

PERFORMANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 JULY 2023

Draft Workforce Strategy

Report by Director of Finance

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. The Performance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to**

Comment on the draft workforce strategy and the four priority areas identified.

Executive Summary

- 2.** The Council's draft Workforce Strategy sets out how we will develop the capacity and capability of our workforce to achieve our strategic priorities for Oxfordshire residents. It also ensures we attract, recruit and retain talented people, promote a positive and inclusive work environment, identify how we will enable growth and development across the workforce and how we plan to develop leadership capability and high performance. This draft Workforce Strategy attached at Annex 1, takes account of feedback from senior stakeholders including the Extended Leadership Team, Senior Managers Forum and Directorate Leadership Teams following a comprehensive consultation process. A draft action plan has also been produced which is attached at Annex 2. This sets out the proposed actions which will deliver the strategy and will be updated regularly.

Background

- 3.** The Council has not had a clearly defined organisation-wide workforce strategy since 2019. Our vision is to be high performing and renowned for our innovative, highly engaged and agile workforce. We're committed to bringing together a workforce that reflects the communities we serve, creating an environment that supports diversity, equality and inclusion, and allowing all our employees to bring their whole selves to work to deliver great services for our residents. The workforce strategy aims to help achieve this and ensures the organisation delivers on its objectives. Getting it right delivers significant improvements including (but not limited to):

- assurance that organisational objectives can be delivered
- better productivity – through workforce alignment to the operating model

- competitive advantage through a more skilled and innovative workforce and
- higher quality and timeliness of customer delivery, greater staff engagement and retention and lower levels of stress

Key considerations

4. Our workforce strategy is underpinned by our wellbeing, diversity & inclusion and climate action strategies and will include initiatives and projects that aim to improve the overall employee experience through the employee's employment lifecycle. This strategy also aligns with the Council's overall strategic priorities. Any associated projects arising out of the action plan will include appropriate governance and risk analysis and where required, appropriate approvals.

Financial Implications

5. There may be financial implications associated with certain initiatives arising from the action plan. Appropriate processes will be followed and approvals sought once details are known and ahead of initiating any projects.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implication

6. There are no legal implications with this strategy.

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Staff Implications

7. A workforce strategy action plan has been produced which contains the actions aimed to deliver the workforce strategy. Officers from across the organisation will be identified to form part of each project workstream to maximise engagement, accountability and drive the effective implementation of the strategy.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

8. The strategy is underpinned by diversity and inclusion. The workforce strategy action plan associated with this strategy will include activities that will ensure we have a more diverse workforce and an inclusive workplace and working environment.

Sustainability Implications

9. The action plan associated with this strategy will include activities that will ensure we are taking steps to achieve our climate action goals.

Risk Management

10. This is not a HR & OD Workforce strategy, it is an organisational-wide strategy. Therefore it's imperative we get appropriate 'buy-in' and ownership from stakeholders across the organisation. We have mitigated the risk through having a comprehensive consultation plan with the Extended Leadership Team, Senior Managers Forum, Directorates and Trade Unions. In each session we have listened and considered feedback and made subsequent changes as appropriate. We have also changed the way we have engaged with stakeholders after each session to ensure they are tailored to suit the audience so that we get the best from sessions.
11. We have also appointed a Programme Manager who will coordinate the project(s) and hold the organisation and individuals to account on its progress and completion. We will have cross-functional workstreams involving stakeholders across the organisation to encourage collaboration and who will work closely on the evolving action plan. We will also regularly review and report on progress and escalate where progress is not being made.
12. We have consulted the Strategic Leadership team, Extended Leadership team, Senior Manager's Forum, Trade Unions and Directorates. Feedback has been taken into consideration at each stage each. The vast majority of points raised have been more relevant to the Action Plan which has been updated accordingly.

Lorna Baxter
Director of Finance

Annex 1: Draft workforce strategy

Background papers: Nil.

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