



Report of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 13 February 2024

Workforce Strategy Progress Report

Purpose	To update the Scrutiny Committee on progress made against the objectives within the Workforce Strategy 2022-2027
Content	The report sets out the progress made against the Workforce Strategy 2022-2027 objectives during the 2023/24 financial year.
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the information provided and give views on the progress made to date.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Workforce Strategy 2022-2027 was approved by Cabinet in October 2022 after a period of design and consultation with stakeholders. The strategy is available for viewing at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The strategy contains four key themes to drive the improvement of organisational culture over the lifespan of the five-year period, contributing to the Council's Corporate Plan, '*Successful and Sustainable Swansea*,' and the associated Corporate Transformation Plan for 2023-2028.
- 1.3 Following Cabinet's approval of the Workforce Strategy a Workforce and Organisational Development Transformation Programme Board was established in December 2022. The board is responsible for identifying appropriate transformation projects that will enable delivery of the strategy's objectives, agreeing the priority projects for implementation at any given point in the lifetime of the strategy and monitoring progress on a quarterly basis.

- 1.4 The programme board agreed four specific transformation projects listed below in addition to selecting which of the Workforce Strategy objectives would be identified for implementation during 2023/24.

2. Transformation project progress

2.1 Leadership and Management:

Continuing to build a coaching and mentoring culture was selected as the transformation project under the leadership and management theme. The Council had already invested resource into delivering a cohort of qualified coaches which was successfully delivered and a network of coaches created. To embed this approach further a second cohort of the programme was proposed. The project is ready to implement and is anticipated to complete at the end of the 2023/24 financial year.

2.2 A Workforce Fit for the Future:

This project sought to reshape the service that the HR&OD function provides to the organisation, moving from a generic provision to a function led offer. This saw the service split into two distinct functions – an Employee Relations arm to respond to live people management issues and a Business Partner arm which will provide strategic advice and guidance to directorates on workforce planning and organisational development. This portfolio change was complete in September 2023 and the new ways of working have commenced.

2.3 Employer of Choice:

The Employer of Choice transformation project fits within the Digital Transformation Programme given it is IT-systems led development and as such is referenced in the Workforce and OD Transformation Programme Board due to the associated cultural impact of its implementation on the workforce. The project seeks to introduce a new module within the Oracle Fusion suite of products and create a new online recruitment and onboarding process. This project will be moved into the 2024/25 period.

2.4 Wellbeing and Inclusion:

The final transformation project sees a comprehensive review of sickness absence and occupational health provision to inform new approaches. This project was completed during the Summer of 2023, with final recommendations due to be considered at CMT/Leadership in February 2024.

- 2.5 Further detail on each of these transformation projects is contained within Appendix B.

3. Workforce Strategy objectives and progress summary

3.1 The four themes contained within the Workforce Strategy are as follows:

- Theme 1 Leadership and Management**
 - Strand 1 - Culture and Behaviours
 - Strand 2 - Future Leadership
 - Strand 3 – Future Shape of the Organisation

- Theme 2 A Workforce Fit for the Future**
 - Strand 4 – Future Workforce
 - Strand 5 – Recognising Performance

- Theme 3 Being an Employer of Choice**
 - Strand 6 – Recruitment and Retention
 - Strand 7 – Workforce Development

- Theme 4 Workforce Wellbeing and Inclusion**
 - Strand 8- Supporting Our Workforce
 - Strand 9– Equality in the Workplace

3.2 There are circa 40 objectives across the four themes and the programme board have approved commencement of 23 objectives during 2023/24 and into 2024/25.

3.3 Appendix C sets out each of the agreed objectives for the 2023/24 year, provides progress to date, future actions and a current RAG status.

3.4 The Leadership and Management theme contains 5 objectives, all of which are green and scheduled to be delivered by the end of the financial year. An OD offer to the organisation is due to be considered by CMT/Leadership in early February and it is anticipated that most of these objectives will then turn blue and be complete.

3.5 The Corporate Services and Financial Resilience Transformation Committee discussed progress made against the Leadership and Management theme in their January meeting to provide strategic oversight of the theme in detail. The report is contained in Appendix D.

3.6 The Workforce Fit for the Future theme also contains 5 objectives with 1 complete, 4 green and 1 amber. The next programme board is due to consider the status of the amber objective and what actions should be taken to resolve. At the time of writing the Workforce Strategy in early 2022, the 'optimal structure' objective related to plans in each directorate and subsequent changes to strategic direction in the directorates require a review of the relevance of the content in this strategy. It is likely that this objective will change focus and be more specific towards the workforce goals that the directorates are actively pursuing.

- 3.7 Employer of Choice has 6 objectives, 3 of which are green with the remainder needing further work before being completed. As we move into the 2024/25 objectives it is likely that the recruitment-based objectives will be identified as the top priority actions for the revised 2024/25 objective list.
- 3.8 There are 7 objectives in the Wellbeing and Inclusion theme, 3 of which are complete, 1 green, 2 amber and 1 will be withdrawn. The amber objectives are in relation to equalities work and will be carried forward into 2024/25. A HR&OD Manager appointment will be made for the 2024/25 year which will help with capacity amongst the HR management team to prioritise the 5 amber objectives across the strategy.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 Of the 23 objectives agreed for 2023/24 the summary RAG status list is;

Complete – 4

Green – 12

Amber – 6

Withdrawn - 1

- 4.2 Good progress has been made with addressing the objectives set out in the Workforce Strategy with 70% of them due to be complete by the end of the financial year. With one objective due to be withdrawn due to circumstances beyond the control of the Council and a further amber to be redrafted to meet directorate intentions, the remaining 5 amber objectives will be carried forward into the 2024/25 year along with newly selected goals remaining in the strategy.
- 4.3 Recruitment to the vacant HR&OD Manager post will enable greater capacity for delivery against the Workforce Strategy objectives and as the HR&OD service transformation embeds, focus on project work will increase as a result.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications contained within the report.

6. Finance implications

- 6.1 There are no direct implications contained within the report. Any that arise in due course will be factored into future budgets and planning if and when needed.

7. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 7.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

7.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the ‘well-being goals’.

7.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

7.4 As this is an information report there is no need for an IIA.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A Workforce Strategy 2022-2027

Appendix B Workforce and OD Transformation Business Cases

Appendix C Workforce Strategy Objectives 2023/24

Appendix D Corporate Services and Financial Resilience Transformation
Committee report – Leadership and Management, 23 January 2024