



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2020-2024

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide further information on the work undertaken to develop the new People Strategy 2020-2024 following its initial consideration by the Committee on 3 December 2020 and to seek the Committee's approval of the Strategy (attached as Appendix A to this report).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Council's People Strategy (2020 – 2024) was presented to the Employment Committee on 3 December 2020. The purpose of the Strategy which has been developed in support of the Council's Strategic Plan, is to set out a work plan to support overall performance and productivity, and also ensure that the workforce has access to learning and development opportunities, a clear support framework for their wellbeing and mental health and that the County Council is able to attract and retain a committed workforce which understands and works to its values to support Leicestershire communities.
3. The Employment Committee at its meeting on the 3 December 2020 provisionally approved the People Strategy 2020-2024 subject to the presentation of a further report at the next meeting of the Committee detailing:
 - i. The outcomes achieved by the previous People Strategy (2017–2020).
 - ii. The outcomes of the evaluation exercise undertaken on the People Strategy for 2017-2020 which informed development of the Strategy for 2020-24; and
 - iii. The smart targets that have been set for each of the key deliverables for Year 1 of the new People Strategy (2020-2024).
4. This report sets out the additional information requested and seeks approval for the People Strategy 2020-2024.

Background

5. The People Strategy for 2020-2024 has been developed following an evaluation exercise which took place on the previous Strategy (covering 2017-2020) and discussions with all departments to determine workforce needs and priorities over the short and medium term.
6. The information was then categorised into three themes:
 - i. Performance Management.
 - ii. Leadership.
 - iii. Workplace and Culture.

Although there are several overlaps between them, each theme has a number of projects designed to achieve the outcomes the Council requires.

7. The impact of Covid-19 on how the Council's workforce has needed to work now and in the future to deliver its services to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, including the meeting of health and safety requirements, has been factored into these plans, together with a stronger requirement to support the health and welfare of the workforce as they continue to work on a remote basis.
8. A Ways of Working programme has been implemented to lead on the way in which the Council's workforce is expected to work, including how the Council will manage its property estate and roll-out supporting information technology. The people aspect of this programme is being supported by the new People Strategy.

People Strategy 2017-2020

9. The previous People Strategy had the following themes and set out to achieve:
 - i. **Performance management** – Success across the organisation and for our people will be achieved by making clear what is expected of them and what they can expect in return.
 - ii. **Leadership** – we will have confident leaders at all levels to build cohesive teams in order to drive performance.
 - iii. **Skilled, resilient and flexible workforce** –we will build a flexible, skilled and resilient workforce that can deliver on both current and future business priorities.
 - iv. **Enablers** – Our policies, processes and systems will support our managers, enabling the strategy outcomes.

10. Key products were developed and delivered to support the implementation of this Strategy and to achieve the desired outcomes. Details of these are included at Appendix B.

Evaluation of the 2017-2020 People Strategy

11. The People Strategy 2017-2020 and the outcomes achieved were evaluated to inform the development of the new Strategy for 2020-2024. The Council's Data and BI (Business Intelligence) team were commissioned to undertake this work and it was agreed that the question which needed to be asked was:

'How far has the Council moved forward with its People Strategy during the last three years and how much is left to embed?'

Methodology and scope of the Evaluation Exercise

12. The Data and BI Team undertook the evaluation independently and gathered data that could be used to determine the success and impact of the 2017-2020 Strategy on the organisation. This was a comprehensive exercise that consisted of the following approach:

Literature Review included:

- Staff survey 2017 and 2019
- Wellbeing Survey (Covid Response Summer 2020)
- Mental Health Survey (A&C and CFS departments only 2019)
- New starters survey 2019
- Leavers survey 2019-2020
- APR training completion November 2019
- Recording of PDRs in Oracle November 2019
- 360 - degree review completions
- Attendees at performance management launch October 2019

In addition, the wider methodology also included:

- One-to-one interviews with a range of managers
- Online forums for the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Workers Group, the Disabled Workers Group, the LGBT+ Workers Group, the Carers Network
- An online forum was held with participants in the Spring Forward Programme
- Aspects of performance management were picked up in focus groups with the Trade Unions
- Interviews held with ILM apprentices from April 2017 – March 2020
- Corporate dashboards and workforce data – including sickness absence data, health safety and welfare data and data on completion rates of mandatory training were also referred to.

High level summary of the evaluation results

13. The table below sets out a high level summary of the results of the evaluation exercise undertaken and how this has informed the new Strategy for 2020-2024.

Area	Successfully Implemented/Achieved through the Key Deliverables	Work to be undertaken in the People Strategy 2020-2024
<p>Performance Management We will enable success across the organisation and for our people by making clear what is expected of them and what they can expect in return.</p>	<p>Good performance management practices have been embedded into the Council. A number of managers have increased confidence in dealing with performance management issues and draw upon the council's Values and Behaviours to support difficult conversations.</p>	<p>More work to be undertaken with managers to ensure all performance issues are managed. This will include ensuring more managers have the skills and the confidence to address issues and they can clearly communicate their vision, objectives expectations to their teams.</p>
	<p>The Values and Behaviours are seen to be good, clear and workable and in the main are being demonstrated across the Council.</p>	<p>Additional work is required to embed the values and behaviours further into the organisation. Under the new People Strategy there are plans to discuss with departments how these can be incorporated into the business and service planning processes, making them more relevant to service delivery hence increasing their meaning and value.</p>
	<p>The new APR process was evaluated as being an improvement upon the previous PDR arrangements.</p>	<p>More work to be undertaken to ensure consistency of approach and the recording of completions in Oracle.</p>
	<p>Awareness of the Performance Management Framework is generally low across all departments except for one which reported that it was very useful.</p>	<p>Further work is planned under the new People Strategy to re-launch this, making it more bespoke to departments and including it as part of the new Managers Induction so all managers will lead, manage and develop their own skills in line with the five themes.</p>

Leadership	Overall the Council/departments are well led, and good leadership practice was found to have been embedded to a great extent.	All departments believe more time should be made to invest in leadership. All departments would welcome more leadership development. The evaluation identified pockets of leadership which can be improved such as style, approach, skills and consistency (particularly at the mid-tier level of leadership).
	Leadership learning needs are being identified through a range of methods including the new APR process, one-to-ones and team meetings. The various tool kits that were delivered as part of the People Strategy including a new bespoke/flexible approach to learning helped to achieve this current position.	In the People Strategies for 2017 and 2020 there is an expectation for leaders to have vision, be confident, visible, strong, capable and confident. Whilst there was general agreement on these expectations, it was not possible to say how embedded leadership expectations are. Visibility of leaders (including diversity of leadership across the council) was the area cited most often as the expected leadership attribute that could be improved and some leaders would like more communication around the leadership expectations. This is being addressed in the strategy for 2020-2024.
	Of those who have participated in one or more of the Community of Practice events, there was very positive feedback. The format of the sessions which involves face-to-face, two-hour periods of learning and sharing of good practice across the council is well received and many staff feel the training meets identified need.	The branding of these events as being Communities of Practice requires a review as not all of those interviewed were aware of these as such, but they could name the subject areas of the various events held. In addition, a survey has taken place with participants to find out what areas they would like to see events on. This information has been collated and currently being considered in the programme for next year.

Skilled, Resilient and Flexible workforce	In the main the council has a skilled, resilient and flexible workforce and skills, resilience and flexibility are embedded a great deal across the council.	Departments identified that they would like continued support and further guidance on attracting people to work for the council, recruitment and retention in general, hence further work is being undertaken within the new People Strategy, in relation to, for example, where the council advertises and its application and recruitment methods.
	Staff are given opportunities to develop their skills and there are lots of skills within departments. There are resilience strategies and individual resilience across most services and flexibility was demonstrated; particularly more evident recently as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.	Whilst there is widespread support and application of the smarter working policy and the smarter working policy is embedded a great deal, there are issues with the consistency of its application, and more could be done to embed smarter working and behaviour change further. This is being picked back up not only under the new People Strategy but also through the Ways of Working Programme.
	The council's approach to wellbeing is embedded a great deal. It was reported that there is increased communication in this area, more support from line managers and the changes made to the in-house counselling service to reduce waiting times and the introduction of the Employee Assistance Programme have been appreciated.	Those interviewed would like more communication and greater awareness across all wellbeing initiatives. Some felt there could be more clarity on the wellbeing offer/join up and/or improvements to co-ordination and collaboration including more departmental ownership, for example around wellbeing events. The Wellbeing Strategy is therefore being reviewed as part of the People Strategy in 2021.
	Having a 'grow our own' approach, for succession and workforce planning supports departments with the embedding of this theme.	Further work is going to be undertaken with managers to build upon the success of this, to sell the benefits of this approach so it becomes more considered and integrated into department's recruitment and workforce planning strategies.

Enablers	Overall, the enabler theme is embedded to a varied extent. That said it was reported that the policies processes and systems in this area were embedded.	The recruitment portal which managers reported as being difficult to use is being reviewed as part of the Fit for the Future Programme and further work to support the implementation of a new recruitment system will be undertaken as part of the Recruitment and Retention project in the new People Strategy.
	Equality and diversity and related activities are embedded to a varied extent. The workers groups, equality and diversity awards and ratings such as Stonewall, and wanting the council to achieve Disability Confident status are valued but leadership and culture around equality and diversity, staff engagement with equality groups and networks and understanding of specific equality and diversity issues are areas identified for improvement.	Future actions within the new People Strategy include: A refresh of the Equalities Charter, further communication on the importance of completing the mandatory training on Equalities. Development of an action plan to assist in the recruitment, retention and progression of BAME employees to grade 13 and above. As part of this different options for leadership development will be considered working closely with the BAME workers group and the Trade Unions.
	The use of Workforce Information/Data is embedded to a more varied extent. Those interviewed said that they valued the tools and self-service including Tableau dashboards (including mandatory training and attendance management) and the HR Oracle dashboard.	Future development is to meet a desire for more and/or better workforce information and accessibility to HR Oracle dashboards, self-service and improvements around IT Systems. Aligned to the Fit for the Future Programme this is going to be addressed under the theme of Performance Management in the new People Strategy.

People Strategy 2020-2024

Development of the Strategy

14. Following the completion of the evaluation the Data and BI team made a number of recommendations. These were all considered and used as the basis to inform and develop the People Strategy for 2020-2024.

Content of the Strategy

15. The People Strategy 2020-24 has been written with the whole workforce in mind. It is hoped that all employees will gain from the document an appreciation and understanding of the importance of the Council's values and culture; its approach to leadership and management, with an emphasis on the importance of the Council's continued and sustained performance in working for the community. It will also set out the support available to achieve a good work-life balance which of course is highly relevant when considering the current remote working arrangements.
16. The Strategy includes a Manager's Charter, together with learning and development opportunities, the importance of equality and inclusion, and the contribution made by the Council's workers' groups. There is a clear acknowledgment of the importance of wellbeing and mental health. This is an area which will continue to be championed and the work that has been carried out so far will continue.
17. As with the People Strategy for 2017-2020 there are a number of themes in the new Strategy, namely Performance Management; Leadership and Management; and Workplace and Culture.
18. For each of the themes, a project plan is in place to deliver a set of key outcomes in these areas. A revised governance arrangement has been agreed by officers which monitors and oversees the Strategy's overall implementation and performance. This will continue to include the engagement and, where appropriate, decision-making process of internal departmental meetings. To support delivery across the Council, the Human Resources/Organisational Development Business Partners will take a greater leading role in the engagement process with departments.
19. It is intended the Strategy will be a live document on the intranet and internet with, for example, some of the embedded videos and stories being updated throughout its lifespan. It is important that the Strategy and associated plans are used as a basis to communicate with the workforce on the measures that are in place to support staff in all aspects of their employment with the Council. It will also help contribute to making sure that everyone feels they are informed, particularly as the Council's plans for A New Way of Working are taken forward.

Smart targets set for year 1 of the People Strategy 2020-2024 (Deliverables).

20. For Year 1 of the People Strategy a work programme has been put in place. For each of the projects listed below there is a comprehensive project plan that contains all the activities that are required for successful delivery. Officers monitor performance on a fortnightly basis.
21. A high-level overview of the work programme which builds on the detail from the last report to the Committee on the 3rd December 2020 is presented below together with information on Benefits, Targets, Measures and Timeframe.

Project	Benefit	Target	Measurement	Timeframe
Executive Coaching	Senior leaders' leadership capability will be developed to effectively lead and manage through change.	An increase in confidence and level of skill in the ability to lead through change increased from start of programme.	Programme will be formally evaluated which will include participants to score their confidence and skills prior to undertaking the programme and on completion.	May 2021
Leading through Innovation	Managers will be developed to be more confident and capable in managing smarter teams which includes remote working and managing through outcomes that maintain or increase productivity, whilst also understanding the importance of innovation in their ways of working.	An increase in confidence and level of skill particularly in relation to managing the performance of remote teams. An ability to apply in practice what has been learnt regarding innovation.	Programme will be formally evaluated which will include participants to score their confidence and skills prior to undertaking the programme and on completion.	December 2021

Project	Benefit	Target	Measurement	Timeframe
Aspiring Managers	There is a clear development pathway for aspiring managers that enables the organisation to 'grow its own' and supports recruitment and retention priorities.	Confidence to apply for management roles (including the management of people) increased from start of programme.	50% that attended the course go on to apply for a management position.	January 2022
Supervisor Development	Supervisors are accessing learning appropriate to their roles, that increases their confidence and capability.	Increase in uptake from supervisors in accessing appropriate Learning and Development.	Report via learning hub to understand number of supervisors who have accessed resources and which they are.	July 2022
Leadership Management Framework	Managers at all levels are aware and understand what the council requires from its leadership and management and know what relevant leadership development is available to acquire the necessary skills.	Look at the various measures in relation to performance and productivity – results on balanced scorecards and from the Staff Survey.	Managers at all levels are accessing and using appropriate learning resources via the Learning Management System. Reports to be obtained via the learning hub.	December 2022
Mental and Physical Wellbeing	Reduction of sickness absence, staff clearly understand where they can access help when it is required, good wellbeing practice is embedded with managers and in the council's culture, support for those staff	Sustained and maintained progress towards the target 7.5days per FTE	Staff Survey. Wellbeing Survey (a third is being discussed) Leavers questionnaire data - new data from Oct 20	April 2022

Project	Benefit	Target	Measurement	Timeframe
	<p>who are required to work from home for extended periods of time and support with recruitment and retention.</p>			
<p>Recruitment, Retention and Redeployment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new recruitment process which is streamlined and encourages applicants to apply and therefore enables managers to appoint candidates quicker. 2. Recruit to hard to fill posts as a result of the recruitment incentives policy, better 'branding' and more effective recruitment practices. 3. Enhanced communication over the benefits and rewards of working for the council 4. A redeployment process that minimises redundancies and retains skills 5. The council to be regarded as a place where people want to work. 	<p>To be able to attract high calibre candidates to all vacant posts to work for the council and retain for a period of time 3 plus years</p>	<p>Periodically review the recruitment process – its overall efficiency and turnover rates. Increase the numbers of staff who may be redeployed into other posts within the council</p>	<p>June 2022 (dependent on the new recruitment module being implemented in Fusion)</p>

Project	Benefit	Target	Measurement	Timeframe
Diversity and Inclusion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any potential discrimination is eradicated. 2. The council's reputation as an excellent employer (both internally and externally) is promoted 3. Reduction in staff turnover 4. Greater development of skills and insights, resulting in increased productivity 5. Continued development and representation of Workers Groups (BAME, DWG, LGBT+) 	<p>Increase in the% declaring characteristics.</p> <p>Increase in the % of the diversity of the workforce at G13 and above.</p> <p>Achievement of accreditation status i.e. Stonewall, Disability Confidence and Race equality standard</p>	Workforce data reports to be produced from Oracle on a quarterly basis and discussed at Departmental Management Team Meetings	June 2022
The Way We Work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managers lead their teams into new ways of working, resulting in high levels of productivity, and ensuring that their staff have the equipment and skills they need. 2. Managers are enabled to adopt positive changes in behaviour and challenge current ways of working so that they can successfully embed a new working culture, which fosters a climate of trust for 	Targets are still being worked on due to the links with the Ways of Working Programme	The different ways in which this can be measured are currently being assessed	December 2022

Project	Benefit	Target	Measurement	Timeframe
	<p>them and their staff.</p> <p>3. LCC encourages employees to be innovative, flexible and drive positive change within the organisation. As a result, staff are change-ready and have the proactive mindset, skills and tools to work in new ways.</p> <p>4. Staff are multi skilled and can work flexibly across a variety of teams.</p>			
Attendance Management and Capability	<p>1. Improved levels of attendance and performance</p> <p>2. Improved management of probationary periods</p> <p>3. More appropriate and effective use of the capability process</p> <p>4. An improved performance management culture.</p>	<p>Improved levels of attendance and performance</p> <p>2. Improved management of probationary periods</p> <p>3. More appropriate and effective use of the capability process</p> <p>4. An improved performance management culture.</p>	<p>Oracle data for attendance -reports to Corporate Management Team and Employment Committee</p> <p>HR data from the database to track probation and capability – cases.</p>	June 2022
APR and Supervision	<p>1. More effective APR process and improved interface with supervision.</p>	<p>Supervision received by all 90% of staff to have received APR within a 12-</p>	<p>APR compliance data from Oracle, and Staff Survey information</p>	September 2022

Project	Benefit	Target	Measurement	Timeframe
	2. Greater levels of compliance with APR and supervision completion rates	month period recorded within Oracle		
Values and Behaviours	Greater understanding of the values and behaviours which provide more cohesion to the council and underpin our identity as an employer.	Each of the people strategy projects have values and behaviours integrated.	Values and behaviours statement for each project to be developed and put in place	At the commencement of each project
Performance Management Framework	Clearly understood management expectations which managers are held accountable to.	Performance management framework is understood and being utilised	Survey to take place 6 months after the launch of the project	November 2021
Performance Management Information	Managers have access to workforce data dashboards to assist them in making resourcing decisions.	All managers understand and utilise people data to performance manage	To be discussed with Managers at supervision and APR sessions	To be agreed in line with the full implementation of Fusion (reporting functionality)

Resource Implications

22. As set out in the report to the Employment Committee on 3rd December 2020, the implementation of the People Strategy 2020-2024 will form a fundamental part of the general work programme for People Services, supported in its delivery by colleagues in other support service functions, such as the Communications Team and the Transformation Unit. Additional HR resources have been requested and agreed to ensure timely delivery.

Recommendations

23. It is recommended that the Employment Committee approves the draft People Strategy 2020-24.

Background Papers

Report to the Employment Committee on 3 December 2020 – People Strategy 2020-2024

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=212&MId=6187&Ver=4>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

24. None.

Equality and Human Rights Implications/Other Impact Assessments

25. An Equality and Human Rights Impact assessment has been undertaken on the Strategy and subsequent ones will also be undertaken where the need arises to comply with the legislation in this area.

List of Appendices

Appendix A - People Strategy 2020-2024

Appendix B - Outputs from People Strategy 2017-2020

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