WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer – People & Technology

Corporate Services Committee: 24 May 2023

_____

Subject: **Council Workforce Plan 2022-2027: Update & Annual Action Plans 2022/23**

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's workforce planning activity for 2022/23.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note progress during 2022/23 in delivering against the Council Workforce Plan within the People First Strategy and 5 year plan;
- Note the workforce profile as at 31st March 2023 and key changes; and
- Note progress within the Workforce Plans for each service.

3. Background

3.1 The revised Workforce Planning Strategy and Framework 2022 - 2027 was agreed at Corporate Services Committee on 1st February 2023, reflecting the 5 year People First Strategy and incorporating the Council's Strategic Planning Framework.

3.2 The Council Workforce Plan is subject to monitoring and evaluation to ensure that it remains effective in delivering required outcomes and responsive to any changes in circumstances, which subsequently arise. This report contains 2 sections and associated appendices:
- The progress and achievements made over the last year (Appendix 1);
- The current workforce profile and monitoring, examining any changes (Appendix 2).

3.3 A review of the workforce information provided in Appendix 2 and the Bi-annual Workforce monitoring report (previously reported to Corporate Service Committee) was undertaken to streamline reports and ensure all relevant information is reported in one place. Therefore, going forward the workforce profile and monitoring report will be reported within Appendix 2 of this report annually and provided for information at PMRG.

3.4 Progress updates will continue to be submitted to Corporate Services Committee on an annual basis, outlining progress to date and actions for the year ahead. The progress update at Service Level (Appendix 1) is attached.

3.5 Service annual action plans are scoped under the four Priorities outlined at 4.1 for each Chief Officer Area and are submitted to the relevant Committee as part of the Delivery Planning process. Separate delivery reports are tabled at this committee.

3.6 Whilst separate planning processes exist in relation to West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP), appropriate alignment is in place to ensure that Council employees working within HSCP are included and benefit from all Council Wide initiatives and actions.

4. **Main Issues**

4.1 The attached (Appendix 1) updates on the annual action plans at Chief Officer Service level for 2022/23 under the 4 Priorities:
Priority 1. Our People (Workforce Profile): Ensure resilience and engagement of the workforce;
Priority 2. Recruitment & Retention: Current and predicted future workforce gaps are addressed and core skill sets retained;
Priority 3. Structure & Roles: Service structures and delivery model/s are stable, fit for purpose and future requirements;
Priority 4. Skills & Capabilities: Current and future skills gaps and capabilities are addressed**.**

4.2 **Key Achievements**

4.2.1 Key achievements over 2022/23 for workforce planning within the context of the People First Strategy are outlined in the sections below.

4.3 **Workforce Planning Strategy & Framework**

4.3.1 During 2022/23, efforts were concentrated around reviewing and implementing the revised Council's Workforce Planning Framework with the creation of the Workforce Planning Strategy and Framework 2022 -2027. The revised Framework and Strategy is based on existing good practice and best practice guides ensuring links to Council Strategies and to the People First Strategy and Employee Life Cycle.

4.3.2 The Council wide plan previously assigned a number of actions to all Service areas. As the Council entered the new 5 year strategic planning phase, this year saw Services scoping the actions from the Council wide plan relevant to their service areas, which required particular strategic focus to directly meet the needs of their Service and delivery plans.

4.3.3 The planning for 2023/24 further defines these actions to provide focus on the needs of the service and ensure key elements of the People First Strategy are reflected and incorporated into service plans with People and Change working closely with management teams to implement and progress. Development of information feeding channels to ensure the above and that Service level

outcomes in turn influence People First activity to meet service requirements continues.

4.3.4   Embedding the new Strategy and Framework across the Council has been undertaken with the development of Chief Officer Information packs at key stages and discussions taking place in management meetings to support workforce planning activity and reporting requirements at Service level. Further support mechanisms are in progress including the development of a manager Toolkit to support the implementation of the Framework and Strategy. It is expected this will be continually developed with additional tools and guidance over the 5 year planning period to support manager needs

4.4   Priority 1. Our People (Workforce Profile): Ensure resilience and engagement of the workforce

Equalities

4.4.1   This year has seen the revision of the Council's equality action plan bringing the priorities in line with the People First Strategy and employee life cycle with years 1 and 2 concentrating on recruitment and on-boarding and methods to increase the diversity of our workforce.

4.4.2   Recognising the importance of diversity and inclusion, and of a workforce which is reflective of our communities, focus has been given to actions to support this. It was previously recognised that the Black, Asian and Minority ethnic profile is an area of focus for the Council's equality outcome to 'attract more diverse talent'.

4.4.3   In order to further understand the makeup of our workforce another data verification exercise was undertaken encouraging employees to provide their equality information to enable more accurate analysis of the workforce profile. This was provided in both paper format and electronically. It is expected the outcomes will support and inform the development of policy, future actions and supports to remove any barriers to employment. This exercise is expected to continue at key points in the future.

4.4.4   Progress has also been made around a Respect at Work Policy and supporting Toolkits for both managers and employees and this will feed into the forthcoming Resolution Framework.

4.4.5   Focus has been given this year to progressing the Equally Safe at Work (ESAW) programme, an innovative employer accreditation programme to address sex inequality and violence against women and girls aiming to support employers in reviewing workplace culture and ensuring that policies and practices are enhanced to address the barriers that women face at work. The 'Development' stage commenced in 2022 with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council making pledges of support, a cross service working group being established with Councillor representation for achievement of the criteria, an employee survey launched to gauge current levels of

understanding and a focus group undertaken in relation to experiences. The developmental stage will continue into 2023/24.

4.4.6   The Council has held the Armed Forces Gold Award for actions in support of Armed Forces, reservists and their family members since 2019. A report was submitted to Council in October 2022 following an exercise to collate and review the activity which services are undertaking in support of the award with a view to consider improvements. These actions to further support this community are being considered within our People First Strategy and equalities work.

4.4.7   At its meeting held on 22nd December 2022, Council considered a report on an Equality Review of the Council's Terms and Conditions. This report identified equality concerns around overtime, contractual overtime, public holiday entitlement, shift allowance, incremental progression and the provision of group life. It was agreed that the Chief Officer, People & Technology would consult with trade union colleagues on the range of proposals to address the inequalities and the outcome will be presented to a future Council Committee.

Wellbeing

4.4.8   With a revised approach to supporting employee wellbeing implemented in 2019/20, the focus through 2020 - 2022 had been to consolidate the key changes made to the infrastructure of the Employee Wellbeing Group and the associated communication channels thereby realising the benefits brought by these changes. With the infrastructure embedded, work was undertaken throughout 2022/23 to use data in order to identify areas for improvement. As well as key statistics provided through absence information, this included qualitative data from focus groups and feedback received through our communication channels.

4.4.9   A number of improvements were made to the way in which we collate information on work related stress such as capturing the number of people who report work related stress whilst still at work and the type of stressors under Health and Safety Executive standards. This has enhanced understanding of the improvements that need to be made to the forms used by employees as well as identifying improvements that can be made to the way in which we support people experiencing stress, particularly personal stress given this is consistently one of the top 3 reasons for sickness absence Council wide.

Employee Engagement

4.4.10 Research has shown where a workforce is highly engaged it tends to be more productive, with reduced absence and employee turnover. Through the 'People First' Strategy, the Council has committed to developing and improving employee engagement by building on existing good practice. The Council already has a number of initiatives to support employee engagement including Trickle, 1-2-1 (Be the Best) conversations to support

workforce development, recognising success and value through employee recognition awards and the traditional biennial employee survey, which has now been replaced by Trickle.

4.4.11 The Council's main tool for employee engagement is a digital platform called Trickle, available via the website or App which enables inclusivity as it is accessible to the whole workforce, including front line employees and those working from home. Trickle was initially rolled out to a small group of services in 2020 with Council wide roll out completed in 2022. This has enabled the workforce, including front line employees, to raise issues and access information via the App on their phone. This was fundamental in supporting the workforce through the pandemic by having a platform to directly communicate with the workforce and providing the opportunity for employees to ask questions or raise concerns digitally. Recognising the benefits of this employee engagement tool, our aim is to improve the level of engagement with Trickle across existing and new users. To support this aim, a re-launch took place from September 2022 and this has shown an increase in the number of users experiencing trickle from 1316 to 1827.

4.4.12 Demonstrating that the Council values employees and celebrates success is an essential component of employee engagement. There are many activities currently underway to support this, including our Recognition Awards, use of the intranet, MS Teams praise functionality and Trickle fist bump function. As part of this engagement programme of work, we will seek to maximise these opportunities to embed the 'People First' ethos.

Work Styles/Flexibility

4.4.13 Following the pandemic which saw a number of roles shift to remote working, over 2022/23 support has been provided to return employees back to an office environment whilst still allowing the flexibility of remote working. Maximising use of our IT and digital systems has allowed for a hybrid approach to undertaking work and meetings to suit both individuals and the needs of the service.

4.4.14 Monitoring the changing working environments continues as employees are supported to work from various locations, more flexibly whilst balancing their work and personal commitments. This is considered essential not only in supporting employee's wellbeing but also key to improved productivity and recruitment and retention. This year has seen assessment of Council offices being undertaken with a survey of Church Street in 2022, which included availability of space due to remote/hybrid working arrangements with outcomes informing plans and changes for the consolidation of offices and facilitating future savings in relation to office rationalisation. Availability of space due to remote working will also allow various teams across the council to locate in the same building facilitating cross-functional working and easier access to relevant supports.

Policy

4.4.15 Progress has been made around the Council's employee policy base with the updating of policies and terms and conditions to incorporate the pay settlement agreement and additional days leave as well as the introduction of new policy. A Pregnancy Loss Scheme was introduced in February 2023 supporting all employees of the Council by providing guidance and a compassionate responses to those who experience pregnancy complementing employee wellbeing and our people First Strategy.

4.4.16 A Respect at Work Policy was completed with further work providing supporting toolkits required before roll out which is expected in the coming year. This will support our equality agenda. Scoping has also commenced in relation to the introduction of a Resolution Framework which will simplify the policy base for employees and managers who raise concerns with a focus on early intervention, informal (where appropriate) and effective resolution of concerns.

4.4.17 Progress has also been made around a Violence against Women Policy in support of the Equally Safe at Work developmental stage programme and is expected in the summer 2023. In addition drafting has commenced around a flexible/hybrid working policy to reflect the current workstyles and culture of the Council. A review of the policy timetable for the revision and drafting of policies was commenced this year for undertaking in the coming months and years.

4.5 Priority 2. Recruitment & Retention: Current and predicted future workforce gaps are addressed and core skill sets retained

Year 1 People First – Employee Life Cycle - Recruitment

4.5.1 The People First Strategy in relation to the employee life cycle commenced with a focus this year on recruitment with the intention being to create a positive inspiring, informative and seamless journey from application to appointment, attract the right candidates, aid retention and in turn support the workforce planning and equalities agendas. A full review of the recruitment processes and systems was undertaken including in-depth processes mapping, collation and analysis of relevant data sources and user feedback including recruiting managers and employees recently joining Council leading to key findings being established.

4.5.2 The finding were collated into 'show and tell' sessions for the People and Change Teams leading to the development of a number of work streams incorporating process and policy review, talent management, job quality and workforce planning initiatives, equalities actions and engagement to bring about improvements to the recruitment process for services. These work streams have commenced and will be undertaken alongside the scoping and analysis relating to year 2 with a focus on on-boarding.

Job Evaluation

4.5.3. In the second half of the year, the job evaluation processes were paused to undertake a thorough review of the current Job Evaluation policy, procedure and practice for consistency and recommendations for improvement. This has been completed and has resulted in the review of Job Evaluation policy and procedure which will be out for consultation shortly. The proposed changes are in line with the agreed Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees Job Evaluation Scheme and Practice Manual 3rd Edition.

4.5.4 Further work has also commenced to ensure all data relating to job evaluation is robust and fit for purpose. This essential work will lead to improved job design and compliance with the Strategic Operating Model (SOM) and provide structured governance moving forward to any proposed changes in line with the Workforce Plan.

4.6 Priority 3. Structure & Roles: Service structures and delivery model/s are stable, fit for purpose and future requirements

Budget Savings

4.6.1 Following the announcement of the budget savings to be made in December 2022 and March 2023, priority was directed to supporting services across the Council to make the relevant savings. Services have been reviewing and explore opportunities to deliver services differently and more effectively whilst making the required savings. Focus for workforce planning in these areas therefore shifted to current structures and functions making longer-term workforce planning difficult at this time due to uncertainty around future resources.

4.6.2 This has seen intensive work across various areas including the undertaking of our Organisational Change Policy and Service design processes, review of supporting documents and employee engagement information to support the varying and often complex circumstances within different services areas. The People and Change Team have focused on the streamlining and automation of various processes ensuring where required a council wide view is taken. This has included streamlining the Council's Switch processes to ensure transparency and effectiveness of matching people to roles in preparation of increased numbers requiring support.

4.6.3 The use of data and automation of processes has been developed to effectively support with the Voluntary Severance and Voluntary Early Retirement programme required to deliver savings options for efficient and effective decision making. This in turn also led has led to the development of processes and data requirements for employee pensions establishing systems and data channels between the Council and Strathclyde Pension Fund.

4.6.4 As affected services prepared to enter the formal consultation period, the effective use of our workforce console and data has been imperative to inform and fully understand the implications of proposals for service delivery and the workforce and ensure accurate notification of the potential impacts. Focus has also been on developing employee engagement supports at this time with promotion of our current support mechanisms and the introduction of PACE (Partnerships Action for Continuing Employment) support, the Scottish Government's initiative dedicated to helping people with advice and support when faced with the possibility of redundancy.

Fit for Future (FfF) Service reviews

4.6.5 To date, 7 reviews have been completed to date:
- FfF1 – Waste Services
- FfF2 – Working 4 U
- FfF3 – Repairs Contact Centre
- FfF4 – Procurement
- FfF5 – Building Standards
- FfF6 – Housing Voids & Allocations
- FfF7 – Facilities Management & Catering.

Information & Data

4.6.6 Service level workforce Plans are embedded within Service Delivery plans and therefore work has concentrated on the development of the workforce planning portal within the Council's performance management system 'Pentana'. The development of dashboards has now provided accessibility for Chief Officers to oversee both service and Council activity, record and monitor actions and facilitate the reporting process. Review of this facility will continue to ensure maximum usage and improvements incorporated.

4.6.7 The workforce planning console continues to be the key source of workforce information for managers using real time data. It is recognised that further development of the Workforce Planning Console is required and work has commenced this year in relation to the scoping of possibilities and requirements around workforce projections, establishment/finance data, exit and equality data. Managers continue to be supported and encouraged to use the console to inform decisions.

4.6.8 An exercise has commenced to align data held with the Human Resource Management System and finance budget for the establishment within services to ensure alignment and clarity bring one set of data. This has also enabled review of structures against the Strategic Operating Model (SOM), anomalies to be rectified and will prompt recommendations for structure improvements. This in turn will support service review processes, the possibility of cross service working and bring improvements to the workforce planning console data analysis and reporting.

4.6.9   Data and analytics have played a key role in considering future resources and supports within the People & Change function with a review being undertaken of the workload and support the Human Resources Team provides informing recommendations to ensure effective resourcing for key Council projects and initiatives to facilitate our People First Strategy and cultural changes required.

4.6.10 Surveys, self-evaluation, service design and quality improvement exercises also continue to provide beneficial insight into areas for enhancement and have informed associated action plans. From the workforce planning update in Appendix 1 examples can be found of services using the digital platforms such as trickle surveys and communication strategies to inform their workforce planning activity. These insights were also used to inform the People First Strategy Year 1 Recruitment review and key findings will be used to inform future actions plans with examples being wellbeing, equality and the Equally Safe at Work Programme.

4.6.11 As part of Workforce Planning managers are reviewing service delivery structures and roles alongside digital solutions as part of change management and service re-design processes, project support and implementation, training and development opportunities and requirements and automation of process and forms.

4.7   Priority 4. Skills & Capabilities: Current and future skills gaps and capabilities are addressed**.**

Learning & Development

4.7.1   The evolution of learning and development programmes over the pandemic and looking into the future has radically altered our approach to delivery, as well as the demand for learning opportunities. We have seen an unprecedented increase in online learning, both from the number of design requests for new modules, as well as the actual usage of the Ilearn platform. Corporate programmes are now being offered as a blend of both virtual and face to face sessions, as is most relevant to aims of the programme and the needs of the delegates.

4.7.2   This year the ACHIEVE Framework relaunched with updated Values and behavioural expectations, alongside a new Leadership Framework with updated expectations for all leaders/managers. Work will continue in 2023/24 to further communicate and embed this framework ensuring the consistent application. A new Development Framework has also been introduced, outlining the many opportunities for all employees at all career stages.

Digital Skills

4.7.3   Digital Skills development remains a priority for the council. The new Digital Skills Support Framework, which launched in April is designed to ensure that all employees across all services have access to someone who can support

them in their digital skills with the introduction of digital champions. There are a variety of different support resources available including courses through West College Scotland, online learning modules and dedicated intranet pages.

4.8   The current workforce profile

4.8.1   The workforce profile as at 31/3/23 is attached in Appendix 2, with comparisons made against the previous year and commentary on trends. The main observations are detailed below:

4.8.2   When compared to the same period last year, there has been a headcount reduction of 43 across the council. This change is mainly accounted for by a further reduction in fixed term contracts and a small number of permanent contracts however, there was an increase of 8 apprenticeships this year from the previous year and it has been noted the casual/supply pool headcount has increased also. Reviewing the comparison data the overall workforce has steadily declined with the bulk of the reductions in Roads and Neighbourhood, Citizen, Culture and Facilities and Education Services, the removal of the Vaccination centres from the People & Technology establishment also impacted with these being return to Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) until the summer 2023.

4.8.3   Whilst the percentage reductions have been across permanent and fixed term contracts the percentage of permanent contracts has increased slightly from by 0.51% to 90.69% with the same reflected in the reduction of temporary contracts. In addition the percentage of apprenticeships has increased marginally indicating workforce planning and development of future key talent pools continues, which is a positive development, providing security and stability in times of uncertainty. This is however likely to change in the future as monitoring of the workforce is indicating further reductions in headcount of both permanent and temporary contracts.

4.8.4   The percentage split of permanent and temporary contracts has remained largely unchanged with the same reflected in the overall sex profile with a static overall split of 26.2% male and 73.4.% female.

4.8.5   Turnover has remain static at 13.2% from last year to this with the main turnover being in Citizen, Culture and facilities, Education and Community Health Care. Turnover has significantly increased from previous years and - although the pandemic and turnover in vaccination centres contributed has contributed to this future budget savings are also expected to impact.

4.8.6   This year has seen a reduction in the sickness absence figure from 14.55 full time equivalent work days lost per employee to 14.00. Although the same reasons of minor illness, personal stress and acute medical conditions remain the highest with front line employees having the highest levels of sickness it is thought the effects of the Pandemic are still being felt.,Employee wellbeing

and engagement supports will continue to be developed and deployed for future positive impacts.

4.8.7 This year the data showed that there is a further increase in the percentage of employees working past the age of 65 (4.3% to 5.2%) showing a continued trend of stead increase over the last 4 years, supporting the national profile of employees choosing to work longer for various reasons.

4.9 Workforce Planning Actions for 2023/24

4.9.1 Key areas for progression and continued development are outlined in the sections below. It is noted however that many of these areas are interdependent contributing to the People First Strategy as a whole.

4.10 Priority 1. Our People (Workforce Profile): Ensure resilience and engagement of the workforce

Equalities

4.10.1 With the Equalities Plan being re-aligned to the People First Strategy, work will continue to focus on inclusion and diversity within the Council and in particular the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) profile which has been identified as an area of focus. To ensure there are no barriers to entering employment for BAME and other groups as set out in the Equalities Mainstreaming report, this year will see a recruitment audit being undertaken, focus on advertising, application and assessment, use of data for monitoring and insights and an Equal Pay Audit.

4.10.2 The verification exercise to further understand the composition of the workforce undertaken in 2022/23 will be used as a basis to inform future action this year. It is anticipated that an extension of this exercise will be undertaken to encourage further reporting to better understand the makeup of our workforce, increasing equalities information to inform Workforce Planning and policy development.

4.10.3 Focus will be given to the rolling out of the Respect at Work Policy in relation to Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination and Victimisation and the development of a Resolution Framework for early intervention and effective resolution of employee and manager concerns. Further developments around equality based policy are being consider around neurodiversity and gender transition.

4.10.4 The Equalities agenda will focus on the Equally Safe at Work (ESAW) programme to complete the developmental level by July 2023. Focus will be on the drafting and implementation of a Violence Against Women policy and planned training in relation to applying a gender based lenses for the working group. Other criteria are also being progressed in relation to analysis of data around the gender pay gap and a final survey to assess cultural change around this programme and preparing from the Bronze level.

4.10.5 The Council's re-submission to re-validate the Armed Forces Gold Award will be due in March 2024 therefore work will progress this year in relation to the supports and actions currently in place as well as considering further supports in line with our People First Strategy and equalities work including encouraging the recruitment and retention of Armed Forces Reservists and their family members.

Wellbeing

4.10.6 Now integrated into the organisational priorities, the Employee Wellbeing Strategy continues to focus on priority areas, responding to the needs of the organisation. There will be regular progress reports to PMRG and JCF including monitoring the impact of the resulting actions. A focus on supporting employee financial wellbeing will continue into 2023/24 as well as implementing the remaining actions from the review of the stress management framework.

4.10.7 To support this work and continuing into 2023/24, the number of mental health first aiders is being increased throughout the Council as well as new digital tools being explored to make the reporting and recording of stressors a more user friendly process. Additionally, there will be continued focus on financial wellbeing with the Wellbeing Roundups, further promotion of Salary Finance and the implementation of a new employee benefits platform that will also see employees having increased access to services that support their financial wellbeing.

Employee Engagement

4.10.8 As the Council is facing significant financial challenges it is crucial that we continue to support employee engagement and ensure all employees have a platform where their voices can be heard and that they are fully aware of where supports can be accessed and in times of change feel supported and valued. Therefore continued support of employees in a virtual environment using MS Teams, trickle, webinars, on line training, surveys, employee forums and support to ensure that employees feel engaged, supported and valued will continue. Peer support groups/communities have been developed to allow for collaboration and networking e.g. wellbeing advocates and MS Teams ambassadors. Considerations are also being given to equalities networks and peer support group requirements.

4.10.9 The established communication frameworks for national and local messages to be shared will remain and there will be an increased focus on further embedding the one-to-one/Be The Best Conversations in areas where we have feedback that these could be improved.

4.10.10 To compliment this and to provide further insight into levels of employee engagement, additional data sources will also be considered, in particular information from Exit Surveys to inform an action plan for improvement.

This further supports the Council's commitment to the principles of the Fairwork Convention, in particular ensuring that employees have a voice

Work Styles/Flexibility

4.10.11 The organisational culture and environment continues to evolve in relation to moving to offices of the future and focus will continue around wellbeing, working from home, employee engagement and promotion of flexible working styles to ensure this continues to be successful during times of innovation and change. As a forward thinking, innovative and creative council, we will continue to promote agile working where possible and support employees and managers across all services to embrace and embed the various flexible working options. More office based employees are now working remotely and all employees have the opportunity for more flexible styles of working with some employees choosing to return to the office more often. Future policy development will support this, in particular the flexible/hybrid working policy and policy reviews will be reflective of the new working styles. It is anticipated that flexibility of working styles will also support our agenda for diversity and inclusion as flexibility will open up a wider pool of potential talent.

Policy

4.10.12 A number of policy development have been outlined within the various sections of this report. In addition to these efforts will concentrate on the supporting of the budget saving processes and subsequent service review process with the development of an organisational change policy framework which will see all the relevant policy base and supporting information under one policy framework.

4.10.13 Following on from the introduction of the Pregnancy Loss scheme focus will also be given to auditing and reviewing where required the surrounding family friendly policies to ensure these reflect the provisions of the Pregnancy Loss scheme.

4.11   Priority 2. Recruitment & Retention: Current and predicted future workforce gaps are addressed and core skill sets retained

Year 1 People First – Employee Life Cycle – Recruitment

4.11.1 Commenced Year 1 in 2022/23, the 5 year People First Plan will continue to focusing on key improvements of the Employee Life Cycle with spotlights on the following:
- Year 1 – Recruitment
- Year 2 – On Boarding
- Year 3 – Development
- Year 4 – Retention
- Year 5 – Recognition

4.11.2 Whilst Year 1 plans are in action and will continue through 2023/24 around recruitment, running concurrently will be the scoping and analysis of data and processes around all aspect of 'Onboarding' for new employees entering the Council's employment.

4.11.3 The aim is to bring efficiencies around processes for smooth transition into our employment, improvements around positive first experiences of integrating a new employee into the organisation and demonstrating our positive culture whilst at the same time incorporating the aspects of the Fair Work Convention to ensure we are an employer of choice. Focus will be around automation of systems and processes and close collaboration will be required with our IT service for capabilities in this area. This will be paired with development work, embedding and continuing to improve the exit interview process providing insights into the environment within services. Trends and feedback from this work will identify and inform future actions.

Workforce Planning and Job Evaluation

4.11.4 Focus will continue around workforce planning to facilitate the achievement of the People First Strategy. Efforts will be concentrated on supporting the internal recruitment market, particularly to assist the budget savings, supporting and developing employees into new roles and making better use of succession planning.

4.11.5 Workforce planning will continue to ensure Skills and recruitment gaps are forecast and identified timely and service plans reflect how these gaps can be filled. Work will concentrate on the review of job quality, role profiles and recruitment practices following the scoping of year 1 improvements through the various work streams identified. This will encompass review of key talent pools and hard to recruit posts at Service level for targeted initiatives for recruitment and retention. Consideration will also be given to promoting careers within the Council for future workforce requirements.

4.11.6 Following the implementation of The Workforce Planning Strategy and further efforts will be made around embedding the strategy and developing tools and supports to ensure its effectiveness. A Workforce planning toolkit is under development and is expected to be rolled out this year and development of training and awareness of workforce planning processes, including better data usage being developed for managers. Development of the Workforce Planning Console will feature within this.

4.12 Priority 3. Structure & Roles: Service structures and delivery model/s are stable, fit for purpose and future requirements

Budget Savings

4.12.1 Priority will be given to supporting services over 2023/24 and beyond to implement the required budget savings, review structure and service delivery

requirements and methods in line with our Organisational Change processes. Focus will be given to a supporting employee's wellbeing and engagement during this time.

Fit for Future (FfF) Service reviews and Information and Data

4.12.2 The approach to Fit for Future is itself under review and the programme will continue across services supporting and promoting better use of data, improved decision making and better people practices, fully utilising existing systems and technologies to improve service delivery and improving services for our citizens. Priority is currently being given to the implementation of Office 365 within Services.

4.12.3 The further rollout of O365 continues with users moving over to a cloud platform. The introduction of MS365 will bring many opportunities and access to tools that services will require support with to ensure they can maximise benefits from the available applications. A Centre of Excellence will be set up to ensure safe and good practice and ensure the maximisation of this exciting and innovative tool.

4.12.4 Service managers are reviewing workforce plans, structures and digital solutions to support service delivery and these are supported by the People & Change team in a number of ways such as change management, project support, training, automated forms, service design, employment advice and recruitment.

4.12.5 Continuous improvement initiatives, such as Lean/Six Sigma, service design, coaching and mentoring and leadership development will continue through the year ahead as core organisational deliverables. 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, this is will be particularly relevant due to the budget savings options as services will be reviewing how they deliver, resources available and facilitating the effective redeployment of employees. Service Workforce Planning will be critical in supporting these considerations.

4.13   Priority 4. Skills & Capabilities: Current and future skills gaps and capabilities are addressed**.**

Learning and Development and Digital Skills

4.13.1 The focus on digital literacy and skills will continue with Excel and Outlook courses provided by West College Scotland continuing funded through the apprenticeship levy and Flexible Workforce Development Fund for ongoing support of improved data usage, understanding and promoting new and efficient ways of working. Focus will also be around the Digital Skills Support Framework ensuring every employee has access to digital skills support and information.

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 additional financial or procurement implications associated with this report. There are funding streams associated with the initiatives mentioned in this report but these are already secured.

7.   Risk Analysis

7.1   A robust approach to workforce planning ensures that the Council identifies current and future needs and identifies potential risks to the council at an early stage. This proactive approach allows strategies and policies to be developed that ensure the continued delivery of best value services.

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 as it is progressed.

9.   Consultation

9.1   The Strategic Leadership Group have been involved in the development of the plan through preparation of the Delivery Plans and this report and associated appendices have been provided to the relevant trade unions on 3rd May 2023.

10.   Strategic Assessment

10.1   The contents of this report and the workforce planning process supports the Council's aim to make the best use of both financial and human resources resulting in a positive impact upon service provision.

Victoria Rogers
Chief Officer - People & Technology
Date: 3rd May 2023

Person to Contact: Lisa MacGregor, People and Change Partner
16 Church Street, Dumbarton
Tel: 07949800801
Email: Lisa.MacGregor@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Council Workforce Plan Progress update 2022/23
Appendix 2 – Workforce Profile and Monitoring 31st March 2023

Background Papers: Council Workforce Plan 2017-2022: Update & Annual Action Plan 2021/22
Strategic Lead Area Workforce Plans (as part of Service Delivery Plans) 2022-2027
The Workforce Planning Strategy and Framework 2022 – 2027

Wards Affected: None