

Networks strengthened and learning forum established for Human Resources and Organisational Development Heads of Service

All members of Generate are now represented on this Group, which is supported by Cobbett's employment and health and safety specialists. The Group has started to look at shared learning and shared talent management and has jointly commissioned a key project to ensure the combined strength of the organisations is utilised when recruiting to difficult positions.

First joint response to policy consultation

Group members had been responding to policy initiatives from the TSA and government individually. The Group has now agreed a protocol for issuing joint responses to key consultation exercises, reflecting the combined views of five housing providers that between them own and manage almost 36,000 homes. Our first joint response to the TSA Standards consultation was formally reviewed against submissions of large national organisations. The feedback from others who had read the Generate submission was that it generally compared very well in terms of its style and content, and was cited as insightful and comprehensive.

Generate members have contributed to the CIH UK Housing Panel

Members of Generate have contributed to the UK Housing panel surveys for the Chartered Institute of Housing. The confidence of Generate members to offer opinion on national issues has been strengthened from their joint learning and debate opportunities provided within Generate.

Joint Board networking and training events

Board members have expressed real benefits from joint Board networking and training events that provide a 'safe' environment for discussion of some contentious issues such as funding, remuneration, appraisals etc.

Conclusions

The previous 12 months have been a busy period of often intense activity for the Generate Group.

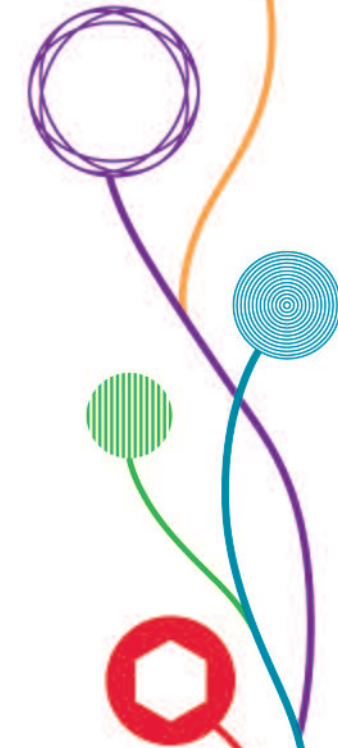
It has also been a year where the Chief Executives have been able to test out and debate how they get value from Generate and how the concept that is Generate can continue into the future to add value both to the individuals who take part in it and of course to the five organisations and their customers and stakeholders.

The Group has been formally able to assess its success and learning in a range of activities and this feedback will be built into developing Generate's first business plan.

For more information about Generate please contact Paul Johnson, Generate Facilitator, on tel: 07713 085001 or visit www.wegenerate.co.uk



May 2009
to
May 2010



Generate

Generate Annual Report



Introduction

Generate is a group of five housing organisations that work together to share knowledge and experience for the benefit of all of their tenants and customers.

The organisations have similar values and are not looking to compete with each other, but to collaborate and achieve more together.



We have very much promoted 'Generate' as 'A group that's not a Group!' - The five organisations are each separate and independent of each other. They are not legally joined in any way – they just share the same enthusiasm and commitment to making a real difference. This allows us to reinforce to others the unique but very effective way we work together.

Collectively, the Group has agreed to produce a brief Annual Report outlining its actions over the previous 12 months, not to just to record what we have done together but to demonstrate the value that Generate has brought to its respective organisations.

Joint Board event on Diversity

A successful event was held in May 2009, with 33 attendees, Chairs, Chief Executives and Board Members focussing for the first time on joint shared learning at a Board level.

The feedback from this event was very positive and the interactive format of the training appreciated, as it took a realistic and practical approach to the delivery of outcomes for customers and staff with diverse needs

New Gen to Generate

The Group began its first review of its purpose and future concluding with a view that the concept of a New Generation of Chief Executives was now established but that the principle of fresh thinking, openness, challenge and innovation was something that all the member organisations wanted to continue to 'Generate'. Thus the 'Generate' brand was formed.

Formal constitution agreed

To reflect the need to offer a structure to the Group, and supported by guidance from Cobbetts our legal advisors, a constitution for the Group was created and agreed by each of the respective Boards. This set down the way the Generate Group would work together and provided some formality, although it is still recognised that much of the value in Generate is in its informal sharing and influencing as much as in its formal meetings and sharing of knowledge and experience.

Developing funding and innovation

All members of the Group recognise the challenges facing their organisations in terms of new capital funding. The Group met with Richard Parker, Director of Housing for PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), to explore new and innovative funding methods. Richard is part of a government think tank in this area and individual members have since met with him on individual projects. As a result of this connection we have also been able to access informal papers on housing issues from PwC.

Political lobbying

On the invitation of the Group Chair of Seddon Construction, the Group took part in a lobbying meeting at the Conservative Party conference with a personal meeting with the then Shadow Business Minister, Mark Prisk. We ensured that this was structured around issues relevant to our customers and our businesses.

Liaison meeting North West ALMOs

To test sharing and learning synergies, the Group had a joint meeting with the North West ALMO Group and both parties have agreed to keep up dialogue in areas of joint interest. This served as a reminder of the level of trust and confidence that the five Chief Executives particularly have built up with each other and the benefits this provides to our organisations and customers in the form of 'free consultancy'

September 2009 NHF Networking Event

Generate held its third Networking Event at the NHF Conference in Birmingham and formally launched the Generate brand. The event was attended by around 80 influential guests, including funders, regulators, and other key opinion formers for Generate members. The reception is becoming a mainstay event at the NHF conference and the feedback, again from those who attended, was that it was an excellent event with valuable opportunities to network and share.

Legal procurement framework established

Following on from the successful Insurance framework with the support of Fusion21, a major framework tender process was achieved for legal services. Major savings of up to 20% on legal fees have been achieved through a formal structured tender process for a three year framework.

Other staff within the Generate organisations working together

Following the successful model of the five Chief Executives, a number of Best Practice sub groups have been formed to look at Housing Management, Governance, Construction and Human Resource issues. These have enabled others in the five member organisations to share knowledge and experiences as they look at how each are tackling key issues. The sub groups have also helped to develop the individuals' formal and informal sector networks.

Lobby group sounding board with Chief Executive of the TSA

At a time of major change and challenge within our regulatory environment, members of Generate were asked to contribute to a sounding board for Peter Marsh, Chief Executive of the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). Peter commented this has been an excellent group of informed contemporary Chief Executives whose opinions are highly valued and can shape future policy. Generate members were encouraged to contribute to pilots and to formal consultation on TSA standards as a group. The Group has learned the potential advantage of a strong voice at a national policy formulation level. We aim to develop the value of lobbying into the future.

Networks of senior finance staff strengthened

Through working together on procurement initiatives, Directors and senior staff in finance who had already formed an informal network, have developed an even more positive and respectful relationship. This has led to constructive challenge, mutual respect and insights into benchmarked performance of the respective organisations.