2023-24
DELIVERY PLAN
People and Technology

West
Dunbartonshire
COUNCIL

Contents

1. Introduction

People and Technology comprise a wide range of services covering Strategic HR, Organisational Development & Change and Digital, ICT, Transactional Services (HR advice, pensions and pay), Health, Safety and Risk and Organisational Resilience. It is one of 8 strategic areas responsible for delivering the Council's Strategic Plan. Key actions to help achieve that are set out in this Delivery Plan, together with actions to address any performance issues and service priorities identified in the planning process.

The progress of this Plan will be monitored and managed by the management team and reported to Corporate Services Committee twice yearly, at mid-year and year-end.

2. Performance Review

The management team completed a detailed review of 2022/23 performance, focusing on the following:
- 2022/23 Delivery Plan year-end progress;
- Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) comparative data;
- Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) comparative data;
- Continuous Improvement (Fit for Future reviews);
- ICT Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey;
- National Digital Office programmes;
- Cabinet Office and Scottish Government Security compliance and guidance; and
- Other benchmarking/feedback etc.

This review highlighted our key achievements in 2022/23 as well as the challenges to be addressed in 2023/24. These are summarised below.

Key Achievements 2022/23

Transactional Support

- Continued to develop enhancements to the Workforce Management System (WMS) solution facilitating increased functionality to simplify data gathering and reporting for users. This included a range of upgrades to the system minimising downtime for users.
- Implemented electronic timesheets submission council-wide saving time both in transactional teams and service teams.
- Completed payroll audit on time and processed multiple, multi-year pay awards and migrated employees on 2-weekly to 4-weekly and monthly pay-runs.
- The team has also been successful in developing automations within key process areas which will continue into 2023/24.

ICT
- Microsoft 365 project – first and second-phase mailboxes migrated to 365 cloud platform and council email now available on any device from anywhere for migrated users.
- Delivered ICT Security training course materials and Cyber Security Awareness sessions for Senior Management Teams and delivered phishing exercises across the organisation; upskilled ICT employees with industry-standard training in infrastructure, desktop and cyber security fields.
- Replaced 1400 PCs & laptops in schools, early years establishments and Libraries; replaced 1200 Chromebooks in schools and now host 12,000 Chromebooks on our Education network and upgraded creative technology software in all high schools; upgraded 4800 PC's & laptops across Corporate and Education estate to ensure they are fully patched and secure with latest operating systems.
- Achieved satisfaction level of 74 % of employees either extremely satisfied or satisfied with ICT service which, given the scale of the transformation work, is positive.
- Delivered Network infrastructure Improvements:
    o Council Wi-Fi replacement project underway to upgrade Wi-Fi access at 76 council locations;
    o Upgraded Storage Area network;
    o Implemented SIP trunking telephony to host telephone lines and calls in the cloud;
    o Replaced ageing server, switch and firewall hardware; and
    o Implemented Network Traffic analysis solution to diagnose and identify causes of high bandwidth usage.
- Implemented a secure remote-control solution to remotely resolve issues with PCs, laptops and mobile phones and implemented a solution to manage and apply critical security updates to off-network laptop devices.
- Assisted in the delivery of service area transformation projects:
    o New Renton Campus;
    o Migration of Criminal Justice LC/CMI system to cloud;
    o Improvements to Citizen PC access in all libraries; and

o Upgrade of Creative Curriculum software for high schools.

People and Change
- Implemented a range of key People and Change Frameworks including; the People Frameworks and updated learning pathways; Digital Skills Support Framework launched encouraging digital champions to promote digital learning across the organisation; People First review completed with the implementation of recruitment improvements underway;
- Work Force Planning Strategy & Framework reviewed for 2022-2027, in place and aligned to strategic service planning processes and the People First Strategy;
- Completed the implementation of the full suite of leadership development programmes, including the launch of Quantum (senior management development) programme and the delivery of all Management programmes offered both virtual or in person;
- Undertook and received a positive Digital Maturity review by Scottish Digital Office for Local Government & Data Maturity review by Scottish Government;
- Supporting continuous improvement, the People and Change Team completed seven Fit for Future service reviews with key recommendations making good progress and supporting budget-saving options;
- Implemented a range of Health & Safety improvements and business support including the development of a quarterly newsletter shared with all employees and alerting them to relevant H&S information; assisting Council Services in the creation and facilitation of quarterly H&S committee meetings and implemented a schedule for the management and inspection of Scaffolds and inspection of all Building Services construction sites across WDC; and
- H&S team reviewed the Strategic Risks aligning them to the 2022-27 Strategic Plan.

Business Resilience
- Delivery of HSCP Incident Officer Training; Category 1 Agencies, under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Scotland) Regulations 2005, each have their own Incident Management Systems for responding to and managing Major Incidents and/or Serious Emergencies. Integrated Joint Boards (IJBs) are now designated as Category 1 Agencies. This means if an incident occurs that requires a coordinated response from the Council or indeed HSCP trained incident officers can be deployed to support the response. Supporting the Health and Social Care Partnership as Category 1 responders to ensure plans are updated and reviewed to meet Category 1 status as well as training key officers to respond to an on-scene incident.
- Delivery of Council Incident Officer Training; The CIO training regime implemented as a core component of the CCS' training and exercising programme is central to equipping suitably designated officers with the necessary range of knowledge and skills to perform the Council Incident Officer role in an incident.

- Delivery of Loggist Training; During an incident, a Loggist is required to keep a log of all decision-making/relevant information for an individual decision-maker representing the Council and/or HSCP.

Challenges

Resilience/ Capacity Challenges
- Across People and Technology, there were several challenges relating to increased demand for support from services, which is anticipated to be an ongoing pressure in future years. The workforce levels of the service has reduced in line with budget constraints which is putting pressure on services to meet competing demands. Over the last few years, we have encouraged services to become more self-reliant by introducing self-serve and developing automation of key processes to promote efficiency in time-consuming tasks, however, we have had limited buy-in from wider services areas and maintaining built automation with key employees leaving the team. Similarly, the take up of service champions to assist with key priorities, such as digital transformation, has been slow. In 2023/24 we will continue to promote automation and self-reliance.
- In ICT and Transactions Support there were challenges around the recruitment and retention of a skilled workforce. This led to some challenges in delivering fully on the ambitions of the digital transformation project. It also led to pressure on other areas of the team as individual employees temporarily filled gaps in key operational roles. In 2023/24 we will continue to explore opportunities to encourage and enable recruitment to these key services whilst exploring career development pathways to maximise the retention of these skills.
- The biggest challenge for the People and Change team was, and will continue to be, the exponential rate of change leading to increase demand for the service to support employees, support council-wide projects such as the roll-out of Microsoft 365, structure changes, changing roles and skillsets with limited resources and increasing workload. This is leading to a much more demanding role as competing priorities such as wellbeing, workforce capability building and project delivery are balanced with ensuring that ongoing financial savings and service delivery expectations are met.
- Maintaining a range of WMS developments with increased workload pressures and demands for areas such as HSCP, Facilities Management, Education and Housing.

Technological Challenges
- Another key challenge is the continued technical challenges with Frontier (WMS). These issues have prevented the WMS team from maximising system automation to deliver efficiencies, especially in payroll. The issues continue to be managed through discussions with the supplier at the national level. In 2023/24 we will continue to identify Robotics Process Automation (RPA) projects to address some of the legacy system issues.

- Hybrid Working Challenges
  - Managing and mitigating the increased risk of Cyber Security threats (on-premise/remote) including updating off-network windows devices to ensure they are secure. Raising user awareness, risk assessments and investigating new and replacement technologies have helped to manage this challenge.
  - Deploying new technologies and upgrading existing technologies when dependency is heightened e.g. upgrades and maintenance of remote access and citrix environments.
  - Increased demand for ICT support - supporting home working as well as using an appointment service to deliver cluster support model in corporate environments.
- Sourcing ICT hardware with supply chain issues.
- Managing storage growth and backups and encouraging service areas to carry out housekeeping tasks in line with their retention policies.
- Increased revenue costs as organisations /suppliers move from a capital-based license model to revenue funded or when transitioning to cloud-based services e.g. MS licencing and supplier hosting costs.
- Deploying and supporting Microsoft 365 whilst training staff in new technology.
- Processes underpinning iConnect – an online solution for submission of pension data to the pension office causing a large volume of additional workload for the small payroll team.

3. Strategic Assessment

The People and Technology management team completed a strategic assessment to determine the major influences on service delivery and priorities in 2023/24. These are summarised below.

Financial Challenges
The entire public sector is continuing to face significant financial challenges due to a range of factors including inflationary cost increases, rising utility costs and insufficient funding to support the delivery of front line and back office services. The Council are currently faced with an estimated cumulative funding gap in 2024/25 of £9.7m rising to £29.5m by 2027/28. We will continue to monitor the overall financial position of the Council and updates on estimated future budget gaps will be reported to Elected Members throughout 2023/24.

These challenges mean further action is required to balance our budget and protect services for residents. This will mean that within People and Technology, available funding will be reduced over time and we will need to reconfigure how we work, what we do, where we work, and potentially reduce the number of people employed. In this context, we will aim to continue to provide a sustainable, quality service to internal clients and the public.

Automation of Processes and Information Provision
Staff across the Council are employed in manual processes and information provision, such as processing invoices and updating transactional spreadsheets. In 2023/24, we will continue to pursue opportunities across the council to improve efficiency. Many such processes can be automated, providing benefits such as faster service delivery, improved quality and greater flexibility, as well as enabling employees to refocus on more complex and meaningful tasks rather than those that are repetitive and mundane.

Infrastructure and Technology
Technology plays an increasing role in everyday life to deliver transformational services in West Dunbartonshire. The Covid-19 crisis confirmed the foundational importance of digital technologies in all aspects of life. The service delivery model arising from the pandemic will require a review and potential redesign of the Council's IT infrastructure architecture. Managing remote/hybrid technical environments will involve redesign, investment in new and or replacement technologies as well as upskilling the ICT team. Some improvements have already been implemented and this will continue.

ICT will review the existing technologies, assess in-flight technology implementations (e.g. 365 implementation) to maximise the investments made, decommission where possible and streamline the range of technologies ICT need to support and users need to access. Over the coming year, we will undertake a pilot scheme to review MS SharePoint & One Drive implementation. A Citrix Storefront Replacement Project will review options to deliver business applications to council employees and improve the digital experience and will carry out a review of remote access technology to offer a streamlined smooth remote access facility. Alongside this, we will continue with the device replacement project focusing on Chromebooks, laptops and PC's and mobile phones.

To deliver a secure, reliable and futureproof wireless connection, over the coming year we will focus resources on replacing ageing wireless hardware in all council locations with new state-of-the-art Wi-Fi 6 technology as well as extending and upskilling the ICT security team to manage and reduce the risk of Cyber Threat.

To support continued and efficient service delivery, in 2023/24 we will carry out a review of the ICT Helpdesk System; this will improve employee's ability to log incidents from any device and anywhere and will include the implementation of a new Tech Support Desk at Church Street to provide immediate walk-up support facility to council employees thereby minimising any potential downtime and disruption to service delivery. We will also review how we manage helpdesk tickets and implementing automated workflows to ensure all incidents and requests are automatically assigned to the appropriate teams which will improve resolution times.

Digital technologies and innovation have become critical to support business delivery, however, an increased demand for IT, data science and technical skillsets is fast outstripping the nation's supply. West Dunbartonshire, like many other organisations globally and nationally, are experiencing a technology skills gap. To address the challenge of skills shortages and recruitment, in 2023/24 we will adopt a new approach to ICT recruitment and look towards developing a graduate partnership programme with West College Scotland; in addition to this we will promote ICT careers at Education Careers events and work in partnership with Working4U to update modern apprenticeships opportunities

Fit for Future Reviews (FfF)
In 2020, to support continuous improvement, the Council embarked on a programme of Fit for Future service reviews. Using a range of tools that encapsulates service design and employee engagement, information is gathered and reviewed to identify improvements and to ensure our services are efficient and that we make the best use of our resources. During 2023/24 we will further review the FfF programme and will place additional focus on savings opportunities. This will help service managers and teams see potential savings areas to assist with the budget deficit.

Improve step1 in the employee life cycle – 'Recruitment'
The recruitment life cycle begins when a need for a post is identified until the point where the preferred candidate is identified. An eight-week review of this step was completed in 2022/23 and improvements in this area will be implemented. The recruitment step will be streamlined, improved and modernised for recruiting managers and for those applying for jobs in WDC (internal or external).

Workforce Planning
The Workforce Planning Framework and Strategy for 2022 – 2027 has been reviewed and implemented ensuring processes are aligned to the Strategic Planning Process and reflects the key priorities of the People First Strategy. During 2023/24 focus will be on further embedding the framework by developing managers' knowledge and skills to enable effective workforce planning within the context of the challenges faced to support Service delivery plans and sustainable people resources to deliver.

Sustainable Employment and Organisational Design
Continuing to ensure employees skillset/development continues to grow and can be supported. If this is not prioritised, recruitment and retention difficulties may be exacerbated with attendance, well-being and workforce motivation impacted. Skills may not keep pace with new technology/tools/developments with WDC becoming poorly placed to capitalise/deliver on improvements

Continue to manage council risk and ensure sound Health & Safety practices are embedded. Poor H&S practice creates significant risk for the council both in terms of financial and reputational damage. Sound H&S practice supports employee engagement and collaboration with good workforce practices, without this commitment employee engagement, will suffer.

Transformation and Continuous Improvement

Digital Transformation
The People First Strategy is ensuring that we put people at the heart of our approach to digital transformation, this is supported by a more cohesive and holistic plan involving learning, engagement, wellbeing and workforce planning. This ambitious plan will ensure all aspects of the individual is considered as we progress with digital transformation from 2022-27.

To facilitate this, the service needs a joined-up approach to supporting digital transformation, growing employee skills and working with citizens to adapt and change how services are delivered. To do this structures require to be reviewed and resources (financial and workforce) need to be identified to ensure plans and processes are in place alongside the ability to constantly monitor progress on keeping pace with digital transformation and technology. To support this the Digital Transformation Board has been widened to allow a more holistic, one-council approach to be adopted. This has created a wider virtual digital team and ensured focus and resources to be employed and prioritised to ensure delivery of the council's strategic aims.

The speed of technological advancement has been rapidly increasing and will continue to do so. This will impact employees, citizens and services as the Council seeks to both capitalise and adapt to these. Additional support and upskilling has been evident with the rapid deployment of MS Teams and this will continue as the team support the rollout and maximisation of M365.

In 2023/24 we will continue to build good data practices/structures council-wide. Managing and maximising data usage and improving skills is key to ensuring employees and users understand benefits and threats. If this is not continued it increases the

potential for both reputational and financial risks. It will also impact decisions and understanding on progressing improvement activity and planning for the same.

We will also continue to support development of the WMS to aid wider process and digital transformation and continue to develop automations within transactional processes through collaborative practice, service design and maximising digital practice, through the reviewed Fit for Future programme. Technology is developing quickly and WDC needs to ensure that they keep pace in order to capitalise on the benefits this brings to service improvement, costs and delivery. This must be looked at collaboratively with users and employees to ensure understanding, best practice and skills required.

Service and Community Resilience
The Civil Contingencies Officer has continued to support West Dunbartonshire's resilience planning, and response arrangements this includes an update of service Business Continuity (BC) plans, this process is typically reviewed on an annual basis however if there are any service changes then the plan is reviewed to ensure it remains up to date. The service BC plans essentially feeds into the Strategic Business Continuity plan to provide reassurances to Chief Executive and Chief Officers that essential services have been considered and adequate risk measures are put in place to minimise disruption. To complement WDCs Business Continuity plans, the Civil Contingencies Officer has set up a Short Life Working Group to do a 'deep dive' into Power Resilience due to the complexities surrounding this risk. The group utilises the Operational Resilience Group structure, the purpose of the group is to provide confidence to the Chief Officers that service managers have considered this risk, and raised awareness across their service, especially with employees. The group seeks to determine what realistically can continue to be delivered and the ways in which services will manage this when there is a complete blackout.

CCS will actively participate in this year's Experiential Learning (on hold during the pandemic). This event provides an opportunity to meet with every pupil in an age group (typically Primary 7) across the area as part of a multi-agency event, emphasising key advice for our young persons. Currently, the CCS provides messaging on preparing a "Grab Bag" as a key preparedness measure for emergencies affecting the house.

Budget Sensitivity Analysis
Budget Sensitivity Analysis In reviewing the service budget projections, consideration has been given to sensitivity of these budgets, in particular for higher risk/ higher value budgets which may have a significant impact on budgetary control and future budget projections. The analysis has considered sensitivity around demand, costs and charges, and income levels.

Within this service, some budgets have been identified as being more susceptible to fluctuations however the UK's exit from the European Union may impact on the supply costs for goods and services such as IT equipment and associated license and maintenance costs.

Action Plan

The challenges identified in Section 2 and the key factors identified in Section 3 have informed People and Technology priorities for 2023/24. Appendix 1 sets out the action plan to address them, including the relevant risks and the performance indicators and targets that will enable progress to be monitored and reported to stakeholders. It also incorporates the Strategic workforce actions.

The Council has identified risks at both a strategic and service level. Strategic risks represent the potential for the Council to take advantage of opportunities or fail to meet stated strategic objectives and those that require strategic leadership. Service risks relate to service delivery and represent the potential for impact on individual services, or the experience of those who work within the services, i.e. employees, partners, contractors and volunteers or service users and clients in receipt of the services provided.

In planning for 2023/24, the People and Technology team considered the Council's strategic risks and identified risks specific to the service. These are set out in the action plan at Appendix 1 alongside actions to mitigate these, with the aim of improving or maintaining the current position (i.e. the current risk score).

4. Resources

Finance

People and Technology has a net revenue budget of £7.428m and a capital budget of £2.685m in 2023/24. A breakdown by section is set out below. We will make the best use of the resources available to deliver on key priority areas and secure external/match funding where this is possible.

Section Budget (Figures subject to ongoing verification)	Gross Expenditure 2023/24 (£m)	Gross Income 2023/24 (£m)	Net Expenditure 2023/24 (£m)	Capital Budget 2023/24 (£m)
Transactional (part of Business Support)	0.915m	-0.079m	0.836m	0.000m
People & Change (HR, H&S, Risk, Change, OD & Digital)	2.092m	-0.050m	2.042m	0.046m
ICT	5.049m	-0.499m	4.550m	2.639m
Total	**8.056m**	**-0.628m**	**7.428m**	**2.685m**

Employees

Employee Numbers

The headcount and full time equivalent employees in each section (as of 31st March 2023) are as follows:

Service Area	Headcount	FTE
Transactional (part of Business Support)	24	21.9
People & Change (HR, H&S, Risk, Change, OD & Digital)	31	31.11
ICT	55	50.19
TOTAL	110	102.59

Absence in 2022/23

The quarterly absence statistics for People and Technology are shown below together with the Council average for the same periods for comparison. The figures for People and Technology have been lower that the Council average throughout 2022/23.

Absence in 2022/23	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Annual FTE days lost per FTE employee
P&T Service	1.19	1.41	1.25	1.8	4.23

COUNCIL WIDE TOTAL	3.86	3.28	4.42	4.02	14.00

Appendix 1: Action Plan

P	4. Our Council

Ob	Objective 10. Our workforce is resilient and skilled where digital technology supports service delivery for our residents

Performance Indicator	2023/24 Target	Owner
Percentage of ICT helpdesk incidents fixed with half day of being logged.	60%	James Gallacher
% of our workforce who have declared a disability	2.2%	Alison McBride
% of our workforce who have stated they are LGBT	2.5%	Alison McBride
% of our workforce who are from a Black minority ethnic group	1%	Alison McBride
Disability pay gap	10%	Alison McBride
The percentage of the highest paid 5% employees who are women	50%	Alison McBride
Gender pay gap	3%	Alison McBride
Percentage of Council employees who agree or strongly agree that in general, they feel valued in their role at WDC	75%	Alison McBride
% employee attendance improvement rate (teachers & local govt.)	1%	Alison McBride

Action	Due Date	Owner
Secure the Council's Technology Infrastructure	31 Mar 2024	James Gallacher

Action	Due Date	Owner
Complete ICT Wi-Fi replacement programme	31 Mar 2024	James Gallacher
Review and implement ICT on site Tech Desk service	31 Mar 2024	James Gallacher
Develop and establish Skills programme to address ICT skills shortage	31 Mar 2024	James Gallacher
Coordinate ICT device replacement programme	31 Mar 2024	James Gallacher
Pursue automation opportunities across the council to improve efficiency	31 Mar 2024	Arun Menon
Continue to drive service and community resilience to enhance overall resilience organisationally and in our communities	31 Mar 2024	Jen Watt
Develop and implement wellbeing, employee engagement, equality and learning and development plans to enable capabilities, improve resilience and promotion of a diverse workforce	31 Mar 2024	All Managers
Develop and implement employee life cycle plans in line with the People First Strategy to attract and retain the workforce	31 Mar 2024	All Managers
Develop and implement learning and development opportunities to improve capabilities and resilience within the workforce.	31 Mar 2024	All Managers
Implement service review process including role design, use of new technology and new ways of working to add resilience, address gaps, and establish opportunities for efficiencies	31 Mar 2024	All Managers

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Workforce Management System not fit for purpose	There is a risk that the WMS system is not fit-for-purpose thereby requiring manual workarounds restricting the level of automation impacting on efficiencies			Arun Menon

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Challenges in protecting the Health and Safety of Employees and Others	Failure to meet the Council's duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees and other people who might be affected by its business			Alison McBride
Complexities in ensuring an appropriately resourced and resilient workforce	Failure to ensure that there is an appropriately resourced and resilient workforce in place to meet future organisational needs, in effectively executing the Council's 2022-27 Strategic Plan.			Alison McBride
Threat of Cyber-attack	Data, systems and/or infrastructure are impacted as result of security attacks which are increasing in number at a time when this threat is already placing demands on resources to deliver increased levels of security controls.			James Gallacher
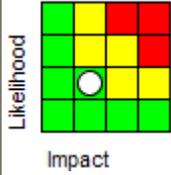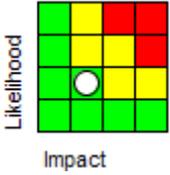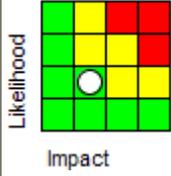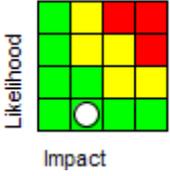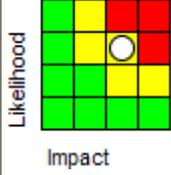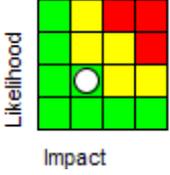
Ob	Objective 11. Our Council is adaptable and focused on delivering best value for our residents

Action	Due Date	Owner
Implement statutory Payroll changes	31 May 2023	Arun Menon
Undertake annual Payroll Audit	31 Dec 2023	Arun Menon
Review and update FfF approach to improve budget efficiencies	31 Mar 2024	Alison McBride
Maintain and monitor employee wellbeing, engagement and workforce planning.	31 Mar 2024	Alison McBride

Action	Due Date	Owner
Continue to embed sound H&S practice	31 Mar 2024	Alison McBride
Implement improvements in recruitment life cycle processes	31 Mar 2024	Alison McBride

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Keeping abreast of developments in the innovative use of Information Technologies	Failure to keep pace with changing technology environment			James Gallacher