



Employment Committee

Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Report of: The Leader of the Council:
Councillor Ashley Baxter

Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and
Economic Development

People Strategy (2025 - 2028)

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To present the Council's refreshed People Strategy for 2025 - 2028 for approval. The strategy builds on the strong foundations laid by the previous plan and reflects current and emerging workforce needs.

Recommendations

The Committee recommends to Cabinet that the People Strategy 2025 – 2028 is approved.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Effective council

Which wards are impacted? (All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

1.1 The Council's workforce represents its largest financial investment and it is important that this is supported by a clear and robust People Strategy. The strategy will inform the budget planning process, ensuring that staffing levels, training and development, recruitment and employee wellbeing are appropriately resourced and aligned with the Council's priorities.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance (deputy s151 officer)

Legal and Governance

1.2 The People Strategy supports the Council in meeting its legal obligations as an employer, including compliance with employment legislation. It provides a strategic framework that ensures HR policies and practices are applied consistently, fairly and lawfully across the Council.

Completed by: James Welbourn (Democratic Services Manager)

2. Background to the Report

2.1. The Council's last People Strategy covered the period from 2022 to 2025 and guided our approach to workforce development, engagement and cultural transformation. Over the past three years, we have made significant progress including:

- Delivering a comprehensive engagement plan
- Promoting continuous learning
- Strengthening leadership development
- Embedding a culture of recognition and inclusion
- Delivering an ambitious wellbeing plan.

However the context in which we operate continues to evolve and has informed the need for a refreshed strategy.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The People Strategy 2025 – 2028 is grounded in engagement with our workforce and Elected Members which has included:
 - Workshops with the People Panel, Senior Leadership, Trade Union and Councillors
 - Analysis of feedback from the 2024 Employee Survey
 - Alignment with the Council's Corporate Plan and refreshed #TeamSK values.

- 3.2. The strategy focuses on what matters most to our people and identified the support they need to thrive and deliver for our communities.

4. Strategic Priorities

- 4.1 The People Strategy (Appendix 1) sets out six key priorities:

Workforce Planning - Building a resilient, agile workforce aligned to future service needs.

Learning and Development – Fostering a culture of continuous learning and development

Employee Experience – Creating an inclusive, engaging and supportive workplace

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) – Embedding inclusive practices and celebrating diversity

Wellbeing – Promoting mental and physical wellbeing through proactive support

Reward and Recognition – Ensuring staff feel valued and motivated through fair and meaningful recognition

- 4.2 Each priority area includes a 'where we are now' overview and a 'future state' vision to guide delivery.
- 4.3 Implementation will be supported by a strategic action plan with clear deliverables, responsible leads and timescales.
- 4.4 Key performance indicators (KPIs) have been established and will be reported to the Employment Committee via the HR Dashboard.

4.5 Ongoing engagement with staff will ensure the strategy remains responsive to changing needs.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The refreshed People Strategy ensures the Council has a skilled, engaged and resilient workforce to deliver high quality services now and into the future.
- 5.2. It provides a clear framework for how we will attract, develop, support and retain great people, equipping them to deliver excellent services for our residents and communities.

6. Other options considered

- 6.1. The Council could maintain the existing People Strategy without substantial revision, however this would not reflect the evolving workforce needs or the significant changes in organisational context.

7. Consultation

- 7.1. Trade Union views have been actively sought to help shape its direction and priorities.
- 7.2. The People Strategy priorities have been discussed in workshops with the People Panel, Senior Leadership and Elected Members.

8. Appendices

- 8.1. Appendix 1 – People Strategy 2025 - 2028