have made us think more widely about how public services are received and shaped. We are more enabling, community focused and empowering than ever before and the way we recruit, develop and retain our workforce is changing accordingly with more emphasis on values and behaviours, concerning ourselves with how people lead, encouraging and supporting staff to deliver in a world of decreasing budget and increasing demand.

As we head into Caroline's tenure as President the focus will remain on the way in which HR and OD can influence the world of work and it is vital we maintain our momentum in bringing about the changes



which will secure the future of public services. I wish Caroline and her team a happy and successful year and look forward to this week's seminar which will set the tone for her Presidency. I hope she will enjoy her year, which I know will take us forward.

I am stepping out of permanent

Let's keep on

Karen Grave is an interim HR professional and PPMA Vice President



Karen Grave looks forward to another big year as Vice President of the PPMA and promises big developments

So, here we are again at PPMA Annual Conference. The last year as 'Joint' Vice President has flown by and I now move into my role as Vice President. In the words of one of the most iconic films of our times, *I've had the time of my life* serving as Joint VP with Caroline Nugent.

One of the real joys of this past year, apart from working with colleagues, partners and sponsors alike, has been the opportunity to see Caroline in action. She is absolutely



Tell us your views

If you have any views about the contents of this *PPMA Focus* or ideas for future articles – or would like to contribute – please email Ashleigh Richards at ashleigh.richards@bristol.gov.uk



employment and into the 'gig economy' and all that entails – so not stepping away but hoping to continue to support the sector and the profession in a broader context. I have loved being a public servant, clocking up 33 years of service this year and I remain committed to the PPMA and to the

continued development of modern, forward looking, confident and capable HR and OD across public services.

Thanks to all those who have supported me this year and who will remain among the best colleagues and friends I have been privileged to know and to serve.

making big strides together

passionate about public service, has enormous integrity and the commercial nous that will only serve us well moving forward. She is a wonderful friend and is going to be a fantastic President and I am privileged to be working with her for another year at least.

This last year has been incredibly busy. It has seen us continue to work with PPMA board colleagues on implementing our 2015–18 Business Plan. We are making great strides but there is always much more that we can do together.

On a personal note, I have focused on developing our new marketing strategy and website. You will have started to see a sharper, more modern PPMA Brand. As an association we have so much to offer, but as is typical of HR/OD professionals we have tended not to shout about what we do. We're going to be more proactive with our marketing efforts and you will start to see a more visible presence. As an example, we will be working with our colleagues at the Public Sector Show in June, to deliver three Open Theatres.

I've also continued to work with our partners the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and the Local Government Association on further developing our work on *21st Century Public Servant*. We have started to implement some of the findings

and we will have much more to say about this important work over the coming year. In addition, our friends at Birmingham University published the sister research *21st Century Public Servant* last year and the PPMA strongly supports this work too.

This coming year will see me supporting Caroline in maintaining our relationships with key partners and sponsors and further expanding our joint working with other public service colleagues. I'll also continue to attend PPMA national and regional roadshow events – it's a fantastic opportunity to meet our members and find out what is happening across the country. The ability to share practice and build connections through these events really inspires me.

In my article last year, I introduced the four legged love of my life, Ellie. Well this year I write as a mum to two beautiful Chocolate Labradors. Ellie and Jenny are BFF's and still providing me with endless opportunities to practice my leadership and management skills. I'm delighted to say that Jenny is much more amenable than her eldest sister, so the moral of that story is that it's never too late to develop and improve!

I look forward to serving as your VP for another year. You can contact me on vicepresident@ppma.org.uk – I can't wait to hear from you.

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Star power

Ashleigh Richards looks back at a year in which she was crowned PPMA Rising Star and reveals how it has proved a positive step in her developing HR career



I am usually merely the person who brings this *PPMA Focus* supplement together, however for this edition I am taking the opportunity to review my year since being crowned (quite literally) as the Rising Star 2016 winner.

There is never a dull day as a Rising Star – the learning opportunities have been endless and I am truly thankful for the chance that was presented to me by my senior leadership team in Bristol (it took a while for them to assure me they hadn't made a mistake and genuinely wanted me to apply!).

The Rising Star programme was one of the most interesting and enjoyably tense experiences I have ever encountered. It consisted of various tasks, from group activities some of which included creating a television advert in groups, to dealing with difficult conversations, mindfulness and presenting our business cases to all attendees. I had the pleasure of spending two days with other like-minded professionals who were passionate and dedicated to HR and the public sector.

The confidence that was gained by every individual in those two days was remarkable and we all came away with a real sense of accomplishment and an eagerness to showcase our newly acquired skills to our colleagues back in our organisations. The team and sponsors have

created an enjoyable but challenging programme of events for developing HR professionals and I cannot fully describe how valuable the experience has been for me.

As a result of the programme I have felt able to present confidently to large audiences; been asked to work on new projects, and have spent the last year shadowing Sue Evans, outgoing PPMA President, during her many tasks. Visiting her at Warwickshire CC has given me an understanding of how similar organisations can run and what fantastic work they are doing. I like to think both organisations have benefitted from this relationship through the sharing of ideas around best practice.

The confidence gained by every individual was remarkable and we all came away with a real sense of accomplishment

People have asked me 'what's next?' I must admit I still do not know exactly what the future holds. I started my career as a 17-year-old apprentice with the local authority, and didn't appreciate how diverse Bristol City Council is and what a fantastic organisation it is to work for. I must admit I almost fell in to the HR profession, however it didn't take a lot of convincing to confirm this was an area in which I would like to progress my career.

I am currently studying a CIPD HR Level 5 qualification and am enjoying the course and the exposure it gives me to areas of HR I am yet to experience. What I can say though, is that this competition has allowed me to think further than I ever thought I could and I can't thank those involved enough for the confidence I have gained.

I now know that my future lies firmly in the HR profession.

Through my experience with the PPMA I feel that I have a greater understanding of how important the HR profession is to the future of an organisation. I have been welcomed with open arms in to a network of professionals who are passionate, committed and want to make a difference within the public sector.



Ready, willing and able

Matthew Wallis, PPMA Apprentice of the Year, wonders if apprenticeships are the way forward for people with disabilities who still want a route into work

As someone who has undertaken a HR apprenticeship within local government and who has a moderate to severe hearing impairment, I only have the highest of praise for apprenticeships for people with disabilities. My apprenticeship allowed me to gain invaluable experience in a new field of expertise, while adapting to the world of work, which can be challenging for anybody, let alone for someone with a disability. The confidence I gained from interacting with new people and learning new skills cannot be underestimated, as this heavily remains with me today.

After completing my GCSEs and moving swiftly into AS levels in 2015, I found myself longing to get into the world of work. Unfortunately, the careers advice I received at school was aimed mainly at students who wanted to carry onto university after completing A levels. Subsequently, at school I started to become dispassionate about my courses and more interested in searching

for an alternative to school.

One day, I stumbled across an advert on a job site for a HR apprenticeship at Central Bedfordshire Council. I had previously been a member of the council's Youth Parliament and had a keen interest in employment law, so then – in the heat of the moment – I decided to apply. After progressing through the shortlisting stage, I started to question whether I would be able to adapt to this new working environment.

At school I had support for my hearing impairment, so I was nervous about the prospect of not being able to access the same kind of help. Through careful searching on the internet, I began to realise that there was little information available to guide disabled apprentices when starting employment – which made me even more apprehensive.

When I finally started my apprenticeship, I noticed that my line manager and the HR department didn't have all the



answers to help support me – however we found a clear way forward by talking about my disability openly and trying out different kinds of adjustments. My colleagues were also keen to help in any way they could, which put me at ease and allowed me to focus on completing my apprenticeship.

Disabled people bring additional skills to workforces such as innovation, problem solving and most importantly, determination

In 2015/16, 443,000 apprenticeships were started by learners without any learning

difficulty or disability. By contrast, only 50,000 new apprentices were people with a disability.

The business benefits of employing disabled people are vast. We bring additional skills to workforces such as innovation, problem solving and most importantly, determination. When you also take into account unemployment rates for disabled people, which stands at 3.4 million, apprenticeships can be at the forefront of helping bridge this unemployment gap.

So, how can you make an apprenticeship accessible for a disabled apprentice? Almost any apprenticeships can be made accessible given the right support. Line managers can gain support from HR and the various national

services available (eg Access to Work).

There are also various support services that exist to promote the business benefits of employing disabled people and how to make sure apprenticeships are accessible. An example of a service who could help is your local Job Centre Plus, who can advise you about recruitment practices that open up jobs to disabled people and provide information about making reasonable adjustments.

I am always eager to promote the benefits of employing more disabled people within local government and would challenge you to check that your apprenticeships are as accessible as possible – could you be doing more to support applicants or hiring managers?



It's good to talk

Caroline Nugent and Karen Grave look forward to this week's annual seminar

The start of the Annual PPMA conference is always an important event. It marks the passing of one presidential term to another and with it comes the opportunity for the new President to bring his or her particular interests and, of course, style.

There are many positives to this – we thrive on diversity and different experience and ideas. However, when Karen and I agreed to take on a joint Vice Presidential term we thought long and hard about how we could use that to really advance PPMA.

Our view was that we would adopt

a common conference agenda over both of our presidential terms. We are yet again in a period of enormous change and challenge. Day to day business as usual for HR/OD colleagues is unrecognisable to that of even five years ago for many of us. in the year of Brexit, Apprentice Levy, IR35, further crisis in social care budgets, we are not going to be bored... Further budgetary pressure is likely across public services – that isn't easy when we are delivering vital services. But it is our new normal. Constant change also brings inevitable pressure to prove 'value for money' and to come up with new and innovative ways of working.

Having a common agenda gives us an opportunity to both examine the issues in depth but also to see how things have changed during

our terms. That will help us really define what best practice is in HR and OD and ensure we promote that. It should also minimise the likelihood of reinventing wheels and flitting from buzz word to buzz word.

What's also really important in our conference agenda is the emphasis we put on understanding our business. For us to be really effective business partners, we really need to understand what our organisations need from us and their drivers. HR and OD are often much closer to the heartbeat of organisations than is realised but we've brought together some really senior non-HR leaders to talk to us about their expectations and challenge our thinking. There is no room for complacency.

We will also focus on the key HR/OD professional thinking and

practice that will help us get through uncertain times. Ironically the VUCA world has just become the new normal for many of us, but we need to understand how we can support our workforces in times of change and still keep them engaged, with high productivity and commitment.

2017 sees us return to a much loved venue in Bristol and the site of previously successful conferences. We are so looking forward to the two days – the agenda is absolutely jam packed and once again we are supported by very committed sponsors and great speakers.

Next year we will follow the same agenda, but we recognise there may be an 'unknown' that will need to be addressed in 2018. We'll adjust as we need to, but we have huge confidence that our agenda will stand the test of

time. The exciting news about next year is that for the first time we will be holding our conference in Newcastle-Gateshead. There is some excellent work in this fantastic region.

All our feedback suggests that this period of relative continuity will benefit the PPMA. We will bring our own flavour, but we will work closely with our board colleagues, members, sponsors and employers to make sure we deliver the best professional development event we can and to ensure the PPMA is the body we turn to in future.

We are absolutely confident that our annual two day conference is the best value for money event available to public service HR and OD professional across all public services. We look forward to seeing you there.



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Apioneering Greater Manchester HR Shared Service Centre (GMSS) went into 'live' operation in March, providing HR and payroll services to circa 20,000 employees across two public sector organisations.

In February 2016 Trafford Council and Greater Manchester Police jointly developed a business case which reported significant benefits for collaborating on the delivery of a HR and payroll shared service. Since that time, both organisations have worked tirelessly behind the scenes via a joint programme structure and governance to achieve the collaborative ambitions, while keeping a focus on the individual organisational objectives.

The high level design that was created was underpinned by a number of joint strategic objectives and deliverables:

- Joint partnership governance
- Co-location of operations within Greater Manchester and fully integrated teams
- A new, co-designed customer service model
- Change management to support the cultural changes required and manage stakeholder expectations
- A joint vision for branding and marketing that is aligned to individual organisational objectives

With a combined workforce of more than 20 thousand employees, officers and volunteers the aim

We're open for business

A pioneering partnership between Trafford Council and Greater Manchester Police opened its doors in March, as **Jacqui Buckley** explains



Jacqui Buckley (fifth across) and the leaders at the Service Agreement signing

was to deliver a model for first-class, integrated HR transactional and payroll service that is confident in its expert knowledge of each staff member, delivers economies of scale and improves service quality through enhanced technology. A new customer service model has been designed which is aligned to industry best practice and effectively manages

all HR demands across GMP and Trafford organisations through a clearly defined, tiered model.

In previous partnerships, many organisations had dedicated resources that would deliver on behalf of their respective organisations, in this instance the programme resources were working across specified work streams on behalf of

both organisations using a shared programme governance framework, this has been challenging in some respects as both organisations are culturally very different. The programme team supported by the leadership team have overcome these challenges through strong governance and genuine passion and commitment to deliver a sustainable partnership.

The service is designed to have the ability, resilience and experience to support a wide range of public sector bodies regardless

The service is designed to have the ability, resilience and experience to support a wide range of public sector bodies regardless of their originating organisation

of their originating organisation. It is the first collaboration of its kind in the region and has the potential to define the next phase of transformational change in the North West by becoming the

public sector blueprint for shared services.

The partnership is on track to achieve £2.8m in savings (up to 2021) and further savings have been proposed predicated on the rollout of further process efficiencies and deployment of technology. In addition to the financial savings, the partnership recognises the importance of the Greater Manchester devolution agenda and the commitment to investment in local employment and services which can be clearly evidenced through this new service.

During its first couple of weeks of operation the service is reporting high demand levels including circa 300 direct calls, 400 online queries, and 200-300 transactions per day.

Leaders of the new service have jointly said: 'As part of the reform for public services, agencies across Greater Manchester are embracing new ways of working. This new service is an example of how we can effectively pool resources to provide a better service to our staff and the public. It is a common sense move, highlighting how far Greater Manchester has come in building a strong foundation of working together'.

Jacqui Buckley is Head of Greater Manchester Shared Service at Trafford Council & Greater Manchester Police



Tom Beaumont is Senior Consultant, Financial Wellbeing

A large proportion of the population are financially exposed. The lack of longer-term financial resilience built into UK households and static earnings leaves them poorly prepared for the future.

One of the key aspects when managing day-to-day finances is knowing what money is coming in, and what money is due to go out. For those employees with a consistent income and expenditure this can be relatively straightforward – but with one third of those surveyed in the Government and local authority sectors having an income that fluctuates each month, managing day-to-day finances can be a real challenge.

One other key challenge for the UK is financial exclusion – those who are financially excluded are unable to access goods and services with convenience and at a cost that is reasonable, and those who are included are able to do so with ease.

UK workers can be financially

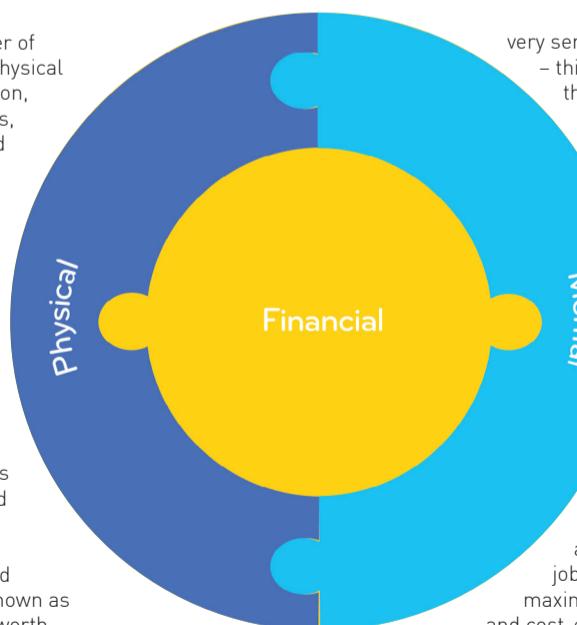
The Wellness test

Tom Beaumont of Neyber outlines the importance of employee financial wellbeing

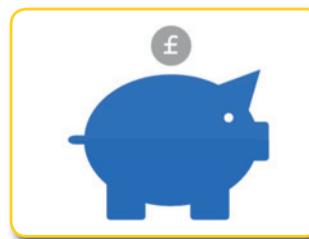
excluded for any number of reasons ranging from physical access and transportation, cost prohibitive products, regional differences and non-UK nationals as a few examples.

The impacts of financial worries can be widespread and can affect the individual both physically and mentally. It can also affect behaviour, relationships, and their ability to perform normal day-to-day tasks including those required for the job.

Organisations often think about turnover and sickness rates – also known as absenteeism. It's also worth thinking about those employees



that do show up for work everyday but who aren't focused and could be disruptive both to themselves and to others – presenteesim. These employees show up to earn their salary because they can't afford not too, but they are not in the right frame of mind to carry out their duties. Presenteesim can have some very serious consequences – think health and safety, think about those dealing with client money or legal matters, or those in healthcare professions – a lack of concentration can be significant. So should financial wellbeing be on the priority list of HR? The answer is definitely yes. Most organisations are concerned with job performance, maximising productivity and cost-effective business models – all three of these can



be affected by poorly performing staff.

There are a number of things employers can do which can be summarised very simply:

- 1) Education and awareness are key – making sure employees understand the options available to them so they can make smart well-informed decisions.
- 2) Remove the financial capability stigma – it's ok to talk to people and ask for help if you are struggling.
- 3) Communication – open honest communities within the workplace where people can learn from others and can take responsibility for their own situation.

If you would like to explore these findings and many others in more detail, you can register to receive a copy of our *DNA of Wellbeing 2017* report due out in May via hello@neyber.co.uk.

Do come and say #Hello at the PPMA Annual Seminar this week or contact tom.beaumont@neyber.co.uk to find out how we are helping innovative organisations such as Thurrock Council

There is no doubt that one of the themes for HR professionals at the PPMA Conference this year will be how we influence workforces that we don't directly manage; or how we transfer workforces to alternative operating models; or how we deliver better outcomes for citizens with reducing cash; or how we build governance in arms-length or partner organisations to satisfy the council while encouraging freedom to operate and return of profit.

Indeed we wouldn't mind betting it's probably one of the biggest topics of conversation. 2016 and 2017 have presented the biggest increase in new operating models, new organisations, new boards, new freedoms and ultimately new talent challenges; so we're not surprised there's lots to talk about.

For many, this changing organisational and operational landscape has presented immediate opportunity, the freedom to operate outside of the public sector constraints, perhaps in a Teckal, social enterprise or mutual model mean that terms, conditions, reward, culture, engagement strategy, leadership qualities, behaviours and values can be

The value, price and opportunities of freedom

Garfield Cameron and **Julie Towers** of Penna outline the changing organisational landscape for public services and its impact on talent, culture and outcomes

revisited and anchored in the new rather than the old; and also anchored in the commercial and entrepreneurial with pace and personality. That's not to say the public sector bodies themselves can't do the same, but there's something very empowering



Julie Towers is Managing Director at Penna Recruitment Solutions

about a new organisation and the blank canvas and opportunity to reimagine the people strategy from top to bottom is hugely exciting.

This race to generate revenue, trade, partner, share and change governance in order to create the



Garfield Cameron is Lead Consultant at Penna for public sector arms-length and trading organisations

freedom to return profits to the public purse and square the circle of declining funding is upon us; and if it's not happening to you, ask why not, or go and start the revolution in your place.

We've been privileged to work with some of the most established and newest trading organisations and the breadth of thinking and creative innovation is stunning; with new boards needing a range of different and challengingly commercial chair's and non-executive directors; and new top structures needing very different CEOs and MDs, the talent pool has to be widened and the talent attraction strategies changed to

reach out to a very different and highly passive candidate audience.

We're advising clients to think again, and think differently when it comes to the recruitment process too. If you genuinely

We see apprenticeships as a progression route into jobs we still need in the future rather than a training scheme

want private sector candidates then you will have to forget the formal processes until you have a good field; and you must get your remuneration and reward strategy clear in terms of basic, bonus and benefits – many candidates will be getting higher basics, better bonuses and a range of benefits that just don't exist in the public sector; but might need to in these arms-length organisations; and if they're truly arms-length then they have the flexibility to do so, but often the Member and Officer views on them are the deterrent.

It's time to think different, it's time to do things differently and if we remember why we're doing it – to deliver revenues back to authorities that so need it, then we'll get it right.

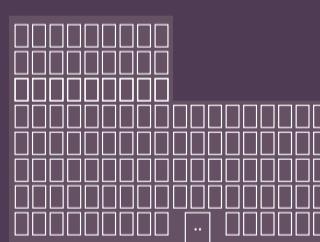
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We found some real Future stars!

Now close to its fifth yearly cohort, PPMA and Penna look at the 'Peer into the Future' programme for current HRD's and aspiring talent and reflect on the success it has achieved – including uncovering some potentially inspirational future HR leaders. **Yvonne Skingle** explains

There have been 70 Peers so far, enjoying six modules involving their self-development and some of the key challenges for the sector – commercialism, OD and transformation, social care and health integration, trading arms and new models of delivery and the future of the public sector.

We have had the support of Waitrose, Aldi, Toyota and Kier Housing as we look at the different ways of operating in a HR or OD environment, as well as some high-profile chief executives and directors who have given generously of their time to the programme.

We hold a Peer alumni twice a year so that the networking and learning can continue – and again some really great insights into cross sectorial practice from high profile speakers has been important to maintain the momentum of the challenge, building self-confidence and looking at the bigger picture of change for the sector.

This year we have also launched 'Peer of the Year' to truly celebrate the success of one of the peer's in their organisations or across the public sector – the winner will be announced at the PPMA Seminar in Bristol as you read this.

It's so easy in HR (as with other professions) to get into the weeds of the transactions and operations – employee relations, restructurings etc – that you forget to think about the bigger world out there. So

'Peer' is about the strategic role HR and OD needs to play in the sector and getting our future talent in the right place. Peer of the Year celebrates the ability to do this and really make an impact in your business.

That's enough from me – hear it from some of the participants who have made Peer a focus for their personal development, career journey and impact in their businesses.

Sandra Farquharson, newly appointed interim Head of HR at Bristol City Council: 'The Peer into the Future Programme provided a unique opportunity to hear the latest thinking in the public and private sector. Visiting large private sector organisations and learning about the challenges and successes of these companies, provided valuable insight into HR solutions that could also be used within the public sector. It was a great opportunity for networking and sharing.'

Victoria Tricarico, Director of HR,



Yvonne Skingle is Director at Penna Executive Search and PPMA National Policy Lead

Creative Education Trust: 'I was extremely fortunate to be part of the Peer programme while I was head of People and Change at Haringey Council. The programme was a fantastic opportunity to learn from some really inspirational speakers about their leadership experiences, as well as to network with other HR professionals from across a range of industries.'

'Peer' is about the strategic role HR and OD needs to play in the sector and getting our future talent in the right place

Selena Lansley, Head of Workforce, LGA: 'As a member of the first cohort in 2013/14 I gave it a five star rating. The development opportunity came at the right time having spent my first year heading up the workforce improvement programme and pay framework for London Councils. Four years on I reflect on the value of the personal insights, business knowledge, tools and ideas, contacts and overall the confidence to develop my own leadership style. I am proud to have been recently selected to head up the LGA workforce team supporting councils. I have promoted and recommended the programme to colleagues who like me have put the learning into

practice resulting in accelerated career progression.'

Felicity Davies, HR Service Centre Manager, Warwickshire CC: 'I am on the current cohort of Peer into the Future and I am finding this really invaluable to me. It's great to have some protected time away from the office to focus on my development and some thinking space. All of the presenters have been inspirational and have absolutely captured my attention with their "story". It's really great having successful HR leaders and chief executives talking openly and honestly about the challenges they face in their roles and being able to map some of their skills back to the work we did about skills and behaviours of a great leader. The networking in the cohort is also excellent, this has helped me develop my network and the engagement between the group members is very good.'

Caroline Nugent, HR Director OneSource and Incoming President, PPMA: 'I was lucky to have the chance to attend the very first cohort of Peer into the Future. It allowed me the "headspace" to get out of the day job and look at what else was going on. The fact that speakers were prepared to give us real situations they have had to handle really allows you to understand how complex a world we work in! I have also been able to attend the fascinating alumni events with some top class speakers from

private, third and public sectors which continue to make me think and push for ideas. The fact I have subsequently become a director (and others have been promoted since attending) is testament to the opportunity of having the high level strategic space. As incoming President of the PPMA I am committed to supporting the programme and encouraging our next leaders.'

Sue Evans, PPMA President: 'Anyone aspiring to advance their career to a senior role in HR or anyone already in role but looking to extend and develop their strategic thinking and ideas should really enrol in Peer into the Future. It is a great opportunity to network and to engage with chief executives and experienced HRDs around hot topics and future thinking. The programme will give you the strategic "headspace" to really consider the future of HR, the future of work and the future of workforce across public services. Above all, it will challenge you to think about your role now and in the future. With a broad range of topics and even broader range of contributors this is the programme that will give you the confidence to lead HR.'

The next cohort starts on Thursday 21st of September 2017. To find out more about the programme, please visit www.pppma.org.uk/events/peer-into-the-future-2016/2017 or email peerintothefuture@penna.com