

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Strategic Lead – People & Technology****Corporate Services Committee: 22nd May 2019**

Subject: Council Workforce Plan 2017-2022: Annual Action Plan 2019/20**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on the Council's workforce planning activity for 2019/20.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Committee is asked to:

- Note progress during 2018/19 in delivering against the Council Workforce Plan;
- Note the workforce profile as at 1st April 2019 and the key changes;
- Note the planned actions for 2019/2020; and
- Note that the Delivery Plans for each service will include workforce annual action plans.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Council Workforce Plan 2017-2022 was approved by this Committee on 29th November 2017, having been developed in line with the Council's revised Strategic Planning Framework.
- 3.2** The Council Workforce Plan is subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that it is effective in delivering required outcomes and that it is responsive to any changes in circumstances which subsequently arise.
- 3.3** The initial progress update was provided to committee in February 2018 and further reports will be submitted to Corporate Services Committee on an annual basis, outlining progress to date and actions for the year ahead. The progress update is attached as appendix 1 and the action plan for 2019/20 is attached at appendix 3.
- 3.4** Workforce annual actions plans, for each Strategic Area will be submitted to the relevant Committee from May each year, as part of the Delivery Planning process.
- 3.5** Whilst separate planning processes exist in relation to West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP), appropriate alignment is in place with the Council-wide Workforce Plan and resulting action plans insofar as they relate specifically to Council employees working within HSCP.

4. Main Issues

4.1 The attached annual action plans highlight each of the issues to be addressed over the 5 year period of the Council Workforce Plan, as follows:

- Addressing the gap between current workforce supply and predicted future demand;
- Ensuring clear, effective and stable organisational design;
- Addressing the gap between current and required workforce and leadership and management competencies, both technical and behavioural;
- Ensuring a healthy, engaged workforce;
- Addressing workforce diversity objectives; and
- Improving use of technology and new ways of working.

4.2 This report contains 3 sections and associated appendices;

- The progress and achievements made over the last year since last reported to Committee in February 2018 (Appendix 1)
- The current workforce profile, examining any changes over the last year (Appendix 2)
- A high level action plan for 2019/20 (Appendix 3)

4.3 Progress over the last year

4.3.1 When reviewing all service level action plans it is evident that there is significant activity over the last year. In response to the BVAR we are reporting 100% completion against the workforce planning actions.

4.3.2 Services are reviewing relevant data and the changing environment to predict future demand and explore opportunities to deliver services differently and more effectively. Where relevant, services are considering the opportunities and benefits of commercialisation, cross service working and shared services as appropriate. Full details are contained in individual service plans.

4.3.2 A focus on process improvement is also evident across services, adopting a continuous improvement approach, with lean six sigma training supporting this organisational priority. There are currently 25 qualified yellow belts, trained in lean six sigma, agile working, service redesign and commercialisation. These individuals will be leading and supporting improvement projects across the organisation.

4.3.3 With a culture of continuous improvement, the council is embracing the requirement for digital literacy with a council-wide survey to assess the digital temperature of the organisation to inform training and development programmes. A recent digital maturity assessment reported that “It is clear that West Dunbartonshire has created a culture where staff are empowered to embrace new ways of working in modern surroundings. This environment

which is actively embraced by the full senior leadership team is ideal for the required transformation of services” - (Digital Maturity Assessment Feb 2019).

- 4.3.4** Employee surveys, self-evaluation and quality improvement exercises have also provided beneficial insight into areas for enhancement and have informed associated action plans. Services are linking together in a more cohesive fashion, promoting a one council approach in projects such as IHMS, Early Years Expansion, the ‘no home for Domestic Abuse’ project and Employee Wellbeing.
- 4.3.5** In recent years the council has placed great emphasis in supporting the development of the workforce, embedding ‘be the best’ conversations, skills exchange and training plans and building resilience and career planning into service and team plans. Following the last Employee Survey, meetings took place with all service managers to review their outcomes, in particular their results around Be the Best Conversations. All were offered further support for their teams in the form of online information, face to face sessions//briefings for staff and/or any other support they felt would be beneficial. As a result of the above, over 18/19 there was an increased number of requests for onsite Be the Best Conversations 30OD minute sessions
- 4.3.6** In addition to these meetings, a pulse survey was undertaken to further assess the occurrence of Be the Best Conversations with the results showing an increase of 8% from the employee survey to 68%. Almost 7 in 10 people who responded confirmed they were benefiting from be the best conversations. Whilst this is encouraging, the focus groups have established some confusion over the language and are not recognising regular chats or, supervision meetings as part of the ‘Be the Best’ framework. There are plans for the coming year to provide clarity around this and as a result of this the figures should increase.
- 4.3.7** To support those who wish to develop into leadership roles, services are asked to facilitate peer support groups, and the inspiring leaders programme continues across the organisation with 43 delegates completing this programme in 2018/19. This is supporting succession planning discussions and the development of leadership competencies. Promoting the coaching ethos of the council, the coaching and mentoring programme has now delivered the second cohort of coaches, which has provided a further 11 coaches in 2018/19 bringing the total across the council to 17. There is also a cross organisational mentoring pilot programme which further widens the skills, experience and benefits for both coaches and those being coached.
- 4.3.8** The work associated with workforce diversity objectives has been informed by equalities data and audits. There have been positive developments in this area with the promotion of flexible working supports and our disability confident commitment. Recruitment processes are continually being refined to implement positive action and support the reduction in occupational segregation e.g. There is a focus in Early Years and care encouraging men

into these professions and Employability continue to promote and support female apprenticeships in craft trades. As is known, our current workforce profile shows an under-representation of BME and disabled employees. Work to understand recruitment data and what improvements can be made is an ongoing activity across the council. Through this work we aim to ensure that barriers to employment for minority groups are reduced or removed, to support our commitment to creating a diverse workforce.

4.3.9 The council encourages a healthy and engaged workforce and this year have focused on mental wellbeing and resilience, piloting the innovative Headtorch programme. This programme takes a proactive approach to mental health at work leading to culture change, creating an environment that encourages creating positive mental health at work and breaking down the barriers and stigmas associated with mental health. We have also been promoting the mental health support service available through access to work and this will continue in the coming year.

4.3.10 A review of the employee wellbeing strategy and the associated working group was undertaken and the feedback has informed a relaunch. The forthcoming year will see a more streamlined working group concentrating on themed areas with a cohesive approach to actions. It is anticipated that these changes will provide a renewed focus and will improve the impact of the wellbeing strategy. The framework also assists in improved communications to ensure that managers and employees are aware of the supports available and how to access and promote these.

4.3.11 Full details of the progress made against actions are contained in appendix 1.

4.4 The current workforce profile, examining any changes over the last year

4.4.1 The current workforce profile is attached in Appendix 2, with comparisons made against all data comparing previous year and commenting on trends. The main observations are detailed below:

4.4.2 When compared to 2017/18 data there was a reduction of in the number of permanent headcount across the council in 2018/19 however there was also a corresponding increase in the permanent FTE. This would suggest that permanent employees are securing more hours within their contracts and reflects the work carried out by services redesigning contracts to better meet the needs of services, joining posts or increasing hours where possible.

4.4.3 In contrast fixed term employment has continued to grow with an additional 89 fixed term headcount reflecting large scale temporary funding streams such as PEF and the Scottish attainment challenge. Services are also responding to reducing budgets and ensuring a more flexible approach when responding to resource needs. Fixed term contracts can provide this flexibility, responding to changing demands.

- 4.4.4** While the overall Head count has increased by 1% the overall FTE has increased by 5% which further demonstrates that not only is the council employing more people but these people are working more contracted hours than in previous years. This is evident across both full time and part time working arrangements.
- 4.4.5** The overall gender profile remains largely unchanged with an overall gender split of 28.5% male and 71.5% female.
- 4.4.6** There is a higher percentage of employees working past 65 with an increase of 1% over the last 2 years.
- 4.4.7** There has been a reduction in the council's turnover figures compared to previous years. Since 2016 this has been between 8.6% and 8.7% and this year it 8.0% with a reduction in leavers numbers

4.5 High level action plan for 2019/20

- 4.5.1** Building on the achievements made in the last year, 2019/20 will see attention focused on embedding initiatives, such as Lean six sigma, coaching and mentoring and leadership development. Services will continue to promote and engage in cross organisational working, and explore the opportunities that this provides, including the potential for retraining of employees into other areas. To future proof the plans for service delivery, succession planning with continue and talent management will be key in further supporting this.
- 4.5.2** Building on the data gathered from the employee survey and various feedback surveys, we continue to gather evidence and work on the development of the organisational culture and environment. A recent digital maturity assessment provided positive feedback from employees concerning the direction of the organisation and the culture it is developing. We are also currently developing an improved exit interview process to allow data to be gathered from those leaving the organisation and this will also inform future actions.
- 4.5.3** Through 19/20, focus groups will follow up on the 'Be the Best' pulse survey and work will continue with further targeted support/briefings to raise awareness and increase the practice of Be the Best Conversations. It is hoped the results of this work should reflect in the next employee survey.
- 4.5.4** In 2018/19 work was undertaken to attract candidates to the council promoting local government working and more specifically WDC as an employer of choice. This will continue into 2019/20 to incorporate a full on-boarding review, analysing all aspects of recruitment from attracting candidates to integrating a new employee into the organisation and its culture. Part of this project will also involve influencing how WDC is viewed and rated as an employer, which will include the monitoring of feedback from exit interviews and also external websites such as Glassdoor. Any trends will be identified and inform future action.

- 4.5.5** A significant area of development will be the digitalisation programme for the organisation, managed through the Digital Transformation Board. This will involve and benefit all service areas and will build on last year's work to understand the workplace skills in digital literacy.
- 4.5.6** Following the re-launch of the Employee Wellbeing Strategy and formation of the wellbeing Group, the agreed actions will now be implemented and embedded focusing on priority areas. There will be regular progress reports to Change Board, monitoring the impact of the resulting action.
- 4.5.7** With regard to Brexit, individual service plans contain the specific service implications and risk assessments relating to funding, supplies etc. Whilst our EU employee numbers are low the council is monitoring this and can respond accordingly.
- 4.5.8** Full details of the 2019/20 action plan is attached as Appendix 3.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** Integration of workforce planning within wider organisational planning processes ensures that workforce issues are effectively identified and addressed. This supports the Council's commitment to its employees in relation to all aspects of their employment, ensuring that employees' needs are met and that efficient and modern services are effectively delivered both now and in the future.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** There are no financial or procurement implications associated with this report.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** A robust approach to workforce planning ensures that the Council identifies current and future needs. This allows strategies and policies to be developed that ensure the continued delivery of best value services. Embedding workforce planning within the planning process and incorporating best employment practice ensures that key issues affecting the workforce are identified at the earliest stage.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** A full EIA is not required in relation to the Council Workforce Plan as individual assessments will be undertaken in relation to each area of work referred to in the Plan as it is progressed.

9. Consultation

9.1 The Strategic Leadership Group have been involved in the development of the Plan through Delivery Planning.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 This report directly supports the Council's Strategic Priorities.

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Date: 30th April 2019

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Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Council Workforce Plan Progress update Appendix 2 – Workforce Profile April 2019 Appendix 3 – Workforce Plan Action Plan – 2019/20
Background Papers:	Council Workforce Plan 2017-2022 Strategic Lead Area Workforce Plans 2017-2022 Strategic Workforce Planning Framework
Wards Affected:	None