

# **PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**

## **Finance and Resources Committee**

**12 June 2024**

### **PEOPLE AND CULTURE STRATEGY 2024-2028**

#### **Report by Corporate HR Manager (Report No. 24/180)**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the People and Culture Strategy 2024-2028 (Appendix 1) and the associated action plan. This strategy supports our journey of transformation and change, providing a sustainable approach to resource planning as we reshape our organisation to ensure that we are empowering our teams to be the best they possibly can in order to deliver the best public services for the people of Perth and Kinross, focussed on need and within available resources.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- A.** approves the People and Culture Strategy as set out in Appendix 1, which will be supported by an iterative action plan owned and led by the Strategic Leadership Team.
- B.** agrees that updates on progress of actions in the action plan and any new or emerging issues arising during the life cycle of the strategy will be reported annually to this Committee.

#### **3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT**

This report is structured over the following sections:

Section 4: Background/Main Issues  
Section 5: Proposals  
Section 6: Conclusion  
Appendix 1: Draft People and Culture Strategy

#### **4. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Corporate Plan 2022/23-2027/28 (Report No. 22/311) set out the key priorities and vision for the Council, including the principles of how we will approach the delivery of services. Our Transformation and Change Strategy (Report No. 22/142) recognises that to achieve the ambitions of Council we will need to transform our organisation, including its size and shape. And our Financial Strategy (Report No. 22/141) recognises the unprecedented budget

challenges and need for responsible decision-making given the context in which we work. This People and Culture Strategy builds upon the foundation laid by these previous decisions to provide the enabler for our continued journey to reshape our organisation to ensure that we can deliver the best public services we can for the people of Perth and Kinross, focussed on need and within available resources.

- 4.2 The previous Corporate Workforce Plan covered the period 2021–2023. However, to allow the changes agreed through the Executive and Senior Leadership Review (Report No 23/195) to be fully implemented, officers agreed to defer the replacement of that plan until June 2024.
- 4.3 The new People and Culture Strategy is also an agreed management action emerging from the 2022/23 Best Value Thematic Review (Report No. 23/366). The Audit Scotland 2024 Best Value Theme is Workforce Innovation and this strategy incorporates feedback provided to date from the auditors. Any other future recommendations related to workforce planning will be incorporated into the action plan.
- 4.4 This strategy has considered the significant changes, opportunities and challenges which the Council and the wider public sector are facing, including:
  - Changing demands for services
  - Range of highly specialist skills and services required for delivery
  - Need for well-trained, adaptable and modern workforce
  - Increasing pressures on recruitment and retention experienced across all Councils in Scotland within an increasingly competitive recruitment market
  - Changing relationships with partners, stakeholders and communities to better manage demand and move to an evidence-based focus on need
  - Changing models of service delivery, including Council's role as a facilitator rather than a sole provider
- 4.5 The context in which we are now operating is set out in the Strategy, based around the values of **Ambition**, **Compassion** and **Integrity** to ensure that it delivers direction not only on what we need to do but also why, where and how we should be delivering that action. The operating context includes:
  - An ageing population
  - Our current workforce profile
  - Resource reductions and constraints
  - Leadership
  - Digital by design
  - Agile working and changing patterns of work
  - Engagement and inclusion
  - Fair Work First principles
- 4.6 To meet these challenges, we require strong workforce planning arrangements across the organisation with key milestones, sound governance arrangements and effective measures to monitor our progress in achieving

our priorities set out in the Corporate Plan, Finance Strategy, Transformation and Change Strategy and Digital Strategy.

## 5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The proposed People and Culture Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1, sets out our objective:

***“To enable the delivery of a sustainable approach to workforce development, and a flexible and agile workforce with the right skills, values and attitudes to meet the needs of our communities now and into the future.”***

- 5.2 It sets out how we will review our workforce in line with changing ways of working, retain and develop employees to meet current and future workforce requirements and expectation and changes to service delivery. Working together this way will enable us to meet the changing needs of customers and communities as well as supporting our employees to embrace these changes to deliver on the priorities in the Corporate Plan.

- 5.3 The Strategy builds on our existing focus on workplace culture, recruitment, and staff retention, Fair Work, learning and development, health and wellbeing, leadership and reward and recognition. Actions proposed within the Strategy will further develop our performance focus and provide clarity of expectation and support available.

- 5.4 From the consultation process, collated data and external sources a number of key issues were identified. These have informed strategic aims, objectives and actions proposed in the strategy. The core elements of the Strategy and associated action plan include:

- The need to address a number of external and internal drivers requiring a more co-ordinated approach to our workforce planning activity and to embed this into operational activity as a primary factor in effective service delivery.
- In order to attract and retain increased numbers of suitably qualified candidates our employment offer to potential candidates needs to be presented more attractively, tailored to target audiences.
- To support the development of a more flexible workforce there is a need to attract and retain employees who can embrace the ethos of a “One Council employee.”
- There is a need for greater flexibility in our policies and processes which facilitate the movement of employees to support both the delivery of essential services and, where appropriate, employee development.
- The need to continue to harness the use of technology to deliver efficient, transparent and accessible services that support our employees and communities in the best and most efficient and effective way possible.
- The need for employees to attend work regularly, be the best they can be to thrive, engage, be productive, creative and feel safe (physically and

psychologically) and supported at their work. To promote PKC as a truly inclusive workplace to allow employees to be their authentic self at work.

- To proactively and fairly support the Council's performance framework. Everyone will be required to manage performance ensuring clarity of role and expectations, delivering their role to the required standards. Everyone is expected to role model our values and behaviours in all that we do. The People and Culture Strategy will underpin a performance culture of accountability where feedback and developing performance is viewed positively and is designed to meet business needs.
- The importance of partnership working – we need to consider how we work with partners, ALEOs, Tayside Contracts and other Local Authorities to share ideas, best practice, effective use of resources, create development opportunities and to address changes in workforce requirements.

5.5 We aim to create a workforce that:

- Is the right size and shape to deliver our services and desired outcomes now and in the future, in line with our workforce planning, Council and Service/workforce plans
- Is well-led and empowered to deliver the Corporate Plan priorities.
- Has the appropriate skills and behaviours to enable delivery of the Digital Strategy to optimise the use of technology, internet, working remotely, being flexible, motivated and outcome focused.
- Is responsive to changing needs, new ways of working and delivering services differently.
- Is safe in the working environment and supported to be mentally and physically healthy with the right work/life balance.

5.6 The Strategy will be supplemented by a Workforce Planning Group with service representation to ensure that actions are actively managed, the plan is a live document and will be reviewed regularly to identify particular occupational groups, shortages, hard to fill, surpluses, areas of decline, skills and capacity building. This group will incorporate feedback arising from engagement activities, e.g. employee survey and any changes to external factors during the life cycle of the strategy. The representative on the group will act as channels for sharing of ideas, providing examples of good practice from operational teams along with any other guidance for managers and employees.

5.7 Actions arising from workforce planning locally will form part of the service operating models, one to one documents and Performance Development Discussions with employees.

5.8 Ownership of the Strategy and the associated actions is the responsibility of the Executive and Strategic Leadership teams. They are collectively responsible for the delivery of the corporate plan priorities and this strategy reflects the values and behaviours that will underpin the delivery of these across the organisation. Ongoing oversight of the action plan will be by the

Strategic Leadership Team, to ensure awareness and ownership of specific initiatives.

- 5.9 Updates on particular workforce actions will be provided, as appropriate, to EJCC and JNCT.
- 5.10 Ongoing engagement and communications with our workforce will be undertaken to ensure channels for feedback are open; to raise awareness of the aims of the strategy and associated actions; to promote and share other key changes impacting on people to ensure shared understanding and awareness of what is changing and why and promote learning and development opportunities and career pathways.
- 5.11 A plan on a page with the agreed strategy aims will be developed and published on the Council's website.
- 5.12 An annual update report on progress will be provided to the Finance and Resources Committee.

### **Future developments**

- 5.13 Additional measures and initiatives arising from the financial context and Transformation and Change plan may necessitate other measures that enable the Council to deliver savings over the next three financial years. These may include:
  - Accelerating collaboration/shared services with other Councils and partners to achieve economies of scale and improve service resilience.
  - Building capacity for community led work and delivering more services in partnership with the third sector and community organisations.
  - Further reviewing our operating model in terms of organisational design toolkit i.e. numbers of direct reports to line managers and our overall management structures.
  - Ensuring that [financial principles](#) and the [vacancy management measures](#) are being actively applied and this may impact capacity and service provision in some areas.
  - Other employment considerations regarding flexible working arrangements, our use of buildings and utilising resources differently across the working week.
- 5.14 Our refreshed employee survey was developed in partnership with key stakeholders including the trade unions. This new annual survey was live from 15 April to 31 May 2024. The feedback from the survey will provide valuable information about leadership, staff communication, engagement, resilience and health and wellbeing. The survey results will give us an insight into how staff are feeling and what their specific issues are, providing the opportunity to deliver and support actions to address these. The results will be factored into our action plan and will be reported in future updates to this Committee.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Our staff do great work. We want to ensure that their contribution is recognised, that they feel valued for the work that they do and the difference that they make. As we continue on our journey of transformation and change, reshaping our organisation is essential to ensuring that we are prepared to deliver the best public services we can for the people of Perth and Kinross, focussed on need and within available resources. We have a clear vision, aims and aspiration for our workforce, and bringing our people on that journey is an essential part of that process.
- 6.2 The proposed People and Culture Strategy sets out the commitments to our employees to ensure that they have the right skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours to positively make a difference to those we serve.

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### Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Greg Boland	Strategic Lead, Strategic Planning, People and Performance	May 2024

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – Draft People and Culture Strategy

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

## 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>n/a</b>
Workforce	<b>Yes</b>
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	<b>Yes</b>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<b>n/a</b>
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	<b>n/a</b>
Legal and Governance	<b>n/a</b>
Risk	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>Yes</b>
External	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	<b>Yes</b>

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 The People and Culture Strategy supports all of the priorities within the Community Plan 2022-27.

- *Reducing Poverty (including child poverty, fuel poverty and food poverty)*
- *Mental and physical wellbeing*
- *Digital participation*
- *Skills, learning and development*
- *Employability*

#### Corporate Plan

1.2 The People and Culture Strategy supports the priorities within the Corporate Plan:-

- *Tackling poverty*
- *Tackling climate change and supporting sustainable places*
- *Developing a resilient, stronger and greener local economy*
- *Enabling our children and young people to achieve their full potential*
- *Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people*
- *Supporting and promoting physical and mental wellbeing*
- *Working in partnership with communities*

## 2. Resource Implications

### Financial

- 2.1 There are no direct financial implications.

### Workforce

- 2.2 There are no direct workforce implications as a result of the development of the People and Culture Strategy.

The strategy will support the delivery of the corporate plan priorities and will operate in conjunction with other existing Council strategies. The action plan will be reviewed and outcomes and actions will be monitored and reported annually in terms of progress.

This proposal is put forward by the Corporate Human Resources Manager.

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

- 2.3 There are no direct asset management implications.

## 3. Assessments

### Equality Impact Assessment

This proposal has been assessed as **relevant** and the following positive outcomes are expected following implementation:

- Increased opportunities for young employees arising from the action to increase the proportion of the workforce under the age of 30.
- Continued and developing support for employees who may experience barriers to inclusion and opportunity.
- Increased confidence among employees from minority groups to feel secure in being their authentic self in the workplace.
- Increased opportunities for all employees to access and benefit from career and personal development opportunities.
- Increased security for employees as a result of new approaches to workforce planning.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

The proposals have been considered under the Act however, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

### Sustainability

There is the potential for elements of the People and Culture Strategy to impact on our Climate Change efforts, namely hybrid working and its impact

on commuter traffic. As we develop each element this impact will be considered.

### Legal and Governance

There are no legal implications.

### Risk

The priorities set out in the Strategy and within this report are designed to **“enable the delivery of a sustainable approach to workforce development, and a flexible and agile workforce with the right skills, values and attitudes to meet the needs of our communities now and into the future.”** It is noted that the Strategy and action plan are live documents and will evolve due to changing priorities and as such risks will be identified, as appropriate.

## **4. Consultation**

### Internal

- 4.1 Internal consultation activity has been undertaken including Executive Leadership Team, Strategic Leadership Team, Senior Management Teams, Service Managers, Staff Disability Network and the Wellbeing Group. The Care and LGBTI+ Networks and employees were offered the opportunity to comment.

### External

- 4.2 External consultation has focused on our recognised trade unions. Desktop exercises were undertaken of other organisations’ People and Workforce Strategy documents, related workforce data and other external publications e.g. CIPD Working Lives Scotland Report 2023, Audit Scotland Best Value Reports.

## **5. Communication**

- 5.1 Following approval of the People and Culture Strategy, a plan on a page will be created and published on our website. The Communications Team will ensure that appropriate communications are used to cascade the Strategy.

Regular updates will be reported to committee during the lifespan of the Strategy.

## **2. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/a

## **3. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – People and Culture Strategy