

'Partnership at Work'

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20TH ANNIVERSARY
1989-2009

About United Welsh

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- Housing Association
- Turnover £40m p.a./ 150 people
- Partnership at Work started 2001
- Employee engagement & industrial relations reputation
- Financial Times – 4th Best Workplace in UK 2005
- Partnership at Work audit - “*Best in Class*” (IPA 2008)



Partnership at Work



“The only way to sustain business success is by unlocking the potential of our people through ‘engagement’. For us a key component of this is ‘Partnership at Work’.

Why Engagement Matters?

"The fact that only around 12% of the UK workforce can be considered as highly engaged shows that there is potential for huge gains for the economy if we can improve in this area" - David Macleod, led the UK Government (BERR) Review of Employee Engagement 2009



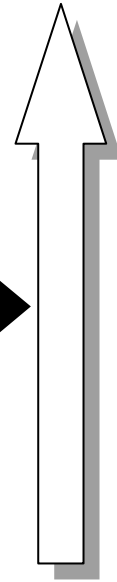
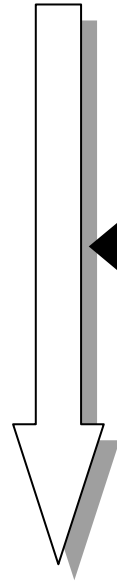
McLeod Review – Key Enablers

- *Leadership* provides a strong *line of sight* between the job and the organisation's vision
- *Engaging Managers*, who treat people as individuals and who listen and encourage
- There is organisational *integrity* such that espoused values are reflected in behavioural norms
- There is ***employee voice*** in the organisation

Enablers of Engagement



'Engaged Leadership'



'Employee Voice'

Employee Voice in Practice

- Information is not enough
- Consultation is not enough
- For true engagement, people need to be able to participate in the decision making process, if they wish
- In practice this requires a collective (& independent) voice

Participation in Decisions

“When members of a group are involved in the decision-making process, they tend to believe in decisions made.

When members are excluded from decision-making, then they offer less commitment to such decisions and may oppose or sabotage them”

Tom Douglas, “Survival in Groups”, 2008

Employee Voice

“I am committed to the principle that collective voice in the workplace is a fundamental human right. It does not matter how a collective workers’ voice is articulated as long as it is authentic, ...independent...”

*David Coats, Assistant Director of Policy,
The Work Foundation, 2009*

Partnership at Work in Practice

- Partnership Agreement, with our employees, through our recognised union, UNISON
- “Recognises the legitimate interests of both parties and the common objective of sharing in the success of the business”
- ‘Option-based consultation’ at TPG
- Workplace culture

Lessons Learned

- What's in a name?

“Your partner in laundry and waste disposal”

- We are all beginners

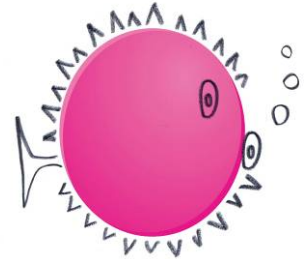
“People like to think that they are where what they agree with is!”

- C S Lewis

- It is counter-cultural

Partnership at Work Defined

- It is a partnership between management and employees
- When decisions are made that affect business and impact directly on employees...
- Management commit to a level playing field to enable a common agenda to be discovered



OBC in Practice

- Establishment of a satellite office
- Change in hours of work
- Restructure of maintenance function
- Restructure of maintenance team
- Opening new main office
- Communication strategy



Partnership Manager

- Partnership at Work needs to be resourced
- Link between union and senior management
- Link between line managers and their people
- Link between union and non-union employees
- Trust bridge
- Guardian of agreement and consultation

United Welsh – The Evidence

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- Reduction in Rent Arrears of over 100% since 2001
- Reduction in rent lost because of empty properties of over 100% since 2001
- Largest development programme in Wales
- Increased customer satisfaction
- Union membership
- Increased employee satisfaction (92% of our people say they are proud to tell others that they work here)
- Great Workplace competition – Top Not for Profit Organisation in the European Union (2005)



Mandy on Partnership

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“Being involved not only gives me real opportunities to influence the decisions which affect me and my future, it also means I am more aware of the wider picture. As a result I can be confident United Welsh are going places, so for me it’s the place to be.”



Double Presidential
Recognition Award Winner

‘Partnership at Work’



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