

Introduction

This report showcases the key achievements set out in the Corporate Workforce Plan – Building Ambition – 2018 – 2021.

At the time the plan was approved, the world of work was evolving and public services transforming the way in which we worked and delivered services to our communities. The plan recognised that the pace and extent of change was so significant that there had never been a more important time to set out our ambitions in our workforce plan and invest in our people through enhanced workforce development and effective leadership. As well as identifying challenges and opportunities in key occupational areas, the workforce plan identified priorities for action under four key themes.

Significant progress has been made in achieving our ambitions for our workforce and work has begun on the [Perth and Kinross Offer](#); however, no-one anticipated we would face a global pandemic that has tested and challenged the resilience of individuals and organisations world-wide, changing the way we work and live forever.

Never has workforce planning been more critical than during the Covid-19 pandemic when we rapidly re-prioritised our work and re-tasked staff to focus on our role as a Category 1 Responder, and provide essential operational services, including those to the most vulnerable citizens in our communities. The pandemic saw the Perth and Kinross Offer in action and the need to innovate and collaborate on a scale never seen before.

Safeguarding the health and wellbeing of our workforce was essential, supporting them to be healthy and resilient during such challenging times. Digital technology became critical to the way we work and the continued delivery of our services, requiring our people to show agility, develop new skills and embrace new ways of working. Never had there been a more significant time to invest in our people than during the pandemic.



Our Changing Workforce Profile



The overall size of our workforce has increased from 5534* to 5738**



Fixed Term Contracts have decreased from 530 to 348 (down 34%)



Annual pay bill incl. employer costs has increased from £185m to £218m



The number of employees 16 - 24 has increased from 275 to 282 (up by 2.5%)



The number of employees aged 60+ has increased from 454 to 541 (up by 18.5%)



Permanent turnover has decreased from 9.1% to 6.2%

* as at 31 March 2018
**as at 31 March 2021

Since March 2019, our workforce has increased by approximately 4% (headcount), with the Scottish Government's expansion of Early Years the main contributor to the increase. Pay awards, along with the increase in the size of our workforce and incremental advancements over the three year period, has resulted in a £33m increase in our paybill. Recognition of the continued need to invest in our young workforce as part of our workforce planning creates a pipeline of future talent and recognises future challenges around our aging workforce.

Focus on Culture



Click on image above

As our PKC culture evolves Learn, Innovate, Grow has been re-modelled into the Organisational Development (OD) Plan, supporting transformation and cultural change to enable the PK Offer.

Outcomes:

- A learning organisation, which offers equality of opportunity for all employees, through access to learning and career development which helps them grow personally and professionally
- Employee engagement visible in improved or innovative practice
- Our individual and collective leadership inspires, supports and values contributions from all
- Employees feel valued, recognised and respected, and employee voice influences change

Achievements:

- The [OD plan](#) sets out our principles in OD along with a programme of activity around 4 key themes; cultural change, leadership, employee development, and health and wellbeing
- Organisational values have been agreed to set the tone of PKC culture and a behaviours framework is in development
- Engaged in creative and collaborative working with communities and partners in response to the global pandemic, supporting our most vulnerable citizens e.g., creation of mass vaccination centres and, recruitment and deployment of resources
- Using a range of virtual engagement methods like, surveys, online meetings and conferences employees, citizens, communities, businesses and partners participated in phase 1 of the PK Offer
- Enhanced the range of interventions used to support teams and Services through cultural and structural change, as well as new ways of working triggered by the pandemic
- Reinforced our internal cultural change message through continued opportunities for employee self-development on a wide range of topics including wellbeing, leadership and digital skills; and enriched our e-learning programmes
- Implemented new leadership initiatives creating self-awareness and enhancing working relationships; in collaboration with Perth UHI created a programme for those new to management
- Facilitated development discussion workshops helping to create a safe space for people to share experiences, consider how they can become more autonomous and empowered, and work on establishing more risk positive behaviours

- Continued to [celebrate success](#) in a virtual environment using video footage to share employee achievements and inspirational behaviours in-line with the PK Offer
 - Emphasised the importance of maintaining good [health and wellbeing](#), through regular [newsletters](#), events and conferences and this is now embedded in everyday conversations
- Supported digital leadership with employees more confident in technology enabled change, developing knowledge and skills for life, work, learning and leisure; and collaborated to increase digital participation in our communities

Attract, Retain and Develop Talent

To enable us to meet the needs of our communities, it is essential that recruitment and retention strategies are in place to ensure current and future workforce requirements are met. To Attract, Retain and Develop talent, the following outcomes were set in the 2018 plan:

- Perth & Kinross Council is recognised as a 'great place to work' by employees across the employee lifecycle (from recruitment to exit)
- We can evidence a positive recruitment experience for all candidates

Achievements

- To promote our employer brand, a [web page](#) created to promote the P&K Offer, hear about the issues that matter and learn how we can work together with our communities to provide support. Resources to help people learn and understand about the range of services and initiatives undertaken by the Council.
- A new welcoming [eric](#) intranet site with easily accessible news updates and resources supports a positive employee experience.
- Brexit information and support campaign for our Non-UK EU/EEA national workforce with regular awareness raising communications. Employees took up the offer of a one-to-one appointment with a specialist solicitor from the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre, supporting those employees to apply for pre/settled status. Continued monitoring of the impact of Brexit and the pandemic on our workforce and the labour market.
- **Learn to** programmes offer existing employees the opportunity to pursue a different career by studying for a qualification and supporting future workforce requirements.

Case Study

In partnership with Perth UHI, 27 employees have realised their ambition to work in **early years** by becoming an Early Childhood Practitioner. This initiative was part of a suite of initiatives to support the implementation of the Government's increase in early years provision, support child development and reduce the attainment gap.



'Katie was a superb addition to our staff team last session, so much so that she has landed a permanent contract she has brought experience and life skills to the job, which we really benefited from'
Headteacher

Four very successful Learn to Teach programmes, in collaboration with the University of Dundee, has produced 32 very high calibre students access the teaching profession.

- Continued employment opportunities for young people e.g., apprenticeships, graduate and professional trainees, particularly in areas of growth and hard to fill. The increasing number of young people in the our workforce provides a pipeline of future talent, development of career paths (e.g., early years, property), and supports retention and succession planning.

150 MA's
Recruited

- 52 Secured Employment in PKC
- 42 Went on to a positive destination e.g. further study or employment outwith PKC
- 56 progressing qualification

- The pandemic delayed the introduction of a refreshed Recruitment Framework, however, a more modern approach has been adopted, focusing on hard to fill posts. Examples include –



- Using a range of tools and platforms including videos to highlight vacancies, provide more information to the candidate, and the

approach supports the appointment of hard to fill roles (e.g. school leadership roles). Involving stakeholders provides them with a voice, enhances the candidate experience. Enabling our young people to promote modern apprentice vacancies to their peers on our social media platforms. The overall result contributes to attracting talent and supports our employer brand.

- Networking opportunities were introduced to our corporate induction offer whilst some elements of induction transferred online during the pandemic, making our [induction journey](#) more accessible.
- Introduction of a new Managers Induction, with further development planned within the [Corporate Workforce Plan 2021-23](#) to support new, existing and aspiring managers.



Healthy Working Lives

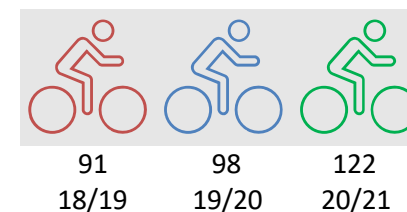
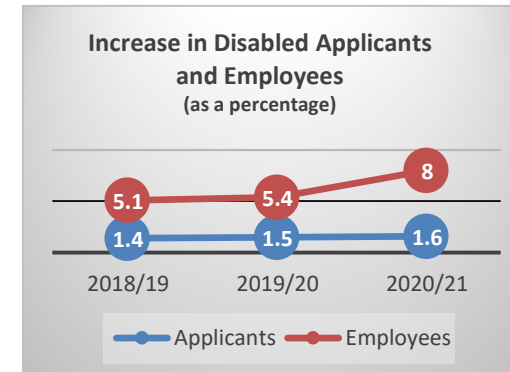
The Council recognises that a strategic approach to health and wellbeing is more likely to achieve successful outcomes, both for the organisation and our employees. The Covid-19 pandemic affected our everyday lives and our employee's safety, health and wellbeing became more important than ever. The outcomes contained within the 2018 – 2021 Corporate Workforce Plan were:

- A healthy workforce: increased promotion / uptake across the range of health, wellbeing and resilience initiatives and opportunities available to support people to perform their best at work, and maintain a positive work / life balance
- Engaged and motivated staff with the skills, behaviours and resilience to adapt positively to change

Achievements

- Introduction of a new [Health and Wellbeing Framework](#) in October 2019 to support employees through ill health prevention, early intervention and building resilience. Recognition that health and wellbeing is more than just physical health, with greater emphasis on mental and financial wellbeing, including the promotion of welfare rights services to staff, promotion of Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) to pension
- Continued offer of counselling and physiotherapy treatment for employees, with demand increasing year on year prior to the pandemic.
- Prior to the pandemic, a wide range of health and wellbeing opportunities were available, including Hatha Yoga and JogPKC, to encourage and support all employees, including our increasing ageing workforce, to lead healthy active lives and to Live Life Well.

- Awarded Disability Confident Leader Status in September 2019, recognising our commitment to supporting disabled candidates and employees and helping the Council to make the most of the talents disabled employees can bring to the workplace. The Council continues to see an increase in the number of disabled applicants and employees.
- Dyslexia awareness [guidance](#) developed following sessions to raise awareness and hear about colleagues lived experiences.
- Introduction of guidance for managers on making [mental health reasonable adjustments](#).
- Guidance on [periods and menopause](#) implemented to support employees and managers with OH delivering sessions on Working Through the Menopause and An Insight to the Menopause, aimed at male employees.
- During 2019, the [cycle to work scheme](#) monetary limit increased to a maximum of £5,000, enabling employees to purchase e-bikes. **311** employees have taken part in the scheme during 2018-21.



- PKC represented at the National Wellbeing Champions Network contributing to and learning of the best practice from local authorities, NHS and Scottish Government. In 2020, due to our highly regarded wellbeing offer to employees, asked to share our practice with Tayside Contracts. A Local Resilience Partnership Wellbeing Group set up, resources shared, and an opportunity exists to collaborate and learn from local partners.
- During the pandemic, existing risk assessments were reviewed following Scottish Government guidance to ensure safe systems of work.
- A Health and Wellbeing champion appointed with much of the learning on offer focusing on promoting physical, mental and financial wellbeing. This was determined from emerging themes such as more opportunities for contact with own team, access to mental health resources and communications, from employee surveys in 2020. Mental health support for staff and managers will continue to be a focus. Resources include:



Fair Work

To support our people have a positive working life, the Council aims to offer work that offers effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect. Embedding this into our culture also supports the Council as an employer of choice. The agreed outcomes for 2018 to 2021 were:



- Inclusive and progressive working environment which encourages and supports diversity and growth, and where people can be themselves at work
- Employees experience a sense of purpose, community and fulfilment, both within their job role, and as part of the wider Council

Achievements

- Recognising that employee engagement should be iterative and varied to encourage involvement and provide solutions in real time, a range of new approaches have been undertaken, including:

Pulse surveys – short, timely focusing on key areas e.g., employee wellbeing, new ways of working	Sounding Boards and Focus Groups	Employee engagement events
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This offers employees an opportunity to participate in topics which are of most interest to them; provides a platform to influence policy and practice; and share their creativity to improve the employee experience.

- The [Learning Opportunities](#) programme is available to CPP organisations. Since the beginning of 2020, all learning events have been available online offering greater opportunity for those in localities out-with Perth city to participate with over 300 delegates at a time attending virtual conferences and webinars.
- Living Wage Employer since 2012 and advocate with local employers and suppliers.
- The findings of our annual equal pay audits have identified that our gender pay gap has fluctuated around 0% in recent years and is currently -1.2% in favour of women, primarily due to the expansion of early learning and childcare as these roles are predominantly undertaken by women. No new equal pay claims have been received during this period and there are no outstanding claims.
- New approach to fixed term contracts enabling a more risk positive approach to recruiting or converting a temporary employee to permanent where there is only temporary funding. 47 requests have been received since implementation in 2019, providing employees with greater certainty of earnings whilst supporting the fair work principles and improving the stability of our workforce, particularly in hard to fill occupational areas such as technical roles and where there is recurring funding. This is evidenced by the 34% reduction in fixed term contracts, see Our Changing Workforce Profile.
- Strong partnership working continues with local agencies to support young people on the autism spectrum access modern apprenticeship opportunities. Since 2018, the Council has supported 3 young people with autism on our modern apprenticeship programme, all of whom

have subsequently achieved a positive destination, including 2 being employed by PKC.

- Introduction of a guaranteed interview for care experienced young people for modern apprentice opportunities. Commitment to support care experienced young people by offering work experience and an apprenticeship for one care leaver per year.
- Review of our family policies and procedures to ensure the language is gender neutral.
- Becoming a 'path finder' authority in collaboration with [Close the Gap](#) to develop an accreditation programme to enable us to better support employees who have experienced gender-based violence, resulting in:

[Guidance for managers:](#)

- An event, in May 2019, supported by Elected Members and our EOT to raise awareness on the issues of gender-based violence.
 - Continued working with the Perth and Kinross Violence Against Women Partnership to better understand the issues and inform future work
- Official [See Me in Work](#) partners since December 2019, formalising the Council's commitment and efforts in tackling mental health stigma and discrimination.
 - As part of Black History Month, in October 2020, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues were invited to have a conversation about

their experiences of working with PKC which lead to the set-up of the **Belong staff network** which aims to provide a social and support network to staff, who are Black, Asian or from another Ethnically Diverse background and any of their allies.

- Introduction of regular [equalities](#) newsletters.
- During our response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council continued to apply Fair Work principles, with the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities our priority. Staff were asked to follow health protection advice to protect their health and safety which include:
 - Provision of relevant personal protective equipment and continued risk assessed working practices in a rapidly changing situation.
 - Staff required to shield or self-isolate, where possible, provided with alternative work or arrangements to homework.
 - Increased flexibility for employee's home working to balance caring responsibilities, home-life issues and work.
 - Creation of additional guidance to support managers e.g., managing remotely.

This enabled the Council to focus on our role as a Category 1 Responder, and provide our essential operational services, including to the most vulnerable citizens in our communities.

Occupational Groups – Key Workforce Planning Highlights

STAFF OPPORTUNITIES

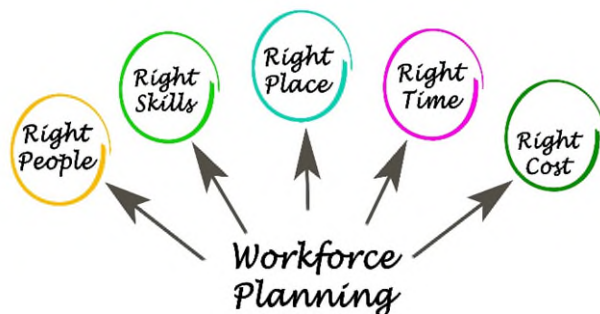
Creative initiatives offering opportunities to retrain and change career e.g., early years, teaching, in areas of growth and hard to fill roles

Upskilling of our staff e.g., use of digital devices e.g., in Building Services resulting in a positive customer experience; across our workforce due to the pandemic increasing the skills set of our workforce and creating efficiencies

Learning on key areas for some front facing staff e.g., child and adult protection



WORKFORCE PLANNING



Workforce planning models for early years expansion showcased at national level; enabled implementation in majority of PKC settings during 2020-21

New career pathways e.g., early years, property, offering career progression opportunities and supporting retention

Introduction of mentoring and shadowing contributing to succession planning e.g., Property, Leadership and Management Programme in Housing

Variety of apprenticeships and entry level opportunities to address the lack of skills/knowledge in hard to fill areas, creating a pipeline of future talent and supporting the young workforce e.g., construction, HGV mechanics, early years, adult social care

NEW WAYS OF WORKING



Increased collaboration and partnership working e.g., increase in usage of childminders, private and not for profit nurseries; working group with independent care providers in HSCP to explore improved recruitment and retention; multi-agency working including climate change, protecting people; sharing of knowledge, best practice and innovative ways of working ensuring learning together across HSCP management team

New ways and models of working e.g., ELC communities and work patterns, cross team working e.g., HSCP remobilisation, Test for Change project in development with key partners including Tayside Contracts reducing spend on agency and consultants

Retasking of employees during pandemic has accelerated work to enable deployment and reskilling of employees using Job Families to meet areas of demand

RESOURCING



Modern approaches to recruitment and selection e.g., use of social media to promote hard to fill roles, recruitment packs showcasing the role and working and living in Perth and Kinross, short film clips, involvement of key stakeholders, resulting in increased number of applicants and contributes to improving our employer brand

Greater flexibility in roles e.g., mobile working, more responsive, locality-based roles, linking with key services, resulting in a more efficient, responsive and flexible service.