

WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2023-2027

**FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE (COUNCILLOR
CHRISTOPHER WEAVER)**

AGENDA ITEM: 7

Reason for this Report

1. To seek the approval from Cabinet for the Workforce Strategy for the period 2023-2027, attached as Appendix 1, in order to provide the links between business, financial and workforce planning, particularly during this period of financial challenge and organisational transformation.

Background

2. On 14 July 2022, the Cabinet agreed 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' – a wide-ranging programme of "commitments for Cardiff" covering the spectrum of Council services, which includes a number of proposals that involve changing and/or improving the way in which the Council delivers services to citizens and communities.
3. 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 the Stronger, Fairer Greener commitments. We are committed to supporting our employees so that they want to work for us, feel that they are valued and appreciated as individuals.
4. 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 financial challenges and demand and alternative ways of providing services are constantly being explored, including Hybrid working processes. This is having significant implications for our workforce and the Council is committed to support our employees and to 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 transformation.

Issues

5. This strategy sets out the key priorities to create a culture that supports high performance and enables a flexible, skilled, engaged and diverse workforce. It builds on the previous workforce strategy by both taking some of the activities identified in that strategy to the next stage and identifying new activities. The Workforce Strategy has been shaped with the aims and priorities of 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' in mind and sets out the commitment to strengthen the link between business, financial and workforce planning and development.
6. Creating purpose in a fast changing environment whilst motivating employees through change has become essential for many roles. Outperforming organisations foster leadership skills at every level of the organisation to deliver outstanding results. These leadership skills include:
 - providing a line of sight by making the Council's objectives clear at all levels, and inspiring and motivating people to deliver against those objectives;
 - being trusted by people and acting in line with the Council's values and Employee Charter at all times, including having the courage and support to challenge inconsistent behaviours; and,
 - empowering and involving people through a culture of trust and ownership in the authority where people feel empowered to make decisions and act on them.
7. Some of the emerging issues which have been identified in relation to the delivery of the 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' include:
 - i. The need for a more diverse workforce reflecting the diversity of our communities
 - ii. The need to identify innovative mechanisms for recruiting and retaining staff in areas of national shortage
 - iii. The need for increased and relevant skills development
 - iv. The need to utilise, nurture and develop the talent we have across the organisation
 - v. The provision of support to the health and wellbeing of employees
 - vi. The need for partnership working with our trade unions will be as important as ever
 - vii. The need to remain engaged with our workforce in order to provide mechanisms that enable two-way communication channels.
8. The key priorities of the strategy include:
 - i. **Equalities and Diversity** – a recognition that significant actions need to be taken in order to ensure that the Council's workforce is more reflective of our communities and that no groups are or feel that they are not able to bring their full self to work
 - ii. **Resourcing Strategies** – we need to fully understand our future staffing needs across a variety of our services and have plans and mechanisms in place to ensure that those needs are met, so that

we become an employer of choice; attracting, developing and retaining the best talent.

- iii. **Workforce Planning** – our workforce planning needs to be taken to the next level to ensure that it fits with our business and financial planning to enable the Council to take informed decisions on how to make the organisation more agile from a process, people and technology perspective.
 - iv. **Learning and Development** – ensuring that all employees have the opportunity and appropriate access to develop their skills and ensuring all training is relevant, up to date and meets the needs of the organisation in both content and delivery mechanism
 - v. **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.
 - vi. **Workforce Contractual Developments** - a clear framework to help redesign our council and support good employee relations through policy and contractual changes which support a modern organisation
 - vii. **Partnerships with Trade Unions** - communicating clearly and regularly with our Trade Union partners to ensure the employee voice is heard and listened to.
9. The Workforce Strategy sets out the corporate and cross cutting actions to ensure that the Council meets future workforce needs. The implementation of this Workforce Strategy will ensure the Council can unlock the full potential of its current and future workforce.
10. There has been various consultation processes in order to develop the strategy. Feedback has been incorporated into the final document and includes Trade Union consultation and Employee Equality Network consultation

Reasons for Recommendations

11. The Workforce Strategy 2023-2027 sets out a framework of priorities and commitments necessary to create a culture that supports a flexible, skilled, engaged and diverse workforce in order to support the commitments set out 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener'.

Financial Implications

12. The Workforce Strategy sets out a framework of commitments and priorities that are able to be progressed primarily through existing financial resources. Where it is identified during implementation that there is a need for additional financial resources then first consideration

will need to be given to a reallocation of existing financial resources. For more longer medium term objectives any financial resource needs will need to be identified in future budget setting determinations.

Legal Implications

13. The Workforce Strategy is not a contractual document and will have no contractual force.
14. In considering the matters raised by the Workforce Strategy, the Council has to satisfy its public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010. Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must, in making decisions, have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are: (a) Age, (b) Gender reassignment, (c) Sex, (d) Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality, (e) Disability, (f) Pregnancy and maternity, (g) Marriage and civil partnership, (h) Sexual orientation, (i) Religion or belief – including lack of belief. It is noted that equality and diversity are key priority areas in the Workforce Strategy. Whilst the Workforce Strategy wishes to promote an inclusive and engaging workforce that reflects the great diversity of Cardiff communities, it should be noted that positive discrimination (e.g., recruiting someone because they have a protected characteristic, if that person is less suitable for the job than another applicant), is unlawful although positive action is lawful (e.g., recruiting a candidate with a protected characteristic over another provided they are as equally qualified as the other candidate).
15. When taking strategic decisions, the Council also has a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage ('the Socio-Economic Duty' imposed under section 1 of the Equality Act 2010). In considering this, the Council must take into account the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers (WG42004 A More Equal Wales The Socio-economic Duty Equality Act 2010 (gov.wales) and must be able to demonstrate how it has discharged its duty. It is noted that the Council continues to support the provision of opportunities to individuals who are unemployed, made redundant and not in education or training.
16. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to consider how its decisions will contribute towards meeting its well-being objectives (set out in the Corporate Plan). The Council's decisions should comply with the sustainable development principle, which requires that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is noted that the Council has achieved Level 1 status for the Healthy Travel Charter, in recognition of its commitment to promoting sustainable and healthy modes of travel.
17. The Council must also be mindful of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards and consider the impact of its proposals upon the Welsh language. It is noted that the

Workforce Strategy highlights improvements in the number of posts advertised as Welsh Essential and Desirable, and a commitment to increasing the number of Welsh speakers within the Council through the roll out of a comprehensive Welsh language training programme and developing and implementing training opportunities through the medium of Welsh.

HR Implications

18. This Workforce Strategy (Appendix 1) is being recommended for agreement in order to respond to a range of challenges the Council is facing and to ensure that there is a skilled, engaged and diverse workforce in order to deliver the priorities set out in 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener'. The actions within the strategy have been developed in order to safeguard future service delivery models and to improve the contribution employees make to delivering the Council's priorities through effective management and engagement. The attached Strategy sets out how the Council will achieve the required change within the workforce in a structured, planned and fully consulted way.
19. An Equality Impact Assessment of the strategy has been completed and there are no adverse impacts on any specific groups.

Property Implications

20. The report does not make specific recommendations relating to property. However the workforce strategy, workforce planning and specifically the adoption of the Hybrid Working model impacts the Council's use and requirement of operational property. This is particularly relevant in core offices, which are under review at present, and the directorate workforce requirements and formal implementation of hybrid working will have a significant influence on the size and type of office environment the Council requires going forward. This in turn feeds directly into the Carbon, Financial and Service objectives of the Corporate Property Strategy. Workforce planning and Hybrid working are key interdependencies on future operational property planning.
21. Suitable environments are critical to deliver the objectives of the workforce strategy and hybrid working.

RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is recommended to approve the Workforce Strategy 2023-2027 as attached as Appendix 1

SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Chris Lee Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer
	17 March 2023

The following Appendix is attached:

Appendix 1 Workforce Strategy 2023-27