

OUR PEOPLE

Focus on Engaging with Our People

Annual Review 2021/2022

At Warwickshire we will listen, learn and act to create an inclusive organisation



Our People Strategy

Warwickshire's Story



Message from Monica Fogarty, Chief Executive

In order to fulfil our vision that Warwickshire is a great place to work, where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best, we understand how important engagement is. Therefore we want to listen, learn and act on the feedback from our people, as we know that an engaged workforce is a happy, motivated and high performing one.

Listening to the voice of our people has never been more important as we have navigated working through the second year of the pandemic, we have taken the opportunity to regularly check in with our people and wanted to particularly focus on wellbeing. Our people are telling us what we are getting right and where there is room for improvement and I am delighted to see some high scoring areas and look forward to seeing improvements in other areas, as we respond to the feedback provided.

We also understand that there are issues affecting our people from outside of the organisation which continue to test our people's resolve, such as the pandemic, wider socio-economic challenges and the delay in concluding the national pay settlement, recognising these and supporting our people to deal with these is also an important part of our story.

At a glance

- The check in approach has continued through 2021 with 4 touch points throughout the year.
- Response rates have been between 29% and 44%, although we have seen a decline in our December 2021 survey response rate.
- Wellbeing has continued to be a focus through each check in, with between 78% and 83% feeling ok or better.
- Workload is still a common theme of concern raised through the free text element of the questionnaire and we expect this to remain a focus for 2022.
- Agile working has remained topical and 90% of our people would either prefer a hybrid of working from home and in the office (50%) or mainly working from home (40%). Our approach to agile working supports this preference.
- In terms of trend data from previous check-ins, the positive responses have spanned from a minus 6% reduction to a plus 16% increase throughout all the questions asked over the last year.
- Our most improved scoring question was “Senior managers (Strategic Directors, Assistant Directors and Service Managers) in my Directorate are approachable” increasing by 16% from 48% to 64%.
- The question that declined the most was “Warwickshire County Council is a Good Employer” a reduction of 6% from 84% to 78%.
- Our most positive scoring question was 92% agreed “My immediate manager trusts me to do my job”.
- Our lowest scoring question “I believe action has been taken as a result of the check-in surveys” which scored 47%. This question has not been asked since 2019 when it scored 25% and so has seen an improvement.
- Our key business measure (KBM) and indicator (KBI) questions remained largely consistent, with between a 0% and minus 2% change.
- We have agreed the longer-term approach to engagement, which supports the Say, Stay, Thrive model and will continue to see 4 check points throughout the year using our channels of engagement.
- The priority for 2022/2023 will be to increase participation in Your Say activity and to focus on workload.

Focus on Our People Strategy



Through the later end of 2020, the council refreshed its Our People Strategy, to drive through the vision of Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

Embodying our Values and Behaviours, the Our People Strategy is built on 6 building blocks:

Our behaviours

Our behaviours were first introduced in 2016 and these haven't changed. Our behaviours frame how we should behave at work. They help us to understand how we should go about our work and the way we should interact with each other and our customers.

- do what we say.
- move with purpose and energy.
- focus on solutions.
- help people and communities to find their own solutions.
- build strong working relationships.
- be the best we can be.

Our values - the Warwickshire DNA

To support the achievement of our vision, five key organisational values have been identified:



High performing



Collaborative



Customer focused



Accountable



Trustworthy

Our People Strategy building blocks

The building blocks provide the foundations for the delivery of Our People Strategy vision. We have identified six key building blocks:



For each building block we have a clear set of outcomes we need to achieve so that we can fulfill our vision and transform as an organisation in a way which is sustainable.

Focus on for 2021/2022

Employee engagement was identified as a priority activity under the Our People Strategy for 2021 and the focus on work has included:

- **Continued regular focused check ins:**
 - **March** – High performance culture.
 - **June** – Big Conversation and Wellbeing check.
 - **September** – Leadership.
 - **December** – Engagement score.
- Instigated a project to review the long-term approach to employee engagement and agreed future proposals.
- Developed the Our Approach to the Voice of Our People.
- Developed a Channels of Engagement document.

Measuring Success

For 2021/2022 the following Key Business Measures and Indicators are taken from the survey:

**% Employee
Engagement**

**% Leaders &
managers driving a
high- performance
culture**

**% Employee
wellbeing is
promoted at work**

**% Able to
access
learning and
development
opportunities**

**% Internal
communications
keep me upated
on what is
happening**

Achievements 2020/21

- **Our Key Business Measures all achieved over 70% agreement: Engagement 74%.**
 - High Performance Culture – 76%.
 - High Performance Culture - 74%
 - Wellbeing promoted at work – 83%.
 - Internal Communications – 87%.
 - Access to learning and development – 76%.
- **Our most improved questions included:**
 - “Senior Managers in my Directorate are approachable”, 64%, a 16% increase.
 - “My immediate manager is a role model for WCC ‘Our Behaviours’” – 81%, a 9% increase.
 - “Good performance is recognised and appreciated in my team”- 76%, a 9% increase.
- **Our highest scoring questions included:**
 - “My line manager trusts me to do my job”, 92%.
 - “I am able to take responsibility for my own performance”, 88%.
 - “The Council’s internal communications keep me informed of what the Council is doing”, 88%.
- **As a result of the feedback received the following corporate actions have been taken:**
 - SLF sessions exploring the data and equipping leaders to take action in their area.
 - Developed a tool kit for managers to use.
 - Developed the Agile Working Approach to enable our people to work in a way that enables them to be their best.
 - Supported areas with low engagement scores to look at ways of increasing engagement, through designing and delivering bespoke team development solutions.
 - Reviewed areas with high engagement scores to understand and share best practice.
- **Managers and leaders are also expected to take action as a result of the surveys and are provided with tools and resources to support them in doing so.**
- **Gained our Bronze Thrive at Work accreditation, which demonstrates our commitment to wellbeing.**
- **Developed the longer-term approach to engagement by reviewing the existing approach and consulting with stakeholders to develop the Stay, Say, Thrive model.**
- **Developed the ‘Our Approach to engaging with our people’ to re-enforce our commitment to listen, learn and act to create an inclusive organisation.**
- **Developed the ‘Channels of Engagement’ document which details how we listen to the voice of our people.**

Areas for Development

- **The response rate has reduced throughout the year from 46% to 29%**
- **The questions that reduced by the biggest margin were:**
 - “Warwickshire County Council is a good employer”, 78%, a reduction of 6%.
 - “I am proud to work for Warwickshire County Council”, 76%, a reduction of 5%.
 - “I feel valued and recognised at work”, 66%, a reduction of 5%.
- **The questions that scored the lowest were:**
 - “I believe that action will be taken as a result of the check in survey”, 47%, an increase from 25% when last asked in 2019.
 - “Work has a positive impact on my wellbeing”, 53%, this is the first time we have asked this question.
 - “I receive constructive feedback on my performance”, 65%, a 1% increase on the 2019 results.

Priorities for 2022/2023

- **Implement the new approach to engaging with our people including:**
 - Launch “The approach to engaging our people” document.
 - Launch “The channels of engagement” document.
 - The proposed touch points and themes for 2022/2023.
- **Have a focus for 2022/2023 on wellbeing and workload management, as this has been a consistent theme throughout 2021/2022.**
- **Target response rate, with a target to increase responses to 70% by 2025, actions will include:**
 - Focus on building trust and working towards our aspiration of moving away from anonymous surveying to a position where our people trust us and want to openly share their thoughts and opinions.
 - Consider how we can better reach our non-office based and offline colleagues, through discussions directly with these groups to understand how best to collect their views.
 - Target showcasing and the continuous improvement aspect of engagement focus on the you said, we did – did it make a difference.
 - Ensure our leaders and managers are aware of the expectations for responding to surveys and are supported and enabled to take action.

Conclusions

- It has been a successful year in terms of listening to the voice of our people and our engagement surveys have shown that in the main our people who complete the surveys are positive about working for Warwickshire, which is particularly pleasing when we consider the wider national context of the pandemic and increasing socio-economic challenges.
- The key business measures that are measured through the colleague surveys have largely remained consistent, with some small variations.
- We have seen increases in scores across 14 questions, a reduction in scores in 9 questions and 5 have remained the same.
- Our work in future years will now focus on:
 - a) Increasing participation rates.**
 - b) Fostering trust and working towards a position where concerns regarding anonymity are no longer a barrier to our people completing any Your Say activity.**
 - c) Celebrating the action taken in response to the results.**
 - d) Ensuring that as many of our people as possible are able to give their views and have their voice listened to.**

Further information

Links to further information and resources supporting our employee engagement approach.

[Wellbeing check-in results dashboard](#)

[Check in 5 summary of results](#)

[Check in 6 summary of results](#)

[Check in 7 summary of results](#)

[Big Conversation summary \(May 2021\)](#)

Our approach to engagement (see page 9)

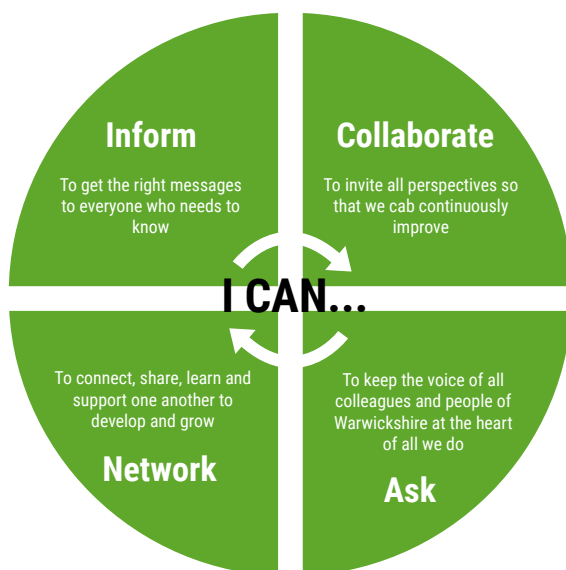
Our Approach to Engaging with Our People

Our people work with passion and purpose, are engaged to serve and aligned in the delivery of great work.



At Warwickshire we will listen, learn and act to create and inclusive organisation

- The engagement of our people is the key to our success, and we understand that when our people feel listened to, they are happier, more fulfilled, and enabled to work to their full potential.
- The aim of our approach, will be to follow the Say, Stay Strive model:
 - **Say** – our people are **our ambassadors** and speak positively about the Council, to colleagues, potential employees, and customers.
 - **Stay** – our people have a strong **sense of belonging** and desire to be part of the Council.
 - **Strive** – our people are motivated and **exert effort toward success** in their role and for the Council.
- We have a variety of **channels of engagement** within WCC, because we believe that **every voice matters** in making Warwickshire the best it can be.



Engaging with our People enables us to:

- Listen to the **voice of our leaders** and understand the vision for the organisation.
- **Supporting each other**, so that we are all enabled to bring our best selves to work.
- **Communicating with one another** so we can all be aligned in the delivery of great work.
- Listen to the **voice of our people** and understand what enables them to



Being the best you can be, by:

- Taking every opportunity to share feedback on what you appreciate and what could be improved, and support others to share their feedback, too.
- Finding ways that work for you to access information, collaborate, ask questions and network with others.
- Using 1:1, appraisal and team meetings to discuss topics which affect the way in which you work.
- Completing our YourSay Colleague surveys and participating in our Big Conversations.
- Seeking out alternative ways in which you can get involved in the work of the council, through Directorate Forums, Employee Networks etc.



Our Leaders and Managers will do what they say by:

- Embodying our **values and behaviours** and are committed to our people vision of a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.
- Providing a clear **vision** for our people from their individual contribution to our business outcomes.
- Having **good and meaningful conversations** with individuals and as a team, encouraging our people to provide feedback.
- Being engaging managers and **listening** to the voice of our people.
- Understanding that **colleague survey results** are the measure of our people engagement and not how we engage with our people.
- Taking ownership and time to **understand** what the survey results are telling them, create more dialogue and take action where they can make a difference.



Organisationally we will focus on solutions by:

- Facilitating the **colleague survey approach** and measuring the success of our engagement through the survey results dashboard.
- Providing reports to our **senior leaders** on emerging themes and trends to help shape priority setting.
- Supporting the delivery of the **Survey Action Plan**, ensuring it is up to date and relevant.
- **Celebrating success** in employee engagement with managers and leaders.
- **Facilitating and supporting** the employee forums and staff networks.
- Ensuring that our approach to engagement is **best in class** and continually developed to meet the needs of our organisation.

