

Workforce Strategy 2023-2027

Purpose of the report

1. To brief the Committee that Cabinet approved the Workforce Strategy 2023-27 in March 2023, setting out a framework of commitments and priorities it will be progressing to ensure a flexible, skilled, engaged and diverse workforce.
2. To present the content of the strategy and agree the Committee's future monitoring of Cabinet's progress in delivering the strategy.

Structure of the Papers

3. To support Member's preparations for this scrutiny, attached to this cover report are:

Appendix 1: Cabinet Report titled Workforce Strategy 2023-2027

Appendix 2: Workforce Strategy 2023-2027

Appendix 3: Presentation prepared for this Committee outlining a draft 18-month action plan.

Background

4. The Workforce Strategy 2023-2027 has been developed on the premise that having the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time and at the right cost is critical to the Council achieving the objectives as stated in the Cabinet's 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' programme of commitments for Cardiff.

5. The strategy sets out the agenda to strengthen the link between business, financial and workforce planning, particularly through the current period of financial challenge and organisational transformation, whilst committing to supporting employees so that they want to work for Cardiff Council and feel that they are valued.

6. The implementation of this Workforce Strategy will ensure the Council can unlock the full potential of its current and future workforce and is an essential framework/reference point for the forthcoming development of the Hybrid Working Policy.

Issues

7. The Cabinet report, attached at **Appendix 1**, outlines emerging workforce issues in relation to delivering the 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' policy commitment as listed below:
 - a workforce that reflects the diversity of our communities.
 - innovative mechanisms for recruiting and retaining staff in areas of national shortage.
 - increased and relevant skills development.
 - utilise, nurture and develop existing talent across the organisation.
 - support for the health and wellbeing of employees.
 - work in partnership with trade unions.
 - ensure effective two-way communication channels with the workforce.

8. The strategy, attached at **Appendix 2**, sets out the achievements to date under 5 of the 7 themes. (*section 2*). The current workforce is profiled by gender, age range, ethnicity and sexual orientation (*section 3*). *Section 4* is the body of the document, addressing each priority with the issues that need to be tackled, **immediate actions** that will be taken and **further development** in the medium – longer term, allocating a section to each as follows:
 - 4.1** Equalities and Diversity
 - 4.2** Resourcing Strategies
 - 4.3** Workforce Planning
 - 4.4** Learning and Development
 - 4.5** Culture, Health, Wellbeing and Engagement

4.6 Workforce Contractual Developments

4.7 Partnerships with Trade Unions

9. The presentation attached at **Appendix 3** will provide members with a quick overview of the actions to be delivered under each theme over the next 18 months.
10. Delivery of the strategy will be led by the senior management team and the next step is that Directorates, in collaboration with HR, will incorporate action planning to address the strategy as part of their Directorate Delivery Plans for 2023/24. It is proposed that the action plans are reviewed quarterly by the HR service.
11. Members will note that the strategy proposes that, as part of its work programme for the coming year, this committee reviews progress against stated actions. A timely review would be 6 monthly.

Scope of the Scrutiny

12. Members will have an opportunity to gain a full understanding of the Workforce Strategy, a foundation for the development of the Hybrid Working Policy. Whilst the Workforce Strategy has already been agreed by Cabinet, Members comments and observations are invited as a starting point for informing action planning and a benchmark for measuring progress over the next 18 months.
13. The actions proposed by the strategy are many, some are aspirational and general in nature. Members may therefore wish to explore how the HR service will interact with Directorates; what level of moderation will be applied across the organisation to ensure Directorates are practical in their action planning; what measures/indicators will allow for an effective 6 monthly assessment; and how realistic the ambition within the strategy is given the current financial challenges.

Way Forward

14. Councillor Chris Weaver, Cabinet Member, Finance, Modernisation & Governance, Chris Lee, Corporate Director Resources, and Tracey Thomas, Chief Human Resources Officer, have been invited to present the Workforce Strategy 2023-2027, to ensure Members have a full understanding of the breadth of the strategy, its basis for work ongoing to develop a Hybrid Working Policy, and to inform the Committee how it can measure progress over the timeline of the strategy.

Legal Implications

15. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

16. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with

recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- I. Note the Workforce Strategy 2023-2027, as agreed by Cabinet on 23 March 2023.
- II. Consider whether it wishes to formally pass on any observations and recommendations to the Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation & Governance.
- III. Agree a way forward for receiving progress reports on the work required to implement the Workforce Strategy 2023-2027.

DAVINA FIORE

Director of Governance & Legal Services

10 May 2023