

Staff Consultative Panel



Title	Agenda														
Date	Monday 3 July 2023														
Time	3.00 pm														
Venue	Facilitated by Microsoft Teams virtual meetings platform only. Members and officers attending this meeting are requested to see their separate Outlook meeting invitation to join the meeting.														
Full Members	<p style="text-align: center;">Chair To be appointed by the Panel</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vice Chair To be appointed by the Panel</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">West Suffolk Council (6) (Employer's side)</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Staff Representatives (6) (Employees' side)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conservative Group (2)</td> <td>Birgitte Mager Margaret Marks</td> <td>Lizzi Cocker Robert Cooper</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Independents (2)</td> <td>Victor Lukaniuk Phil Wittam</td> <td>Paul Davison Carys Frost</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Progressive Alliance Grouping (2)</td> <td>Donna Higgins David Smith</td> <td>Penny Mills (Vacancy)</td> </tr> </table>				West Suffolk Council (6) (Employer's side)	Staff Representatives (6) (Employees' side)	Conservative Group (2)	Birgitte Mager Margaret Marks	Lizzi Cocker Robert Cooper	Independents (2)	Victor Lukaniuk Phil Wittam	Paul Davison Carys Frost	Progressive Alliance Grouping (2)	Donna Higgins David Smith	Penny Mills (Vacancy)
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		West Suffolk Council (3) (Employer's Side)	Staff Representatives (2) (Employees' Side)												
Substitutes	Conservative Group (1) Independents (1) Progressive Alliance Grouping (1)	Susan Glossop Don Waldron <i>(To be confirmed)</i>	<i>(Vacancy)</i> <i>(Vacancy)</i>												
By invitation	Gerald Kelly	Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory													
Note: This panel is not governed by the normal Access to Information rules (The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012) in the Council. Therefore, these meetings are not open to attendance by the public.															
Interests – declaration and restriction on participation	Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, other registerable or non-registerable interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached and, when appropriate, to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.														

Quorum	Four members, comprising at least two employee representatives and two members of the council.
Committee administrator	Sharon Turner Democratic Services Officer Telephone 01638 719237 Email democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Agenda

Note: Whilst these agenda papers are not covered by the normal Access to Information Rules (see agenda front), where items are listed as containing exempt/confidential information, members of the Panel are requested to treat them as such.

1. Substitutes

Any member (which includes councillors and staff representatives) who is substituting for another member should so indicate, together with the name of the relevant absent member.

2. Staff Consultative Panel: Terms of Reference (attached)

1 - 4

To receive the Terms of Reference for the Staff Consultative Panel, as contained within the Council's Constitution.

3. Election of Chair: 2023 to 2024

The approved Terms of Reference for the Staff Consultative Panel requires that the Chair of the Panel shall be rotated between the Employer's Side and the Employees' Side. When the Chair is a Member of one side of the Panel, the Vice Chair shall be a Member of the other side.

For 2023 to 2024, the Chair is required to be elected from the Employees' Side.

Therefore, the Panel is requested to **ELECT** a Chair in accordance with this arrangement.

4. Election of Vice Chair: 2023 to 2024

The approved Terms of Reference for the Staff Consultative Panel requires that the Vice Chair shall alternate between the Employer's Side and the Employees' Side.

As the Chair of the Panel shall be drawn from the Employees' Side for 2023 to 2024, the Vice Chair is required to be elected from the Employer's Side.

The Panel is requested to **ELECT** a Vice Chair in accordance with this arrangement.

- 5. Apologies for absence**
- 6. Minutes** **5 - 8**
 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held 27 March 2023 (attached).
- 7. Declarations of interest**
 Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, other registerable or non-registrable interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, **no later than when that item is reached** and, when appropriate, to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.
- 8. Workforce Data Overview (attached)** **9 - 10**
 This data is a snap-shot in time and is collated every quarter, looking at the previous twelve months.
- 9. Fostering Friendly Guidance (attached)** **11 - 14**
 The purpose of this guidance is that, at present, there is no statutory right for paid time-off for employees who foster a child, except in a foster to adopt situation. This guidance would assist to support the Council's approach to the well-being of the Council's employees and to its agile working agenda.
- 10. Introducing the West Suffolk Workforce Strategy 2022 to 2028 (attached)** **15 - 32**
 The Council's Workforce Strategy focuses on five key workstreams: Skills and Behaviours; Recruitment and Retention; Pay, Reward and Recognition, Health and Wellbeing and Future Planning. These workstreams are the pillars to the Strategy setting out the Council's priorities in each area and its approach to delivering on those priorities.
- 11. Workforce Strategy Priorities for 2022 to 2028 - Action Plan (attached)** **33 - 40**
 The Action Plan sets out the priority actions in each of the five workstreams and monitors and records the progress of outcomes against those. It is a working document and is adaptable to change and review of how those actions are delivered.
- 12. Dates of future meetings**
 The following dates for future meetings of the Panel are listed below. All dates are Mondays starting at 3pm and the venue will be indicated nearer the time:
- Monday 20 November 2023
 - Monday 12 February 2024

West Suffolk Council Constitution

Extract from Part 3; Section 2 - Responsibility for Council (Non-Executive) Functions

Panels

C.8 Staff Consultative Panel

1. Overview

- 1.1 The Panel's membership will be drawn from Councillors and staff of the Council. The definition of 'staff' includes all groups of employees covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.
- 1.2 The Panel will consider the Council's staffing arrangements and provide a regular forum to secure the largest measure of agreement between the Council as an employer and Trade Union employees regarding matters directly affecting employment by the Council.
- 1.3 To provide a group of Members who can develop an enhanced level of understanding on staffing matters.
- 1.4 To make recommendations to the Cabinet about policies and actions required to develop and maintain effective employee/employer arrangements.

2. Constitution

- 2.1 The Panel shall comprise 12 Members, to be comprised of six Councillors, which desirably reflects the political balance of the Council, as far as practically possible, to be the 'Employers' Side' and six members of staff from the Council to be the 'Employees' Side', nominated by the Trade Unions recognised by the Authorities in accordance with the formula set out below:-
 - (a) Employee representatives appointed by each of the Trade Unions recognised by the Authority should be on a proportional basis to the total number of employees within the individual union compared to the total Trade Union membership; and
 - (b) Each Trade Union recognised by the Authority shall have a minimum of one seat.
- 2.2 The Trade Unions recognised by the Council shall represent all Council employees. This will include raising issues on behalf of non-Trade Union members, should they be requested.

- 2.2 In the event of any failure to appoint/elect the number of representatives provided for by this Constitution, such failure to appoint/elect shall not invalidate the decisions of the Panel.
- 2.4 Two substitute Members shall be permitted on the 'Employers' Side' and two substitutes shall be permitted from the 'Employees' Side'.
- 2.5 It shall be the duty of a senior Human Resource Officer to attend and advise the Panel.
- 2.6 The Panel shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from its Members. When the Chair is a Member of one Side of the Panel, the Vice-Chair shall be a Member of the other Side. The Chair of the Panel shall be rotated on an annual basis between the Employees' and Employers' Side. The Chair of the meeting shall not have a casting vote.
- 2.7 The Panel may invite attendance by any person whose particular knowledge or experience may assist the Panel in its considerations. Such attendance shall be in a consultative capacity and only for the period during which the relevant subject is under consideration. In addition, the Employee side may arrange for the attendance of a Trade Union official at any meeting of the Panel, subject to the prior agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair.

3. Terms of Reference

- 3.1 To establish and maintain methods of negotiation and consultation, to consult on matters affecting the employment of all groups of employees of the Council, with a genuine commitment to seek consensus and enter into agreements, as appropriate.
- 3.2 These matters may include such subjects as:-
 - (a) Application or implementation of National Agreements.
 - (b) Application or implementation of Local Agreements or local conditions of service.
 - (c) Productivity or performance arrangements.
 - (d) Issues referred to the Panel by the Trade Unions as provided for by the formal 'Consultation Procedures' (Employment Restructuring & Redundancy).
 - (e) Working conditions.
 - (f) Welfare and health of employees.
 - (g) Personnel procedures including recruitment, sickness, discipline and handling of grievances and redundancies.
 - (h) Training and development of employees.
 - (i) Equality issues; and
 - (j) Any issue referred to the Panel by the Cabinet.
- 3.3 Issues affecting individuals (eg pay, discipline) are excluded from consideration unless they represent matters of principle which are of general application to employees.

4. Authority of the Panel

- 4.1 Decisions of the Panel shall be in accordance with the voting arrangements set out in paragraph 5.3 below and shall be subject to the approval of the Cabinet, as provided for by the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

5. Arrangements and Procedures

- 5.1 Meetings shall normally be held quarterly but, exceptionally, the Chair may decide, after consultation with a senior Human Resources Officer to convene an Extraordinary meeting at any time or to cancel a scheduled meeting due to lack of business to transact. Meetings to alternate between the Council Offices or as agreed by the Panel.
- 5.2 The quorum for the Panel shall be four, comprising at least two Employee representatives and two Members.
- 5.3 Voting shall be by a show of hands and simple majority. No motion shall be regarded as carried unless it has been approved by a majority of Employer representatives and a majority of Employee representatives present and voting.
- 5.4 The report from the Panel to the respective Cabinet shall be by way of presentation of the minutes or by way of a brief report in a format agreed by the Cabinet.
- 5.5 If the Panel is unable to agree and no local settlement can be achieved, the matter may be referred by either side to the Cabinet.

*(*Note: This meeting is not governed by the normal Access to Information rules (The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012) in the Council. Therefore these meetings are not open to attendance by the public).*

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Staff Consultative Panel

Minutes of a meeting of the **Staff Consultative Panel** held virtually via MS Teams remote meeting platform on **Monday 27 March 2023** at **3.00 pm**

Present:

Chair Birgitte Mager (Employer's Side)
Vice Chair Paul Davison (Employees' Side)

Members (employer's side)

John Griffiths
James Lay
David Nettleton

Ian Shipp
David Smith

Substitutes attending for a full member (employer's side)

Sara Mildmay-White

Staff representatives (employees' side)

Lizzi Cocker

76. **Substitutes**

The following substitution was declared:

Councillor Sara Mildmay-White substituting for Councillor Carol Bull.

77. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carol Bull (Employer's Side) and from Carys Frost, Robert Cooper and Penny Mills (Employees' Side).

78. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

79. **Declarations of interest**

Members' declarations of interest are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

80. **Workforce Data Overview (verbal)**

The Service Manager (Human Resources and Organisational Development) presented this item which provided a 'snapshot' of the West Suffolk Workforce Data as at 31 December 2022.

The Panel discussed the data presented. Discussions centred around staff absence, where it was noted that short term absence had increased in the last year. However, absence overall, had remained stable.

The Panel also discussed the overall headcount of the Council, where it was noted that this had reduced over the last year. The Service Manager explained the vacancies which were currently out to advertisement, particularly those within the Housing and Operations service areas.

Following on from a question raised by the Panel with regards to the workforce data, the Service Manager confirmed that she could provide the Panel Members with a further breakdown of the quartile workforce data to highlight the particular queries raised.

A question was also raised in relation to the percentage of staff who were working from home. The Service Manager explained that there was no specific data available. However, the provision of this data would be further investigated.

With there being no decision required, the Panel **noted** the update provided.

81. **Domestic Abuse Awareness Guidance for Employees and Managers (attached)**

The Panel had received a copy of the Council's Guidance for employees and managers on domestic abuse awareness. The aim of the Guidance was to provide information about how the Council would tackle the issue of domestic violence and abuse and support those who were affected. The Guidance set out the rights of employees and also explained the support available to them. This would help managers to be confident about their role in managing and supporting employees. It would help employees to understand what support and help was available to them. It would help to foster an inclusive working environment in which everyone was treated fairly.

The Service Manager explained that the Council had been working to set up a network of eight Domestic Abuse Champions who had been trained to equip them with the skills to spread awareness among colleagues and act as a 'go to' person for information and support. The Champions held a drop-in event to meet and chat with staff and would also have a stand at the regular corporate staff induction sessions.

The Panel made reference to the forthcoming emergency alert which was to be tested by the Government on Sunday 23 April 2023, by sending out a text directly to mobile phones. Some concern was expressed around those individuals, who were in an abusive relationship and who were in possession of a second mobile phone, unbeknown to their partner. This was acknowledged and this would be highlighted by the Domestic Abuse Champions through their staff networks and through the Service Managers.

Councillor Carol Bull (who had been unable to be present at the meeting today) had raised a question in relation to page 3 of the Guidance, second paragraph, where it stated '*Where appropriate, reasonable additional*

measures will be taken by the council to protect the safety of those experiencing domestic violence and abuse while travelling between home and work ...'. Councillor Bull asked as to how this might be accomplished.

The Service Manager explained that the Council had a duty of care to its staff which covered all of those times, not just when the staff walked into the building. The duty of care would include manager support in situations where an employee may be travelling from another location, perhaps where they have moved out of their home or ensuring they were able to travel, making adjustments where necessary. This could mean a different work base or a manager being aware of the difficulties the employee may face in getting to and from work. The employer commitment was to recognise that each individual case needed different levels of support and ensuring that it was flexible and supportive to ensure the health and safety of the employee as much as possible.

The Panel commended the Council for the implementation of this initiative.

With there being no decision required, the Panel **noted** the update provided.

82. **Pay Policy Statement 2023 to 2024 (Report number COU/WS/23/007 attached)**

For information, the Panel had received a copy of Report number COU/WS/23/007, which related to the West Suffolk Council Pay Policy Statement for 2023/2024, which had been subsequently approved by Council on 21 March 2023.

The Pay Policy Statement included:

- a. The level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers (senior staff).
- b. The remuneration of the lowest paid employees.
- c. The relationship between the remuneration of the highest and lowest paid employees.
- d. Other specific aspects of Chief Officer remuneration, fees and charges and other discretionary payments.
- e. The gender pay position.

The Council's ratio of the highest paid employee (April 2022) to the lowest paid (£20,812 per annum) contractual employee was 7.2:1. The Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector 2011 recommended that the average pay ratio between the chief executive of most public sector organisations and the lowest paid member of staff was below 12:1. The Council also continued to pay above the National Living Wage.

For the period April 2021 to March 2022, the Council's gender pay gap was -2.56%, which showed that the average hourly rate of females was 2.56% more than the average hourly rate of males. The median gender pay gap was -4.72%.

However, it was noted that the Council's pay policies and structures would need to continue to be reviewed to ensure that it had due consideration to the following particular factors:

- a. The level of future Pay Awards.
- b. Increase in the National Living Wage (which was forecast to rise to around £11.16 in 2024).

The Panel then discussed the content of the Pay Policy Statement and asked various questions for clarification. One of the questions particularly raised, the Service Manager confirmed that there were six members of staff who were paid on the minimum hourly rate.

With there being no decision required, the Panel **noted** the update provided.

83. Dates of future meetings

The Panel noted the dates for future meetings, as listed below. All dates were Mondays starting at 3pm the venue will be indicated nearer the time:

- Monday 3 July 2023
- Monday 20 November 2023
- Monday 12 February 2024

The meeting concluded at 3.46 pm

Signed by:

Chair

Workforce Overview



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	30/06/2022	30/09/2022	31/12/2022	31/03/2023
Headcount (All)	689	690	685	702
FTE (All)	642.68	644.24	640.52	657.35
Headcount (Permanent)	652	649	646	658
FTE (permanent)	608.67	607.33	604.81	617.77
Full-Time v Part-Time	80.12%/19.88%	80.29%/19.71%	80.58%/19.42%	81.34%/18.66%
Average age	46.1	46.0	46.0	46.0
Gender	51.67% male 48.33% female	51.16% male 48.84% female	51.68% male 48.32% female	52.28% 47.72%
Turnover	14.02%	13.46%	13.30%	12.03%
Total days lost due to absence	4729	4857	4581	4343
Average days absence per FTE	7.23	7.54	7.07	6.61
Short term absence (days)	3053	3122	3133	2726
Long term absence (days)	1676	1735	1448	1617

Agenda Item 8

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Fostering Friendly Guidance

2023

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Guidance sets out our organisation's support for employees who are undertaking the care of a child/children under a foster-care/kinship care arrangement with a local authority or an independent fostering provider.
- 1.2 We recognise and value the contribution that foster carers make to the lives of children and young people in care.
- 1.3 We understand that foster carers will need some flexibility in their working arrangements in order that they can meet the needs of their fostered child or young person.
- 1.4 We are committed to support any employee who is a foster carer. We will do this, wherever possible, by creating a fostering friendly organisation that offers flexible working arrangements which respond to the needs of all employees who are foster carers.

2. Guidance aims

- 2.1 This Guidance aims to offer our employees the opportunity to work flexibly where this is compatible with the demands of their job. Our agile working guidance and parental policies all apply to foster carers.

3. Eligibility

3.1 This Guidance applies to all West Suffolk Council employees, who are:-

- applying to become a foster carer/kinship carer or,
- an approved foster carer/kinship carer and have a child in placement (or have had a child in placement for 75 per cent of the previous 12 months),
- and who have evidence of the above processes

4. Time off entitlement

Existing foster carers

4.1 Employees that are already foster carers will be entitled to five days paid leave each year (pro-rata for part time employees), in addition to their annual leave, for caring responsibilities. This will only be available to the primary carer within the couple.

4.2 Where a couple are applying to become approved foster carers and both are employed by West Suffolk Council, both individuals will be entitled to receive a maximum of five days paid leave (pro-rata for part time employees) to attend mandatory training.

4.3 If at the end of a year any leave entitlement remains unused, it cannot be carried over into the subsequent year.

Employees applying to become foster carers

4.4 In addition to the above five days, to assist employees during their application to become approved foster carers, a maximum of five days paid leave (pro-rata for part time employees) will be available to allow the employee to participate in mandatory training, initial home visits and to attend the required fostering panels.

4.5 Should training be completed in less than five days (overall), any outstanding balance of the five days' leave may still be used to undertake caring responsibilities in the first year.

4.6 These additional five days will only be available to facilitate attendance at initial training sessions and care in the first year and will not be an annual entitlement.

5. Procedure for requesting time off

5.1 If you intend to foster a child/children, you should give your line manager no less than four weeks' notice of your intention to train as a foster carer. This is to ensure that your line manager and colleagues can provide you with support and encouragement. This also ensures that, should you wish to request any special leave to care for the

child/children, your line manager has sufficient notice to make any necessary arrangements for staff cover.

- 5.2 The request for time off should outline the reason and the amount of leave required.
- 5.3 Where more than the maximum entitlement of paid leave is requested (as outlined above), the line manager and the employee should discuss other means available such as annual leave, time off in lieu, parental leave.
- 5.4 Wherever possible, requests to take any other foster carers leave should be submitted at least five working days prior to the placement of a child.
- 5.5 The line manager will approve the leave on a discretionary basis considering individual circumstances of each case and operational requirements of the business. The leave will be considered and approved on a pro rata basis for part time employees.

6. Additional support

- 6.1 The council recognises that there may be occasions where a carer will need to take additional leave to facilitate a successful placement. In these circumstances, in addition to the foster carer's leave entitlement, the following options are also available:
 - Annual leave
 - Flexible working arrangements
 - Unpaid leave
 - Extended leave

7. Cessation of leave entitlement

- 7.1 An employee's entitlement to foster carers leave will cease in the following circumstances:
 - An employee's application to become a foster carer is rejected.
 - The employee's status as an approved foster carer is removed for any reason.
 - The employee ceases to act as a foster carer.

8. Useful information

- 8.1 Further information about the fostering service, including details about how to apply to become a foster carer can be found below:
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/fostering-and-adoption/fostering>

9. Enquiries and change control

- 9.1 All enquiries relating to this document should be directed to HR.
- 9.2 This Guidance will be subject to review which will be initiated by HR in consultation our recognised trade union.
- 9.3 Suggestions for any changes to this document should also be forwarded to HR.

10. Revisions

Date of review or revision	Reason	Author
May 2023	Guidance created	Wendy Canham



Workforce Strategy 2022-2028

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Foreword

We recognise that the greatest asset we have, to deliver services to the communities of West Suffolk, is our workforce. It is important that, as we continue to deliver those services in a changing and challenging environment, our workforce strategy continues to focus on how we attract, retain, reward, nurture and develop our staff, through our five key workstreams.

There will be a continuum of change in public services over the coming years, not only in the services the public sector provides and the demands placed upon them, but in how services are delivered as demographics shift, new technologies emerge and our citizens' expectations change.



Our vision is: supporting and investing in our West Suffolk communities and businesses to encourage and manage ambitious growth in prosperity and quality of life for all. This Workforce Strategy, in line with our values, outlines our commitment to work together to deliver this vision and to develop future focused workforce plans to help us to deliver against our Strategic Framework, while building a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects and understands the communities we serve.

This strategy captures the learning from our collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic and recognises the opportunities that 2020 has provided to move towards an agile organisation, valuing new ways of working and enabling our staff to deliver their best work in different ways, with a strong focus on supporting health and wellbeing.

The workforce strategy makes a commitment to take positive action to attract and develop an inclusive workforce that understands and reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. We need to consider new ways of influencing culture change across the organisation, cultivating diversity and inclusion and creating a workforce where difference is respected and valued. We recognise that a diverse workforce, with a diverse set of experience, perspectives, understanding and background will support the development of new ideas.

We are focused on how we will continue to reform the way we work to enhance the capabilities of our staff, develop an inclusive culture where leaders, at all levels, promote a culture of personal responsibility and accountability and empower an engaged workforce, where our staff can be creative, flexible and have the right skills to respond positively to any challenges ahead. In so doing, we will build on the resilience of the workforce, increase productivity and effectiveness to enable us to respond to community demands together, providing the best outcomes for our residents.

This strategy recognises that career trajectories and structures are changing and the traditional boundaries of jobs are starting to break down as people seek portfolio careers and organisations seek individuals who can move from project to project rather than fit a defined role, requiring us to challenge traditional specialised and linear public sector careers. These changes will therefore require us to respond and think differently if we are to recruit and retain a truly diverse and inclusive workforce, a workforce which is able to bring insight, encourage change and the ability to innovate, enabling us to transform, grow and deliver people focused services and initiatives.

Ian Gallin, Chief Executive

Our Vision, values and behaviours

West Suffolk Council's vision is to be ambitious in supporting and investing in our communities, businesses and the environment and to encourage and manage growth, prosperity and quality of life for all.

Our values and behaviours are measured through our staff performance development review and underpin our workforce strategy, our roadmap to ensuring we have a motivated, committed and well-equipped workforce.



Our workforce journey – where are we now?

West Suffolk Council is committed to being an employer of choice, offering an excellent working and development environment, with a commitment to learning and improving.

We recognise that the key quality and financial objectives can only be achieved through the contribution of a well-led, engaged and efficient workforce, a workforce proud to work for the people of West Suffolk.

The previous strategy 2018-2020 and the Interim People Plan 2020-2021 focused on the development of our workforce post-shared services and during the response to COVID-19, as well as the changing landscape of working in a much more collaborative way with partners.

A summary of some key achievements includes:

Workforce Strategy 2022-2028

- **Skills and behaviours**

We continue to provide opportunities for staff to engage and learn new skills. We invest in continuous professional and personal development for all staff by offering in-house and externally commissioned development programmes.

- **Recruitment and retention**

We have focused on flexible and timely approaches to recruitment, embedding career pathways for succession planning, and we have continued to seek flexible opportunities in the way people want to work with a focus on service delivery.

- **Health and wellbeing**

We have continued to offer a range of health and wellbeing initiatives that are made available to staff and online health and wellbeing resources that can be accessed at any time. Wellbeing levels across the organisation continue to be positive and the results from the wellbeing pulse surveys have consistently shown that there is great team support and positive working relationships across the organisation and high confidence that people can get help when they need it, as well as high levels of interest in work.

The warning signs we need to continue to consider are personal resilience, workloads, stress management, opening communication or connectivity with others to support these risk areas and physical health while working at home.

- **Reward and recognition**

We have continued to find creative ways to support our employer offer, with the introduction of additional non-financial rewards such as staff recognition awards.

- **Future planning**

With the continued commitment to apprenticeships, career pathways and promotion opportunities, we now need to move forward into an exciting new phase of our journey, capturing learning from our previous achievements, the pandemic and post COVID-19, to transform the way we deliver our services in a new agile way.

Contextual factors affecting our future workforce

We continue to have a strong reputation and proven track record of transforming local government to meet the challenges faced by our council and communities, demonstrated by the creation of one West Suffolk Council. We need to build on this as we prepare the workforce for a range of external and internal challenges ahead. Table 1 outlines the ongoing internal workforce challenges.

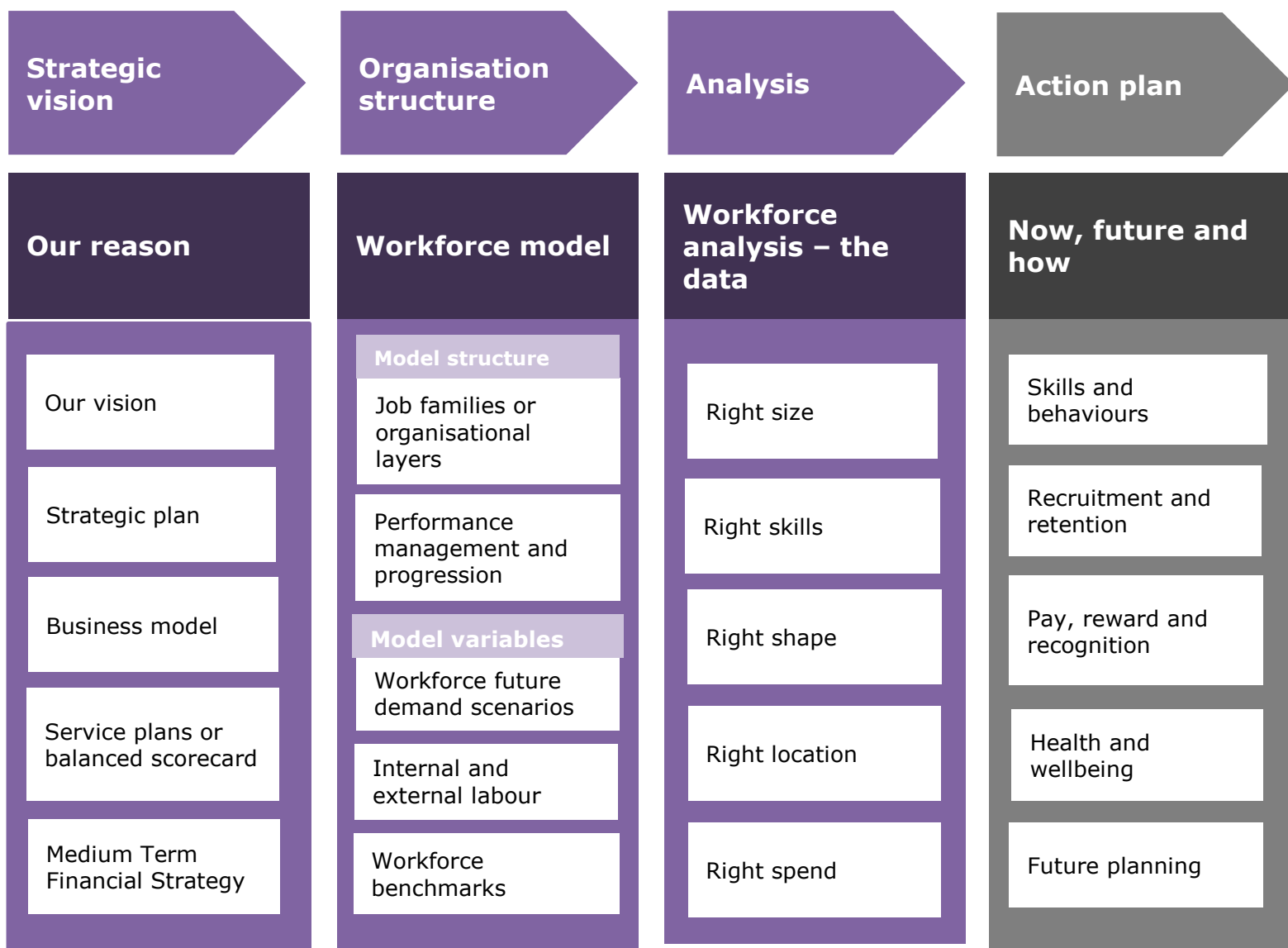
Table 1 – Ongoing internal workforce challenges

Challenge	Measures
Recruiting and retaining a wide range of talent	Future profiling and succession planning that continues to grow and develop our own staff alongside the new to attract fresh external insights
New ways of working	Career pathways and progression
Leadership development and peer networks	Maximising the skills of current staff
Agile working	Financial sustainable solutions
Equality, diversity and inclusion covering recruitment, networks, training and coaching and mentoring	Health and wellbeing, with a focus on physical health and mental health
New learning management system	New approaches to corporate inductions
Leading Together development programme	Range of coaching and mentoring options
Staff survey and wellbeing pulse surveys	Ensuring employees are able to fully utilise the opportunities that emerge from new technologies that will transform how we deliver

Workforce strategy model

Our strategy is underpinned by our overarching commitment: to enable West Suffolk Council to be a great place to work by attracting and growing a competent workforce with the right skills and behaviours to deliver the best services for our communities.

The model below outlines how this strategy sits across the wider organisational context.



Valuing difference

The council recognises that a diverse set of experiences, perspectives and backgrounds is crucial to innovation and the development of new ideas. Valuing differences plays a key role in attracting and retaining talent and is an important component of a successful organisation.

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity, creating a culture where diversity is valued and encouraged, using the principles of the Equality Framework for Local Government.

As part of this strategy, we set out how we will work towards a workforce that reflects the diversity of the local community, so that our services are provided appropriately and the council benefits from a wealth of experiences.

Throughout our workstreams, we encompass our approach to taking positive action to support our commitment to being an inclusive employer who values diversity and promote and support Disability Confident through both recruitment and retention.

Leading together

To support managers at all levels to assist in coaching and supporting their staff and help deliver this strategy, Leading Together is our overall leadership commitment to 'building an engaged and energised workforce where different ideas are valued, ensuring that we know, support, empower and trust staff to effectively deliver, while being inclusive in all we do'.

This will be achieved through our five leadership behaviours:



- be authentic
- be visible
- engage with others to understand
- lead with integrity
- be enquiring and challenging.

Our workstreams and priorities

We continue to focus and build on our five key workstreams as they underpin the ambitions of our organisation in becoming an agile employer, as we look to further transform the way we work in the coming period together with our commitment to attract, train and retain a workforce which embraces equality, diversity and inclusion.

Skills and behaviours

Why is this a priority?



We strive to be an organisation where we support the right people, with the right skills to deliver and where people can give their best at work. Our people must be supported by strong leadership, leaders who create an environment of involvement and respect and where different ideas, backgrounds and perspectives are valued and used to create innovative and sustainable ways to work with our elected members and our communities. Equally we encourage and support all staff to demonstrate leadership, both personally and organisationally. We must focus on connective skills, those which enable collaborative working and shared delivery, translating our vision into successful completion of projects, to continue to drive public services.

What do we want to achieve?

- Continue to train, develop and grow our workforce in multi-disciplinary settings to ensure our staff have the skills for their role, but to also focus on transferable skills as well as professional and technical skills.
- Continue to develop our teams to have the skills and behaviours to deliver services innovatively, creatively and flexibly, ensuring our staff are fully engaged at all levels.
- Support a flexible workforce through redeployment, secondment and job swaps, opening opportunities for our staff to work across the organisation, creating inhouse capacity to meet organisational demand.
- Support inclusive leaders, those who model the right values and behaviours and who welcome individual contributions, encourage and support engagement in decision making, challenge the norm and demonstrate effective coaching and mentoring.
- Develop leaders who have a people centred approach and promote a culture of personal responsibility and accountability, using emotional intelligence and actively promoting and supporting health and wellbeing.
- Encourage all staff to show personal and organisational leadership, taking responsibility and accountability in their work and their learning and development with a strong commitment to continuous personal development, investing in themselves as well as others.
- Foster a cultural mindset to learning and development and encourage a sharing of knowledge and interesting information across the workforce.

What actions will help us deliver the needs identified?

- Continue to develop career pathways, mapping skills, future knowledge and behaviours to support succession planning, building in flexibility where necessary to develop skills across multiple areas of the organisation, a zig zag approach to career progression.
- Identify career pathway plans which can overlap into different areas to bring together core skills and abilities over a range of work areas and continue to develop skills mapping to match job roles to new and appropriate apprenticeship standards.
- Continue to maximise the opportunities of the apprenticeship levy either through apprenticeship contracts or upskilling the workforce, finding innovative and new subject standards.
- Deliver a suite of compulsory training for managers, supervisors and team leaders through providing leadership training and exploring opportunities around master classes.

- Introduce a comprehensive equalities and diversities training offer, including recruitment and interviewer training, unconscious bias and anti-racism and manager training.
- Embed a culture where staff invest in their own learning through the 'Take Time To Learn', a commitment of dedicating at least one hour a month to developing themselves through a range of ways – for example, reading interesting articles, completing e-learning modules, watching videos, listening to podcasts, talking to colleagues or discovering and sharing new ways of working.
- Encourage staff sharing of relevant learning with colleagues, either formally in team meetings or in discussions, or sharing learning with other colleagues across the organisation to benefit their development.
- Capture the learning and development activities in performance development reviews, which feed into individual and service training plans.
- Provide different ways of learning for our staff to self-develop in bite-size sessions, as and when they need support and guidance, through platforms such as Watch and Go, where staff can log in to watch single videos or a series of videos created as learning pathways.
- Continue to source new learning topics and providers to build on the current corporate training offer and professional training offers, and monitor and report on compulsory training module engagement to ensure we reach all corners of the workforce, which delivers the needs for the directorate training plans.
- Support our staff and peer networks to create a culture of engagement by encouraging employees to have a voice that is listened to and explore how we can extend these to support underrepresented groups.
- Embed coaching and mentoring as core management skills.
- Ensure all new managers, team leaders and supervisors are supported in their roles, through induction and training, to provide a base line of West Suffolk Council policies and procedures information, and continue to train to support development.

Recruitment and retention

Why is this a priority?



We need to continue to source, recruit and retain the best people with the right skills at the right time to deliver our vision. Good recruitment leads to good retention and both are equally important to the growth and success of any organisation. We need to build a diverse and inclusive workforce that is reflective of and understands our communities, through all levels of the council. We need to ensure we support our staff at the start of their employment, from appointment to retirement, ensuring we focus on their work life balance and enabling them to reach their full potential and aspirations.

What do we want to achieve?

- Retain as many as possible of our high performing employees who show commitment, dedication and loyalty to ensure we maintain a stable workforce, especially in terms of skills and knowledge.
- Monitor and retain healthy turnover rates, because we are an employer of choice – a place where people want to work, and want to recommend others to work with us, bringing new skills and ideas to continue to build a strong workforce.
- Be able to attract and retain specialist and hard to fill roles through creative approaches to recruitment and different models of recruitment and employment engagement.
- Find creative ways to recruit to hard to fill roles, within the ethos of the council's employment principles, finding solutions which are sustainable, fair and equitable.
- Ensure that new entrants to the council are fully embedded in the organisation from the outset and are welcomed by an induction programme that supports that process and their needs.
- Support our employees in their work and their personal lives by advocating work life balance, supporting agile working, caring responsibilities and volunteering opportunities.
- Ensure we support new ways of working through our new recruits, complementing the current agile working, and through the working lives of our employees, responding to different needs while ensuring the services deliver.

What actions will help us deliver the needs identified?

- Develop and deliver an onboarding process for new starters, which enables processes to be completed online from application to offer, enabling induction to focus on the employee manager and the employee employer relationship and introduction to the council, together with the personal needs of each employee.
- Develop and deliver a new manager induction process which signposts managers to the toolkits and guidance in managing people and managing processes.
- Deliver a corporate induction event which enables all staff to meet members of Leadership Team together with colleagues across other service areas.
- Attract a wider pool of talent by re-evaluating the skill set needed when replacing staff, considering the needs of the role, not straightforward replacement.

- Ensure that all recruitment requests consider the widest options available for agile working, to ensure we attract a wider and diverse audience, testing and questioning traditional thinking and potential barriers.
- Promote agile working through our recruitment processes, by clarity and storytelling, with our staff sharing experiences and practices, and widening this through our recruitment website pages.
- Focus on local jobs for local people, within a local government setting, while considering suitable roles where wider ways of agile working may be available and enabling us to attract a wider and diverse workforce, particularly for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Review our recruitment processes to identify and address any disparity in equality of opportunity.
- Continue to support career pathways, through apprenticeships, secondments, redeployment and job swapping, supporting job enrichment and satisfaction and enabling a flexible workforce to work across the council, having an insight into what all corners of the organisation do, not just those areas where they are deployed to work.
- Consider other flexible offers such as sabbaticals and career breaks, to enable our workforce to fulfil other opportunities, whether that be personal or work related, with the opportunity to return to the council, bringing back enriched skills and abilities achieved through different experiences.
- Focus on developing further employee engagement initiatives, such as staff focus groups, capturing the energy of staff who want to look at the possible in everything we do.
- Capture exit interview data to enable a clear understanding of the reason for staff movement, highlight any trends which can inform changes and expectations of staff.

Pay, reward and recognition

Why is this a priority?



We need to continue to be able to recruit and retain a diverse range of people and pay, reward and recognition is a fundamental part of our offer to our staff at a time when resources are even more stretched, post-COVID-19 recovery. In order to attract the best staff, we need to be able to ensure that we not only offer the employer of choice reputation but the widest available benefits that are available to us, in the most cost effective way, recognising that benefits are not always about pay. We need our staff to realise they are valued and recognised for their efforts through initiatives and events.

What do we want to achieve?

- Continue to bring in new benefits, which meet our workforce needs, in terms of financial support and management, and enhance our offer through our West Suffolk We Save platform.
- Be competitive in terms of our pay, reward and recognition offer to our workforce and to future recruits.
- We are proud of our gender pay position – endeavour to ensure that any future pay initiatives do not compromise this position.
- Promote that reward is not all about pay and the employer offer focuses on the widest possibilities.
- Demonstrate to our staff, through staff recognition schemes such as the yearly recognition rewards, that we value them.

What actions will help us deliver the needs identified?

- In July 2021, we launched Cushon, a financial benefit which offers savings schemes for staff and is based on the West Suffolk We Save platform. Continue to promote this, along with financial initiatives, webinars and talks.
- Launch Salary Finance, a financial benefit based on the West Suffolk We Save site, which offers the widest financial help to our staff, including short term and long term loans, draw down arrangements during the pay month and other opportunities to support short term financial pressures.
- Continue to ensure our pay line is fit for purpose.
- Undertake both gender and ethnicity pay gap recording.
- Continue to utilise the full range of benefits available on the Reward Gateway platform, such as SmartTech purchase scheme, SmartAwards e-cards and e-communication and a car benefits scheme.
- Continue to work with Reward Gateway to promote the West Suffolk We Save benefits and actively communicate, through the site, with staff who are signed up as members and continue to promote 'good news savings' with updates from Human Resources and Learning and Development.
- Promote our range of non-financial benefits, such as agile working, flexible working and work life balance, and ensure those policies continue to add to the overall offer.
- Continue to deliver yearly staff award recognition which reflects the priorities of West Suffolk Council.

Health and wellbeing

Why is this a priority?

A healthy and motivated workforce, which demonstrates resilience and is responsive to change, will reflect in the quality of services we provide for our communities.



A proactive approach towards workplace health and wellbeing will support our staff to be happy, healthy and motivated. Failure to recognise that a culture of a strong commitment to health and wellbeing is one of the most important offers an employer can make will result in an increase on spend in this area, together with low morale, poor productivity and high turnover. Good health and wellbeing is a core enabler of employee engagement and organisational performance.

What do we want to achieve?

- Support our staff to ensure they maintain a work life balance, which provides a sense of value and responsibility with employees being in control of their lives. In return, our staff will have increased loyalty and a stronger commitment to the organisation.
- Ensure levels of absence are at a manageable level across the council, but also be mindful of how agile working can mask absence through a commitment of always being accessible.
- Aspire to be a good employer who recognises the importance of work life balance, but also the pitfalls where home and work lines can potentially blur in order that we can reduce workplace stress and absence.
- Support employees to have a choice over how and when they work, giving them greater autonomy and job satisfaction.

What actions will help us deliver the needs identified?

- Through strong people policies, such as agile working and health and wellbeing, continue to support an environment where our employees matter to us and our managers take responsibility for supporting and signposting their staff in terms of wellbeing interventions.
- Encourage and support our employees to maintain good physical and mental health, actively monitoring health data, and develop a positive work and home life balance to avoid home life conflict and positively discourage a working long hours culture and an expectation to always be accessible.
- Work with managers to ensure that health and wellbeing is a priority and ensure that they uphold those values in the ways in which they will support their staff and themselves.
- Provide a wide range of health and wellbeing initiatives, which support not only the national events and topics but also reflect and respond to the needs

of our workforce, and ensure that initiatives are monitored and evaluated to ensure they are current and relevant.

- Ensure we recognise health issues, especially in an agile world, and can address them and support staff and managers to resolve matters, ensuring our managers lead by example through emotional intelligence, role modelling and self-awareness.
- Communicate and evaluate our health and wellbeing offer, through the intranet and use of regular pulse surveys, to support health and wellbeing.
- Support agile ways of working to enable our staff to maintain a work life balance and empower them to have more autonomy over their work, where it is done and how it is done.
- Work closely with our external counselling provider to offer timely and topical support networks such as the parent and carer group and the new normal life group.
- Support our staff to engage with staff networks which provide a culture of engagement, encouraging employees to have a voice and a safe space to share issues, concerns and ideas, to ensure a range of views are considered for the best outcomes.
- Engage and work with our mental health first aiders and wellbeing champions, to continue to offer a range of support for our workforce, through our internal network of staff based in our services.

Future planning



Why is this a priority?

Workforce planning can be the most effective activity an organisation can engage in to provide internal and external intelligence to enabling effective current staff needs and future succession planning. We need to be able to plan for skills shortages, both local and national, monitor turnover and undertake succession planning to be able to respond to service needs and demand and continue to support the transformation of the organisation. Planning enables us to identify gaps between the present and the future, to enable the implementation of solutions so that we can deliver on our priorities.

What do we want to achieve?

We need to stay ahead of the curve to ensure that we have the right number of people, with the right skills, employed in the right place at the right time. We need to think creatively and consider career pathways and career portfolios which enable us to utilise our workforce in the most flexible way that enhances not only their career opportunities but also the opportunities for the council. We need sound workforce planning to enable sustainable organisational performance, through better decision making about the future people needs in the public sector. We need to be able to tell the story through our workforce data.

What actions will help us deliver the needs identified?

- Positively encourage and seek opportunities for our staff to be redeployed or seconded to other parts of the council in order to build new skills and abilities, building portfolio careers which will enable a greater approach to matrix working.
- Use information drawn from the staff surveys to inform workforce planning decisions and actions.
- Encourage a stronger commitment and a fluid movement of staff to enable staff to gain new skills within the organisation, supporting the 21st century public servant expectations of the new public sector employee.
- Ensure that workforce planning is not just about numbers, but is about skills potential and how this can be deployed across a multi-disciplinary organisation, with buy-in needed from the whole organisation, linking the strategic need to the workforce planning.
- Produce relevant people data, on a quarterly basis, to enable service managers to interpret the data, input good quality information and analyse performance for their service, but understand where their service fits with the organisation.
- Improve the quality and quantity of data we hold about our workforce to help make more insightful decisions. Use the data to bring together organisational and strategic planning processes, while being clear that the approach must be flexible to deal with constant change.

Delivering the strategy

A key part of any successful strategy is the execution and everyone has a part to play in translating this strategy into reality and, in the process, enhancing our culture.

Strategic managers

- As a leadership team, promote and support the implementation of this strategy.
- Create opportunities to talk to staff and managers about progress made against our people plan aspirations and the ongoing challenges we face and how we can overcome them.
- Create a space to listen to staff and promote an inclusive workforce.
- Encourage and support others to take responsibility for continual learning and development.

All people managers

- Ensure all staff understand and know how their work contributes to our objectives, connected to the performance development review.
- Foster an inclusive team where people are recruited for attitude and trained for skill.
- Create an environment where staff are willing to try new ideas, focus on what does work and what could be even better (growth mindsets).
- Work together to identify and manage shared problems and develop shared solutions – ‘one team culture’.
- Know your people, use emotional intelligence to have difficult conversations, show empathy and compassion, with wellbeing at the forefront of supporting people.
- Share and celebrate successes together; create and support development opportunities.
- Use resources in different ways; continue to embrace flexible deployment and agile working.
- Continually learn and adapt – as leaders and with our teams.
- Focus on engaging and communicating with staff.
- Be a cohort of strong and confident managers, working together internally and across the system.
- Build positive relationships with members to help shape and influence our response to our challenges, opportunities and risks.

All staff

- Keep talking and sharing ideas; be open minded.
- Take the initiative to propose new ways of working which supports collaboration and increases efficiencies for the council.
- Take personal responsibility for how and when you work.
- Utilise training and development opportunities to increase your understanding of inclusivity and proactively address any discrimination in and outside the workplace.
- Take control of your personal learning and career progression.
- Look after yourself and your teams; put wellbeing at the heart of all we do.

Human Resources (HR) Team

- Work closely with senior managers to develop workforce plans in directorates in support of the priorities outlined in this strategy.
- Regularly monitor and give feedback on emerging themes, progress and challenges.
- Review key HR policies, procedures, systems and management support to facilitate organisational change.
- Work closely with trade unions to help improve performance and lead on negotiations.

Workforce strategy priorities for 2022-2028

Action Plan

	Priority action	To do/actions and completion dates	Timescale	May 2023 Update
Skills & behaviours	<p>Train, develop and grow our workforce focusing on transferable skills as well as professional and technical skills</p> <p>Support and develop a flexible workforce who work for West Suffolk Council</p>	<p>Continue to support development of career pathways, mapping skills, knowledge and behaviours for succession planning, building in capacity and flexibility across the whole organisation.</p> <p>Identify career pathways which overlap in different disciplines across the services, bringing together common core skills and abilities, and transferable skills.</p> <p>Continue to maximise the opportunities the apprenticeship levy can offer to upskill our own staff in related subjects that will offer movement across the council's services.</p> <p>Increase skills and opportunities through matrix working, secondment and shadowing opportunities both internally and externally.</p> <p>Consider and support redeployment opportunities through vacancy management and project/group opportunities.</p>	<p>Where opportunities arise look at options but wider corporate career pathways until in a better place with workload (structures/transformation work)</p> <p>Business as usual</p> <p>Business as usual</p> <p>Business as usual</p>	
	<p>Deliver a suite of training for all reporting managers, team leaders, supervisors and chargehand, offering consistency to bring officers to a set standard.</p> <p>Supporting managers to understand their responsibility and approach to being an inclusive manager</p> <p>Peer managers networking</p>	<p>Deliver short sessions of training which bring our managers up to a consistent level of understanding across all grades, with relevant topics to support people management.</p> <p>Embed coaching and mentoring as core skills through training, networking and collaborative supporting managers to take responsibility and gain confidence and competence in dealing with people related matters.</p> <p>Support managers to take responsibility to access people management data which is available to them on a day to day basis through itrent – such as absence, annual leave, and personal data and build confidence and competence to deal with people related matters.</p> <p>Support and facilitate regular peer managers networking sessions, which brings the group of employees together and supports the training programme. Enable the learning from the training programme to blend with practical and best practice</p>	<p>Explore through L&D review in first half of 2023.</p> <p>Explore through L&D review in first half of 2023.</p> <p>Explore through L&D review in first half of 2023.</p> <p>Use Peer Network group to design an induction process/toolkit for new managers for implementation by end of next year. Leadership Development programme (project based) for Band 5/6 staff.</p> <p>Ongoing but looking to develop further.</p>	<p>Need to review diversity sessions, including manager sessions. Do's and Don't's for operational managers.</p> <p>Level 5 mentoring apprenticeship</p> <p>Feedback from managers on access to people</p> <p>New manager sessions</p>

	Priority action	To do/actions and completion dates	Timescale	May 2023 Update
	Induct all new managers	sharing, which will support a consistent approach to people management and how and where to access information. Ensure new managers are supported through their induction to provide a base line of knowledge of WS people management policies and procedures, including access to management reports to support day to day people management such as sickness, annual leave, mileage, etc. Produce guides and toolkits to deal with day to day issues to empower managers to take responsibility for early interventions.	Ongoing.	Mgr induction. To review in 2024. Formal template plan. Corporate manager induction every 6 months, include finance, understand organisation. Expectations around people managing – policies in place for guidance – but also what we expect of managers. Induction to complete mgr skills matrix to support training plan. Promote internal and external appointments. Lead by Director, supported by HR
	Develop a future inspiring leader's programme for band 7/8 staff	Deliver a yearly programme of interventions to support the development of Band 7/8 employees for future aspiring leaders, identified through the PDR process and to training and development.	First programme running in 2023. Next programme running in 2024 for Band 5 and Band 6. 2024 for Band 7/8 programme	
	Support and encourage a culture of engagement, ensuring all employees have a voice	Different models of engagement to ensure that staff can have a voice that is listened to and is used to influence and shape the service delivery, supported by focus groups where needed. Support team meetings and other events (corporate induction, wellbeing events) to showcase and promote HR, payroll and L&D information, and benefits package.	Part of L&D review. Specific piece of work looking at engagement with Operations. Wellbeing survey planned for next year. Ongoing.	L&D Champions
	Actively influence in appropriate networks across the Suffolk system and wider	Working with partners on the Suffolk wide graduate scheme Look at opportunities to work together in the L&D space to offer consistent public sector training.	Currently 7 in Suffolk, 1 placement at West Suffolk. Part of L&D review by end of next year. Look at opportunities for crossover with corporate programme.	

	Priority action	To do/actions and completion dates	Timescale	May 2023 Update
	Provide different ways of learning for our staff	<p>Embed Take Time to Learn through staff engagement and develop a learning culture of peer learning, action set learning, information sharing as well as traditional L&D methods.</p> <p>Support service training plans and personal development aspirations through the PDR process by coaching and mentoring managers</p> <p>Offer of L&D through different ways, different subject matter, and through employee engagement and feedback to ensure the offer is current, relevant and supports the organisation culture and priorities</p>	<p>Part of L&D review.</p> <p>H&S modules part of iLearn early next year.</p> <p>Part of L&D review to establish what sits in PDR process and link with training plans.</p> <p>L&D Review – on going</p>	Completed 2023
Recruitment & Retention	Develop and deliver the onboarding module of iTrent	<p>Introduce online processes for all new starters to include staff being able to upload own documents, electronic signatures.</p> <p>Enable some basic training to be completed prior to starting employment.</p> <p>Develop the module to be more informative for new employees, to support agile working and connectivity across the workforce.</p> <p>Categorise e-induction packs for service/operations.</p> <p>Produce a managers guide to onboarding to include links to info/guides</p>	March 2023.	On boarding module project. Go live by end of September 2023. Due to deliver self-service once members on MiHR early June 2023
	Get a better understanding of what attracts people to work here, why they like working for us and why they stay	<p>Work with focus group and comms to capture “why work at WSC”. Promote the recruitment website with personal profile stories “why I work here”.</p> <p>Continue to use staff focus groups to have insight into issues staff want to raise, improve and develop initiatives, capturing the energy and commitment of staff who want to engage in making a difference.</p>	<p>Consider a pulse survey.</p> <p>Second half of 2023.</p> <p>Comms working on promotion of Waste vacancies now by speaking to existing staff.</p>	<p>Review in 2024</p> <p>Promotional videos in use.</p>
	Develop and deliver inductions for all new staff	<p>Deliver corporate induction, working with the CEO and LT and relevant market stalls to welcome all new employees</p> <p>Offer a comprehensive induction process and guide for all new managers including signposting to key documents, policies and processes.</p> <p>Develop an approach to connect new starters to the organisation to support future corporate inductions – 2024.</p>	<p>Business as usual</p> <p>Business as usual</p> <p>Explore options and aim to have something in place for September 2023.</p>	Review in 2024

	Priority action	To do/actions and completion dates	Timescale	May 2023 Update
		Develop an on-line staff handbook – end 2024	June 2024	New starters stand at corporate induction
	Creative recruiting to include effective use of recruitment methods to target specific applicants for hard to recruit positions, increased use of social media for advertising	Working with comms business partners to ensure full utilisation for social media for advertising. Review advert content and design, working with a focus group. Review processes to identify and address any disparity of equal opportunity. Ensure that we embed a culture of review for recruiting roles which considers and focuses on skills now and future needs, and to support attracting a wider and diverse pool of talent, local jobs for local people. Reduce advertising costs by using social media and other advertising methods.	Some elements ongoing but overall review completed by June 2024	Review June 2024
	Use promotion of the employer of choice through maximise the recruitment website	Continue to ensure recruitment web pages are up to date, current and refreshed. Focus on stories and personal experience to bring the website to life and relate to potential applicants. Promote agile working through story telling throughout the advert to offer process.	Link to above action (June 2024).	June 2024
	Ensure we embed different approaches and ways of working to employment	Continue to support agile working opportunities to attract candidates and to support managers to manage. Consider flexible offers such as sabbaticals and career breaks, where appropriate, to provide opportunities for staff to return bringing back enriched skills and abilities achieved through different experiences	Business as usual, promoted in adverts. Business as usual linked to Workforce Planning.	
Pay, reward & recognition	Ensure staff are aware of the value of their employment package	Work to produce an employee specific total reward statement to ensure staff can make informed decisions and to support retention. Draft statement produced May 2023	September 2023	Pushed back to September 2023
	Continue to ensure our pay line is fit for purpose	Benchmarking against other councils to ensure our pay grades are comparable whilst maintaining our own layers and job families and the NJC JE scheme.	Always under review.	
	Continue to work with Reward Gateway in order to promote the WSWS benefits and increase engagement and show cases "good	Build on the benefits we offer to include discounts, vouchers, employee assistance programme, Tusker, SmartTech, Doctor helpline 24/7, on line 24/7 counselling, legal help line, Salary Finance (financial platform for education and loans), Cushon (savings schemes), Cycle to Work, The Wellbeing Centre and use storytelling to promote and share with employees to ensure our staff get the best out of what is on offer to enhance their whole employee package	Ongoing.	

	Priority action	To do/actions and completion dates	Timescale	May 2023 Update
	news savings" through staff experiences	AVC Wise. Presentation to LT in October 2023 – salary sacrifice		
	Promote and celebrate our non financial benefits	Promote the range of non-financial benefits which make up our total employee offer including agile working and work life balance policies, our investment in learning and development and apprentice opportunities to upskill and retrain staff, our commitment to health and wellbeing of our staff being of utmost importance and our staff recognition through Staff Awards Introduce e-cards and e-communications to recognise achievement.	Ongoing at corporate inductions and wellbeing events. By the end of 2024.	Can send thank you cards on MsTeams
	Gender pay and pay policy reporting and designing actions to support this	Gender pay and pay policy continues to be positive, with no need for interventions to address any issues. However, all our policies and initiatives must be mindful of the need to ensure equality and diversity and transparency in design. Undertake both gender and ethnicity pay gap recording. Data cleanse to be completed / promoted. January 2024	Ongoing.	January 2024
Health & Wellbeing	Provide initiatives that support the building of resilience and wellbeing and the ability to take responsibility for our own health, recognising the opportunities to do so	Continue to develop the engagement of our Wellbeing Champions, Domestic Abuse Champions and Mental Health First Aiders. Review numbers of champions and the services they represent. Work with the Menopause support group to offer peer support to colleagues and share experiences and feedback. Bringing the groups together to better understanding how to use going forward, understand each other roles. Co-ordination role on Domestic Abuse champions	Targeted sessions on domestic abuse and alcohol dependence next year. On going	2024 End 2023
	Support the health and wellbeing of our staff	Support managers to lead by example in wellbeing initiatives which benefit teams. Calendar of health initiatives / events to include 3-4 key health events each year, updates, information and support groups. Continue to work with the external counsellor/life coach to deliver group sessions which supports individuals to support others and increase connectivity across the workforce and introduce topics of commonality.	Business as usual. Business as usual. Business as usual building on existing work and working with new intern in 2023.	New sessions September 2023

	Priority action	To do/actions and completion dates	Timescale	May 2023 Update
		Work with Service Manager for Operations and Unison to develop a varied wellbeing plan for the depots to include Men's Health Week and other events.		Use work of the intern to develop new programme
	Join in and promote national initiatives such as Workplace Challenge, Stoptober, Mental Health at Work week, etc	Work with a wide range of providers including Mind, OneLife, NHS, Gipping, Bury Physio, to offer national initiatives and take advantage of free support and offers where possible. Wellbeing Suffolk; Realise Futures; AFP; SNEE.	Ongoing.	
	Ensure we offer relevant and timely health and wellbeing initiatives	Collate valuable data and feedback from pulse surveys, a focus group consisting of wellbeing champions and managers and attendance of events to ensure good take up of events and relevance. Mini poll to find out what topics staff would like covered. - Investigate which events staff value and why events are attended to inform the offer.	By end of 2023 linked to review of champions. Look to produce a quarterly wellbeing newsletter starting early 2023.	See above. What topics going forward on wellbeing
	Work closely with our managers in terms of health and wellbeing issues	Work with managers to collate service intelligence on issues relevant to health and wellbeing and together work to consider practical support through connectivity and individually. Managers are key to health and wellbeing, ensure all operational managers are fully equipped both in terms of knowledge and skills to support the health and wellbeing agenda and prioritise attendance at events and corporate training which support this subject.	Ongoing through HRBP work. Ongoing through Peer Networking group. Health and wellbeing will be key to Band 5/6 development programme.	Mgr peer networking group and service managers – what issues dealing with.
	Support an open and inclusive culture	Support and encourage our staff to engage with staff network opportunities such as pulse surveys, surveys, focus groups and encourage a culture where staff have confidence to have a voice and a safe space to share issues, concerns, ideas and take responsibility and ownership with regards to health and wellbeing of themselves, others and the organisation. Manager peer networking group, youth networking group, Sarah Lindley-Parker sessions.	Business as usual, continually encourage through networks using those opportunities and the champions.	
	Raise awareness of stress and stress related absence/performance	Coach managers to recognise early signs of stress to enable them to have confidence to take early steps to support employees, especially understanding agile working and home and work life conflict issues and balancing organisational and service needs. Ensure all new managers attend stress awareness/MHFA training. Increase coaching / mentoring offer.	Peer Networking session in 2023 linked to new ways of working. Longer term piece of work linked to Manager induction training. By end of 2023.	

	Priority action	To do/actions and completion dates	Timescale	May 2023 Update
		Train champions to act as ambassadors in services to promote benefits.	This will happen as part of action learning sets.	
Future Planning	Building resilience	Encourage a stronger commitment and fluid movement of staff to gain experience and new skills across the organisation to be able to support demand.	Ongoing	
	Redesign workforce planning requests to consider medium and long term potential needs	Use workforce planning requests to consider future needs as well as current. Move away from recruiting like for like and the here and now and horizon scan to consider medium and long term. What is this role likely to look like in two years' time? Does this role currently reside in the right place? Where are there synergies across the organisation which this post would sit better with? Review recruitment request form to include other questions – i.e. is the post sitting in the right team / service.	Ongoing	
	Ensure succession planning is an essential part of a service role	Work with services to establish future staff needs and map against current succession planning to ensure services are future proofing service delivery. Produce guidance on job families, organisational structure and layers, spans of control as a template for managers including job evaluation principles. Add this into the manager induction programme.	Ongoing linked to restructures Ongoing	
	Use employee feedback to shape the future	Draw on information and intelligence from staff surveys to inform future workforce planning decisions and actions.	Ongoing	
	Consider workforce planning priorities across the whole organisation	Develop a map of where skills and abilities sit in the organisation that can be deployed across a multi disciplinary organisation, supporting transformation and organisational change to maximise the ability to retain staff.		
	Map the outcomes against the actions	To be completed at end of 2028.		
		Continued use of Pulse Surveys.		
Other	Communications	Prepare an employee friendly workforce strategy document and ensure that such documents are reproduced to provide information and engagement. Work with comms.	By 2024	
	Translate the strategy to all our workforce so that everyone owns it and has a roll in it	Produce a yearly update of achievements and communicate to all staff through staff briefings. Use of i-blog for updates i.e. Menopause.		

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