

Cardiff Council

Workforce Strategy 2023 - 2027

Supporting our Employees to Excel



Strategaeth
y Gweithlu



Workforce
Strategy



STRONGER
FAIRER
GREENER



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Introduction

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 our objectives as set out in [Stronger, Fairer Greener](#). We are committed to supporting our employees so that they want to work for us, feel that they are valued and appreciated as individuals.

This strategy sets out the key priorities to support high performance and enable a flexible, skilled, engaged, and diverse workforce. It builds on the previous workforce strategy with a focus on embedding current practices, as well as identifying new areas for development. It has been shaped with the aims and priorities of Stronger, Fairer, Greener as set out below.

A stronger city, with an economy creating and sustaining well-paid jobs, with an education system that helps our young people reach their potential, with good, affordable housing in safe, confident and empowered communities, all supported by well resourced, efficient public services.

A fairer city, where the opportunities of living in Cardiff can be enjoyed by everyone, whatever their background, where those suffering the effects of poverty are protected and supported, where a fair day's work receives a fair day's pay, and where every citizen is valued and feels valued.

A greener city which, through our One Planet programme, takes a lead on responding to the climate emergency, which celebrates and nurtures biodiversity, with high-quality open spaces within easy reach for rest and play, which is connected by convenient, accessible, safe sustainable transport options.

The Council's approach to service development and innovation and our ability to deliver change has been well regarded by our citizens, communities, and partners. The traditional public service models of service delivery are being challenged in the context of austerity and demand and alternative ways of providing services are constantly being explored. This is having significant implications for our workforce and the Council is committed to support our employees and their development to meet the ever-evolving demands of their roles.

This 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 change.

We will support our employees:

- To be able to be flexible and respond to ongoing workforce challenges
- To effectively deliver all services
- To continue to hybrid work where appropriate
- To develop themselves for the role they are in and any future career aspirations
- To actively engage with the organisation
- To shape the ideas for future service delivery
- To develop ideas and encourage innovation whilst respecting the restraints a Local Authority faces

It is important that all employees understand what is required of them, and why their role is important. As an employer, we need to understand the views and concerns of our workforce

and more importantly how our workforce can help shape and contribute towards the solutions that will help us meet our future challenges.

This Strategy sets out the actions we will need to take to ensure that the Council meets its' future workforce needs. The implementation of this Strategy will ensure the Council can unlock the full potential of its current and future workforce.

The strategy encompasses seven key priority areas that will need to be addressed:

1. **Equalities and Diversity** – striving to promote an inclusive and engaging workforce that reflects the great diversity of Cardiff communities.
2. **Resourcing Strategies** – becoming an employer of choice: attracting, developing and retaining the best talent
3. **Workforce Planning** – workforce planning enables the council to take informed decisions on how to make the organisation more agile from a process, people and technology perspective
4. **Learning and Development** – ensure that all employees have the opportunity and appropriate access to develop their skills. Ensure all training is relevant up to date and meets the changing requirements of the organisation
5. **Culture, Health, Wellbeing and Engagement** – keeping our workplace safe and healthy, and our workforce engaged and resilient. Ensuring all of our employees, wherever they are based, have access to our support services and are able to take part in the associated activities.
6. **Workforce Contractual Developments** – a clear framework to help redesign our Council and support good employee relations
7. **Partnerships with Trade Unions** – communicating clearly and regularly with our Trade Union partners to ensure the employee voice is heard and listened to.

The commitments by the current administration underpin this Workforce Strategy and will inform our direction, set by Cabinet, over the next 5 years.

Achievements

Throughout the lifecycle of the previous strategy, we made significant progress and achieved many of the goals we had set.

We had a number of significant challenges, the greatest of these was the COVID 19 pandemic. Due to our strong political and senior management leadership providing clear direction, and the development of closer working relationships with our manager and employee networks we were able to continue to deliver our services in new and innovative ways as well supporting our employees.

Equality and Diversity:

Our 5 Employee Equality Networks, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic; Carers; Disability; LGBT+ and Women's, are embedded into the culture of the organisation and each network has two Senior Management Champions.

Through our work with the Networks in the area of diversity we have achieved recognitions and gained a number of awards. These include:

- Carer Confident – Accomplished
- Disability Confident – Level 2
- Stonewall Workplace Equality Index - Gold award
- Menopause Pledge
- Sunflower Scheme
- Race at Work Charter

We have continued to develop our suite of Equality training and in particular have rolled out Unconscious Bias, Sunflower, Micro Aggression, Trans Awareness and Connect 5 mental health training.

We have made significant improvements in the number of posts advertised as Welsh Essential and Desirable. We have also increased our number of Welsh speakers within the Council through the roll out of a comprehensive Welsh language training programme.

We have made significant progress in our policy development and creation of specialist guides through close working with our Employee Networks. This has enabled us to fully support the Equality and Diversity agenda and includes:

- Neurodiversity Guide
- Menopause Guide
- Deaf Awareness Guide
- Transitioning Guidance
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Home working Guide (Manager and Employee)
- Special Leave Policy
- Review and update of the Recruitment and Selection Policy

We have actively promoted the Council as an employer of choice to diverse communities across the city, through our Into Work Service, Cardiff Works, Employee Networks, social media, Career Fayres and Engagement events.

Workforce Planning:

Our Workforce Planning process has been embedded in the organisation throughout the life cycle of the previous strategy.

Directorates evaluate their current workforce, ascertain their future requirements and the availability of resources, to develop action plans to bring these together and manage the gap.

Through our Workforce Planning exercise, we have been able to develop appropriate interventions to enable us to address areas of concern. This includes:

- A significant increase in the number of apprentices and trainees provided with opportunities within the Council
- Increased attendance at schools, colleges and universities to promote the Council as an employee
- Innovative work experience processes put in place in order to provide opportunities for young people to understand the work of the Council

We have developed our Fair Work Long Term Agency Policy. This was approved by Cabinet in July 2022 and has been implemented.

Learning and Development:

Innovative training has been provided to support staff with entrepreneurial skills develop further project management, presentation skills as well as commercial awareness.

Specific courses were rolled out to managers to support them with employing and supporting young people, which has been invaluable to the success of onboarding a younger workforce.

There has been the development of a comprehensive suite of e-learning and virtual courses for all employees to access.

Targeted manager training has been developed and rolled out across the organisation to support our managers in the application of policies and procedures. These include:

- Attendance and Wellbeing
- Disciplinary processes
- Recruitment & Selection
- Menopause
- Neurodiversity
- Managing remote teams
- Difficult conversations and Conflict resolution

We continue to promote Welsh Government funded apprenticeship and higher apprenticeship programmes and fully funded ILM courses.

We have implemented a Work Experience e-Learning suite providing online work-related learning activities to supplement service placement activities.

Our Cardiff Manager Programme has been further developed and updated and continues to be rolled out across the organisation to our manager population and aspiring managers.

We have also developed a Cardiff Manager Pathway for existing and new managers to the organisation. This is designed to help our managers identify the necessary mandatory training they are required to undertake, as well as allowing them to find out about the additional training available to support them in their career development.

Engagement of Employees and Trade Unions:

Our employee engagement programme has been significantly developed as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. During the pandemic all Senior Manager Forum and Cardiff Manager Forum sessions were held virtually which allowed for a far greater reach

In addition, engagement events were organised across the organisation allowing employees to meet with cabinet members and our senior leadership team.

Employee Networks have delivered Council wide engagement sessions and events on a variety of subjects and topics. The Networks have also engaged with Trade Unions, Members and SMT

A number of surveys were rolled out to employees, including a major survey regarding Hybrid working.

Manager Guidance for Homeworking, Homeworking Etiquette and Managing Remotely and Hybrid Teams Training has been developed and implemented to respond to the specific needs identified.

We have continued to build relationships and partnerships with our Trade union colleagues to ensure a solid footing for employee relations.

Health and Wellbeing:

We have maintained our silver award status for the Corporate Health standard during the pandemic. With a further assessment taking place where we were commended for our work in relation to all aspects of Health and Wellbeing

We have also achieved Level 1 status for the Healthy Travel Charter, in recognition of our commitment to promoting sustainable and healthy modes of travel.

Occupational Health, HR and Cardiff Academy have provided targeted sessions for Managers on a range of Wellbeing Support Services:

- Mental Health
- Suicide Awareness
- Reasonable Adjustments
- Carers Passport
- Menopause

Extensive work has been undertaken in relation to our policies and guidance including:

- Leave policy - greater flexibility for bereavement leave
- Special Leave
- Neurodiversity
- Menopause
- Carers
- Deaf Awareness

Cardiff Academy have provided additional targeted training for employees and managers around mental health, stress awareness and the softer skills required to support colleagues and employees.

The Connect 5 Mental Health training programme has been launched.

Occupational Health devised and rolled out sessions including:

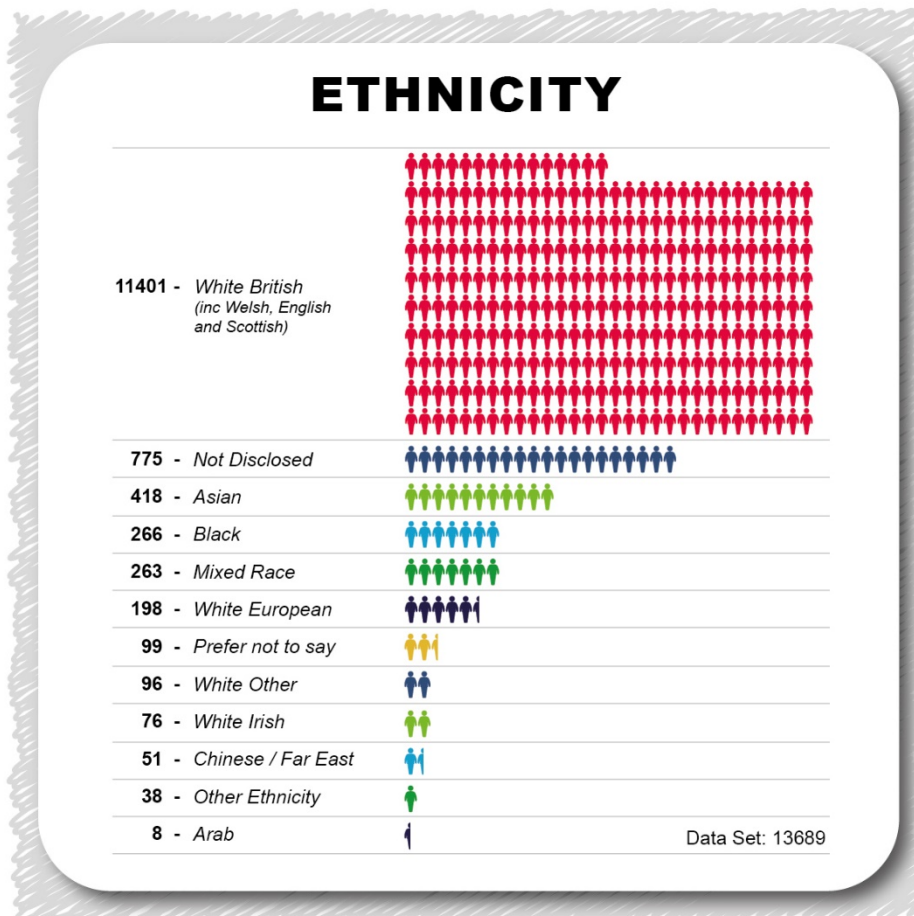
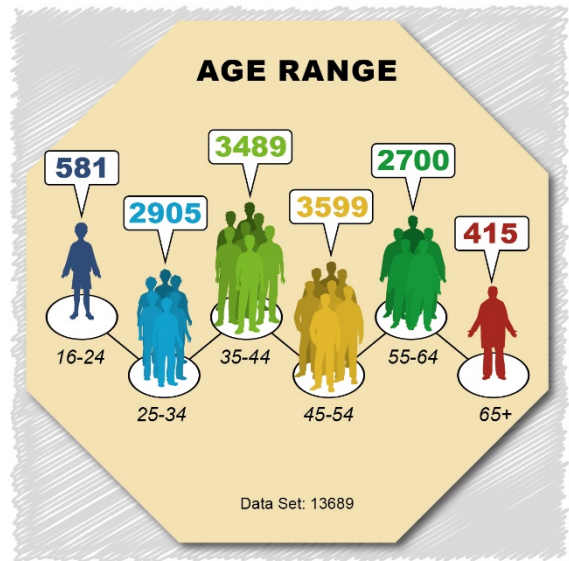
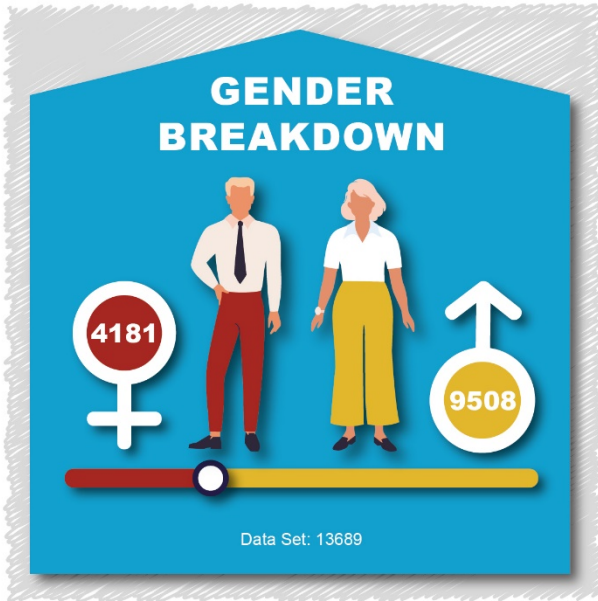
- Vicarious trauma;
- Letting go and moving on;
- Grief support;
- Suicide awareness;
- supervisor support;
- relaxation techniques
- supporting staff returning to work after long term sickness

We continue to provide targeted Health and wellbeing sessions on a wide range of topical subjects which include:

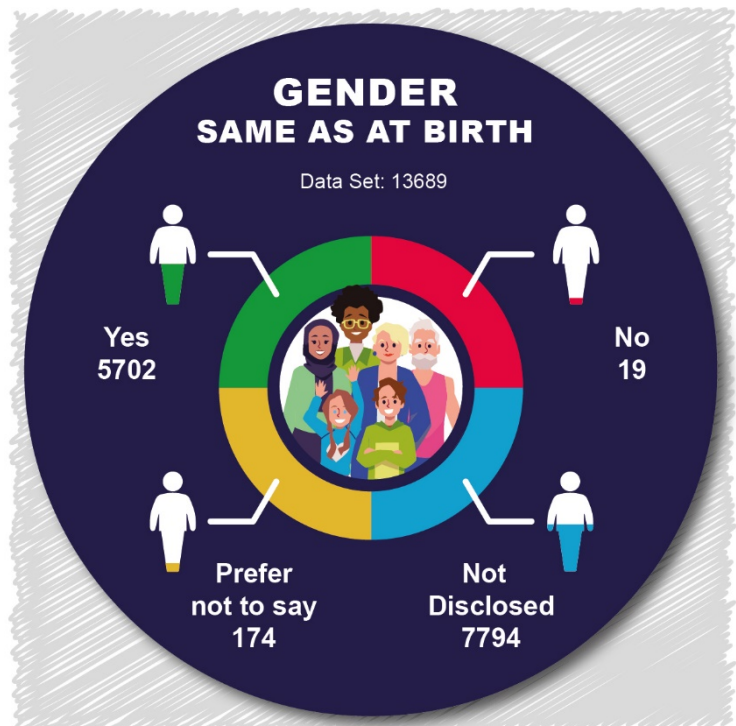
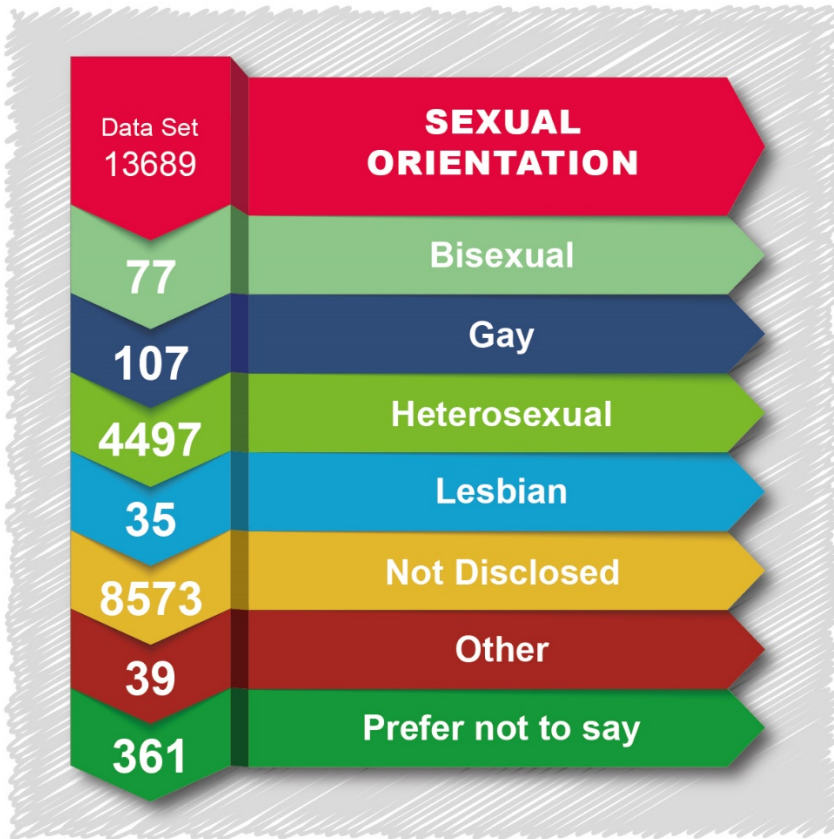
- ADHD awareness
- Autism awareness
- Financial Wellbeing
- Menopause
- NHS Screening programmes
- Taking care of yourself whilst homeworking



Workforce Profile



Workforce Profile



4. Strategy Themes

The strategy themes are the key priorities for the organisation in respect of our workforce. Each theme sets out the immediate actions required as well as the longer-term developments which will need to be considered over the lifetime of this strategy.

4.1 Equalities & Diversity

We recognise that a diverse organisation is necessary for the continuing accessibility and quality of our services. It is important that as a Council our workforce is reflective of the communities and citizens that we serve. This is an on-going challenge for the Council, and we understand that the steps we put in place now will help us to achieve this goal in the future.

The elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation continues to be achieved through our policies, procedures and guides and ensures that all employees are treated with dignity and respect.

Within this strategy we set out a number of key priorities that will enable us to build on the good work already underway to ensure we fulfil this objective.

Immediate Actions

- Complete the actions that came out of the Race Equality Taskforce which will be led by SMT and will involve working closely with our managers, employees, and our Employee Networks
- Improve the monitoring information that we hold. We will continue to promote and roll-out our Working for Cardiff App so that all employees are able to share their protected characteristics and update their personal records confidentially
- Continue the review of our Equality Suite of training on an ongoing basis to ensure it is relevant, fit for purpose and that it addresses identified skills gaps.
- Roll out autism training
- Identify different ways to deliver refresher training to employees
- Roll out of Diverse Recruitment Panels
- Continue to work closely with our Employee Networks in a variety of ways including to improve intersectionality.
- Implement a Leadership Programme that supports employees with real or perceived barriers to progression
- Implement a reverse mentoring programme

Further Developments

The medium-term goal is to support networks to build on existing accreditations. This includes our ambition to become a top 100 employer and the highest ranked local authority in Wales for Stonewall. We will also focus on progressing through the levels for both Carer and Disability Confident Awards.

We will continue to support our employee networks with a particular focus on intersectionality, greater engagement with front line employees, and schools.

We will continue to promote the Welsh language in order to create a bilingual organisation.

We will ensure that during the review of our policies and procedures that they are fit for purpose and support inclusivity.

We will continue to work closely with our Employee Networks to gain their input into various areas of work and future policy development.

We will also consider opportunities for strengthening the resources that support the Employee Networks.

The long-term goal is to significantly improve the diversity of our workforce so that it becomes more reflective of the local communities we serve.

We recognise that this will take time, but we are committed to realising this ambition through these and other key initiatives.

4.2 Resourcing Strategies

Being seen as an employer of choice so that we can attract and recruit from a diverse and talented pool of applicants, remains a key priority for the organisation.

Equality of opportunity is embedded throughout the recruitment and selection process, and we commit to sharing promotional opportunities to all employees. We have an established process in place to support managers and employees to identify and implement reasonable adjustments when required.

We are committed to equal pay for equal work, closing the gender gap and encouraging a transparent system.

The Council continues to provide opportunities for young people to apply for paid employment and also access work experience placements.

The Council has social inclusion at its core and continues to support the provision of opportunities to individuals who are unemployed, made redundant, not in education or training.

We need to recognise that the employment market is a very different place to what it was pre COVID 19 pandemic. Therefore, we need to ensure that Cardiff Council has processes in place to allow us to recruit and retain talented individuals in a competitive market.

Immediate Actions

- Identify our harder to fill posts by working with Directorates to understand the reasons. We will then be able to develop creative ways to engage with potential applicants in order to fill these roles
- Support Directorates to create pathways into their harder to fill roles
- Work with Directorates to design and develop meaningful career paths to help prevent high turnover levels
- Strengthen and further develop links with local universities, colleges and schools and also professional bodies
- Review recruitment processes and practices and make any necessary changes as appropriate

Further Developments

It is vital that we ensure that we continue to promote Cardiff Council as an employer of choice.

We will ensure our recruitment process is attractive and inclusive for all new applicants. This will include a review of our current behavioural competency framework and developing bespoke recruitment practices.

We will continue to work with our managers to obtain feedback, review processes and ensure they have the right skills to recruit effectively.

The long-term goal is to explore more creative ways of attracting into and retaining people in the organisation. Social media is used for citizen engagement and communication; however, we will need to consider options for using these outlets for advertising our jobs.

This will help us target specific groups and demographics

We will look to obtain meaningful feedback from applicants who have gone through the process to understand what is working well and where the process needs to be improved.

We will review our job titles, adverts, job descriptions and person specifications so that applicants can easily identify the role they wish to apply for.

We also need to have a clear understanding of why people leave the organisation and where possible look for innovative ways to ensure we retain the talent we have within the organisation.

4.3 Workforce Planning

Workforce Planning is a continual process used to align the needs and priorities of the organisation with those of its workforce to ensure we are able to meet our legislative, regulatory, and service delivery requirements. It is also key to the Council being able to meet its organisational objectives.

It enables the Council to take informed decisions on how to make the organisation more agile from a process, people, and technology perspective.

The Council's Workforce Planning process has been in place for a number of years. The new Statutory Performance Management Framework places an emphasis on aligning service, financial and workforce planning and within this workforce strategy there is an emphasis on achieving this objective.

Immediate Actions

- Embed workforce planning into the Council's planning and performance framework
- Directly link financial and business strategies with people management and development plans
- Place greater emphasis on how budget implications and other restraints are reflected in workforce plans
- Develop meaningful actions that will result in a workforce reflective of the communities we serve
- Development of data sets to help managers to manage their teams

Further Developments

Our goal is to ensure Cardiff Council continues to be a 'fair work' employer. We will do this by reducing further use of agency staff and transferring them to permanent contracts, where possible and in line with the Council's Fair Work (Long Term Agency Worker) Policy.

We will identify and agree a new corporate skills framework and provide training to fill any gaps for employees.

It is also vital that our managers have the competencies that are required to support our workforce and are clear and have the competencies required to undertake their corporate responsibilities, therefore we will also develop a manager competency framework and provide developmental opportunities within this.

We will also be reviewing and updating our Behavioural Competency framework to ensure all staff are aware of the behaviours expected.

We will engage with Directorates to increase the range and level of opportunities for apprentice and trainee roles ensuring placements are meaningful.

In order to ensure that we have talented individuals within pivotal roles within the organisation now and in the future, we need to ensure that we develop our succession planning processes as well as our talent management programmes in order to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills at the right time.

4.4 Learning & Development

Cardiff Council is always looking to improve and develop the skills of its workforce so that they meet the needs and expectations of our customers and changing requirements of the Council.

Employees need to be encouraged to use internal and external sources to develop new ideas and approaches to create a culture of innovation.

We are committed to ensuring that all our employees have the opportunity and appropriate access to develop their skills and reach their full potential. We will ensure all training is relevant up to date and meets the needs of the organisation

Immediate Actions

- Ensure training and development opportunities are available to deliver the leadership requirements of the organisation
- Promote the Manager Learning Pathway
- Promote and enhance apprenticeship and NVQ opportunities
- Review and update our suite of equalities training
- Continue delivering Mentoring Young People training
- Develop a learning and development strategy to ensure that all our L & D interventions are appropriate and meet the needs across the organisation.
- Continue to develop and implement training opportunities through the medium of Welsh
- Continue and where appropriate enhance our Welsh language skills training.

Further Development

The medium-term goal is around ensuring that the training provided by the Academy reflects the ongoing and changing needs of the organisation

We will be reviewing our corporate and service induction programmes

There will be a need to identify and develop training to resolve our corporate skills and manager competency gaps.

We will continue to promote the use of WG funded apprenticeship qualifications to managers and employees across the Council

In order to complete the user review process, we need to develop more creative ways for employees to provide meaningful feedback on courses they have attended via Cardiff Academy.

We will also develop ways to engage more closely with Directorates to understand the learning needs of their specific workforce. This may include the development of L&D advocates across the organisation.

Cardiff Academy will develop and enhance external commercial partnerships to provide further income opportunities.

4.5 Culture, Health, Wellbeing and Engagement

The Council's employees are at the heart of the organisation and are its most valuable asset.

Their wealth of experience on the job makes their views and suggestions key to informing the future of Council services.

The health and wellbeing of employees is important as it produces positive attitudes, encourages motivation and innovates thinking and is therefore an important factor in building employee engagement.

Keeping our workplace safe and healthy, and our workforce engaged and resilient, and ensuring all of our employees, wherever they are based, have access to our support services and are able to take part in the associated activities.

The Council is committed to building a culture that enables individuals to bring their whole selves to work.

Immediate Actions

- Develop a revised employee engagement strategy and programme with a greater emphasis on Directorate delivery
- Review and update the Council's Cultural Values and Employee Charter
- Develop a programme of communications to reach all employees to include annual engagement events
- Increase participation in Health and Wellbeing initiatives
- Continue to develop and implement actions to support the physical and mental wellbeing of staff
- Roll out awareness sessions to support Welsh Government and NHS testing campaigns and screening programmes
- Continue the roll out of the Council's Employee Benefits package

Further Development

We need to proactively increase and improve the 2-way conversation between employees and the organisation. We will do this using a variety of initiatives including, virtual, in person and making use of the available technology.

We will continue to monitor the Corporate Health Standard and identify the next steps and agree the appropriate level of accreditation.

We recognise the important role managers play in supporting their employees and we will continue to engage with our managers to ensure they have the relevant skills to do this, including managing hybrid teams, encouraging resilience and good mental health.

We will develop a programme of targeted awareness sessions on a range of health and wellbeing subjects.

Long-term we need to review a number of areas and explore our engagement and health & wellbeing provision. Part of this will involve looking at opportunities to introduce mechanisms to gather employee suggestions.

We will evaluate the addition of other products to be included in our Employee Benefits Package, with a view to creating a more comprehensive benefits offer.

We will also be developing more creative ways to reward and recognise employees, and this will include a re-evaluation of our Personal Review process.

4.6 Workforce Contractual Developments

The Council has a clear framework to help redesign our services and support good employee relations.

We recognise that our employees are at the heart of the organisation. It is important that we have the appropriate policies and procedures in place to support employees in their roles and enable managers to manage their teams effectively.

Immediate Actions:

- Embed Hybrid working within the Council
- Review the Council's main employment policies to ensure they support best practice to include Resolution, Disciplinary, Attendance and Wellbeing

Further Development:

There are a number of developments in this area, and we need to develop a process by which case work can feed into policy developments on a regular basis.

The reward strategy of the Council has been in place for a number of years during which time there has been changes both within and out-with the Council. Therefore, a fundamental review of our reward strategy is required to ensure it meets the needs of a modern employer.

We will develop a more robust policy review programme that ensures all policies are relevant, fit for purpose and support a modern organisation.

Longer term we need to create more opportunities for employees to provide feedback and explore different ways to obtain employees views on existing policies, processes, and guides. In addition, we will be engaging with the workforce and our Employee Networks to understand where we have gaps in order to develop a programme for policy reviews.

We will be looking at opportunities to create more non-traditional career paths across the organisation.

4.7 Partnerships with Trade Unions

There is a positive partnership relationship between the organisation and trade unions which is essential to the development of the Council and its services.

The Council recognises the importance of maintaining good relationships with our Trade Unions and is committed to work in social partnership built on principles and practices of shared commitment between the organisation and our employees.

The organisation is committed to working closely with the Trade Unions, in the development of future strategies for the delivery of services.

Communicating clearly and regularly with our Trade Union partners is key to ensuring the employee voice is heard and listened to.

Immediate Actions

- Develop and agree a revised Recognition Agreement including facility time and disputes process
- Ensure that meeting arrangements meet the needs of both Trade Unions and the organisation
- Engage the Trade Unions to build closer working relationships with our Employee Networks

Further Development

We need to work with our Trade Unions across the organisation to ensure we are embracing the values of Social Partnership in areas such as One Planet, Equalities etc.

We need to ensure that all new employees are made aware of the work of our trade Unions and that the trade unions themselves have a communication pathway to employees.

We will work with our Trade Unions so they understand the ongoing challenges of the organisation and how they can contribute and shape solutions to meet these demands.

Engaging with the Trade Unions to enable us to unlock the full potential of the current and future workforce is vital to the organisation.

5. Strategy Delivery

This Strategy sets out how the Council will meet its existing and future workforce requirements. It has been approved by Cabinet and will be led by SMT.

Directorates in conjunction with HR People Services will be required to feed into the action plans which will be reviewed on an 18-month basis.

Progress of the actions will be reviewed by SMT and will be reported on through our existing mechanisms including Policy, Review and Performance Scrutiny, as well as SMT;

Performance Assurance processes; Trade Unions and Employee Equality Networks.



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