



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

23rd JANUARY 2023

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY AND COUNCIL WORKFORCE PLAN 2023-28

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNCILLOR M WEBBER

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Human Resources**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to enable Cabinet to consider, review and approve the following:

- Human Resources Strategy 2023-28
- Council Workforce Plan 2023-28

The strategy and workforce plan set out a strategic and operational direction in terms of how the Council will utilise and develop the workforce to achieve the Councils' vision and priorities in a climate of change and financial uncertainty.

1.2 A monitoring update report for 2021-22 workforce priorities is also included in Appendix C. These priorities were part of the previous Council Workforce Plan 2017-22.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

2.1 Consider and if appropriate, approve the Human Resources Strategy 2023-28 (Appendix A).

2.2 Consider and if appropriate, approve the Council's Workforce Plan 2023-28 (Appendix B).

2.3 Agree that outcomes will be delivered through related plans and strategies such as departmental Delivery and Workforce Plans, the Council's Strategic Equality Plan, Digital Strategy and Office Accommodation Strategy.

- 2.4 Agree that monitoring will be in the form of an annual position statement providing data regarding progress towards meeting the Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan aims.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The 'Human Resources Strategy 2023-28' and the 'Council Workforce Plan 2023-28' outlines how we will support the Council to deliver its vision and priorities; as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-24, 'Making a Difference'.
- 3.2 Our people, or workforce, play a vital role in delivering our vision, to make Rhondda Cynon Taf a great place to live, work and play. Human Resources strategy and workforce planning is essential to ensure that, through our workforce, we can meet current needs and plan for the future to deliver our best for our communities through our workforce. We need to ensure that we have the leadership, staff resources, skills and capacity to continue to deliver excellent services and meet current and future opportunities and challenges.
- 3.3 The Human Resources Strategy and Council's Workforce Plan has been shaped by the sustainable development principle and embeds the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to meet national well-being goals and the public services Five Ways of Working.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Our previous Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan, both 2017-22, are due for renewal. The new, proposed Human Resources Strategy and Workforce Plan builds on previous work, with a focus on maintaining services and performance due to current financial uncertainty.
- 4.2 Renewal of our Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan is also a recommendation by Wales Audit Office. In their 'Springing Forward – Workforce – Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council' July 2022 report it was identified that the Council:

“Established a solid base for workforce planning when it set out a clear vision and priorities for its workforce within its Human Resources (HR) Strategy 2017-2022”

“The Council also has a clear Workforce Plan 2017-2022...(which) provides clear links with the priorities of the HR Strategy”

It was noted that:

“The Council has a clear vision and effective planning arrangements for its workforce but as it renews its workforce strategy will need to ensure this is fully shaped by the sustainable development principle”

The new Human Resources Strategy and Workforce Plan aims to address this, more information is available throughout this note.

5 OVERVIEW: HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY AND COUNCIL WORKFORCE PLAN 2023-28

5.1 The Human Resources Strategy 2023-28 shares the Council's vision for Rhondda Cynon Taf and will work towards delivering the Council's vision and priorities. The Human Resources Strategy consists of three strategic pillars to support the Council to achieve its vision, underpinned by four key aims for action reflected in the Council's Workforce Plan 2023-28. Both documents are available in the appendices.

5.2 Strategic pillars to support the Council's vision and priorities:

1. People and performance.

We need the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. We want to develop a skilled, high performing, resilient, dedicated, healthy and agile workforce that will deliver the Council's vision and priorities.

2. Organisational environment.

We want to enable an effective and supportive working environment where staff can thrive. We will create and support a culture of working together, sharing of knowledge, innovation and genuine employee and service user involvement.

3. Sustainable and responsible working.

We need to work in a sustainable and responsible way to ensure that current needs are met without compromising future outcomes. Early intervention to prevent problems and ensuring that our workforce is focused on the long-term will be important to achieve this. Partnership and collaboration across and between sectors to tackle the significant issues we are facing at a local, national and global level is also essential.

5.3 Equality, diversity, inclusion and overcoming socioeconomic disadvantage, along with climate change and Welsh language, are

overarching themes embedded within each pillar. Some objectives are more strongly associated with a particular strategic pillar, however in practice, there will be some overlap. Each strategic pillar can provide a perspective or lens to inform workforce decision making and planning.

5.4 The strategy will be delivered through the four key aims of the Council's Workforce Plan:

- (i) Leadership and management development: Responsible, inclusive and sustainable to deliver priorities.
- (ii) High performing, engaged and dedicated workforce.
- (iii) Recruiting and retaining staff for excellent service delivery.
- (iv) Maximising attendance and supporting staff wellbeing.

Objectives for each aim are available in the Council Workforce Plan 2023-28 (Appendix B).

5.5 Outcomes will be delivered through related plans and strategies such as the Council's Strategic Equality Plan, Digital Strategy, Office Accommodation Strategy and departmental Delivery and Workforce Plans. Some Delivery Plans will be more strongly associated with delivery, for example the Human Resources Delivery Plan.

5.6 Monitoring will be in the form of an annual position statement providing data regarding progress towards meeting the Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan aims. The strategy and workforce plan will also be reviewed and updated as required to ensure relevance in terms of achieving the Council's vision and priorities.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

6.1 An Equality and Socio-economic Impact Assessment has been completed and reviewed by the Impact Assessment Review Panel (and can be viewed if required). Feedback from the Impact Assessment Review Panel was generally positive and highlighted that the inclusion of strategic pillars is a positive step forward in pulling together various policies, there was a good understanding of potential impacts and intersectional thinking, along with good use of research and data.

6.2 At present, no negative impacts have been identified, although there are some impacts which are neutral. This is primarily due to an emphasis on maintaining services and performance due to the Council's current climate of financial uncertainty. The situation will be

reviewed regularly and where possible in the future, improvements and supportive interventions will be put in place. Positive impacts identified were for age, disability, gender reassignment, armed forces community and carers. Neutral impacts were identified for marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, area deprivation, low income/income poverty, low and/or no wealth, material deprivation, socio-economic background, socio-economic disadvantage.

7 WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and reviewed by the Impact Assessment Review Panel (and can be viewed if required). Feedback from the Impact Assessment Review Panel was generally positive; Welsh Language Services advised that it was a robust and detailed assessment, which carefully considered how the strategy would impact the Welsh language, how the Council can work to best achieve the aims of local and national policies and aims regarding the Welsh language.
- 7.2 Overall, positive impacts were found for all categories and where appropriate, actions identified to mitigate against potential negative impacts which could happen in the future. The situation will be reviewed regularly and improvements and supportive interventions will be put in place as required.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 There are no financial implications aligned directly to this report. In terms of delivery, focus will be on achieving the best outcomes using existing resources.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 Legal implications will be assessed as required, for example to ensure that work streams comply with legislation. Core legislation is below, although the list is not exhaustive:
- Equality Act (2010)
 - Employment Rights Act (1996)
 - Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
 - Management of H&S at Work Regulations (1999)
 - Data Protection Act (2018)
 - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)
 - Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act (2006)

- Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice (2015)

10 CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 10.1 To inform the development of the Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan, information was gathered from all Council Service Self Evaluations (2022-23), from the Human Resources Senior Management Team and the Council's Senior Leadership Team. Information from our staff consultations was also considered.

11 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- 11.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2021-24, 'Making a Difference', takes account of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the vision, priorities and principles maximise the Council's contribution to the seven national Well-being goals. The proposed Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan will contribute to and support the delivery of the Council's vision and priorities by aligning strategy and planning to ensure that we have the workforce we need now and in the future. The Five Ways of Working have also been considered.
- 11.2 The strategy and workforce plan align with the sustainable development principle; this is covered in more detail within the Human Resources Strategy and Workforce Plan documents. The pillars of the strategy encourage leaders and managers to view workforce decisions through different perspectives or lenses, for example looking to the long term to ensure that current needs are met without compromising future outcomes, along with early intervention to prevent problems, partnership work and collaboration.

12 STRATEGIC OR RELEVANT TO ELECTORAL WARDS (please specify)

- 12.1 There are no specific strategic or relevant wards in respect of this report, although there will be benefits to all wards as the Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan aims to ensure that we have the workforce needed to deliver the Council's vision and priorities.

13 CONCLUSION

13.1 The new Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan align to the sustainable development principle and set out a strategic direction and key aims for action, to support the Council to achieve its vision and priorities. Focus is on ensuring that the workforce continues to meet both current and future needs, along with maintaining performance and services in a climate of financial uncertainty. The strategic direction and planning will help to ensure that the Council has a workforce that is adaptable and responsive to the changing context of the Council and the needs of our communities.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

[ARTICLE 6 – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE](#)

***Contact Officer –Deb Hughes, Service Director Organisational
Development, Human Resources***

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Appendices:

A	Human Resources Strategy 2023-28	p10
B	Council Workforce Plan 2023-28	p18
C	Previous Council Workforce Plan Monitoring Update: 2021-22	p32

Officer to contact: *Deb Hughes, Service Director Organisational Development, Human Resources*

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL HUMAN RESOURCES
STRATEGY 2023-28**

**Introduction: Achieving the Council's Vision and Priorities
through our Workforce**

The Human Resources (HR) Strategy outlines how we will develop, support and utilise our workforce to support the Council to deliver its vision and priorities; as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-24, 'Making a Difference'. The strategy will ensure that the Council:

- Takes account of organisational context, works collaboratively and creates a sustainable working environment to ensure we look to the long term in addition to meeting current needs.
- Has responsible and inclusive leadership and management to deliver priorities, working sustainably and responsibly to meet current and long term needs whilst meeting challenges and maximising opportunities.
- Recruits and retains the best employees.
- Has a high performing workforce to deliver our priorities. We will continue to strengthen the Council's performance culture, providing rewarding work and development opportunities for staff to enhance outcomes. We will also focus on staff development and well-being for a sustainable approach to performance.

The HR strategy will also ensure that the organisation has expert HR processes, advice and support so that managers and staff are clear about what they need to deliver and for what they are accountable. This will also help to further strengthen the Council's performance culture, as set out in the Council's Performance Management Framework. The Council's HR department will also continue to support departments with workforce issues and demonstrating flexibility to meet needs and ensure the best results for the workforce, whilst demonstrating due diligence and complying with legislative requirements.

The HR Strategy consists of three strategic pillars; 'People and Performance', 'Organisational Environment' and 'Sustainable and Responsible Working',

which are explained in more detail later. Each pillar can provide a useful lens with which to view workforce issues, planning and processes to ensure the Council's vision and priorities are delivered, along with looking to the long-term and taking account of national priorities and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Due to the challenges ahead, which include local and national priorities such as changing demographics, increasing demand for services, diversifying our workforce, the cost of living crisis, advances in technology and issues such as climate change, there is the potential that new workforce knowledge, skills, abilities and processes will be required. There will also be opportunities to further improve and develop our workforce, to enhance performance and service delivery. The HR Strategy will support the workforce to meet challenges and maximise opportunities to strive towards delivering the best results for both now and the future.

The HR Strategy should be read alongside the Council's Workforce Plan 2023-28 and the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-24, 'Making a Difference'.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

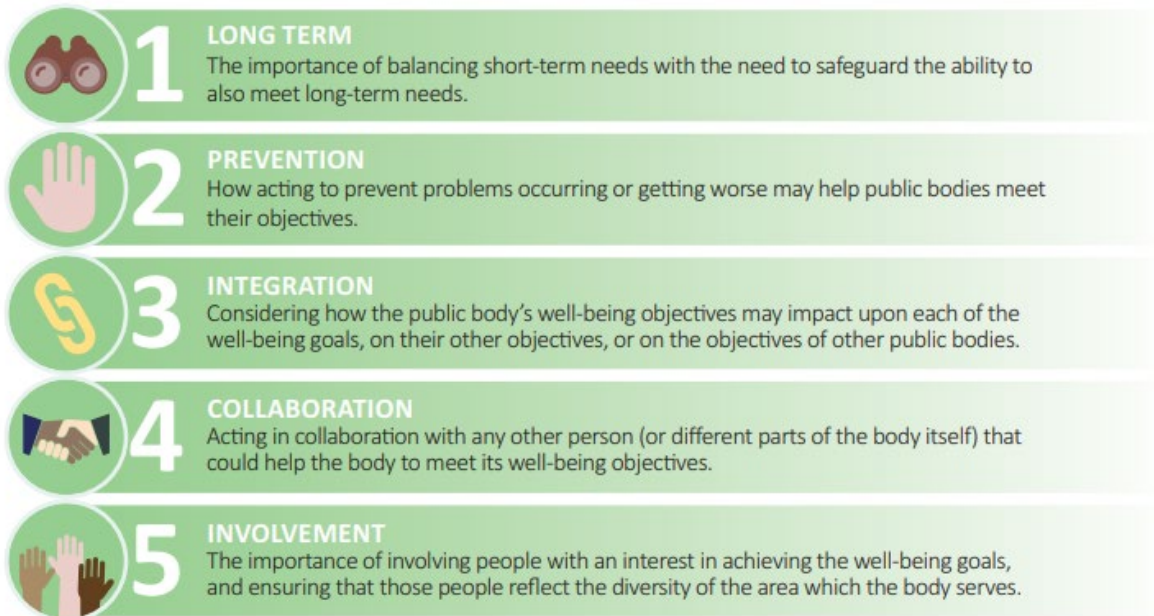
The Act has seven well-being goals which public bodies must work to achieve:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

Sustainable Development is important and is about improving the way that we can achieve goals. The Act defines Sustainable Development in Wales as:

"The process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals."

It sets out Five Ways of Working needed for Public Bodies to achieve the seven well-being goals:



The Council's HR Strategy and Workforce Plan will take into account requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Five Ways of Working.

The Council's Vision and Priorities for Rhondda Cynon Taf

As set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-24, 'Making a Difference', the Council's vision is:

"For Rhondda Cynon Taf to be the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy and prosperous."

The Council's purpose and the reason why it exists is:

"To provide strong community leadership and create the environment for people and businesses to be independent, healthy and prosperous."

The Plan sets out three priorities which the Council has committed to delivering:

- Ensuring people are independent, healthy and successful.
- Creating places where people are proud to live, work and play.
- Enabling prosperity, creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, be entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper.

To make progress in delivering these priorities and to achieve our vision whilst responding to the significant financial challenges we continue to face, the

Council has set out how we will intend to deliver these priorities in the Corporate Plan. A set of commitments to focus on to deliver these outcomes sits underneath each core priority:

- Live within our means
- Efficient and effective Council
- Maximising opportunities
- Shared responsibility

The Council's Corporate Plan takes account of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and our vision, priorities and principles continue to maximise the Council's contribution to the seven national Well-being goals. The Priorities in the Corporate Plan also serve as the Council's Well-being Objectives. The national goals, together with the five Ways of Working, will continue to be incorporated into the detailed action plans that will deliver the Council's three priorities.

The Council's HR Strategy and Workforce Plan will complement the Council's Corporate Plan by ensuring that the workforce and our people management and leadership deliver Council priorities, whilst taking account requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, national goals and the Five Ways of Working.

The Council's Human Resources Strategy

The Human Resources Strategy shares the Council's vision for Rhondda Cynon Taf and will work towards delivering the Council's vision and priorities. The HR Strategy consists of three strategic pillars to support the Council to achieve its vision, underpinned by four key themes for action reflected in the Council's Workforce Plan 2023-28.

Equality, diversity, inclusion and overcoming socioeconomic disadvantage, along with climate change and Welsh language, are overarching themes embedded within each pillar. Some objectives are more strongly associated with a particular strategic pillar, however in practice, there will be some overlap.

Each strategic pillar can provide a perspective or lens to inform workforce decision making and planning.

Strategic pillars to support the Council's vision and priorities

1. People and performance

We need the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. We want to develop a skilled, high performing, resilient, dedicated, healthy and agile workforce that will deliver the Council's vision and priorities.

2. Organisational environment

We want to enable an effective and supportive working environment where staff can thrive. We will create and support a culture of working together, sharing of knowledge, innovation and genuine employee and service user involvement.

3. Sustainable and responsible working

We need to work in a sustainable and responsible way to ensure that current needs are met without compromising future outcomes. Early intervention to prevent problems and ensuring that our workforce is focused on the long-term will be important to achieve this. Partnership and collaboration across and between sectors to tackle the significant issues we are facing at a local, national and global level is also essential.

How we will deliver our strategy

The strategic pillars are underpinned by four key aims or focus points which will be implemented through the Council's Workforce Plan 2023-28:

(i). Leadership and management development: Responsible, inclusive and sustainable to deliver priorities

We recognise that the quality of our leaders and managers, along with the relationship between line managers and teams, is key to our success. We want to further develop leadership and management capacity throughout the Council. We want to strengthen the skills of our leaders and managers, so that they are supported and developed to face the challenges ahead. We want them to have the energy, drive, innovation, creativity and political acumen to lead change, whilst inspiring and supporting our staff to achieve the Council's vision and priorities.

We want their passion for public services to motivate them to work together and to actively contribute to collaborative and partnership work, finding responsible and sustainable solutions to priorities and service delivery. We aim to foster responsible, inclusive and sustainable leadership and management to tackle the big issues facing the world and to ensure that we look to the long term and embrace the sustainable development principle from the Well-being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Leaders and managers will understand the organisational context and will look to deliver and enhance Corporate, Welsh Government and National Priorities.

(ii). High performing, engaged and dedicated workforce

To deliver the Council's vision and priorities, a high performing engaged and dedicated workforce is needed. We will support and manage staff to achieve their best.

Staff will be aware of how what they deliver contributes to corporate priorities as performance management will be aligned to the Council's vision and priorities. Staff development, coaching and mentoring will be essential; staff with the potential for growth will be identified and developed further. The work environment will also be key for staff to thrive and achieve the best possible outcomes. We want staff to work together and in partnership, contributing to achieving our vision.

(iii). Recruiting and retaining staff for excellent service delivery

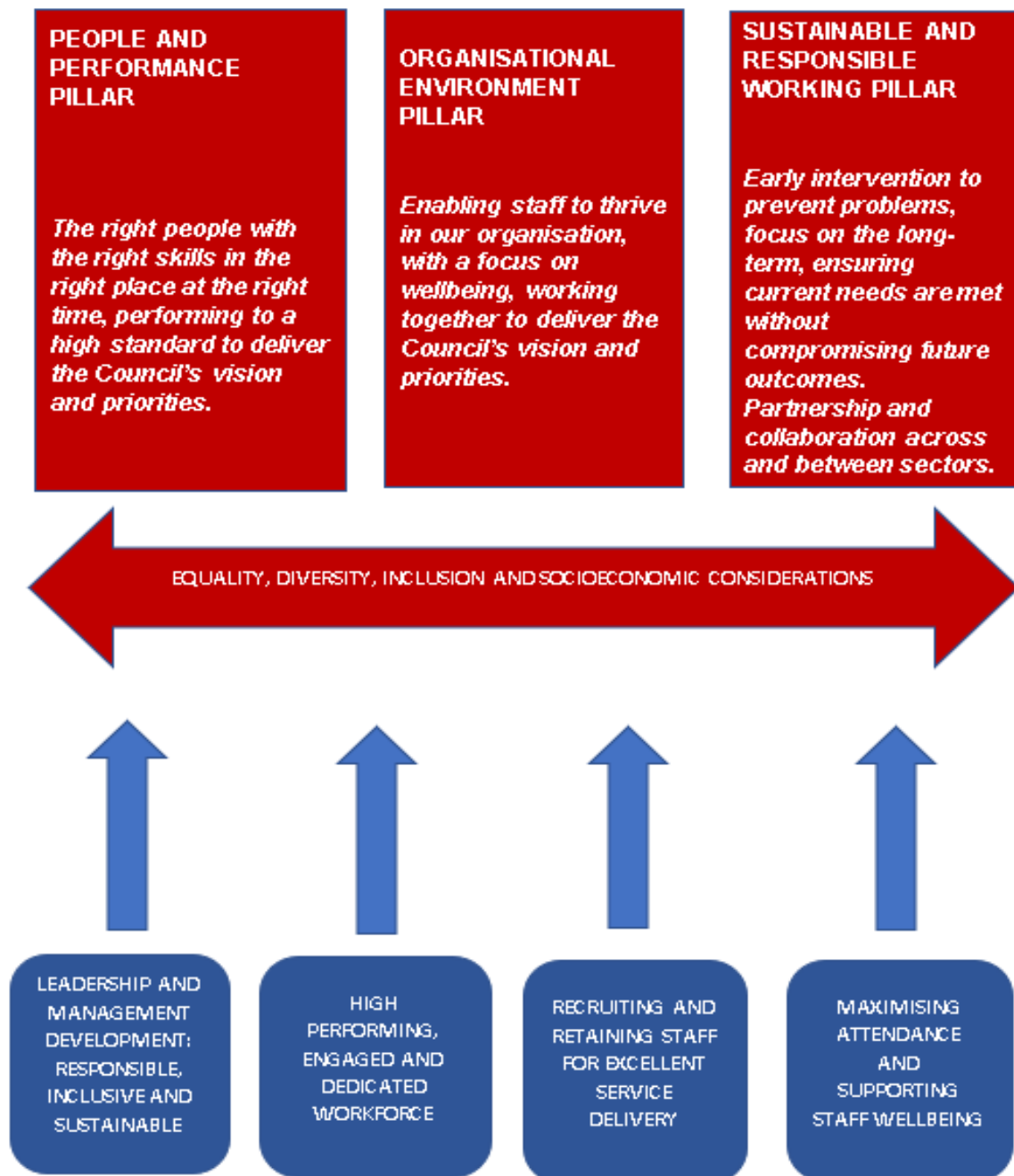
We want to both attract and retain a diverse workforce who have the skills and commitment to deliver the Council's vision and priorities and adapt to changing needs. We want to become an employer of choice and support staff throughout their employment with us to achieve great work outcomes. We recognise the role that the work environment and culture has in achieving this.

(iv). Maximising attendance and supporting staff wellbeing

Maximising attendance and supporting staff well-being is essential for us to achieve our vision and priorities.

We will provide safe working environments within a culture that supports and encourages staff to manage their well-being and health to achieve their best at work, for both now and the long term. We will use mechanisms such as tailored interventions, good management and organisational support, policy and procedure to support staff throughout their employment and to encourage healthy habits and work life balance.

RCT Council HR Strategy: Strategic Pillars and Workforce Plan Aims



Responsibility

The Human Resources Director has overall responsibility for the Human Resources Strategy. However, for it to succeed it needs to be embedded throughout the Council. We will need commitment from all our managers and staff to ensure a strategic workforce approach to deliver the Council's vision and priorities.

How will we know if the strategy is effective?

The implementation of the HR Strategy will be reflected in plans such as the Council's Workforce Plan and key department Delivery Plans such as Human Resources and Information Communication Technology (ICT).

The HR strategy will be monitored through a variety of methods and an annual position statement will be produced. As part of this work, the HR Strategy will be reviewed, to ensure that it is fit for purpose in terms of delivering the Council's vision and priorities. The following will primarily be used for monitoring and review:

- Council Workforce Plan along with monitoring updates and reviews.
- Council's Corporate Plan.
- Human Resources Delivery Plan.
- Council Strategic Equality Plan.
- Council Digital Strategy 2022-26.
- Other relevant business plans and documentation related to the Council's Workforce Plan, for example from departments with relevant actions such as Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Corporate Estates.
- Service Self Evaluations (SSEs).
- Annual Council staff survey, along with other relevant consultation information.
- Other internal and external information relevant to the organisational context and priorities. Some internal information has already been listed, external information can include Welsh Government priorities such as climate change and the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, also documents such as the Future Trends and Well-being of Wales reports, along with industry insights relevant to the workforce.

It is also important to note that some objectives are more strongly associated with a particular strategic pillar within the HR Strategy, however, in practice there will be some overlap. For monitoring purposes, the objective will be tied to the pillar which has the strongest association. For example, performance runs throughout all pillars, however objectives related to individual staff performance reviews will be monitored and reviewed under the 'People and Performance' pillar.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL WORKFORCE PLAN 2023-2028

Introduction

Our people, or workforce, play a vital role in delivering our vision, to make Rhondda Cynon Taf a great place to live, work and play. Good workforce planning is essential to ensure that, through our workforce, we deliver our best for our communities both now and in the future. We need to ensure that we have the staff resources, skills and capacity to continue to maximise opportunities and overcome challenges.

The County Borough has experienced the devastating impacts of Covid and the 2020 floods, and future challenges are ahead such as the cost of living crisis, uncertainty about levels of funding and an increasing demand for our services.

Careful financial planning is key to our success, but alongside this, so are our staff as they deliver our vision and priorities. Our Workforce Plan will help ensure that we plan ahead to make the most of our workforce to achieve the best possible results for the County Borough.

Purpose of the Council's Workforce Plan

The Council's Workforce Plan will support the Council to achieve its priorities, as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-24, 'Making a Difference'. The Workforce Plan will ensure that the Council recruits, retains, develops and supports staff and managers to continue to deliver excellent services and meet current and future opportunities and challenges.

The Council's Workforce Plan also embeds the requirements of the Well-being of Future generations (Wales) Act 2015, to meet national well-being goals and the public services five Ways of Working.

What is Workforce Planning?

Workforce Planning requires an organisation to look at where it is now and where it needs to be in the future. This information is matched with its existing workforce and any known or expected pressures on the supply or replacement of staff through:

- Identifying the link between business strategies and people plans (as we are a Local Authority in Wales we also align with Welsh Government strategies and plans).
- Identification of the future skills and competencies needed to deliver new and improved services.
- Analysis of the present workforce.
- Comparison between present workforce and the requirements of the future and identification of any gaps.
- Strategies to address gaps.
- Setting objectives and actions to realise strategies and workforce planning goals.
- Monitoring, review and evaluation.

Information used to develop the Council's Workforce Plan

The following sources of information have been used to develop the Council's Workforce Plan 2023-28:

- Service Self Evaluation (SSE) documents 2021-22.
- Council workforce data and other relevant sources such as the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-24, 'Making a Difference' and our Tackling Climate Change Strategy 2022-25.
- Council Digital Strategy 2022-26.
- Staff survey and consultation data.
- Welsh Government information such as Future Trends 2021, Wellbeing of Wales 2021, Anti-racist Wales Action Plan and their LGBTQ+ Action Plan, Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers, which has been consulted on (responses currently under review).
- Other relevant external workforce information and insights.

Our Workforce Plan and alignment to the Council's Corporate Plan and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The aim of the Council's Workforce Plan is to enable the Council to deliver its vision and priorities, as set out in the Council Corporate Plan 2021-24, 'Making a Difference'.

The Council's Workforce Plan focuses on ensuring that the Council's workforce can meet current and future challenges whilst maximising opportunities to achieve the best possible outcomes. To achieve this, it aligns with key strategy such as the Council's Corporate Plan and Human

Resources Strategy. Requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to meet national well-being goals are also embedded in our Workforce Plan.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

The Act has seven well-being goals which public bodies must work to achieve:






Well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015



To work towards these, Sustainable Development is important to improve the way that we can achieve goals. The Act defines Sustainable Development in Wales as:

“The process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.”

It sets out five ways of working needed for Public Bodies to achieve the seven well-being goals which are outlined below:

-  **1 LONG TERM**
The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
-  **2 PREVENTION**
How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
-  **3 INTEGRATION**
Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
-  **4 COLLABORATION**
Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
-  **5 INVOLVEMENT**
The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

The Council's HR Strategy and Workforce Plan will take into account requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Five Ways of Working.

The Council's Corporate Plan

The Council's Workforce Plan also aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-24, 'Making a Difference', which outlines our vision and priorities. The Council's vision is:

“For Rhondda Cynon Taf to be the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy and prosperous.”

The Council's purpose and the reason why it exists is:

“To provide strong community leadership and create the environment for people and businesses to be independent, healthy and prosperous.”

The Council's Corporate Plan takes account of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and sets out three priorities which the Council has committed to delivering:

- Ensuring people are independent, healthy and successful
- Creating places where people are proud to live, work and play
- Enabling prosperity, creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, be entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper.

To achieve our vision, the Council has set out how we will intend to deliver these priorities:

- Live within our means
- Efficient and effective Council
- Maximising opportunities
- Shared responsibility

These themes will be reflected in workforce action plans related to the Council's Workforce Plan and HR Strategy.

Opportunities and challenges

The Council faces a number of challenges and opportunities in the present and into the future. Whilst current issues can be identified, it can be difficult to predict what lies ahead, although there are reports and information available that can help us to focus on what we may need to be working towards to help with workforce planning. Looking at what we need to currently address, as well as what we may need to overcome moving forward, helps us to plan and have the best chance possible of maximising opportunities and overcoming challenges to deliver the best services for the long term.

Some key challenges and opportunities which have been identified include:

- Increasing demand for services, which can be driven by a changing population. Rhondda Cynon Taf, like many areas, is facing a growth in older cohorts which adds demand to health and social care sectors. This demographic is also reflected in our workforce as people have extended working lives. This may result in a need for more flexibility in terms of working patterns, adjustments and career pathways. We also want our workforce to reflect the number of Welsh speakers in our communities and create opportunities to realise this in line with the aims of the Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers Strategy.
- There are also socioeconomic challenges which our residents and staff are facing. For example, the cost of living is increasing and we may

need to consider the impact of this on the workforce and look to support staff, for example around financial well-being.

- We also want to support staff to reduce sickness absence and maximise attendance. As part of this, it is important to support staff throughout the challenges they may be facing, for example caring responsibilities and working for longer to support their retirement. We want to encourage a work life balance and good well-being so that work performance can be optimised and sustained for the long-term.
- There is a greater focus on advancing diversity, equality and inclusion in society and this is reflected in Welsh Government plans such the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan and reports which highlight issues such as poverty and health in Wales. We want to be proactive in our approach to tackle these important issues and this will be reflected in our workforce planning.
- Many organisations are facing challenges around recruitment, retention and skills gaps. Due to the diversity of services that the Council provides, we can experience skills gaps in certain sectors or in some technical skills we require. There can also be shortages of qualified candidates in the local labour market and we sometimes find that our grading system is not as competitive as other sectors in terms of salary, which can add to recruitment challenges. However, we do offer employees great support in terms of wellbeing, development opportunities and family friendly policies which can help with recruitment attraction and staff retention. There can also be increases in demand for services and a requirement for more staff to deliver services, for example a greater need for health and social care services and winter pressures. Therefore, we will look at improving our recruitment processes and provide opportunities to develop staff ourselves so that we have the right people with the right skills for service delivery. Retention of staff is also important to ensure continuity of service delivery. Part of this is creating and sustaining working environments for staff to thrive and good working patterns such as further developing hybrid working.
- Due to the diversity of our services and recruitment challenges we are facing in specific service areas, we will continue to offer bespoke support and interventions as required to ensure that we continue to recruit and retain the best staff to meet the ever increasing demands upon our key Council services. We will also continue with more inclusive approaches to Council wide recruitment initiatives. For example, in terms of supporting the armed forces community there are

a range of supportive measures, in particular our guaranteed job interview scheme for service leavers, veterans and reservists who have demonstrated that they fulfil all essential criteria for the job they have applied for. Also, as an employer we are undertaking work around neurodiversity in the workforce and we are currently working towards becoming an Autism Aware certified organisation. The Human Resources and Digital Improvement Teams are already certified as Autism Aware and we are looking to rollout training to the whole Authority.

- Partnership work is becoming increasingly important to tackle the complex and multi-faceted challenges facing our communities and core services. This includes working with the police and health service for example, but also the emerging relationship we have with our communities where we work together for both residents and businesses to take a shared responsibility for themselves and the communities they live in.
- There are significant advances in digital technology and data management and it is important to exploit these transformational opportunities for positive impacts for residents, staff and service delivery.
- Leadership and management will be key to meeting challenges and maximising opportunities. We will support and develop our leaders and managers so that they can deliver the Council's vision and priorities.
- Like all Councils, we are continuing to face a difficult financial challenge as more people need our services. As there is uncertainty about the levels of funding in the future, we need to make decisions about where to prioritise and spend resources. We will be considered and innovative in our approach to design alternative and more efficient ways of working, to ensure high standards of service delivery are maintained.
- There are other significant challenges to consider. The war in Ukraine is a humanitarian crisis and is contributing to economic and political uncertainty. The economic impact of Brexit along with workforce, supply and distribution issues. Future waves of Covid could also impact us, for example, the economic impact and increased demand for our services. There is also the potential of labour shortages and supply and chain issues.

- There is also the challenge of climate change and the Council has committed to becoming a net-zero Green House Gas Council by 2030. The work around climate change will require changes to be made by both staff and residents.
- We also have a good working relationship with our trade union colleagues who help advance the interests of their members in the workplace. We have worked with trade unions around issues such as negotiating agreements on terms and conditions, change and the impact on staff, also member concerns on a more individual level. This relationship is important in realising our ambitions for the workforce and ensuring excellent service delivery. Staff are made aware of the benefits of membership at induction.

The Current Workforce

The Council provides important local services and facilities for residents. These include providing education services and schools, waste and recycling, leisure and recreation facilities including parks, highway maintenance, local planning, libraries, social services and environmental health.

We have a range of employment contracts including fulltime, part-time, term time and casual. Some staff have more than one contract. Agency workers and consultants are used only when necessary, to ensure service delivery or to buy in expertise for project delivery. We also have services delivered through partnerships or commissioning arrangements.

We are also a main employer for the local area and 80% of our staff live in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Rhondda Cynon Taf is situated to the north of Cardiff, at the heart of South Wales. It consists of five valleys, the Rhondda Fawr and Fach, Cynon, Taf and Ely, some areas of which have high concentrations of multiple deprivation.

The figures below give an overview of staff composition (including schools) for 2021/22:

- Headcount of 9957 employees with a total FTE of 8042 (excluding casual contracts and seasonal positions).
- 45% of our staff are employed in schools.
- 75% of staff are female and 25% are male.
- 46% of staff are part-time.
- Most staff are aged between the ages of 35-54 (54%).
- 529 of our posts are partly or wholly grant funded.
- There were 1010 leavers and 988 starters.

- In 2020-21, 15% of staff are fluent Welsh speakers, a slight increase over the last few years (figures could not be obtained for 2021-22).
- 2.8% of staff disclosed that they had a disability, however staff equality data return rates for this question were low so this figure may be an underestimate.
- Staff from minority groups make up 0.8% of the workforce, but again information return rates were low so this figure may not be a true reflection of the workforce. Job applications from ethnic groups are also increasing, from 2.5 in 2016 to 6% of all applications in 2021-22, this data was more reliable as information return rates for equalities information were high.

The workforce we need: Workforce Plan delivery aims

To ensure that we have the workforce we need into the future, the Council's Workforce Plan aims to set out four delivery aims that will apply across the workforce. This plan, however, does not replace local workforce plans that are in place to address specific service needs.

The four delivery aims are:

1. Responsible, inclusive and sustainable leadership and management to deliver priorities

We recognise that the quality of our leaders and managers, along with the relationship between line managers and teams, is key to our success. We want to further develop leadership and management capacity throughout the Council. We want to strengthen the skills of our leaders and managers, so that they are supported and developed to face the challenges ahead. We want them to have the energy, drive, innovation, creativity and political acumen to lead change, whilst inspiring and supporting our staff to achieve the Council's vision and priorities.

We want their passion for public services to motivate them to work together and to actively contribute to collaborative and partnership work, finding responsible and sustainable solutions to priorities and service delivery.

We aim to foster responsible, inclusive and sustainable leadership and management to tackle the big issues facing the world and to ensure that we look to the long term and embrace the sustainable development principle from the Well-being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Leaders and managers will understand the organisational context and will look to deliver and enhance Corporate, Welsh Government and National Priorities.

Objectives:

The Council will continue to utilise and embed current mechanisms for communicating with, and developing leadership and management skills which include:-

Managers Briefings, Global Communications, Coaching and Mentoring Programmes, Accredited and non-accredited leadership and management programmes, improvement hours.

The Council will adapt its leadership and management programmes to deliver more flexible modular programmes with a focus on the concepts of responsible leadership. We will look to the long term and view challenges through a variety of lenses, (to include for example, Diversity and Inclusion, wellbeing, Welsh language and climate change) to increase diversity and look to resolve problems early through early intervention.

The Council will continue to support its leaders and managers to embed and normalise the Welsh language within their service areas.

2. High performing, engaged and dedicated workforce

To deliver the Council's vision and priorities, a high performing engaged and dedicated workforce is needed. We will support and manage staff to achieve their best.

Staff will be aware of how what they deliver contributes to corporate priorities as performance management will be aligned to the Council's vision and priorities. Staff development, coaching and mentoring will be essential; staff with the potential for growth will be identified and developed further.

The work environment will also be key for staff to thrive and achieve the best possible outcomes. We want staff to work together and in partnership, contributing to achieving our vision.

Objectives:

The Council will continue to support staff learning and development through existing mechanisms including, corporate induction, e-learning, improvement hours, service and role specific training and mandatory learning programmes.

To continue with the new standard staff consultation to allow for comparative data to be generated to review changes in staff views over time and identify areas for improvements. Supplementary pulse questionnaires will be used to gather staff views on topical themes as required.

We will foster a working environment where staff feel safe and can thrive to perform at their best, free from discrimination and harassment. To support this, we will raise awareness of existing mechanisms and monitor success. This includes our Dignity at Work and Grievance processes, along with well-being and staff network peer support.

To rollout the new corporate individual performance reviews to improve performance by ensuring that staff have feedback and support to enhance or maintain their overall performance.

The Council will look to augment learning and development opportunities for staff through accessing funded learning streams (for example through national programmes such as apprenticeship frameworks and personal learning accounts) in partnership with further and higher education partners

The Council will explore methods of enhancing internal staff communication digitally via systems such as iTrent, together with focussing on new methods of communicating key messages via social media platforms such as Facebook

We will continue to review and amend our policies and procedures to ensure that they meet legislative and organisational requirements and support staff well-being.

The Council will continue to invest in the development of its Members' and workforce, providing opportunities to increase their digital skills and literacy, enabling people to become more digitally confident. The Council's Digital Service will continue with its approach for digital support that includes staff induction, bitesize development sessions and tailored support to assist the adoption of new digital solutions, so that we can make the most of the opportunities that digital brings.

We will leverage our information to gain useful actionable insight from our rich data sources, ensuring that our workforce decision making is informed from robust data analysis and using data driven approaches.

The Council will continue to support its Welsh speaking staff, providing all the necessary tools for them to thrive and develop in their language of choice.

3. Recruiting and retaining staff for excellent service delivery

We want to both attract and retain a diverse workforce who have the skills and commitment to deliver the Council's vision and priorities and adapt to changing needs. We want to become an employer of choice and support staff

throughout their employment with us to achieve great work outcomes. We recognise the role that the work environment and culture have in achieving this.

Objectives:

To continue to develop our employer brand and increase our social media and online presence to attract the right people to work for us.

To continue to work with departments to support with recruitment and retention and use tailored interventions where appropriate to meet needs.

To continue with our Graduate and Apprenticeship schemes to recruit to skills gaps and look to the longer-term needs of the organisation.

To continue to grow and develop our employability programmes; Access to Employment, Gateway to Employment and Care2Work, to support those furthest from the jobs market to experience real work opportunities within the Council. This includes supporting individuals with learning and physical disabilities and our Children Looked After.

To identify mechanisms through which the recruitment, selection and on-boarding of staff, particularly in hard to fill roles, can be expedited.

The Council will continue to challenge and strengthen its procedures regarding the recruitment, retention and training of Welsh speaking staff in order to support the relevant aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and any resulting national and local strategies.

4. Maximising attendance and supporting staff wellbeing

Maximising attendance and supporting staff well-being is essential for us to achieve our vision and priorities.

We will provide safe working environments within a culture that supports and encourages staff to manage their well-being and health to achieve their best at work, for both now and the long term. We will use mechanisms such as tailored interventions, good management and organisational support, policy and procedure to support staff throughout their employment and to encourage healthy habits and work life balance.

Objectives:

To finalise and implement the Council's 'Office Accommodation Strategy Workspace Plan: Fit for the Future' and continue to review hybrid working arrangements to ensure our workforce have the right digital tools for their role, that performance is maintained, and to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of staff.

Develop and implement a Well-being Strategy that supports a healthier and more resilient RCT Council workforce. Focus will be on mental, physical, social and financial well-being and take account of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. We want well-being to be integral to everything we do.

Continue with Occupational Health and Well-being Unit support and tailored interventions with a focus on reducing sickness absence. We aim to provide impactful support in line with our workforce profile and tailored to what people need.

In addition, Employee Relations will continue to work with and support services to manage absence. This includes the provision of up-to-date information and specialist advice to assist with resolution rates.

Responsibility

To ensure that we realise our ambitions to provide the best service to residents and the public sector both now and in the future, the Rhondda Cynon Taf Workforce Plan needs to be embedded throughout the organisation. It is recognised that departments will have their own specific workforce plans in place to meet their needs, however all plans will align to the Council's overarching Workforce Plan to ensure we have a cohesive approach to workforce issues to achieve our vision and priorities.

Council Workforce Plan Delivery and Monitoring

The Council Workforce Plan will be delivered through related plans and strategies such as the Council's Strategic Equality Plan, Digital Strategy, Office Accommodation Strategy and departmental Delivery and Workforce Plans. Some Delivery Plans will be more strongly associated with delivery, for example the Human Resources Delivery Plan.

Monitoring will be in the form of an annual position statement providing data regarding progress towards meeting Council Workforce Plan aims. In addition, the Workforce Plan aims will be reviewed and updated as required to ensure

that they continue to be relevant in terms of achieving the Council's vision and priorities.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL WORKFORCE PLAN MONITORING UPDATE:
2021-22**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This note is relevant to the previous Council Workforce Plan 2017-22 and reports on progress towards meeting priority actions for 2021-22 following the interim monitoring report from 2020. The new Council Workforce Plan 2023-28 takes forward future priority workforce actions.
- 1.2 An overview of the Council Workforce Plan 2017-22 is not presented as an interim, pre-COVID update was presented to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in 2020. Due to the pandemic, it was decided that moving forward new priorities were to be set, relevant to operating within a COVID environment, along with continuing progress with relevant previously set actions.

2 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2.1 Over the last couple of years, Human Resources has focused its resources on supporting managers, Headteachers and staff throughout the pandemic, dealing with constant change at a national and local level within their services. This has resulted in actions such as redeploying staff, recruiting and resourcing new services such as Track, Trace, Protect; supporting the co-ordination and delivery of COVID testing and the vaccine programme, putting in place shielding arrangements for 'at risk' staff and facilitating risk assessments for staff to return to work safely along with supporting their well-being. The new HR/Payroll system iTrent was also being implemented parallel to this activity.
- 2.2 Other key areas have also supported the aims of the Council's Workforce Plan 2017-22, for example ICT and Corporate Estates, in terms of accelerating hybrid working by providing staff with IT equipment to enable working from home, more agile working and mapping out a way forward in terms of the future of office accommodation. Much of this work was accelerated due to the pandemic. A hybrid working policy has been produced and a Council Office Accommodation Strategy is being finalised.
- 2.3 The detailed monitoring of the Workforce Plan for 2021-22 is available on request. Further to this, highlights against Workforce Plan aims for 2021-22 are listed below, most of which is an excerpt from the HR Corporate Assessment and may include detail not covered in the detailed monitoring of planned objectives set in 2020. This is due to

changing priorities and work streams developed to meet changing needs during COVID and emerging from the pandemic:

2.4 Workforce Plan Aim 1: Developing a flexible and agile workforce that shares organisational knowledge

- Accelerated by the need to respond to the COVID pandemic, Agile and Hybrid models of working are now business as usual. The detailed implications of a safe, flexible and technologically supported return to offices together with arrangements and policies for flexible working are continually reviewed and are informed by staff surveys.
- Ensured a safe return to offices for staff, complying with changing COVID regulations.
- Reintroduced formal Flexible Working arrangements in April 2022.
- Held one Cabinet/Officer planning briefing virtually during 2021/22 and a face-to-face session held in 2022. The programme was affected by intermittent COVID restrictions but is now running as usual.
- A hybrid working policy has been produced and a Council Office Accommodation Strategy is being finalised.
- Continued staff communication via staff surveys, global emails and RCT Source/INFORM.

2.5 Workforce Plan Aim 2: Recruiting and retaining the best talent to create a diverse workforce

- A review of recruitment processes is being considered to complement the iTrent Recruitment functionality.
- Launched a dedicated recruitment web presence.
- Increased the use of Social Media platforms as a recruitment attraction method for hard to recruit and priority posts e.g. Social Care, Facilities cleaning, Mechanics, Graduates and Apprentices.
- Introduced the Educators Wales platform for the Education sector, enabling schools and education to advertise vacancies on a Wales wide job portal, free of charge.
- Children's Services implemented a Social Worker recruitment campaign which led to the appointment of 20 new Social Work staff. Recruitment campaigns are now being developed and implemented for hard to fill priority posts.
- Introduced a new short application form to widen the recruitment of Supported Living and Residential Services staff.
- Held Career Fairs in:

- February 2021, with 942 attendees. 30 plus employers featured over 600 job vacancies including Apprenticeships and Graduate opportunities.
- September 2021 with 468 attendees. 30 plus employers featured over 1,000 job vacancies including Apprenticeship and Graduate opportunities.
- Human Resources and Communities4 Work worked with DWP to support a pool of harder to reach applicants and delivered a number of workshops to assist individuals apply for the Apprenticeship and Graduate opportunities.
- Continued to build organisation capacity through targeted recruitment of Graduates and Apprenticeships throughout the pandemic, with 30 Apprentices and 26 Graduates appointed during 2021/22. 45 Apprentices and 20 Graduates have been recruited so far in 2022 and the next Graduate recruitment campaign will take place in December 2022 and Apprenticeships in early 2023.
- In June 2021 the Council was awarded Macro Employer of the Year at the Apprenticeships Awards Cymru 2021, the Princess Royal Training Award in 2022 in recognition of its commitment to training and the positive impact that developing staff has on the local authority and was a finalist for the Public Sector Award in the Pink News Awards 2022.
- Continued to deliver, virtually, the mandatory Induction Programme introduced in September 2019 for all new staff. The content and delivery has been continually reviewed to ensure that it remains both accessible and fit for purpose given the changing circumstances. A revised format was introduced in March 2022, from which feedback was positive compared to previous events and further reviews are scheduled.
- Secured additional funding to extend a further 3 opportunities per year for Children Looked After on the 'Step in the Right Direction' programme.
- Continued to work with Coleg Y Cymoedd and Elite Training to provide 10 supported placements a year through the 'Gateway to Employment' programme, offering opportunities to 10 young people with Additional Needs to gain valuable work experience with a view to securing paid work.
- Worked with University of South Wales to provide internships across the Council.
- Continued to support the Gatsby Benchmarks in RCT schools, promote the Council as an employer, particularly in relation to Apprenticeship programmes.
- Supported the roll out of the Welsh Government funded 'Kickstart' scheme, providing 20 placements within various service areas across the Council for individuals aged 16 – 25.
- We have continued to implement the actions from the RCT Council Welsh Language Skills Framework to maintain an overview of Welsh Language

skills, needs and resources with a view to recruiting and training staff in order to meet these objectives.

2.6 Workforce Plan Aim 3: Leadership and management development

- Continued to deliver our Leadership Development programmes Mercury; Transform and ILM programmes through virtual platforms to the appropriate levels of management. Face to face training has also been facilitated where necessary/appropriate.
- Introduced further aspects of leadership development in the Council's Leadership Series. These have focussed on 'Leading during the Pandemic and Beyond' and a series of 'Women into Leadership' programmes. These events were also recorded and made available on RCT Source.
- Worked with the training provider ALS to introduce funded mentoring training.
- Developed a new approach to Individual Performance Reviews (IPRs) scheduled for implementation in April 2023. This process will be made available for managers/staff through iTrent and will align with the organisational performance arrangements and Delivery Plans. Explanatory guidance, workshops, e-learning opportunities and staff and manager communications are being developed to accompany the implementation. iTrent will also provide relevant compliance monitoring functionality.

2.7 Workforce Plan Aim 4: Enabling a high performing, engaged and committed workforce

- The development of our new approach to IPRs set out above will contribute to a high performing, engaged and committed workforce.
- We have continued to put in place a range of Staff Benefits, described in more detail below.
- Our Staff Engagement approach has sought and responded well to staff views e.g., around hybrid working and the reintroduction of refreshed 'flexi' arrangements which better met the needs of the organisation and staff.
- The Council is exploring how we can rethink community engagement and how to use this evidence in decision making.
- We have signed BITC's Race at Work Charter.
- Our staff networks have continued throughout the pandemic.
- Various working groups have been set up to address specific issues, which include the Cost of Living Working Group, Hybrid and Flexi working group, Sexual Harassment Working Group, Social Services Workforce Planning Group.

- We are undertaking work around neurodiversity in the workforce and are currently working towards becoming an Autism Aware certified organisation. The Human Resources and Digital Improvement Teams are already certified as Autism Aware and we are looking to rollout training to the whole Authority.
- Continued to refresh the Compendium of training opportunities accessible through INFORM and RCT Source and staff. Latest update was published in September 2021.

2.8 Workforce Plan Aim 5: Supporting health and wellbeing to maximise attendance.

To keep people well we:

- Implemented a staff wellbeing helpline-providing access to COVID testing for key workers and their families, self-referrals to wellbeing assessment and physiotherapy, and a listening ear.
- RCT supported and worked with Cwm Taf Morgannwg in providing staff and its external partnerships with COVID testing and vaccinations. The Council provided venues, staff and booking systems amongst other support, along with supporting the governance and protocols development. In Summer of 2022 the Council provided staff validation data for RCT Staff and our private partners in health and social care for the COVID Vaccine booster campaign.
- In order to manage the risk of individuals throughout the pandemic we introduced this specific risk assessment which was updated regularly in line with guidance. A task group was set up to manage the updates and communications. COVID has now been included in the general risk assessment process for managers to complete.
- Put in place Staff Wellbeing Assessment guides that allows staff to look at their self-care and how the organisation can support them.
- Introduced 'Wellbeing with Cari', an Artificial Intelligence tool that enables staff to self-assess their wellbeing confidentially and access to support in line with their scoring. 1,000 staff have accessed Cari.
- Put in place a range of 'Bitesize' wellbeing sessions, informed by themes emerging from staff engagement with 'Cari'. These included 'Sleep' and 'Menopause Café'.
- Delivered the annual influenza vaccine to 1,200 staff and supporting national campaigns e.g. blood pressure, mental health etc.
- Secured funding for and implemented counselling service for school staff, both in and absent from work owing to sickness. 199 staff supported in 847 appointments between August 21 and March 2022, with high levels of positive feedback.
- Resumed Absence Management arrangements held in abeyance during the pandemic.

- An employee assistance programme, Care First, was introduced in June 2022 and is available to all staff. It provides staff access to 24/7/365 in the moment support. Staff can access an advice centre, online CBT, an app, webinars, health website etc.

3 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY AND WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The update includes information around specific equality and diversity and Welsh language objectives.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications aligned directly to this report. In terms of future delivery, focus will be on achieving the best outcomes using existing resources.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 There are no consultation implications associated with this report.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Legal implications will be assessed as required, for example to ensure that work streams are legally compliant. Core legislation is below, although the list is not exhaustive:

- Equality Act (2010)
- Employment Rights Act (1996)
- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Management of H&S at Work Regulations (1999)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)
- Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act (2006)
- Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice (2015)

7 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- 7.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2021-24, 'Making a Difference', takes account of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the vision, priorities and principles maximise the Council's contribution to the seven national Well-being goals. The aim of the Council Workforce Plan 2017-22 was to contribute to and

support the delivery of the Council's vision and priorities to ensure that we have the workforce we need now and in the future.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The 2021-22 priority workforce plan updates relevant to pandemic working conditions have been presented, marking the end of the reporting of the 2017-22 Council Workforce Plan. An overview of the Council Workforce Plan 2017-22 was not presented as an interim, pre-COVID report was previously made available to SLT in 2020 to update on actions pre-pandemic. Due to COVID it was previously agreed that only relevant actions would be carried forward and new actions for 2021-22 were set, relevant to the pandemic working conditions. Moving forward, there will be annual updates for the new Council Workforce Plan 2023-28.