

Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

23 February 2022

Annual Review of Our People Strategy & Year 2 (2022/23) Delivery Plan

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the work in the review of Our People Strategy and considers and comments upon the proposed delivery priorities to inform the development of the Our People Strategy Delivery Plan for 2022/23.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In December 2020, our refreshed Our People Strategy was shared with Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Staff and Pensions Committee. The Strategy and 2021/22 Plan were endorsed and a commitment made to bringing the 2022/23 Plan to both committees.
- 1.2 In September 2021 further papers were brought to Staff and Pensions Committee in a revised 'Annual Review' format covering:
 - Sustainable & Resilient Workforce;
 - Health Safety & Wellbeing, and;
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.
- 1.3 An Annual Review of Our People Strategy is currently being finalised and will showcase and celebrate the activity and performance against our priorities over the previous year, consider the performance data and current context and detail the key priorities for the coming year.
- 1.4 This paper summarises progress made in the first year (2021/22) of the refreshed Our People Strategy and outlines the 2022/23 Delivery Plan.

2. Financial Implications

None.

3. Environmental Implications

None

4. Supporting Information

4.1 Our People Strategy Annual Review – At a Glance

The Our People Strategy provides direction and focus for the development and implementation of a range of projects and initiatives under six building blocks.

2021/22 activity, measurement of success and priority actions for 2022/2023 for each building blocks are summarised as follows:

Culture, Value and Behaviours

Progress – Our wellbeing work has seen the achievement of Thrive bronze accreditation, launch of our approach to wellbeing and an updated Attendance at Work Policy. We have developed the future approach to engagement, whilst continuing to run regular check-in's with our people and prioritising actions based on their feedback. We continue to develop and progress an ambitious Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) action plan.

Measures – Attendance levels have remained within target; Our Colleague Survey scores are strong with our wellbeing indicator at 83% and 11% above 2019 levels. Solid progress has been made against our EDI indicators including gender and ethnicity pay gaps and 83% of colleagues believe that Warwickshire County Council values equality and diversity.

2022/2023 – Focus will continue on wellbeing, engagement, and EDI, these being key areas in which we aim to positively differentiate as an employer. The coming year will see further development of our culture in support of the Council Plan.

Leadership

Progress – Our foundational work towards people management data and metrics will better equip leaders. We have continued to develop leadership capability through our Senior Leadership Forum (SLF). Positive gains have been seen in the approachability of senior managers, their role modelling of values and colleagues feeling trusted to do their jobs.

Measures – Our High-Performance Culture engagement measure brings together several leadership areas and has remained at a consistently high level.

2022/2023 – Focus will continue on leading with data and developing our leadership offer.

Performance

Progress – Contributions have been made in the further development of our Performance Management Framework, Business Planning, individual Appraisals and Personal Development Plans.

Measures – Our High-Performance Culture and Engagement scores have remained consistently high.

2022/2023 – 360-degree feedback processes will be in place for all SLF members and if capacity allows, we will review our wider approach to performance and appraisal frameworks.

Organisational Development and Design

Progress – We launched our agile working offer, based on service delivery, choice, and trust, and have provided a package of support and guidance for its implementation. This has supported the pandemic response. Activities to implement and support our service redesigns have continued.

Measures – The take up of agile working contracts continues to rise each month.

2022/2023 – Focus will continue on developing the agile working approach, and if capacity allows, we will enhance the use of establishment data in order to support improved workforce planning.

Reward and Recognition

Progress – Implementation and development of the employee benefits platform; phased roll out of the 'High5' peer-to-peer recognition system.

Continuation of our Long Service and STAR recognition schemes.

Measures – Employee retention has maintained at sustainable rates whilst marginally above target.

2022/2023 – Our focus will be to drive utilisation of existing processes with recognition being embedded a key part of our Employer Value Proposition (EVP).

Talent Development and Career Opportunities

Progress – Recruitment activity has been extended in support of service redesigns and pandemic response. External Indeed and GlassDoor profiles have been developed alongside recruitment microsites. Induction and onboarding processes have been enhanced to complement our EVP and support agile working. Foundational work on career pathways is underway in several services. A Children and Families workforce academy is in place. A Chartered Management Apprenticeship has been introduced.

Measures – The service has strengthened in several key areas to improve social services and respond to the pandemic. Headcount increases of 4.2% in response to the Pandemic and increased demand for services in particular services areas have driven additional recruitment activity.

2022/2023 – Continued focus on positive differentiation as an employer through our purpose, EVP, approach to EDI, the leadership we provide and the culture we build.

4.2 Priorities for 2022/2023

Following the review activities, assessment of the measure outcomes, and engagement from key stakeholders, the following priorities are proposed for 2022/2023:

Several of the priority areas initiated in year 1 of our plan will continue into 2022/23. Activities have been prioritised to enable resources to be allocated to areas of maximum benefit and flexed to meet changes in organisational demand. New priorities are denoted by (n), and those in italics will be secondarily prioritised.

Culture, values, and behaviours

Sustainable and Resilient Workforce - supporting the wellbeing of our workforce to enable our people to be well and in work and development of plans towards silver Thrive accreditation.

Employee Engagement – providing a framework where we can listen learn and act on the feedback from our people, to enable an engaged and high performing workforce.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – enabling everyone to feel valued, included, safe, supported and welcome’, and places inclusivity at the heart of everything we do.

Culture to support Council Plan (n) – Ensuring our culture enables the successful delivery of the Council Plan and our people embody and embrace the culture, values, and behaviours.

Leadership

People Metrics – Leading with Data - Providing managers with the information they require to understand the issues in their workforce and effectively manage them.

Leadership Offer (n) – *equipping our leaders to provide agile and situationally responsive leadership.*

Performance

Reviewing performance management and appraisal approach (n)– Providing a positive and rewarding framework for our people to embrace a high-performance culture.

Organisational development and design

Agile Working Approach – work is what you do not where you do it, with the customer and business need at the heart.

Establishment enhanced activity (n) – developing how we use our establishment to enhance workforce planning.

Reward and recognition

Employer Value Proposition - promoting what working for our organisation is all about to attract and retain the best people.

Recognition platform - implementing and monitoring our peer-to-peer recognition platform to enable our people to give and receive recognition.

Talent development and career opportunities

Induction and Onboarding - improving how we induct and onboard our people who are new to the organisation and/or their role.

Apprenticeship Pay (n) - aligning apprentices' pay with National Minimum Wage rates and to address attraction and recruitment challenges.

Recruitment, Retention and Talent Approach (n)– flexible resourcing solutions to maximise talent, attraction and retention.

*Tier 1-4 recruitment process (n)- reviewing the process applied when recruiting and assessing Tier 1-4 (Leadership & Management) appointments.
Apprentice first approach (n) – providing a framework so that apprenticeships are routinely considered for entry level roles.*

Corporate Learning and Development Offer (n) – ensuring that our corporate learning and development offer is relevant and meets the organisation's needs.

Service Development and Assurance

Policy, legal and compliance – Reviewing our people policies to reflect the changing tone and voice of the organisation whilst ensuring they cover legal requirements.

Pay Framework and National Living Wage (n) – Determining how to accommodate the change to national living wage within our pay framework. Horizon scanning, forthcoming policy and legislation – Ensuring the organisation to ready to adopt any changes – examples include exit cap, carers leave and flexible working rights.

HR System (n) – Planning for contract renewal including options for potential successor system.

Lone Workers (n) – Identifying, sourcing, and introducing a technological solution which improves the safety and security of lone workers.

HROD Service Development (n) Continuing to develop and improve our OneHR service offer and manage demand.

HR Commercial Strategy (n) – Developing our strategy so our traded services remain strong in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

4.3 Conclusions

2021/2022 has been a challenging but successful year for delivery against the Our People Strategy whilst managing the dynamics of the pandemic.

Particular successes include:

- Achieving Bronze Thrive at Work Accreditation.
- Foundational work to set the Tone and Voice for all our policies, as well as how we articulate Our Approach in key areas such as wellbeing, engagement; track performance and celebrate success through the use of Annual Reviews: Health, Safety & Wellbeing; Sustainable and Resilient Workforce; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, and Colleague Engagement.
- Defining and launching our Agile Working Offer.
- Developing approaches for listening to the voice of our people
- Developing people metrics dashboards, which when launched will support managers to lead with data.
- Piloting the Hi-Five recognition platform.
- Reviewing our recruitment services, and enhancing the service offer to managers.
- Continuing to embed our Employer Value Proposition.
- Maintaining high levels of performance in key areas in an ever-changing environment.
- Alongside the longer-term strategic deliverables we have continued to support our people and enabled them to continually deliver for the people that we serve.
- Our measures have mainly remained on target, with some particular successes in terms of stress and mental health absence and the gender pay gap. We are tracking on target in terms of absence, high-performance culture and ethnicity pay gap. Our plans aim to address engagement and retention, where the outturn is tracking marginally outside of our target range.

- In addition to supporting the Our People Strategy our HROD Delivery colleagues strive to enhance the service offer to our customers whilst continuing to deliver a wide range of essential HROD services across the Council and beyond.
- Many of our major projects and initiatives will continue into 2022/2023 and are supplemented by a number of new key activities that will enable the Council to be the best it can be and support the delivery of our Council Plan.
- We will continue to develop the HR service that we can all be proud of, with exceptional service delivery for our customers today and tomorrow.

Appendices

None

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