



Report of the Director of Corporate Services

Governance and Audit Committee – 13 July 2022

Workforce Strategy

Purpose:	To report on the progress on the implementation of the Workforce Strategy for Swansea Council 2022 to 2027.
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For Information	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 During the course of 2021 and into 2022 a Workforce Strategy has been developed for the financial years from April 2022 to March 2027.
- 1.2 Through consultations it was agreed that the Strategy should cover a five year period rather than the original three years.
- 1.3 That Strategy has now been implemented and attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on Strategy activities and to advise on next steps.

2 Summary of the Workforce Strategy 2022/27

- 2.1 The Council's Workforce Strategy has been developed taking into consideration our Corporate Plan for 2020/22; "Delivering a Successful & Sustainable Swansea" as well as the provisions of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the requirements of Welsh and UK Government and the immediate and longer- term challenges around Covid-19 and leaving the European Union.

The Council's Recovery Plan; "Managing the Present and Shaping the Future Swansea Council- From Recovery to Transformation" has provided an overview in responding to these challenges and the framework to replace the Sustainable Swansea Strategy with "Swansea – Achieving Better Together". As part of that framework it has been identified under the third longer-term "Reshape" phase that we develop a "Workforce Strategy", recognising that work in Phases 1 (Re-Align) and 2 (Re-Focus) will support this.

1.1 The Strategy identified the following Vision for our Workforce; ***"to have a motivated and committed workforce that is innovative, supported, skilled and customer focused"*** so that we ***"build strong morale in the workforce and ensure our employees feel professionally satisfied, valued and motivated by the positive and lasting impact they have on the people and communities they serve"***.

1.2 To that end, the following Key Themes and Strands have been identified to support that Vision;

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

1.3 Each Strand has identified objectives and will include an Action Plan to support delivery of key activities in achievement of those objectives.

2. Consultation Process

23.1 There has been extensive consultation in the development of this Strategy. This has included;

- Senior management consultations with;
 - The Corporate Management Team
 - Heads of Service Leadership Team
 - HR Customer Focus Group
- Members, via;
 - The Joint Consultative Committee
 - Workforce Scrutiny Group

- Equalities and Future Generations PDC Board
 - Recovery and Future Generations PDC Workshop
- Employees, via;
 - Staff Survey; with specific question relating to the key themes and strands.
 - Focus Group sessions with Trade Union representatives and cross-sections of the workforce.

2.2 The results of these consultation processes have been positively received and helped inform the Strategy.

3 Delivery Against Key Themes and Next Steps

Theme 1 Leadership and Management

Strand 1 - Culture and Behaviours

- Funding has been received for additional resource to support a review of Principles Values and Behaviours.
- Workshops have been held jointly with Trade Unions on Social Partnership Working. A Social Partnership Framework will be consulted on in 2022.
- A strategy for communications and engagement Leadership Team is under discussion on options and a staff survey is being undertaken.

Strand 2 - Future Leadership

- Funding has been received for resource to develop a framework of leadership behaviours and subsequent leadership development interventions.
- A coaching and mentoring strategy has been launched.
- “Let’s Talk” (previously “Leadership Hub”) continues to be held on a monthly basis.
- The Council has become a Member of “New Local” and will be an active participant in this networking group.

Strand 3 – Future Shape of the Organisation

- Funding has been received to support on future organisational design activities.
- The Regionalisation agenda is reviewed regularly by lead officers to identify whether any specific activities are required beyond business as usual - no specific activities identified to be undertaken in respect of the workforce strategy as yet.
- The Council’s Long term Waste Management strategy has been approved and there are currently no workforce actions identified. The Integrated Transport Unit activity is complete. The regional transport plan will be overarching and will not impact on local workforce development.
- Vulnerable learner service re-introduced and Head in place from 1st April 2022. Fifty per cent of the ambition has been realised.

- Community development strategy complete with no workforce implications.
- The optimum model for adult services, and a child and family services improvement programme including a safe 'Looked After Children' reduction strategy is underway. The workforce elements of the children services recovery and improvement plan for this year include the establishment of an academy as part of our 'grow your own' approach to address the deficits in workforce particularly social work capacity. Whilst the academy will be established this year it will take 3 years to provide a sufficient supply of social workers and in the meantime the service is maximising the use of differently qualified staff to add resilience in the short and medium term.
- The People Commissioning Hub has been operating throughout the period of the covid pandemic. A review of staffing infrastructure has been undertaken and recruitment is underway.

Theme 2 A Workforce Fit for the Future

Strand 4 – Future Workforce

- It is a key objective for HR&OD Business Partners to support in the delivery of strategic resource planning to inform workforce strategy across Directorates.
- A Quality Systems Lead has been appointed on a secondment basis to 31st March 2023 to develop and adopt agile (lean) working practices across the Council.
- A report will be provided to Governance and Audit Committee on the Management of Agency Workers. A further recent audit reported an improved rating of "Substantial".

Strand 5 – Recognising Performance

- The review of pay and grading for senior roles has commenced
- Delivery of a revised, "fit for purpose" Performance Management approach, to reflect the future needs of the Council is continuing via Oracle.
- The Council is now seeking accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer accreditation.

Theme 3 Being an Employer of Choice

Strand 6 – Recruitment and Retention

- A Recruitment Specialist has been appointed on a Fixed Term Contract basis to 31st March 2023 to progress the key activities identified in the Strategy as follows;
 - Review and Update of Recruitment and Selection Policy; so that it meets with employment legislation, best practice and Council need (particularly with regard to Equalities).
 - Review of Application Process; so that it is compliant with legislation and is seen to be supportive to applicants.
 - Development of our Recruitment Attraction Approach;
 - Upskilling of recruiting Managers
 - National Education staff recruitment campaign

Strand 7 – Workforce Development

- An additional Corporate L&D Officer has been appointed to 31st March 2023 to support on the following;
 - Development of Corporate Development Needs Analyses (DNA)
 - Delivery of effective elearning solutions in Oracle Fusion,
 - Delivery of Career Development Programmes, particularly for apprenticeships and graduate level entrants offering work experience, trainee programmes,
 - Develop Induction/ On boarding
- Delivery of training related to the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) Act, for example, Integrated Impact Assessments, Sustainable Development
- A draft paper is being consulted on with regard to the provision of Welsh language training to meet our Legal and Corporate objectives
- There is continued partnership with Gower College to identify and deliver external training support.
- Discussions are being held with Gower College and Leadership Team on the delivery of the Digital Strategy mission to achieve Digital skills and confidence including technical competency and digital innovation skills. Discussions have commenced regarding delivery of a Schools Leadership Development Programme.

Theme 4 Workforce Wellbeing and Inclusion

Strand 8- Supporting Our Workforce

- A Training package in-place with additional e-learning packages to incorporate mental health awareness into leadership and management development and courses now advertised that will increase as new Officers start
- The Helping Hands training package is complete, with promotional/recruitment resources to champion mental health. Scoping meeting held with current volunteers in June before recruitment in July 2022.
- Dying to Work Charter reviewed and re-launched.
- Management of Absence Advisors in place to provide dedicated advice and support to focus on reducing sickness absence, particularly longer-term. A full update will be provided to Governance and Audit Committee in September.
- An action plan will commence for re-accreditation for SEQOHS ('Safe, Effective, Quality Occupational Health Service). before audit and inspection by SEQOHS assessors
- Initial meeting with SEQOHS 15th June, registry and re-accreditation process underway.
- To regain Gold Award status under the Healthy Working Wales; Corporate Health Standard and Small Workplace Health Awards), Health Fairs have been booked and newsletters developed and distributed and evidence being built. There is a meeting scheduled with CHS assessors in July.

Strand 9– Equality in the Workplace

- Workforce Equalities Group established to address workforce equalities issues such as;
 - Collection of Data on “Protected Characteristics, pro-active contribution to the development of recruitment and selection processes to reflect the communities we serve
 - Adherence to the Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan and LGBT+ Action Plan as they relate to the Workforce
- Disability Confident Accreditation Employer Status achieved with the intention to achieve Leader status.

4. Integrated Assessment Implications

4.1 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.

4.2. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 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’.

4.3. 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.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications other than those set out in the body of the report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications other than those set out in the body of the report.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: Appendix 1 - Workforce Strategy 2022-27 including action plan
Appendix 2 – IIA Form