

# OUR PEOPLE

## Focus on Our People Strategy

Annual Review **2022/2023 & Year 3 (2023/25) Plan**

*Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.*



# Our People Strategy - Warwickshire's Story



## Message from Monica Fogarty, Chief Executive

I'm once again pleased to introduce Our People Strategy Annual Review which updates on progress made in the second year of the refreshed Our People Strategy, and additionally incorporates the priorities for year three (2023/24).

I talk often about how proud I am of our people, and their passion and dedication to serving our residents and communities and making Warwickshire the best it can be; and likewise we know that our people are proud to work for Warwickshire.

Our HROD service which incorporates both our Strategy and Commissioning and People Solutions Delivery teams oversees the delivery of Our People Strategy and this report sets out a number of the key service improvements that have taken place this year along with achievements and accreditations that the service should rightly be proud of. This includes The Unsung Heroes Award for our Payroll team in the PPMA Excellence in People Management Awards; and gaining the Inclusive Employers Silver Standard in recognition for our equality, diversity and inclusion approach.

Our people make us what we are and are at the heart of our success, and through Our People Strategy we continue to make Warwickshire County Council a great place to work where our diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

# 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, which support the employment journey. Our Year 2 2022/23 activity, measurement of success and priority actions for Year 3 2023/2024 are as follows:

## Joining

**Y2 Activity** – Our induction and onboarding processes have been enhanced to complement our Employee offer and Agile working.

**Measures** – Headcount has increased by 4.2% over the last 12 months and we have onboarded 1100 colleagues.

**23/24** – we look to continue to simplify our processes to ensure a warm welcome to working for Warwickshire.

## Performing

**Y2 Activity** – To ensure our leaders are able to enable our people to work at their best, we have developed an approach to leadership and have secured a partner to co-design our leadership offer.

**Measures** – HR dashboards for managers continue to be developed.

**23/24** – implementation of the leadership approach and offer will take place

## Developing

**Y2 Activity** – Development our career pathways.

**Y2 Activity** – Development of our career pathways. Implemented a new Learning Hub for accessing our Learning & Development activity. Introduction of Chartered Management Apprenticeship.

**Measures** - The Learning Hub Commissioned 290 learning events, 6517 course completions and 14598 eLearning module completions.

**23/24** - review of the corporate development offer and continual development of our career pathways



## Attracting

**Y2 Activity** – Our induction and onboarding processes have been enhanced to complement our Employee offer and Agile working.

**Measures** – Headcount has increased by 4.2% over the last 12 months and we have onboarded 1100 colleagues.

**23/24** – we look to continue to simplify our processes to ensure a warm welcome to working for Warwickshire.

## Wellbeing

**Y2 Activity** – Wellbeing, the way we work, engagement and our approach to inclusivity, are all key to the culture we aspire to. These are now embedded in the way we work. We continue to review the tone and voice of our policies.

**Measures** – attendance levels, engagement levels and EDI indicators remain positive. We have gained the Silver Inclusive Employers Award.

**23/24** – Continue work towards applying for Silver Thrive at Work accreditation. Undertake an appreciative inquiry into how we work. Continue to listen and respond to

## Rewarding

**Y2 Activity** – implementation and development of the VivUp benefits platform. Pilot of the High5 peer to peer recognition platform. Successful long service and Star Awards ceremonies.

**Measures** – 82% of our people are committed to working here.

**23/24** – Review our approach to pay, reward and recognition. Consolidation of our benefits package to support recruitment and retention.

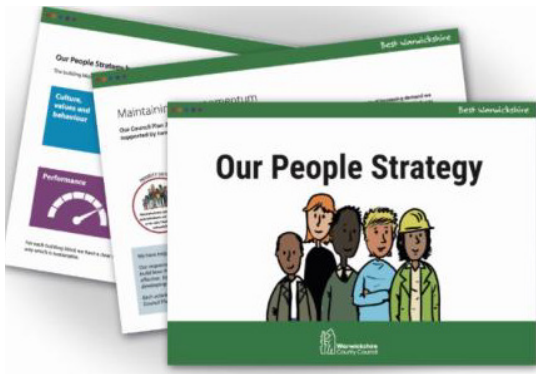
## Moving on

**Y2 Activity** – Work undertaken in other areas such as Employee Offer, recognition, how we work, and wellbeing continue to support retention.

**Measures** – Turnover has steadied over the last year but remains higher than we would like.

**23/24** – Continue to explore reasons for leaving and consider actions to address themes.

# 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 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

## HROD How We Work



## 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 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.

# Achievements 2022/2023

## Against our Priority Project areas

### Leading Organisational Wellbeing

The Sustainable and Resilient workforce project has transitioned into the business as usual Leading Organisation Wellbeing Group. Focus continues on monitoring attendance rates, wellbeing initiatives and collation of the evidence required to apply for Silver Thrive at Work Accreditation. Staff and Pensions Committee endorsed the annual review focus on leading Organisational Wellbeing in October.



### Engagement

The new Our Approach to engaging with our people has been launched, which includes our YourSay engagement activity. The first of the new look survey was completed in June, with Assistant Director led Big Conversations taking place in the autumn. Engagement has increased slightly, and the new measures have provided an encouraging baseline, in which we can continue to monitor our progress in the coming years. An annual review of engagement with our people was endorsed by Staff and Pensions Committee in June.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The Council's EDI activity continues to progress the EDI action plan. In September we were delighted to have been awarded a Silver Award from Inclusive Employers, which recognises our great progress and provides the basis for our future actions. The annual review was presented to Staff and Pensions in October.

### Culture

A review of our culture requirements to support the Council Plan has been completed, to support this work, we have defined our culture, pulling together the values, behaviours, employee value proposition, Our People and EDI vision. The how we work best appreciative enquiry will help shape our future work in this area.

### People Metrics for Managers

Work continues with the development of People dashboards. We have now brought this work in-house and we look forward to implementing the dashboard in early 2023



### Leadership Approach

We have developed a draft Our Approach to leadership, which articulates our expectation of leaders, along with our leadership offer to support them. We have procured a partner organisation to work with us in further developing our leadership development offer, which will be launched in 2023/2024.

### Agile Working Approach

Agile Working has developed into How We Work Best, which captures all our working arrangements across the Council. A new intranet hub has been launched and we are undertaking an appreciative inquiry to work with colleagues to celebrate and embrace the different ways of working.



### Employer Offer

Our Employee Offer has been embedded in how we promote our organisation and we continue to seek ways to use it to promote Warwickshire as an employer of choice and sell the benefits of working with us.



### Recognition Platform

The Highfive recognition platform was piloted on a trial basis, with an alternative way of enabling our people to provide peer to peer recognition and thanks, being embedded going forward.

### Induction and Onboarding

Improvements in how we induct and onboard our people (new to the organisation or role) have been made, taking into account our Agile Working approach.



### Apprentices' Pay

Apprentices' pay has been aligned with the National Minimum Wage rates to address attraction and recruitment challenges.

### Recruitment, Retention and Talent

Flexible resourcing solutions, including career pathways, have been developed to address attraction and retention challenges

### Tier 1-4 Recruitment Process

The approach to recruiting and assessing Tier 1-4 leadership and management roles has been reviewed, developed and approved.

### Apprenticeship First Approach

The testing of a framework so that apprenticeships are routinely considered for entry level roles is currently underway.

### Corporate Learning and Development Offer

Taking on board the views and input from stakeholders, the corporate Learning and Development offer has been reviewed and updated to reflect the needs of the organisation.

## Service Improvements across HROD

Some key service improvements that have taken place across our One HROD service, including both our Strategy and Commissioning team and our People Solutions Delivery team:

- **HR Scorecard** and **strategic workforce planning** discussions with Assistant Directors, the feedback from which has scoped our priorities for 2023/2024
- **Policy review Framework**, redesigning our approach to policies, to reflect the tone and voice of the Council. The grievance policy is due to be launched, following positive engagement with stakeholders, other policy review to follow shortly.
- **Intranet analytics and demand management** approached to support improved service delivery
- **Specialised recruitment team** formed to enable internal executive search and onboarding, adding greater value and saving money for recruiting managers.
- **Commercial Approach**, saw the team successfully retender for an existing contract and onboard a new customer.
- **Health and Safety team** supported the temporary move of Westgate School into Northgate House
- **HR Advisory colleagues** have launched a number of policies and approaches in terms of pension and the Service Orders for Warwickshire Fire and Rescue service
- **The Learning Hub**, implemented a new Learning Management System
- **The Organisational Development Team**, have delivered wide range of local interventions, including team development, coaching and mentoring, supporting working relationships, performance and confidence
- **Our People Voice Podcast**, produced by our Diversity, Inclusions and Wellbeing Team, with our own colleagues as guests, talking about issues that affect their daily lives and sharing their experiences.

## Awards and Recognition



### Warwickshire County Council Star Awards

Homes for Ukraine, instrumental part of the Star Award winning team, for the DBS process.



### PPMA Excellence in People Management Awards 2022

Payroll Team, PPMA award for Excellence in Service Delivery: The Unsung Heroes Award



**Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Team**, submitted Warwickshire County Council to be accredited with the Inclusive Employer Standard Silver



**Leading Organisational Wellbeing Group**, achieved Bronze status and now working towards achieving Silver.

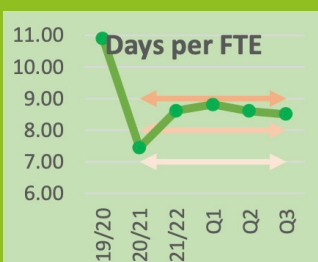


# Measuring Our Success

Across One HR the following Key Business Measures (KBM's) that are reported to Cabinet and Key Business Indicators (KBI's) reported to Corporate Board on a quarterly Basis. The following shows our performance trend.

## Key Business Measures

### Sickness Absence Trend



Performance has stabilised this year, with Q3 at 8.50 days per FTE, and remains in target of 8 days per FTE (+/- 1 day).

### Engagement

**Engagement Score 76%**  
20/21 = 74% Target = 78%  
**Response Rate 40%**  
20/21 = 39%,  
2025 Target = 70%

Employee Engagement increased slightly from last year and it is pleasing to see an increased in our response rate as we continue to work towards our 2025 target.

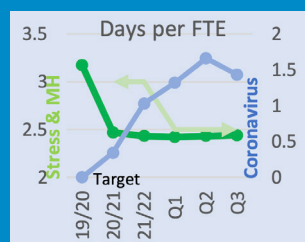
### Pay Gaps

**Gender 2.4%**  
**Ethnicity 0.2%**  
**Disability 2.4%**  
Target 0% (+/-5%)

All our mean pay gaps are within target and are all closer to 0% compared with 2021/22 performance is strong against comparator data where available.

- Gender down 0.2% and below the ONS national average of 14.9%.
- Ethnicity down 1.0% from -0.8 (closer to zero).
- Disability down 1.1%

### High Absence Reason Trend



Stress & MH absence target reduced from 3 to 2.5 days per FTE, our position remains consistent and tracking slightly below target. Covid-19 is now our 2nd highest reason and after significant increases, has now started to fall.

### Engagement Indicators

**Wellbeing 77%**  
**Proud to work for WCC 80% (76% 21/22)**  
**Safe to be authentic self 79%**

These new indicators, which combined relevant question responses from the Your Say Survey have set a baseline for future years, with an encouraging start all recording over 75% agreement.

### Disclosure Rates

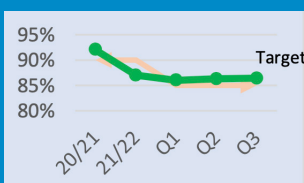
**Disability 83% (+9%)**  
**Ethnicity 96% (+11%)**  
**Religion or Belief 94% (+14%)**  
**Sexual Orientation 71% (+36%)**

Our People Data campaign has resulted in a significant increase in disclosure rates across main categories.

We have introduced 2 new categories around caring responsibility (22.4% disclosed) and socio-economic background (21.7% disclosed).

Of those who have disclosed, the percentage of people choosing "prefer not to say" has stayed relatively the same, which indicates that more people feel comfortable with disclosing their data

### Retention



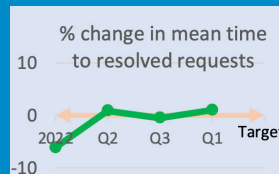
Retention has stabilised, and is currently 86.4%, compared with 87% in April 2022, and remains above target of 85%

### HRSD Satisfaction Score



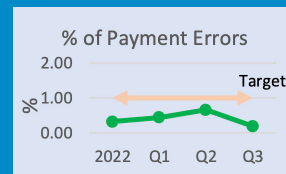
Satisfaction in both recruitment and HRSD delivery are improving and above the target of 7

### People Services



The target is for the time for change request to be below 0, we are currently fluctuating between +1/-1



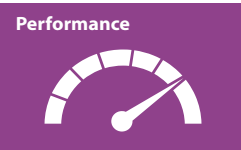
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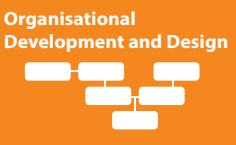


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# Priorities for 2023/2024

Having considered our achievements over the last year, along with our performance measures, and through engagement with Assistant Directors and other key stakeholders, as well as assessing the external factors of the employment market, we have considered the following priorities will have the biggest impact on our people:

Building Block	Priority Areas	The Difference we make
	<b>Culture, values and behaviour</b>	
	<b>Wellbeing</b> – Aligned to our wellbeing offer, undertake a health needs assessment and continue to collate the evidence to apply for Silver Thrive at Work Accreditation. Procure a provider for Occupational Health and EAP.	By understanding the wellbeing needs of our people, we can design and deliver wellbeing initiatives which will maximise our people being well and in work. Achieving Silver will further demonstrate our commitment to wellbeing.
	<b>Our Approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> – Launch our Approach to inclusion and continue with the actions plan with a particular focus on our Socio Economic Inclusion, the response to Inclusive Employers feedback, ONS Data and the Breaking Through and Allyship programmes	To continue our commitment to ensuring that our people feel valued, included, safe, supported and welcome, and places our approach to inclusivity at the heart of everything we do. To look for opportunities, particularly to strengthen social economic inclusion
	<b>How we Work</b> – Undertake an appreciative inquiry into our ways of working to showcase, celebrate and embrace the different ways of working. Continue to develop and refine the Agile Working approach including a refresh of the principles to ensure effectiveness and consistency alongside exploring options for new ways of working to support recruitment and retention.	To showcase the best of how we work and enable us to reinforce the way we need to work to deliver the Council's ambitions. Highlighting how we work will also ensure the appropriate balance for teams between the use of our office accommodation and other locations and will enable all our teams to deliver great services, whilst enabling our people to work at their best.
	<b>Workload</b> – Continue through our engagement approach to enable our people to manage their workload.	To demonstrate to our people that we are listening to the messages regarding manageable workloads and support all our people to work smarter not harder.
	<b>Engaging with Off-line colleagues</b> – Priority focus on how we engage with our colleagues who are not on-line, as well as those who do not currently engage in our YourSay activity.	To ensure that engagement levels are consistent across the council are we are listening to the voice of our colleagues.
	<b>Leadership</b>	
	<b>People Metrics</b> – Leading with Data – Launch a series of power BI dashboards, to provide managers with real time data and information.	To enable managers to better understand the trends within their teams and to take informed decisions using the data provided.
	<b>Performance</b>	
	<b>Performance and Appraisal Frameworks</b> Business as usual annual refresh activity including 360 feedback for Tier 0-3 leaders.	To ensure that our annual performance frameworks reflect the needs to the organisation.



	<b>Policy</b> - review of the tone and voice of the capability policy.	To enable our leaders to manage performance in a constructive and supported way.
	<b>Organisational development and design</b>	
	<b>Strategic Workforce Planning</b> – continue to develop a process, including a workforce assessment, which provides insight and challenge to ensure service are able to respond to future need and provides HROD with common themes to inform priority actions.	The enable our services to have the right people in the right jobs at the right time Supporting services to successfully deliver the MTFS position, whilst ensuring plans are in place to deliver the workforce required for the future. Support HROD in prioritising the activities that will add the most value.
	<b>Reward and recognition</b>	
	<b>Pay and Reward Review</b> – Review our approach to Pay and Reward. Consider and plan future developments	Enable us recruit and retain the best talent and to deliver on our ambition to be an employer of choice and to respond to feedback regarding pay made through the YourSay Survey and Big Conversations.
	<b>Pay and Reward Review</b> – making proposals for future years and plan for further recognition work in future years.	To enable our people to be recognised by their leaders and peers in an appropriate and timely manner in a variety of ways.
	<b>Pay and Reward Review</b> – Consolidate our benefits into one document to ensure that it supports our recruitment a retention ambition. Undertake options appraisal into implementing additional benefits, such as Electric Vehicles and Lease Car Schemes.	To showcase the employee benefits that are available to our people and prospective employees.
	<b>Talent development and career opportunities</b>	
	<b>Recruitment and Retention Approach</b> – understand better why our leavers are leaving and develop a suite of recruitment & retention tools including career pathways, career change, talent management and the re-commissioning of our temporary agency contract.	Enable us to recruit and retain the best talent by offering career progression and career change opportunities that make us an employer of choice.
	<b>Apprenticeships First</b> – review the trial and develop an approach to encourage growth of the use of apprenticeships and utilisation of the apprenticeship levy, along with supporting managers with induction of first- time workers	To create an entry level career pathway into a diverse range of roles across the organisation that enhances the recruitment and retention of new talent.
	<b>Corporate Menu of L&amp;D</b> - review to ensure this meets the needs of our People.	To allow our people to develop existing and new knowledge and skills through a range of learning and development activities that are both relevant and meet the organisation's needs.

<b>Strategic People and HROD Service Improvements</b>	
Policy, legal and compliance – Continuing to review our people policies to reflect the changing tone and voice of the organisation whilst ensuring they cover legal requirements, ensure recent employment law requirements are implemented.	To ensure our policies and supporting documents are concise and approachable thereby enabling managers and employees to use them more effectively.
Horizon scanning, forthcoming policy, legislation and Industrial action – Ensuring the organisation is ready to adopt any changes – examples include carers leave, flexible working rights, and a potential review of EU derived employment law along with potential industrial action.	To provide assurance that we are adopting any changes required to meet our legal obligations.
HR Commercial Strategy – Developing our strategy so our traded services remain strong in an increasingly competitive marketplace.	To continue to deliver trusted and value solutions and advice to our traded customers.
Approach to Health and Safety – review our approach and commitment, continue with our action plan, with a particular focus on the Policy framework and lone working.	To ensure that we are compliant and championing good working practices in terms of health and safety.
Data Metrics - Continue to consider our service performance metrics, ensuring this right data is collected and that we are measuring customer satisfaction across all our delivery functions.	So that we can understand how we are performing as a service and identify where we can improve our service to customers.
Agree our service offer, in line with predicted headcount, with the organisation, ensuring that we are adding the most value.	Our customers are clear on the services we offer and the roles and responsibilities associated with them.
Service Simplification - continue with simplification and addressing our failure demand	Customers see improved service performance and HR teams are able to focus on value add activities.
HROD Wellbeing - ensure the wellbeing of our teams, especially during busy periods, maximise the retention of our talent.	Ensuring that the priority the organisation places on wellbeing is focussed on the HROD service as well so that our teams are supported to do their best work.

# Conclusions

**2022/2023 has been another challenging but successful year for delivery against the Our People Strategy, with some emerging priorities being identified throughout the year, including Strategic Workforce Planning and the Pay and Reward review. Particular successes include:**

- Development of Our Approach to Leadership and procuring a partner to scope and develop our Leadership Offer.
- Well received annual reviews for Engagement, Health and Safety and Wellbeing, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, which tell our Story, celebrate successes and provide focus for further work.
- Our Payroll team were awarded the PPMA Award for Excellence in Service Delivery – Unsung Heroes.
- Our new approach to engaging our people has been well received with an increase in participation and an increase in our engagement scores, along with some positive benchmark positions, for our new measures.
- From a commercial perspective, we were successful in continuing to provide services to Wokingham Borough Council and Stratford upon Avon District Council.
- Alongside the longer-term strategic deliverables we have continued to support our people and enabled them to continually deliver for the communities that we serve.
- In addition to supporting the Our People Strategy our HROD Delivery colleagues have had another busy and successful year, with continued increases in headcount, meaning we are recruiting and paying more people than we were pre pandemic, which has increased demand on all our services.

Whilst some of our major projects and initiatives will continue into 2023/2024, we have identified some key activities to best support the delivery of the Council Plan and respond to the internal and external employment challenges we are currently facing, particularly regarding recruitment, retention, workload and wellbeing.

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.