

OUR PEOPLE

Focus on Our People Strategy

Annual Review - 2023/24 & 2024/25 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

We are now entering the fourth year of Our People Strategy and I am once again pleased to introduce our annual review, which updates on progress made in 2023/2024 and the planned priorities for 2024/2025

It has been good to see so many examples of innovative activity to deliver our people strategy and continuing positive engagement and feedback from our people about the Council as a place to work. We still have much to do and are looking forward to continuing our journey to make Warwickshire a great place to work, where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

Highlights from the last year have included the introduction of a new leadership offer, reviewing our benefits offer and the development of workforce dashboards, to support of workforce planning ambitions.

As we move forward, we have identified a number of priority activities under the key themes of:

- Strategic workforce planning
- Recruitment and Retention
- Reward and recognition
- Leadership
- Equality, diversity inclusion and wellbeing

Our people are at the heart of our success, and therefore prioritising their experience through the Our People Strategy, enables us to thrive and deliver great outcomes for the residents of Warwickshire.



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. A summary of our year 3 2023/24 activity, measurement of success and priority actions for year 4 2024/25 are as follows:

Culture Leadership and behaviours

Year 3

- Wellbeing check-in, flu vaccinations, procured Occupational Health and EAP Provider and refreshed attendance policy.
- Community teams project.
- Updated agile working principles.
- Launched approach to EDI, changes to socio mobility recording and refreshed bullying and harassment policy.

Measures

- YourSay engagement levels and EDI indicators remained positive.
- Absence has started to increase.

2024 /2025

- Proactive action to reduce absence, maximise wellbeing offer, and gain Silver Thrive.
- Embed approach to EDI, work closer with network groups, maximise employee experience for people with disabilities and support the socio-mobility agenda



Leadership

Year 3

- Launched leadership approach, offer and development programme.
- Launched first HR dashboards for managers.

Measures

- YourSay Engagement scores for our leaders and managers remained positive.

2024 /2025

- Embed leadership approach and develop a manager's guide.
- Further develop dashboards for managers



Organisational Development and Design

Year 3 –

- Strategic Workforce planning Pilot.
- Reviewed our Tier 1-4 job titles.

Measures

- Headcount has increased by 3.7%.

2024 /2025

- Implement our strategic workforce planning framework.
- Review our establishment process.
- Build data driven culture and develop data literacy capability.



Performance

Year 3

- Refreshed Performance Improvement Policy

Measures

- Our YourSay High Performance culture score remained positive.

2024 /2025

- Scope our approach to performance
- H&S performance Management system

Reward and Recognition

Year 3

- Consolidation of benefits offer, with development of newsletter, gym memberships, share cost AVC's and lease cars.
- Started to review approach to reward & recognition and updated market supplement policy.
- Updated our Star and Long Service Awards

Measures

- 82% of our people are committed to working here.

2024 /2025

- Continue to review our reward & recognition strategy.
- Showcase our benefits offer, implement Cost Share AVC's and Lease Cars schemes and continue to review other opportunities.



Talent Development and Career Opportunities

Year 3

- Recommissioned our temporary agency worker's contract.
- Increased our work experience placements.
- Consolidation of career pathways.
- Review of our Learning and Development offer.

Measures

- Management of 1000+ WCC recruitment campaigns
- 91% satisfaction across all L&S programmes.

2024 /2025

- Onboard and embed our temporary agency worker's contract.
- Strategic review of resourcing model.
- Scope our approach to talent development.
- Develop a grow our own toolkit and widen apprenticeship and graduate opportunities.



HR Service Improvements

Year 3

- Refreshing key policies and legislative changes around holiday pay, Fire HMIC Spotlight requirements
- Starters Leavers and Movers (SLAM) review
- Scoping future HROD System requirements

2024/2025

- Implement SLAM outcomes.
- Changes regarding family friendly legislation



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



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:



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.



HROD How We Work



THIS IS THE DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE



Achievements 2023/2024 – against our Priorities

Leading Organisational Wellbeing

The wellbeing check in took place in the summer, which saw an increase in our wellbeing score, provided priority areas of focus for our wellbeing offer going forward and will support with the evidence required to apply for Silver Thrive accreditation in Summer 2024. We are now working with our re-commissioned occupational health and employee assistance providers, to maximise the wellbeing offer. The flu vaccination campaign delivered over 700 on site vaccinations, in 5 locations across the county.

Our Approach to EDI

Our commitment to EDI has been drafted and ready to be launched. In terms of social mobility, we have refreshed the questions we ask, so we can start to better understand our workforce, we have also increased the number of work experience placements offered this year.

How we work

A review of our approach to agile working has been completed.

Workload

Workload continues to be a theme from our YourSay surveys, we have developed a set of resources to support managers and teams in ensuring manageable workloads.

Community teams

Delivered a project to research engagement, wellbeing and communications experiences - and associated business challenges - experienced by Community Teams. Working towards an equitable and inclusive offer and has resulted in a number of actions for HR, Marketing and Comms and ICT to take forward and progress as well as sharing existing good practice between community teams.

People Metrics for Managers

The dashboard has been launched and will support managers with their strategic workforce planning activity.

Leadership Approach

We have launched the leadership approach and wider offers, as well as the leadership development offer, which incorporates step up to management for aspiring leaders, conscious leadership for new managers, Leadership in action for existing managers and Inspiring leadership for our Senior Leadership Team. We have also reviewed the job titles at Tier 0-4 to bring them more in line with our competitors to support recruitment and retention.



Performance and Appraisal Frameworks

Annual refresh of the Tier 0-3 performance Framework, along with targeted support to increase appraisal completion recording.

Performance improvement procedure

Refreshed the capability policy in line with our policy framework and relaunched as the performance improvement procedure.



Strategic Workforce Planning

Working with West Midlands Employers and the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, we have undertaken a Strategic Workforce planning pilot with 8 service areas, evaluated its success and started to develop a framework for use across the organisation. Continue to ensure our structures are fit for purpose and any changes are smoothly implemented.



Pay and Reward

Undertaken an initial review of our approach to pay and reward, updated the Market Supplement policy and continue to consider future development.



Recognition

We have refreshed the Star Award categories and have had an amazing number of nominations from across the council with an award ceremony taking place in March 2024. We have also completed a light touch review on our Long Service Award, with a biennial event, the first of which is due to take place in Summer 2024.

Benefits

We have consolidated our benefits and developed a newsletter for colleagues, to ensure all are aware of what is on offer. We have also investigated introducing lease cars and beneficial changes to the AVC offer, both of which are due to be implemented in April 2024.



Recruitment and Retention Approach

The strategic workforce planning pilot has identified some key areas for development. We are re-commissioning our temporary agency worker's contract. Our specialist recruitment team continue to proactively support leaders with key recruitment campaigns.

Apprenticeships

We have trialled an Apprenticeship First approach and will be looking to take this forward in key areas of the business. We have also increased the number of Children's Social work degree apprenticeships and currently have 40 Social Work apprentices.

Learning and Development

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:

- **Policy, legal and compliance** we have undertaken a compliance review on all our policies and continued to review a number of our policies, in line with our policy framework. We have also worked on some key pieces of legislation including the Harper V Brazel findings and are preparing for the upcoming changes to carers leave and Flexible working rights. We responded to the HMIC Fire Spotlight Report, by rolling out a DBS process within the service.
- **HR Commercial Strategy** – onboarding new customers, reviewing our HR Advisory offer to schools and revamped our Warwickshire Education Service HR Newsletter, which has received great feedback.
- **Approach to Health and Safety** – refreshed policy and roles and responsibilities and developed the lone worker guidance.
- **HR Service Data metrics** – Developed a set of service metrics to better understand our performance.
- **Service offer** – with the high-level structure changes within the organisation, both HR Strategy and Delivery has been brought together and joined by Local Services, under one Directorate – Workforce and Local Services. As a management team, we have been considering how we can best support the organisation and are looking to implement a structure to maximise our impact.
- **Service Simplification** – HROD system requirements scoping. refreshing the landing page of the HR intranet. Our HR Advisory community of practice has been working through some key policies, to support our own learning and improve the service offered to managers. The SLAM project has looked at the end of end process of starters, leavers and movers, and looks to implement changes which will simplify the process for managers and provide a warm welcome for employees new to Warwickshire. There has been enhancements to the HR Service Desk on Hornbill, our customer system, to make it simpler and easier to use and to add wider HR service to the platform.
- **HROD wellbeing** – Within the HR delivery service, we have reviewed our YourSay Survey results to gain more insight into our employee experience and as a result have introduced new initiatives such as lunchtime learn sessions, revised team principles, and have sought more regular feedback to inform our ways of working and enhance wellbeing. The HR strategy team have undertaken a series of team development sessions to understand each other better to maximise our performance.

Awards and Recognition



Warwickshire County Council Star Awards:

9 separate nominations for teams/individuals in workforce services



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 aiming to achieve Silver in Summer 2024.



Disability Confident Employer Status Level 2 renewed during Autumn 2023.

HR: Our year in numbers

Across the HROD service, as well as the achievements listed, we have delivered the following activity:

85,000

HROD intranet
page hits

136

School HR &
Payroll Customers

11

External
Customers

209

School H&S
Customers

16

Tender
opportunities
received

HR advisory/HR change

651 formal cases supported
52 change projects supported
18 Subject Access requests
727 queries from schools
128 jobs graded



Health and Safety

109 training programmes delivered
54 DSE assessments
199 workplace inspections
238 eye test vouchers issued
892 occupational health referrals



HROD Improvement

221 communications produced
369 intranet and document
updates completed
15 processes written, reviewed
and improved
93 FOIs completed



Customer experience

25,203 customer connections
(email, call, chat)
0.3 day average response time
5 structure changes implemented



Organisational Development

2887 Your Say survey responses
252 STAR Award nominations
16 team development sessions
76 colleagues recognised for
long service



Payroll

393,836 payslips produced
£493.2 Million pound paid
through the payroll
40 different payrolls processed
13 pay awards
7,717 payroll queries



People Skills

170 apprentices supported
28 apprentices recruited
18,777 delegates
completed training
319 courses delivered



Recruitment

1,009 WCC jobs posted
1,456 traded jobs posted
722 new starters onboarded
9,590 DBS checks countersigned



Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Wellbeing

46 Equality Impact
Assessments supported
42 training courses delivered
1,285 attended training
710 vaccinated through
on-site clinics
10 staff networks
supported

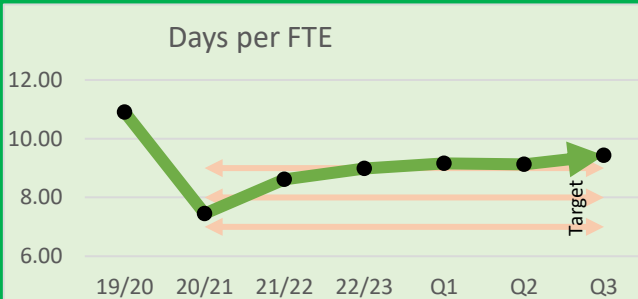


Measuring Our Success

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

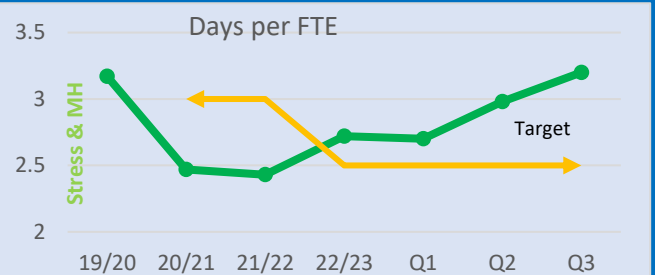
Sickness Absence Trend



Absence has increased this year and is now outside of target and therefore is a key priority.

Key Business Indicators

Stress and Mental Health Reason Trend



Stress & MH absence has increased this year and is now above target.

Employee Engagement

Engagement Score
79%

22/23 = 76% Target = 78%

Response Rate
56%

22/23 = 43%/40%,
2025 Target = 70%

Employee Engagement increased again over the last year and it is pleasing to see an considerable increase in our response rate as we continue to work towards our 2025 target.

Engagement Indicators

Wellbeing

82% (77% 22/23)

Proud to work for WCC

83% (80% 22/23)

Safe to be authentic self

78% (79% 22/23)

The combined wellbeing score has increased. There has been an increase in Proud to work for WCC, and a very slight decrease in safe to be authentic self. With all being over 75%.

Pay Gaps

Gender

0.4%

Ethnicity

-0.2%

Disability

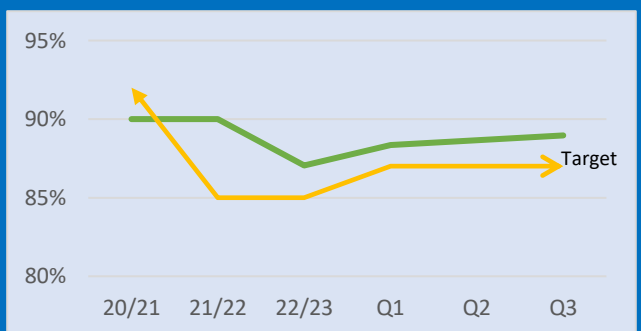
5.4%

Target 0% (+/-5%)

All gender and ethnicity mean pay gaps are within target and are all closer to 0% compared with 2021/22, our disability gap has increased and is now outside of target.

- Gender down from 2.4% and below the ONS national average of 14.3%
- Ethnicity has changed from plus 0.2% but remains the same distance to 0.
- Disability has increased from 2.4%.





Retention






Retention has increased, and is currently 88.65%, which is now on the revised target of 88%

Priority Actions 2024/2025 -

Having considered our achievements over the last year, along with our performance measures, and through engagement with our Senior Leadership Forum 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 in 24/25:

Culture, Values and Behaviours 	Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive action to reduce our absence rates, long term sickness and stress and mental health sickness. • Maximise our wellbeing offer through our links with our Occupational Health and Employee Assistant Programme Providers and maintain and review initiatives already in place. • Achieve Silver Thrive at Work Accreditation
	EDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed our approach to EDI • Work more closely with our network groups, listening more and ensuring our policies meet the needs of all our people. • Maximise opportunities to improve the employee experience for people with disabilities. • Support the levelling up agenda by refining our social mobility data, and target actions to create positive change to ensure our workforce reflects our communities.
	Health and Safety (H&S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve our approach to the management of H&S which will continue to support and strengthen the Council's H&S Culture.
	Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to review and update our policies to ensure that they meet legislative requirements, are principle based, support our people and managers and reflect the tone and voice of the organisation and enable the organisation.
	Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage with our People using our annual Your Say Survey, our employee forums and community teams, where we listen and hear the voice of our people. Ensuring their voice informs our actions.
Leadership 	People Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch and embed a number of HR Dashboards, to enable managers to better understand their team performance to take informed decisions to manage their workforce in the most effective way.
	Leadership Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed our leadership approach and develop a managers guide that focuses on simplification.
Performance 	Performance Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope our approach to performance, which will replace the current performance and appraisal frameworks.
	H&S Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that we understand our health and safety (H&S) performance by introducing technology to support our approach to the management H&S
Organisational Development and Design 	Strategic Workforce Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and embed an approach to Strategy Workforce Planning to provide insight and challenge as well as providing HROD with common themes to inform priority actions around talent management, Talent acquisition and succession planning. • Ensure the HROD Service support the organisation to change and transform to meets its ongoing needs of the Council Plan and the MTFs.
	Establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our establishment process to better understand our workforce size and capacity and the associated costs.
	Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the organisation's ability to understand and communicate data as insightful information by supporting the organisation to deliver our data

		roadmap by ensuring we build a data driven culture and develop data literacy capability.
Reward and Recognition 	Reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to review our Reward and Recognition strategy and plan for future
	Our Employee Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showcase the employee offer and benefits for our people to support our aim to be an employer of choice and to improve recruitment and retention. Embed the lease car and cash AVC schemes, and continue to review other opportunities, in line with the feedback from our people
	Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope developments to our current recognition arrangements at a more frequent and local level.
Talent Development and Career Opportunities 	Recruitment and Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a strategic review of the current resourcing model to develop a modern, inclusive and proactive service that supports us to be competitive and fit for purpose and future focussed. Onboard and embed our new temporary agency contract and start to develop a strategic partnership approach
	Talent Management/ Growing our Own	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope our approach to talent development Develop a toolkit approach for growing our work to widen apprenticeship and graduate opportunities and to develop more career pathways.
	Skills profiling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop our approach to collating the skills across the organisation to enhance workforce modelling, support organisational change initiatives and improve resources planning.
Strategic People and HROD Service Improvements 	Horizon scanning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the organisation is ready to adopt any changes in employment law. Focus includes carers leave, flexible working rights, and a potential review of EU derived employment law along with potential industrial action.
	HR Commercial Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop our commercial strategy to ensure that our traded activity is commercially viable and resilient and enhances our provision of core services.
	Data Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
	Agree our service offer,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed our new structure and review our service offer in line with predicted headcount, with the organisation, ensuring that we are adding the most value.
	Service Simplification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify priority areas using customer insight and data to improve customer experience and address existing areas of high failure demand, implement the SLAM project outcomes
	HROD Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the wellbeing of our teams, especially during busy periods, maximise the retention of our talent
	Systems and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the impact of Digitalisation and AI for HR Work with the organisation to understand, scope and agree our future HROD System requirements.

2023/2024 has been another successful year for delivery against the Our People Strategy. Listening and responding to the voice of our people and leaders, as well as developing our service to best enable the organisation to thrive, our key achievements include:

Benefits Offer
regular newsletters, gym memberships, Cost shared AVC's and lease cars

Community Teams
how we best engage with our community teams, putting actions in place to develop communication and enabling best practice to be shared between teams.

YourSay surveys
on wellbeing and engagement have produced positive results on what we do well and provided some areas of focus for improvements.

Leadership
Launched our approach to Leadership and our differentiated leadership programme to enable our leaders to be the best they can be.

Annual Reviews
Told our story through reviews for Engagement, Wellbeing, Health and Safety and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, celebrating our successes and providing focus for further work.

Strategic Workforce Planning
Worked with the CIPD and West Midlands Employees to undertake a pilot which is being evaluated and will be developed into an approach for use across the Council to ensure our workforce is fit for the future.

Bringing HR Strategy and Delivery together, along with Local Services, under one Director

We have continued to support our people and enabled them to continually deliver for the communities that we serve.

Our HROD Delivery colleagues have had another busy and successful year, delivering effectively against increasing demand for HROD services.

Whilst some of our major projects and initiatives will continue into 2024/2025, 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 around our following key priority themes:

Strategic Workforce Planning

Reward and Recognition

Recruitment and Retention

Leadership

EDI and Wellbeing

We will continue to develop the HR service that we can all be proud of, to sustain exceptional service delivery for our colleagues and service users.