

## PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

20 December 2017

**BUILDING AMBITION – A WORKFORCE FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY****Report by the Chief Executive****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

People remain at the heart of everything we do. Our positive people practices have helped ensure we have a skilled and dedicated workforce who are committed to making a positive difference to people's lives. Workforce planning and development help us understand the talent required to continue to deliver high quality services and to meet the challenges and opportunities emerging through public service reform, reductions in funding for public services and changes in service demand.

This report details the key achievements since the last annual workforce report in December 2016.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Perth & Kinross Council continues to be recognised as sector leading in many areas. We have a successful track record of delivering high quality services, modernising and transforming services as we focus on prevention, performance, place and people. Our positive people practices continue to be valued by our employees and are the hallmarks of being an employer of choice.
- 1.2 Perth & Kinross Council remains the largest employer in the area. Our people work in a diverse range of occupations which reflect the wide range of services we deliver to citizens, families and communities across Perth and Kinross. The services we provide have undergone significant transformation over the last decade and, in turn, the size and make-up of our workforce have changed too. Increasingly, services are being delivered in partnership with other public service organisations, the voluntary sector, private sector and with communities. And our employees have developed new skills and embraced new ways of working and thinking as the demands of jobs have evolved.
- 1.3 The extent and pace of modernisation and transformation is set to continue as we focus on early intervention and prevention, collaborate with public services partners, and co-design and co-deliver services with communities.
- 1.4 What sets us apart as a Council is our collective focus on the connection between leadership, employee engagement and culture as the means of creating the conditions to harness the talent of our people and preparing our organisation for the future. Our plans are only effective if they are developed

and implemented by people who connect with our communities and service users and who have the vision, knowledge, skills, behaviours and experience to do the right things and to do them well. This is why people remain at the heart of everything we do.

- 1.5 Each year, in our annual workforce report we review the progress we have made in developing our workforce – preparing our people for an emerging future, creating a learning ethos and a growth mind-set, developing leadership at all levels, creating a healthy and resilient workforce and reshaping the workforce. This report includes a look back over our journey and celebrates the collective efforts of our people and the progress we have made. Work is also well underway to develop our next Workforce Plan for 2018-2021. This will set out what we need to do to attract and retain the best people in ever changing labour market conditions; and how to continue to create the right conditions for employees to learn, adapt and flourish in uncertain and complex times.

## **2. CONTEXT**

### **Public Services Reform**

- 2.1 The challenges facing our public services are already well documented. Technology is radically changing society with automation and artificial intelligence developing at speed. Demographic change in Perth and Kinross is significant as people live longer and birth rates are rising. The devolution of powers from Westminster to Scotland and far-reaching public service reform has seen several significant pieces of new legislation (such as the Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, and the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 which have a major influence on how services are delivered and by whom.
- 2.2 All of this comes at a time when we continue to see greater demands for personalisation of council services and localisation. We also see opportunities for efficiencies and collaborative gain through working on a regional basis with neighbouring councils and other public service partners.
- 2.3 The Council operates in an increasingly complex environment. The Council role has been evolving as a direct provider of services, a commissioner of services, a partner in collaborative working as well as fulfilling a leadership role within a community planning context. This role has taken on a new significance as our five Local Action Partnerships set out their plans and communities start to embrace the opportunities to design, deliver and improve the impact of services to meet local priorities. The Council has invested heavily in supporting Services to re-design their practices and processes in order to be more efficient and effective in this context.
- 2.4 The strategic decisions that are taken by the Council on which services we will deliver, how they will be delivered and by whom inevitably impact on the number and nature of employees we require within our workforce.

## **Workforce Planning**

- 2.5 Within this context of change, we take a strategic approach to workforce planning and view it as a dynamic process, with adjustments as new influences emerge. We have been preparing our organisation and our employees for this uncertain and ambiguous future by creating the cultural conditions for a resilient and agile workforce. This work in service re-design has been engaged through our new work programme.
- 2.6 Our approach recognises the cumulative effect of strategies for attracting and retaining people with the right attributes, leadership, a culture of learning, innovation and growth, and healthy working lives in creating the best conditions for people to flourish and for the organisation to be successful.
- 2.7 Over the last 8 years, the composition and size of our workforce has changed as the Council has modernised its services, moved to new service delivery models, transformed services to have a greater focus on early intervention and prevention and embraced digital opportunities. Appendix 1 summarises the key changes in our Workforce Profile between 2009 and 2017.
- 2.8 Our workforce has reduced over the last eight years, with an overall reduction of approximately 11% in headcount over the period 2009 to 2017. Included within this figure is a 25% reduction in the number of chief officers and an 11% reduction in service managers.
- 2.9 Part of this reduction is attributed to strategic decisions to transfer functions and staff to other organisations, such as Culture Perth and Kinross, Live Active Leisure and Tayside Contracts. The actual reduction takes on greater significance when taking into account the lock on teacher numbers as part of the Local Government financial settlement (teacher numbers have increased by 1% over the 8 year period), increasing pressure on council services, additional external funding to expand provision in certain areas, such as early years, childcare and breakfast clubs (which saw an increase of 230 staff between 2015 and 2017), and planned growth in our apprenticeship and graduate traineeship programmes in support of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.
- 2.10 Any future reduction in our workforce will continue to be tied into our future skills requirements, reflecting council priorities and the changing nature of how services are delivered, with particular emphasis on working differently with our communities and the impact of digitalisation. We have committed to supporting staff in enhancing their skills base through our 'design thinking work'.
- 2.11 Voluntary severance has been a successful tool to reduce our workforce through voluntary means as well as facilitating transformation and changes in the services we deliver. In February 2017, we agreed to release 39 staff on voluntary severance on various dates through to March 2018 where there are strong business cases which examine affordability, impact on service delivery

and achieving a balanced workforce. A further voluntary severance scheme is being promoted at the moment.

- 2.12 Along with voluntary severance, strict vacancy management provisions help to reduce the size of the workforce and ensure that only critical roles are filled. This is particularly effective where we can use voluntary turnover to plan for changes in the workforce, combined with retraining and deployment of staff. The development of job families across the workforce will provide greater flexibility in the deployment of staff as well as more visible career paths across services.

### **Recruitment Challenges**

- 2.13 Although our workforce is reducing, we must continue to recruit to key roles which are essential to service delivery. Like most Councils, we continue to experience recruitment challenges for teaching posts, and this is more pronounced in rural areas and for certain subject areas (e.g. STEM, Home Economics and Gaelic) and for some promoted posts. In order to address these issues, we are continually recruiting through generic adverts in order to maintain a pool of interested applicants, making permanent appointments wherever possible in order to offer security of tenure, attracting returners to teaching and encouraging more people to enter the profession. Working in partnership with the University of Dundee, we have retrained 13 PKC employees who have now completed their Initial Teacher Training and have secured employment in schools across Perth and Kinross. A further group of 7 employees, and another group of 8 employees are at various stages of their teacher training and will follow suit. We will continue to develop recruitment strategies which will make best use of Government led campaigns and new routes into teaching, social media and attract people with the right skills and behaviours to provide the best learning experiences for our young people.
- 2.14 Another area which has experienced recruitment challenges over the last year is Construction, Property and Engineers where our workforce requirements have increased in order to support the delivery of major capital projects which are essential to the economic growth of the area. We have continued to develop relationships with our partners to share best practice and knowledge, such as in roads collaboration with Angus and Dundee City Councils. We have also developed career grade structures to attract and retain staff, including a new Graduate Apprenticeship with the University of Dundee and other graduate programmes.

### **New Ways of Working**

- 2.15 The impact of the growth in online services, demands for improved accessibility of services so they are available at a time and place of choice, all influence the skills and abilities, numbers, patterns of work and ways of working of workers required in all public services. We have continued to see changes in where and how staff work, stimulated through the Perth Office Programme which brought more flexible work spaces and better use of technology to support mobile working and home working. These

developments have helped us reduce our property footprint and thereby make significant savings. We have also piloted changes in the flexible working hours scheme which facilitate greater flexibility in staff availability to meet the evolving nature of services.

- 2.16 The Mobile Working Transformation Project has focused on providing mobile workers with the information and functionality required to deliver services in our communities and on the move. These new ways of working make our staff more efficient, and improves the quality of services and consistency in service delivery. Over the last year, the deployment of a new mobile working system has been rolled out to housing and repairs staff and roll out is planned to other teams in forthcoming months. These developments are influencing the skills and behaviours required by our staff which is supported through a variety of learning opportunities to suit different learning styles. These changes are expected to be more pronounced as we work differently with communities and partners in future.
- 2.17 The Online Services Transformation project has identified opportunities to offer up to 300 services online, including housing repairs, reporting environment issues, school registration and further improvements to Council Tax and Benefits services. These services will be accessed from the Council website which will provide Live Chat with advisors and Assisted Digital functionality where a Customer Services Assistant can help an individual who prefer not to self-serve for whatever reason to make use of the services. It is expected that more and more people will continue to choose to use online methods of communicating with the council; however, some telephone and face to face provision will also continue.
- 2.18 New ways of working have also created opportunities to make our services more efficient and to make better use of our assets. In 2007, Direct Services within the Environment Service adopted seven day working and earlier this year, Grounds Maintenance staff adopted these new ways of working. The new shift patterns developed through consultation with trades unions and staff ensure effective service delivery, deliver efficiencies and provide employees with work – life balance opportunities. In effect, these new ways of working increase the percentage of time that plant and machinery are used over a seven day period ensuring that Direct Services are as efficient and lean as possible.
- 2.19 These are some of the many examples of how our employees have developed new skills and embraced new ways of working as council services are redesigned and modernised.

### **Young People**

- 2.20 As one of the largest employers within Perth and Kinross, the Council is in a unique position of having a significant impact on the local economy by providing rewarding and well paid jobs, training and entry level jobs for young people through our successful Modern Apprenticeship and Graduate traineeship programmes, and work experience placements for those who may

find it difficult to secure employment. We have continued to work with schools and colleges in promoting the diversity of local government careers, encouraging broader interest in jobs and careers where there are gender stereotypes and promoting modern apprenticeships as a genuine alternative to full time college/university courses for enhancing career prospects.

- 2.21 Our workforce planning approach recognises that young people are our future leaders. Five years ago, we started to address the age imbalance within our workforce by increasing the range and number of opportunities for young people to train and work with the Council. The number of young people aged 16 – 24 years has increased by 73% between 2009 and 2017. Quality is important too - 94% of young people leaving the MA programme have a positive outcome of qualification, employment or moving on to further education. Over the last few years, we have increased the range of occupational frameworks, with a shift to higher level qualifications at SVQ3 and above. We have also prioritised modern apprenticeships and professional trainees which are linked to hard to fill posts and areas of growth such as early years, property and construction. We will continue to nurture talent within our young people so they can have career paths to be part of our future workforce.

### **New Service Delivery Models**

- 2.22 The Council has a long tradition of using different service delivery models, such as Joint Boards and Arm's Length External Organisations, to improve the quality of service, enhance resilience, and deliver efficiencies and savings. Following a transformational review, in June 2017, the Council commissioned janitorial services and a school crossing patrol service from Tayside Contracts. 105 staff transferred to Tayside Contracts with the protection of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment Regulations). These new arrangements allowed the development of integrated services with cleaning and catering services which were already provided by Tayside Contracts. This transfer has resulted in a reduction in the Council workforce and secured best value, improved resilience and improved services through a model which involves integrated service delivery for the three Tayside Councils through Tayside Contracts. Recent feedback from schools indicate that the new model is operating very well.
- 2.23 Therefore, the examples cited in this section demonstrate that our planning for the workforce of the future is very closely linked to our financial planning and transformation programme. Our approach is designed to reinforce our place as learning and agile Council with a workforce which is ready, able and willing to deliver the ambition of the Council as it transforms, through to 2020 and beyond.

### **3. PREPARING OUR PEOPLE FOR AN EMERGING FUTURE**

#### **Learn, Innovate, Grow: Our Organisational Development Framework**

- 3.1 Learn, Innovate, Grow is the Council's organisational development framework which was approved in 2015, alongside the Council's Transformation Strategy (Report No 15/292). Our approach to supporting change and transformation is articulated around the Learn, Innovate, Grow framework (Appendix 2) which sets out our ethos for thinking, working and future growth. The three principles help us to explain how we will evolve our organisational culture and act as enablers for transformation and continued growth. The framework sets out what is expected of people, with a focus on learning, to support changing business needs and new ways of working with our communities.
- 3.2 Our ability to support individual and collective learning has a direct impact on our capacity to transform and grow as an organisation, and at a Corporate level, a wide range of opportunities are available to ensure that people have the support they need to adapt to changing circumstances, develop their skills, and fully contribute to rethinking and reshaping public services.

#### **Learn Innovate Grow Development Discussions**

- 3.3 The Learn Innovate Grow Development Discussion (previously the Employee Review and Development Scheme), was relaunched in January 2017 and now promotes a coaching style to agree priorities, identify individual goals and solutions, and set the expectation that employees take responsibility for their own learning.
- 3.4 Over 50% of employees have participated in this new approach to date, and there has been very positive feedback about the experience from managers and employees alike. In 2018, the timing of these discussions will be more closely aligned with the production of Business Management Improvement Plans (BMIPs). This aims to encourage a more strategic approach to learning needs analysis, to support the delivery of business and transformation priorities at Service and Corporate levels, and ensure maximum efficiency around use of resources.

#### **Leadership**

- 3.5 Chief Executive's Business Breakfasts, Senior Manager Briefings and Joint Executive Officer Team and Corporate Management Group sessions, continue as core elements of the approach to leadership development and networking. They offer a means of sharing information and knowledge, seeking views, making connections, and also creating the opportunity for dialogue on the range of subjects facing public services.
- 3.6 Clearly, a key element of leadership is ensuring that those working within the Council are fully committed to the journey of change, and able to offer their best efforts in service of the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross. Developing talent and building capacity for growth is at the heart of the

leadership agenda, and there is a firm commitment to build on existing success, thus growing our capacity for change and improvement.

- 3.7 Formal learning opportunities continue as we embark on our third collaborative Leadership Development Programme for senior managers, with Dundee and Angus Councils. To date, fifteen senior managers have developed their own leadership skills, and this has contributed to the development of positive learning cultures within their own areas of influence.
- 3.8 Twenty five managers across the Council are piloting a two year online resilience programme, again in collaboration with partner local authorities, to improve personal wellbeing, performance and adaptability. The programme offers a range of concepts for consideration, to encourage self-reflection and action. In gaining a more in-depth understanding of their own their resilience, managers are better placed to recognise and support team members' resilience. These collective opportunities will contribute to building our resilience capability across the organisation.

### **Intent Based Leadership**

- 3.9 A new, system-wide focus on leadership will begin in January with the introduction of the Intent Based Leadership (IBL) model, created by US naval Commander David Marquet. His leadership techniques resulted in the highest people retention and operational standings in the history of the US Navy. The philosophy is entirely aligned with our Learn, Innovate, Grow ethos, and aims to support the further growth of the 'authorising environment', leadership at all levels, and the development of new thinking and action in relation to leadership of public services. Importantly this 'way of being' seeks to support the shift of authority and decision making as close to the service user as possible, which is entirely in keeping with the increasing focus on community empowerment.
- 3.10 This unique and practical approach will enable us to offer leadership development at scale, for all staff in a leadership role (over time). The programme will initially focus on executives to middle management, comprising the establishment of an evidence base, workshops, live coaching and the development of a cohort of IBL champions. These champions will subsequently share their knowledge through a range of practical learning opportunities for all those in leadership roles across the organisation.

### **360° Feedback**

- 3.11 To supplement the range of leadership programmes on offer, a 360° feedback model has been developed (in-house) around the Learn Innovate Grow ethos to support individual reflection, learning and growth. The model will be made widely available early in 2018.



## **A Positive Start: Induction**

- 3.12 In 2017, 150 employees participated in our 'Welcome to PKC' events, which provide new employees (and job changers within the Council) with the current contextual information they need to integrate more effectively into their roles, such as: innovation, locality working, community engagement, fairness and equalities. The events also provide an important opportunity to make new connections with colleagues, and hear inspirational stories about the difference we make to the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross.

## **Induction for Managers**

- 3.13 A Manager's Induction programme is being developed for implementation in 2018 to offer support for newly appointed managers. This will create an opportunity for participants to explore all aspects of being a manager within the Council and network with peers.

## **A Learning Organisation**

- 3.14 Our organisational ethos places learning at the heart of transformation, and as such, organised sharing of knowledge, skills and expertise continues as a priority. The growth of our learning culture is evident in the increasing number of people accessing and contributing to our dynamic range of learning opportunities. The impact on our continuing focus of prioritising learning and development can be seen in our Employee Survey 2017 results (Appendix 3), which shows that almost 72% of respondents feel that their development is encouraged and supported.

## **Learners Wanted**

- 3.15 Our Corporate 'Learners Wanted' programme offers a variety of learning and development opportunities to all employees across the Council. Subject matter is wide ranging, and includes a whole range of topics associated with wellbeing, equalities, digital learning, coaching, knowledge sharing, as well as technical skills to support transformation.
- 3.16 Over the course of 2017, almost 2000 learners have participated in 294 learning opportunities, covering 55 different topics. Significantly, almost 75% of face to face learning opportunities were facilitated by 103 of our own (and Community Planning Partner (CPP)) colleagues, sharing their professional skills and expertise. Our average rating of 4.6/5 indicates a high quality experience for those attending.
- 3.17 This approach capitalises on the vast range of professional and technical expertise and experience which exists across the Council and CPP, and is an extremely cost effective means of supporting learning and development. Participants also benefit from expanding their professional networks and connections, and this is increasingly important, given the increased focus on collaborative working, at local and national levels.

- 3.18 The significant number of employees committing time to develop their skills and capabilities is extremely positive, particularly as many of the learning opportunities are offered in the form of Learning Lunches, with employees giving up their own time not only to participate, but to share their expertise and help others learn.

### **Coaching**

- 3.19 Coaching is a learning opportunity which supports the development of new ways of thinking and working, so crucial to transformational change. We continue to develop our offer in this area, with 7 qualified coaches working internally. This is enhanced by our ability to access qualified partnership coaches (at no cost to the organisation) through our membership of the Tayside Public Sector Coaching Alliance. Within the Council, we have expanded our skill set into the areas of team coaching, professional relationship coaching, and resilience coaching, to ensure that people can access the most relevant type of support for the issue they want to address.
- 3.20 Internal coaches also deliver a one day 'Introduction to Coaching' course, and this year, 80 managers across the Council have participated in this opportunity. The resulting coaching conversation skills help them get the most from their teams, through improved communications and interpersonal skills.

### **Digital Learning**

- 3.21 In addition to the range of face to face learning opportunities, our collaborative digital (d) learning platform offers a variety of topics, comprising 55 modules, where individuals can learn at their own pace, and at a time that suits them best. Half of these modules have been commissioned and produced in-house using internal expertise and we have 2,822 active d-learners with 19,465 modules completed this year.

### **Maximising Technology**

- 3.22 During the year, employees indicated they would benefit from learning opportunities delivered locally, at different times during the day and using a variety of delivery methods. In 2018, we will maximise the use of recently upgraded technology to pilot webinars in real time, as well as recording these to build a library of opportunities, which can be accessed at any time.

### **Developing Digital Skills**

- 3.23 The pace of digitalisation is increasing, and almost all jobs now require a degree of digital competency. Apps and web services are ingrained in almost every aspect of our lives, including banking, media viewing, socializing and communicating. To grow confidence in using new technologies, a 'developing digital skills' initiative is underway. This will include providing a bank of accessible resources accessible via a range of media. Significantly these resources will be created, curated and maintained using internal expertise.

## **Adaptive PKC Worker**

- 3.24 Building on the scale of our learning offer, an Adaptive PKC Worker learning framework is in development. This articulates the skills, behaviours and attitudes which will support employees through their career journey. The aim is to promote the vast range of learning opportunities on offer, and encourage people to develop their own learning packages – it is of course linked to the Learn, Innovate, Grow Development Discussion (3.3, 3.4). It is anticipated that this will further reinforce the importance of learning (particularly during times of change) for individuals, teams and the organisation as a whole. The framework will be available across the organisation in 2018.

## **4. INNOVATION**

- 4.1 We promote and encourage learning and innovative practice as part of everyone's everyday business, and in doing so, aim to grow our collective capacity to develop new solutions to the big challenges we are facing as an organisation.

### **Angel's Share**

- 4.2 Our annual Angel's Share challenge actively encourages entrepreneurial spirit. Since its launch, 39 projects have been awarded seed corn funding to turn employees' ideas into reality, ranging from the innovative use of digital technology, to supporting clients with learning difficulties to develop an outdoor sensory area for school pupils with complex needs.
- 4.3 Now in its fifth year, 13 applications came forward with innovative projects to make a big difference to their client group. Colleagues from across the Council vote for their favourite projects, and the level of interest and support for colleagues was evident with 26,489 votes cast this year. This initiative actively encourages people to bring forward their ideas, reinforces our commitment to supporting creativity and innovation, and brings the year to an end on a positive and upbeat note.

### **Acorn Transformation Fund**

- 4.4 This short-term funding opportunity aims specifically to invest in initiatives which focus on preparing people for the future, encourages innovative approaches to developing people and supports shifts towards new ways of working / models of service delivery.
- 4.5 To date, ten projects have been allocated funding, ranging from a project which promotes 'hard to recruit' areas by sponsoring employees to undertake professional qualifications in social work and social care, to supporting increased digital confidence across the Council to adopt technology-enabled change. A performance framework is in development to check progress, and importantly, measure the impact of these projects.

## **Rethinking Public Services**

- 4.6 Our Transformation Programme promotes a planned approach to change, and as we broaden our understanding of what transformation means in public services, we recognise that we need to keep the focus on innovation and creativity in our daily work, and develop a more entrepreneurial and commercial mind set. Whilst there may be evidence for the challenges our citizens and communities are facing, evidence for the solutions may not yet exist, and we need develop the confidence to take a leap of faith in pursuit of new ways of working, where it is appropriate.
- 4.7 Given the increasing focus on working differently with our communities, a methodology known as Service Design is becoming increasingly relevant, as it promotes a people-focused approach to designing customer interactions and experiences. To learn more, staff from all Services took part in a collaborative global event, Govjam, designed to provide people in public services with an introduction to design thinking skills.
- 4.8 This is a different approach to more traditional improvement methodologies, and as the organisation evolves, it will be important to be fully confident in the application of this methodology. Therefore, to further develop our design thinking capacity and capability, we will commission a Service Design organisation to work with us on two different transformation projects. This will allow us to develop confidence and experience of applying this methodology within a live and supported setting, and in doing so, create a cohort of internal expertise. Subsequently, we will build design thinking skills at scale across the organisation, to be further applied across the range of change and transformation activity emerging across the Council

## **Can Do: Innovation Challenge**

- 4.9 We recognise that incremental change will always be important; however, our transformation journey recognises the need for a more radical approach to change. In this respect, another opportunity which will be pursued in 2018 exists in the form of the Can Do Innovation Challenge Fund, which seeks to support Scottish public sector organisations to find and develop innovative solutions to societal and service delivery challenges, by linking them with private sector innovators. This is a 'Team Scotland' approach which aims to boost Scotland's innovation and economic development performance. Work is underway to identify the right challenges, so that bids can be submitted by 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018. If successful, there is much to be learned from participating in this process, which goes beyond purely funding, allowing participants the chance to experience a collaborative, service design approach to developing innovative practice / solutions for the identified challenge.

## **5. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

- 5.1 The primary source of an organisation's success is dependent on the commitment and action of its people, and the business case for prioritising

employee engagement is well evidenced; encouraging, listening to and acting on employee voice is particularly important within these times of ongoing change and uncertainty.

- 5.2 Employee engagement is an *outcome* of people's experience of an organisation, and the entirety of this report outlines the range of dynamic and positive people practices which seek to ensure that employees remain committed to our goals and values, motivated to contribute to organisational success, and at the same time, are able to enhance their own sense of well-being.

### **Making a Difference**

- 5.3 Our approach is well established, seeking to promote leadership, engaging managers and employee voice; and we are fortunate to have a highly engaged workforce. Perth & Kinross Council is sector-leading in many areas, and we continue to deliver strong organisational performance across the board, as evidenced in the Annual Performance Report 2016/17 (17/321).
- 5.4 We can also see the return on our investment in employee engagement in the quantity and quality of projects recognised for awards, both internally (via the Securing The Future Awards, 6.3) and externally. Examples of this include the Men in Childcare Project, which gained a Scottish Public Service Award in December, and earlier in the year, the Zero Waste Highland Perthshire gained a bronze award in the COSLA Excellence Awards.
- 5.5 Similarly, the numbers of applicants coming forward for Angel's Share and Acorn funding, (4.2 and 4.4) are a clear indication of people's energy, commitment and belief in what the organisation stands for.

### **Maintaining Momentum**

- 5.6 In addition to the engagement events for Senior Managers outlined at 3.5, we have strengthened our focus on employee engagement over the last year, with almost 350 staff participating in seven Futures Thinking Conversations (across Perth City and localities) with Executive Officers. These events (which will continue in 2018) offered the opportunity for colleagues at all levels to discuss and understand the key challenges people are facing and also share their ideas about how these could be collectively addressed.

### **Stronger Communities Conference**

- 5.7 Our programme of conference and events is ongoing, and this creates opportunities to engage with large numbers of staff around emerging areas of focus and promote key organisational messages at both Council and CPP level.
- 5.8 In November, around 200 delegates from across the CPP attended the Stronger Communities conference, to further progress the localities agenda. During the course of the morning, delegates heard from keynote speaker Dr

Claire Bynner of What Works Scotland, as well as from members of the CPP Executive Officer Group. 90% of those completing the event evaluation stated the conference fulfilled their reason for attending.

### **Employee Engagement Survey**

- 5.9 Our annual Employee Survey (which takes place in September each year) is an important part of the Council's approach to continuous improvement, providing a consistent opportunity to understand a 'snapshot' of employee experience at a particular point in time (Appendix 3). It also serves to triangulate the information emerging from the range of engagement activity taking place across the Council, ensuring our work to support people focuses on what people are telling us is important.
- 5.10 In 2017, 2,494 employees (equating to 43.7%), took time to offer their views. Trends over 3 years and the longer term, continue to be generally positive, and this big picture view confirms the effectiveness of our dynamic and evolving approach to supporting people through challenging times. Services and Teams across the Council received their results during October and November, and are currently engaging staff in discussions about strengths and areas for improvement. Talking through, and acting on the results, are the most valuable aspects of the survey. The experience creates an opportunity for staff to shape and deliver improvements within their area of influence.
- 5.11 Additional support will be offered to Services to address areas of challenge emerging from the Employee Survey, and to design and deliver appropriate interventions which bring people and teams together, to develop their own solutions.

### **Pulse Surveys**

- 5.12 In growing our approach to the measurement of employee engagement, pulse surveys were introduced this year and piloted in Education & Children's Services. Pulse surveys aim to encourage more frequent conversation on emerging / important issues within the setting, and in doing so, gain 'real time' insight into people's views and experiences. Housing & Community Safety will be the next Service to pilot the pulse survey method in 2018.

### **Employee Engagement: Themes for Action**

- 5.13 Themes emerging from the range of engagement mechanisms taking place over the course of the year are detailed below. It is clear that whilst life in public services is becoming increasingly challenging, people remain as committed as ever, and this information is already driving our people and transformational priorities for 2018.
- Within the Council, keeping the channels of communication open is critical – such is the pace of change, that people appreciate being provided with real time information on developments. The same applies

for communities – there is a sense that people outside the organisation aren't fully aware of the level of challenge facing public services, and what this means for them.

- The ongoing reduction in workforce is impacting on those who remain in terms of increasing workloads. It is becoming increasingly challenging to maintain levels of performance, or the range of services currently on offer, within this environment. There is a greater reliance on discretionary effort, and this is unlikely to be sustainable in the longer term. Wellbeing of staff will be fundamental to continued organisational resilience.
- There are concerns that the cumulative impact of savings will impact negatively on priorities such as early intervention and prevention, and services which support those in most need.
- As the organisation gets 'leaner' we need to continue to reduce layers of bureaucracy, maximise the use of technology, and support the further growth of an authorising environment, so that people can work more efficiently and focus their efforts on what offers the most value to the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross.
- The approach to transformation and collaboration needs to evolve to allow those involved adequate time and space to focus on the work in hand, and learn new skills which will help us rethink how we will deliver services, and support our communities. It is challenging to progress at the pace required whilst also managing operational services.
- Professional expertise is more important than ever - we need to ensure that people are multi-skilled, and able to move around the organisation as required to support the delivery of priorities. Digital skills are a key area for development, and the emphasis on working differently with communities means that we need to be open to different ways of working – this will mean 'letting go' of services we have delivered in the past, and supporting communities to develop and deliver their own solutions.

## **Healthy Working Lives**

- 5.14 Evidence shows that establishing a strategic approach to healthy working lives is much more likely to lead to successful business outcomes through better employee engagement, improved productivity and reduced sickness absence rates. The Council's approach to health and wellbeing recognises the combined impact of a range of factors on employee wellbeing, including environmental, organisational and societal. We have therefore developed a holistic approach which builds resilience and thereby benefits individual employees, their families, the council as employer and ultimately the wider community.

- 5.15 Over the last year, we have continued to raise awareness of health and wellbeing issues through Learning Lunches on Desk and Chair Yoga, Guided Meditation, taster complimentary therapies, posturite, Working through the Menopause, Keeping Employees in the Loop and Movement is Medicine. Both Inside News Magazines and Compass Magazines have highlighted national campaigns and internal projects and initiatives which encourage employees to take ownership of their own personal wellbeing. Some other examples are Health Promotion Events; winter flu vaccinations, and gaining Supporting Carers At Work – Established Status in the Carer Kitemark Initiative which recognises that proactive support from employers can alleviate some of the stresses and challenges associated with being an employee with caring responsibilities.
- 5.16 The Council has successfully maintained Healthy Working Lives Bronze and Silver Awards and is now actively working towards achieving Healthy Working Lives Gold Award in 2018. The benefits of participation in the Healthy Working Lives Award programme include the following;
- Enhancing the Council's reputation as an employer who values staff and is proactive in employee wellbeing
  - A healthier, more motivated workforce
  - Reduced accidents and work related ill health
  - Contributing to the health of the wider community
- 5.17 Our Jogging and Walking Groups are now well established. Over 30 employees have joined the "Walk this Way" Walking Group who meet Tuesday lunchtimes. Over 150 employees have joined "JogPKC" since the group was established and now averages around 20-30 employees per block. Employees take part in these activities in their own time.
- 5.18 Mental wellbeing and supporting mental health in the workplace remain our priority. Like most other public services employers, mental health continues to be the highest reason for sickness absence across the Council. We have used the See Me Campaign which focuses on workplace mental health issues, to survey employees on their views of the Council's policies, procedures and support in relation to mental health. This survey led to improvement actions which encourage more open dialogue about mental wellbeing within teams and increased access to mental health awareness training. This work is progressing with commitment and support from our trades unions.
- 5.19 Learning Lunches on "Let's Talk about Mental Health" confirmed the need for an extended session for managers to discuss key issues in more detail. This led to the development of a manager's session on Mental Health in the Workplace to raise awareness and support employees, and Mental Health First Aiders have also been trained.
- 5.20 Personal resilience is a key contributor to healthy working lives and it is vital that our people are supported to remain resilient through change and



transformation. Resilience building sessions are offered on both personal resilience led by our occupational health provider, and team resilience led by internal facilitators. In 2018, internal resilience coaches will widen the resilience support offer to managers and team leaders, for sharing at scale across the organisation.

- 5.21 In addition, the Council continues to encourage employees to use the counselling service, the early intervention mental wellbeing service and the physiotherapy service as part of the Occupational Health contract to support employees to remain in work and support/encourage an early return to work wherever possible.

## **6. CELEBRATING SUCCESS**

- 6.1 A key strength of our organisational culture is our ongoing commitment to visibly celebrating success and achievement, both at an everyday level, and also via our growing portfolio of events, such as the Modern Apprentice Graduation, Service Recognition Awards, and David White Award (which will be incorporated into next year's Securing the Future Awards).
- 6.2 These events are highly valued by those attending and create an opportunity to recognise individual, team and organisational achievements, as well as reinforcing key cultural messages around the importance of innovative practice and the impact of positive outcomes. They also serve to reinforce the emotional connection people have with the Council, and further secure the commitment and contribution of our employees.

### **Securing the Future Awards**

- 6.3 Clear evidence of innovative practice can be seen in the scope and scale of applications put forward within the annual Securing the Future Awards (STF) programme – this year, 41 entries competed to win gold in six categories related to the Council's priority areas.
- 6.4 The STF Award categories are currently being refreshed for 2018 to remain relevant and meaningful, and reinforce the increasing focus on community empowerment, and collaborative activity. Participating in the awards process is an extremely motivational experience, as it creates an opportunity to broaden understanding of the significant range of professional expertise, commitment and creativity in existence across the Council.

## **7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Whilst these are undoubtedly challenging times, we remain an ambitious Council, confident of our clear organisational vision and ethos, and our commitment to supporting and investing in the people who work for us to reach their full potential. Building capacity for change is our key focus, and this is allied to developing new ways of thinking and working, as described in this report. We will deliver bold action, and place greater emphasis on

involving consumers, citizens and communities in driving change, and designing services for a different future.

7.2 Our talented and skilled workforce demonstrates their passion and dedication to public service on a daily basis. This provides a solid foundation upon which to transform the way the Council does business.

7.3 It is recommended that the Council:

- Acknowledges and endorses the continued emphasis on supporting our people as the essential element of our ability to transform as an organisation;
- Notes the progress and achievements over the course of 2017, and
- Instructs the Depute Chief Executive / Chief Operating Officer to bring forward a new Corporate Workforce Plan in early 2018.

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#### Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Bernadette Malone	Chief Executive	11 December 2017

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## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Yes / None</b>
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Plan	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	
Financial	<b>None</b>
Workforce	<b>Yes</b>
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	<b>None</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	<b>Yes</b>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<b>None</b>
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	<b>None</b>
Legal and Governance	<b>None</b>
Risk	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>Yes</b>
External	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	<b>Yes</b>

## 2. Strategic Implications

### Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 2.1 The report supports the overall delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the contribution made by our workforce to the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

### Corporate Plan

- 2.2 The report relates to the overall achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities through the collective and individual efforts from our workforce:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

### **3. Resource Implications**

#### Financial

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

#### Workforce

- 3.2 This report sets out our people priorities for a learning and agile council.

#### Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 3.3 There are no land, IT or property implications arising from this report.

### **4. Assessments**

#### Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Our people priorities enable the council to fulfil its obligations in this regard. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for specific initiatives and policies, as required.

#### Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 4.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

#### Legal and Governance

- 4.3 There are no legal issues arising directly from this report. The Executive Officer Team operates an annual programme of workforce governance to maintain strategic oversight of all workforce matters.

#### Risk

- 4.4 The people priorities and practices set out within this report are designed to ensure the council is resourced with a skilled, motivated and engaged workforce to enable it to modernise, transform and deliver its strategic objectives.

### **5. Consultation**

#### Internal

- 5.1 Trades unions are consulted and involved in shaping our employment framework and initiatives which affect our workforce. This takes place via

well-established fora such as the Employees Joint Consultative Committee, Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers as well as through other meetings and workshops which are arranged for specific purposes.

#### External

- 5.2 There is regular and ongoing dialogue with other Councils, partner employers and professional bodies on workforce matters in order to share and develop good practice, exploit collaborative opportunities, seek efficiencies and influence the national agenda.

### **6. Communication**

- 6.1 We celebrate our workforce achievements and successes with staff via a variety of written media, such as Inside News Bulletins, Inside News Magazines, Service Newsletters and face to face opportunities, such as corporate events, Delayed Office Opening events and team meetings. As a major employer in the area, we also celebrate workforce achievements with the wider Perth and Kinross community via the press and social media, as well as through our influence and contact with other employers.

### **2. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Building Ambition: The Council's Transformation Strategy 2015-2020 and Organisational Development Framework (Report No 15/292) – Council – 1 July 2015

Perth & Kinross Council Business Plan 2016-2019, Council, 22 June 2016 (Report No 16/283)

Building Ambition – A Workforce For the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Report No 16/562) – 14 December 2016

Annual Performance Report 2016 / 2017 – Council, 4 October 2017 (Report No. 17/321)

### **3. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Workforce Profile

Appendix 2 – Organisational Development Framework Learn Innovate Grow

Appendix 3 – Employee Engagement Survey 2017