



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28TH SEPTEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2021 - 24

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES



1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consult with Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Workforce Development Strategy 2021 – 24, attached at Appendix 1.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council's *Team Caerphilly – Better Together* Transformation Strategy was adopted by Cabinet on the 12th June 2019. As part of this Strategy, ten corporate reviews are being undertaken to transform how the Council Works and Workforce Development is one of them.
- 2.2 One of the actions of this review is to produce a Workforce Development Strategy (attached at Appendix 1), to develop our employees to maximise their capabilities, effectiveness and resilience to support the re-purposing and re-shaping of our services in response to the many challenges we face as a Council moving forward.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and make comments prior to recommending the Workforce Development Strategy 2021 – 24 attached at Appendix 1 to Cabinet for approval.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendation is made to ensure that we have a Workforce Development Strategy in place to support a workforce in the future that is fit for purpose and equipped with the necessary skills to innovate and move the Council forward the Caerphilly Way.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 As stated, the Council's Team Caerphilly – Better Together Transformation Strategy was adopted by Cabinet on the 12th June 2019 and ten corporate reviews are being undertaken to transform how the Council works and Workforce Development is one of them.
- 5.2 The Workforce Development Strategy 2021 – 24 (attached at Appendix 1) adopts the principles of place shaping, collaboration, digitalisation, commercialisation and innovation. Together with the actions and objectives prioritised in our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, Customer & Digital Strategy 2019-2023, Commercialisation and Innovation Strategy and Service Review Methodology, the effective implementation of this Workforce Development Strategy will be fundamental to meeting the Council's ambitious transformation agenda.
- 5.3 The changing landscape in public health, politics, economics, technology, demography, environmental impact mitigation and social attitudes are influencing how we resource the Council. With concerns over skills shortages, an aging workforce and increasing competition to attract talent to Caerphilly, a strategically planned approach to workforce development is necessary to align strategy, processes and people.
- 5.4 The effective implementation of this Strategy will embed Workforce Planning as an essential business process that is undertaken on a regular basis. Workforce Planning will include skills, audits, structure reviews and identification of priority actions to address workforce risks and development needs.
- 5.5 The Council's HR policies confirm that employees are our most valuable asset and recognise that attracting and retaining a well-trained, well-motivated and flexible workforce, with a wide range of skills and experience is essential to the provision of quality services. Our people are at the very heart of everything we do. Our continuing success as a Council will be dependent on us having a workforce that will champion our values and is fit for the future and this Workforce Development Strategy reinforces this.
- 5.6 Under this strategy, we will seek to address the challenges identified in our stakeholder engagement through the further development of our recruitment strategies and procedures and improve our ability to attract the best and brightest talent to the authority. We will explore and develop new initiatives to enhance work opportunities for our residents, utilising government funded employment programmes to widen the provision of apprenticeships, work placements and work experience opportunities.
- 5.7 A Workforce Planning Framework will be implemented to help translate this strategy into practice and equip our managers with a reference tool to proactively organise and develop their workforce. This will include the development of *agile working solutions* to meet ever changing service needs and address staff shortages, surpluses, talent gaps and skill mismatches. The effective implementation of this strategy will ensure that current and future workforce needs are known, modelled and are capable of meeting changing service delivery requirements and needs.
- 5.8 Under this Strategy, we will work collaboratively to remove any artificial barriers to workforce development and work together strategically to provide comprehensive

learning and development programmes, training initiatives and access to a wide range of digital resources that will be accessible to the wider workforce.

- 5.9 Currently, there is no corporate coordinated approach to Learning and Development across the Council, with each service responsible for their own learning provision. This Strategy supports a workforce that is fit for the future and equipped with the necessary skills to innovate and deliver the Council's Transformation Programme. To ensure that we provide comprehensive learning and development programmes, training initiatives and access to a wide range of digital resources, so that our employees will have every opportunity to enhance their skills and fulfil their potential, the central coordination of workforce development is key in the delivery of this strategy.
- 5.10 This is an ambitious Workforce Development Strategy and comprehensive in content with key priorities highlighted and appropriate resources will be required for the future delivery of coordinated workforce development function. Members will recall that the report to Council dated 13th July 2021 entitled 'Provisional Revenue Budget Outturn for 2020/21, included a proposal to set aside funding of £168k to appoint staff on a fixed-term basis to undertake the initial planning and scoping required, which Members agreed. The recruitment for these posts has commenced and an updated report in relation to centralised Learning and Development will be presented to Policy and Resources Scrutiny for information.
- 5.11 Workforce development is being undertaken to different degrees across the Council. This ambitious Strategy will bring a coordinated approach to workforce development across the Council's services.

5.12 **Conclusion**

The Council's clear commitment to workforce development is now captured in the Workforce Development Strategy 2021 – 24, to ensure that we have a well-trained, well-motivated and flexible workforce, that are capable of dealing with the many future challenges we will face across the Council.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 There are no assumptions made within this report.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. It is recognised that the key principles of this Workforce Development Strategy will have significant benefits for our employees, i.e. permanent, casual and temporary.
- 7.2 This Strategy outlines our aspirations of being recognised as an employer of choice in terms of our approach to diversity, equalities, personal well-being, learning, being forward thinking and resilient to change and leadership development. Strengthening Inclusivity and Equality lies at the heart of this strategy.

- 7.3 The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. The changing landscape in public health, politics, economics, technology, demography, environmental impact mitigation and social attitudes are influencing how we resource the Council. With concerns over skills shortages, an aging workforce and increasing competition to attract talent to the Council, a strategically planned approach to workforce development is necessary to align strategy, processes and people. This includes a non-guaranteed hours' review to restrict/limit the use of casual zero hours contracts moving forward and thus provide more sustainable employment opportunities.
- 7.4 Under this Strategy, we will be exploring and developing new initiatives to enhance work opportunities for our residents, utilising government funded employment programmes to widen our provision of apprenticeships, work placements and work experience opportunities. The Council furthermore supports payment of the Foundation Living Wage which supports young people starting in modern apprenticeship roles.
- 7.5 Agile Working Opportunities that promote greater choice for where work may be carried out will assist in reducing the Council's and the employee's carbon footprint and will in many instances support employee wellbeing and offer a greater choice of employment opportunities that may have been unreachable for some based on where they live and/or their individual circumstance.
- 7.6 This Strategy supports learning and development opportunities for all staff and enables employment through the creation of more substantial and sustainable employment linked to a non-guaranteed hours review. Combined with the provision of the Foundation Living Wage and strengthening of our employment programmes to widen our provision of apprenticeships, work placements and work experience opportunities, the impact of this Strategy is largely positive on the Council's workforce as a whole, i.e. current and future.
- 7.7 The Integrated Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 2.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no immediate financial implications to this report. Any budgetary requirements to support workforce development will be subject to appropriate authorisation.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The centralised Learning and Development team referred to in point 5.10 will be part of the HR structure and recruitment to the posts will be in accordance with Council policies and procedures.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The majority of consultation responses have been incorporated in the Strategy. Some consultation responses were not included because they were more appropriate for consideration and inclusion in other areas of work.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 1972

Author: Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services

Consultees: Corporate Management Team
Cllr Colin Gordon, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Leadership Team
HR Strategy Group
HR Management Team
Stephen Pugh, Head of Communications
Emma Townsend, Health and Safety Manager
Neil Cooksley, Principal HR Officer (Workforce Development)
Trade Unions – GMB, Unison, Unite

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Workforce Development Strategy 2021 – 24
(An accessible version is available on request)

Appendix 2 Integrated Impact Assessment