



# **Our people and culture strategy**

Delivering the Future Together

# Introduction

**Our people are our most valuable asset. The last few years have been unprecedented and our people have risen to the challenges showing resilience and strength to push through and deliver for the residents of Oxfordshire.**

With the arrival of our new Chief Executive, Martin Reeves the new Delivering the Future Together vision for 2023–2026 has been agreed.

We will be focus on becoming an employer of choice, a partner of choice and a place shaper of choice. We will need to manage this within our financial envelope, becoming even more commercially astute.

## Our future challenges

As we move into the future, the nature of the challenges we face and how we respond will be very different. Having leaders that can create and lead an organisation that is innovative, collaborative and inclusive, which embraces continuous improvement and holds itself to account will be important in addressing these challenges.

It is essential that we adopt a change mindset and continuously strive for improvement by looking up and out for innovative ideas – using insight from our own internal sources to deliver change in these challenging times.

We need to be confident and work at pace and we need to support each other by creating a trusted, transparent and inclusive environment where people feel safe to grow and innovate.

We need to work collaboratively and innovatively with each other and with partners across Oxfordshire and beyond. Working beyond our walls with volunteers, commissioned services, maintained schools and academies, and the employees of our strategic partners will create better solutions and experiences for the residents of Oxfordshire.

## Oxfordshire County Council Delivering the Future Together

### Employer of choice

All our colleagues recommend working here. People aspire to work for us and proactively seek employment.

### Partner of choice

We choose the right organisations to develop purposeful relationships to deliver the best outcomes for our residents.

### Place shaper of choice

We convene public, private and community groups to shape the county. Our residents take pride in where they live and are happy with the facilities and services available to them.

# Our key opportunities

**Shaping  
our organisation to  
be efficient and work  
within the budget**

**Working  
at pace**

**Becoming a skilled  
and valuable  
partner**

**Delivering  
opportunities for  
residents, children  
and adults**

**Transforming  
our organisation so  
it's fit for the future**

**Creating a thriving  
and sustainable  
environment for our  
people to flourish**

**Delivering to our  
strategic priorities**

**Creating an  
inclusive and  
positive work  
environment**

**Becoming an  
employer of choice to  
attract and retain the  
best people**

**Developing  
our workforce so they  
have the skills for the  
future**

**Being a digital first  
organisation**

**Being a place  
shaper  
of choice**

# Leading through our values and behaviours

**Our values are at the heart of all we do here at Oxfordshire County Council. We all share a common purpose to deliver excellence for the residents of Oxfordshire.**

Our values act as a guide to how the organisation and our people should approach everything we do.

Leading through our values every day, putting them front and centre of every behaviour, decision and action will unite us as we strive to deliver this excellence together.

By doing this we will attract and retain great talent, we will reward great performance, we will create a positive environment where people can thrive and grow, we will nurture talent and create excellent leaders for now and the future.



# Our vision and priorities

## Our vision

**We develop high performing, innovative, highly engaged and agile teams – employing the best people and reflecting the communities we serve.**

We nurture an environment that supports diversity, equality and inclusion, and allows all our employees to bring their whole selves to work to deliver great services for our Oxfordshire residents.

## Our priorities

### ATTRACT

**Attracting, recruiting and retaining talented people**

- It is essential that we are able to attract, recruit and retain our talented people to deliver excellent services for the residents of Oxfordshire.

### THRIVE

**Enabling our people to thrive and perform**

- Creating a positive and inclusive work environment built on fairness, trust and transparency will allow our people to thrive and perform.

### GROW

**Enabling our people to grow and evolve for the future**

- Providing growth opportunities both on and off the job to build our knowledge, skills and behaviours will help us all deliver the future together.

### LEAD

**Enabling our people to lead and transform for the future**

- Empowering our leaders to embrace the skills and behaviours needed to achieve high performance and effective outcomes.



# Attract

## Attracting, recruiting and retaining talented people

**We want to nurture and develop talented people with the skills we need for the future, alongside welcoming new colleagues who can fill skills gaps and bring new ideas.**

We are mindful that how we recruit is changing rapidly. Candidates' expectations about ways of working and organisational culture are important, alongside health and wellbeing and good pay and benefits, so we need to take a different approach to attract talented candidates and ensure our organisation reflects the demographics of the people we serve.

We need to strengthen our attraction as an employer and develop a strong brand for Oxfordshire County Council so that we create a desirable place to work that is diverse, inclusive and promotes equality.

### We will:

- Raise our employer profile so we become an employer of choice.
- Reimagine our recruitment processes so they are quick, effective and offer a great experience for all involved.
- Be fair and equitable in our resourcing and reward practices to ensure diversity and inclusion.
- Deliver dynamic and digitally enabled onboarding and induction.
- Enhance our rewards and benefits offer so that it is valued by our people, as well as being competitive and attractive in the market.

### What success will look like:

- Quick and effective recruitment processes.
- Increased retention rates.
- Our organisational diversity profile is reflective of the people of Oxfordshire.

# Thrive

## Enabling people to thrive and perform

### **We want highly engaged people, who enjoy coming to work and feel challenged by, and appreciated for, what they do.**

People work at their best when there is strong and effective leadership, as well as a positive, encouraging and inclusive work environment. We will create opportunity for people to connect and make sure their voices are heard, to create an environment of trust, inclusivity, fairness and transparency.

We want employees to use their skills and ideas to help us provide better services and adopt innovative strategies as we become leaner, more efficient and higher performing.

### **We will:**

- Promote a positive and inclusive working environment where people can have open discussions to create a culture of trust, collaboration and ambition where we can all belong and thrive.
- Offer wellbeing services to support our people.
- Manage change well.
- Develop modern, simple to follow toolkits and policies.
- Train and support managers to manage and achieve early resolution of people related matters.

### **What success will look like:**

- High employee engagement and a positive organisational culture.
- High performing teams.
- Well managed absence supported by wellbeing services.
- Strong people management skills to seek early resolution.



# Grow

## Enabling people to grow and evolve for the future

**We already have highly skilled and committed people working here. Looking ahead, we know the way we work and deliver services is changing and many employees need new skills both now and for the future.**

We want to foster an environment where employees lead their own areas of learning and development based on the role they do, the needs of their team and their individual career goals.

We aim to create a culture of learning, where everyone can continuously develop new skills and find career paths within the organisation so that we retain the best talent.

### We will:

- Evolve our mindset and behaviours so people are empowered to lead their own learning and development.
- Enhance our early careers offer to attract diversity and develop our skills for the future.
- Enable our people to develop their professional and technical skills to support high performance and embrace innovation.
- Support people to grow, move forward and develop their careers with us.
- Develop skills and learning to support transformation.

### What success will look like:

- Our people have the skills they need to do their jobs well.
- We grow our own talent.
- We are an innovative organisation, embracing new practices.
- Effective workforce and succession planning to support our organisation to flex and change to the environment in which it exists.



# Lead

## Enabling people to lead and transform for the future

### **We want our leaders to be role models, championing our values consistently and adopting working practices that are sustainable and supportive.**

We will invest in the development of our existing and future leaders so they can achieve high performance and effective outcomes and support employees through transformational change.

We want to bring more diversity to our leadership and management roles so that we have a broader wealth of knowledge and varying perspectives to meet our challenges.

### **We will:**

- Identify and develop the skills and behaviours of our leaders and future leaders.
- Identify and develop diverse leaders of the future.
- Equip our leaders to lead transformational change.
- Resize the organisation to deliver our ambitions within our budget envelope.
- Empower our leaders to make decisions and have greater accountability.

### **What success will look like:**

- Our leaders are high performing and achieve effective outcomes.
- A diverse pool of future leaders are identified and developed.
- Our leaders are confident to lead the organisation through change.

# Organisational people and culture KPIs

## **Time to hire**

Reduce our time to hire to secure new talent quickly and reduce backfill costs

## **Agency spend**

Reduce the spend and usage of agency workers across the organisation

## **Voluntary turnover rate**

Improve retention rates to keep our talented and skilled people

## **Employee FTE**

Track FTE numbers to keep within the budget envelope

## **Employee demographics**

Ensure diversity is represented appropriately in all tiers of our organisation

## **Average days lost to sickness per employee**

Reduce the number of sickness days per employee

## **Apprenticeship levy spend**

Optimise the apprenticeship levy to support OCC and partners

## **Internal movement and promotion**

Track promotions and internal movement to show talent growth

## **Gender and ethnicity pay gap (yearly)**

Ensure fairness of pay across our organisation

## **Employee engagement index (yearly)**

Track overall improvement in OCC engagement