

MJ Awards 2020 submission – Chief Executive of the Year

The senior leadership team at the London Borough of Bromley, with the support of the Council's senior Members, are delighted to nominate Ade Adetosoye OBE as Chief Executive of the Year for the 2020 MJ Awards.

Ade is unfailingly committed to improving the lives of our 330,000 residents in Bromley, which is evident from his achievements in his first year as Chief Executive. Since Ade took up the role in an interim capacity in December 2018 and following his confirmation in post in July 2019, he has spearheaded an ambitious four-year Transforming Bromley Programme, which has so far identified £6m of savings and efficiencies across the organisation, while still protecting vital services for our residents.

Ade has proved to be an inspirational, enthusiastic and supportive leader to his colleagues, our political leaders and our multi-agency partners across Bromley. His open, approachable and transparent leadership style, meeting personally with hundreds of members of staff through one-to-one staff surgeries and team visits, has created the belief that our ambitious transformation roadmap can be achieved.

His cultural change agenda to embed the organisation's visions and values across all services has been integral to delivering our transformation goals, as well as building renewed focus on placing residents at the heart of service delivery. In re-establishing the Borough Partnership Forum, Ade has provided significant support to our partner organisations and to our collective efforts for residents, including enhancing our leisure services and a greater skills and employment offer for our children and young people.

For these reasons and many others, we believe that Ade has demonstrated extraordinary passion, determination and integrity at this early stage that goes well beyond the day-to-day running of a local authority. Leading by example and modelling the values he expects of others, he is reaching and re-engaging colleagues and partners to strive for excellence for Bromley residents.

Transforming Bromley Roadmap 2019 - 2023

Ade came to the Chief Executive role with significant experience in delivering transformation at a departmental level. As Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education, Care and Health Services, he led our unprecedented children's services transformation from an 'Inadequate' Ofsted judgement in July 2016 to achieving a 'Good' judgement with 'Outstanding' social work leadership in January 2019, an incredible feat recognised by senior leaders from Ofsted and the Department for Education.

He has applied the same determination as Chief Executive through the Transformation Programme. Launching our Transforming Bromley Roadmap in April 2019, Ade has articulated the vision for our whole Council approach to tackling long-term organisational challenges while continuing to deliver good quality services as part of business-as-usual activity. In developing the Roadmap, Ade consulted personally with over 200 members of staff through one-to-one meetings and team visits, as well as with the Council's elected members and our multi-agency partners, to better understand the organisation's strengths and areas for improvement.

Ade's ambitious transformation approach has paid significant dividends: in one year, we have identified £6m of savings across all departments. Over £300,000 will be saved through our innovative Staying Together team, which helps to keep children and young people at home with their families rather than entering care. We are digitalising our services through small and large scale innovation, such as modernising our car parks with automatic payment systems and digitalising our archival storage documentation, saving the Council over £30,000 a year. We are improving recruitment and retention in delivering adult social care services through our innovative Wake Up 2 Care scheme to support care homes in Bromley to recruit new carers and providing a clear development pathway for their first six months of employment.

These innovations are vital for the medium-term sustainability of our services and pave the way for incrementally more innovative services.

Transforming Bromley: establishing place-based leadership

In January 2019, Ade re-established the Borough Partnership Forum, bringing together senior leaders from the CCG, health providers, schools, fire and rescue services, police, leisure services, and the VCS sector, to work together on areas of mutual interest. This forum has already proved to be vital for identifying opportunities to support our partners in achieving their goals.

Ade is clear about his personal commitment to partnership and collaboration beyond the Council as a way to improve the lives of residents. He walks the talk. As Bromley's local leisure services provider, one of the changes early in Ade's tenure was to sign up to a long term relationship with us, innovative in the sector, that allows us to invest long term in community wellbeing. He then built on that commitment by inviting us to join the Borough Partnership group, thereby proactively facilitating stronger relationships and more effective collaboration.

Marg Mayne, Chief Executive, MyTime Active

Working with our education partners, Ade's support for the development of the London South East Academies Trust has created a greater range of high quality alternative and special school provision locally. Under Ade's leadership, the Council have invested over £8m to address the complex multi-dimensional needs of the borough's most vulnerable children and young people.

Ade also supported the London and South East Education Group to achieve nearly £6.4m of investment to deliver the London Aerospace and Technology College at Biggin Hill Airport, which has directly led to the decision by MRO Bombardier to relocate its third global service centre from Amsterdam to Bromley. The centre will provide a regional centre of excellence to address the national STEM skills shortage and the relocation of MRO Bombardier will provide significant economic growth to the borough.

Ade's overall approach to public service is in partnership, maximising the skills and expertise of other lead stakeholders. By doing this, he is effectively unlocking greater opportunity and generating wider social value.

Sam Parrett OBE, Group Principal and CEO of London and South East Education Group

Transforming Bromley: driving cultural change

At the heart of Ade's transformation vision is creating a workplace environment and culture where all staff in Bromley feel heard, valued and supported, with the right tools and management to do their jobs well.

As a social worker by training, Ade is in his element when walking the 'shop floor' and meeting frontline officers, knowing that these colleagues are often best placed to identify where the organisation could be more strategic and innovative. Ade has committed to visiting every service in the Council, which staff have reported as beneficial and increasing morale, and his staff surgeries are greatly valued by colleagues, who are reassured by the open offer to bring any issues of interest directly to him.

“He has flung himself headlong into changing the culture of the organisation and his determination and level of commitment to his role and to see through the Council’s vision and objectives is outstanding. Meeting so many staff individually, he has lead by example and his enthusiasm is in my experience seeping right through to staff at all levels.”

Tim Horsman, Assistant Director, Planning

Through Ade’s commitment to taking staff on our transformation journey, we held the first all-staff conference for many years in November 2019, which was an important opportunity for all 1400 colleagues in Bromley to hear Ade’s vision for delivering transformation and making a meaningful difference to improve the lives of our residents.

“His drop-in sessions with staff at all levels within the organisation demonstrate a leadership style that staff really appreciate. I booked a 20 minute slot with him and 45 minutes later, he was still asking questions and seemed genuinely interested. Ade has taken the time to come and talk to junior officers, and has been out and about in the borough seeing what they do in their day to day work. Staff feel valued at Bromley under Ade’s leadership and guidance and can see that he is clearly committed to getting the best out of people and making Bromley the best it can be.”

Sarah Foster, Head of Performance Management and Business Support

Transforming Bromley: increasing affordable housing supply and tackling homelessness

Under Ade’s leadership, we have embarked on a challenging housing transformation programme to increase our affordable housing supply and reduce our dependency on temporary accommodation, which was estimated to represent £10m of cost pressures by 2023.

Through our housing transformation agenda, we will aim to build 1000 homes in Bromley over the next four years through modular construction, exploring opportunities for a special delivery vehicle to acquire homes, and looking at longer-term development on Bromley owned or acquired sites. Through the recent senior leadership restructure, we are establishing a dedicated Housing Development Team, comprising officers with the sufficient skills and experience across planning, regeneration and housing to meet our key aims.

Through Ade’s leadership, we have identified £3m of savings so far to address housing need in Bromley.

“Ade has re-aligned service areas and appointed effective Directors to drive change. This has helped bring to the forefront the key pressures we are facing so that they are part of the common dialogue and goals. Whilst we are still early on in the process, we are already benefitting from those new connections and are exploring ways of working on projects such as the drive to increase access to affordable housing within the borough, which will have a lasting, positive impact on our residents.”

Lynnette Chamieleic, Assistant Director, Housing

Transforming Bromley: promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of our residents

Ade provides a guiding hand on our journey to deliver outstanding education, care and health services. As Chair of the multi-agency Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Governance Board, Ade provides critical challenge to ensure we develop high quality and local provision to meet the needs of children and young people who have SEND. Our recent local area inspection in September 2019 indicated we are making significant progress in delivering the SEND reforms, which is in no small part due to Ade's pivotal role in raising the profile of this agenda across the local area.

"As a newly promoted Director, I found Ade Adetosoye's leadership to be the perfect balance of support and challenge, enabling me to hit the ground running. Ade is consistently approachable and warm in his demeanour, whilst maintaining an unrelenting and unapologetic focus on driving improvements to the lives of Bromley residents. Words like inspirational are often overused, however the Chief Executive has provided every colleague and partner in Bromley with a clear vision and strong impetus for his Transforming Bromley Roadmap."

Jared Nehra, Director of Education

Conclusion

As senior leaders, we believe that Ade has achieved an astonishing amount in his first year as Chief Executive. His authenticity, sincerity and commitment to serving the Council and our residents has been the catalyst for driving the necessary culture change to take all staff on our transformation journey. Ade has created belief and powerful buy-in from staff, Members and partners, creating a powerful coalition of interests to achieve long-lasting change.

"I have worked with Ade over the last 14 years in different authorities and his consistency highlighted by other colleagues is testament to his professionalism in striving for excellence for our communities.

His sense of public service is outstanding and his determination to make a difference is a tribute to his integrity."

Janet Bailey, Director of Children's Services

Judging by his accomplishments so far, we believe Ade will continue to achieve great things for the residents of the London Borough of Bromley.

"Anybody can read the reports. They'll tell us that we are gripping financial challenges. Our Ofsted reports agree that our services are improving. We're tackling housing, the environment, social change and isolation. The reports are good. But, from me as a local member, it's when I listen to staff that I know real change is happening. When they stop me to tell me they feel happier, that they are listened to or that they are excited to come to work, then I know we have change."

Cllr Peter Fortune, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Education, Children and Families