

Flintshire County Council
People Strategy 2016 – 2019
Supporting a Modern and Efficient Council

Introduction

The organisation and its services are embarking on a further period of significant change, as described in the improvement plan, and portfolio business plans. We will only achieve our ambitions and be successful with this change through our people. Engaging our people fully and developing the skills, attitudes and behaviours we will need in the future is a priority.

The 2016-19 People Strategy builds on a set of foundations set by previous strategies plus early work on this strategy in 2015, these include:

- A good track record of achievement with the successful implementation of Single Status and settlement of Equal Pay claims,
- Creation of an Employee Service Centre,
- Providing an integrated end-to-end HR Transactional service;
- Electronic Document Management (EDM) which has enabled the merger of HR, Payroll and Education Staffing files;
- Further development of the Apprenticeship Scheme,
- Implementation of agile and flexible working,
- Development of e-learning modules to support Alternative Service Delivery Models, leadership and management development
- Introduction of a competency based appraisal and talent management system.

The Strategy is designed to ensure that as a Council, we are able to adapt flexibly to the challenging pace of change within the public sector but also to respond to the changing context of local government at a local, regional and national level. Many of the themes from the previous strategy are still relevant, but there is an increased focus on how we plan to develop and support our people during this time of change. For some people, periods of change can cause uncertainty. For others change brings new possibilities and is something to be relished. During these times communication and leadership are more important than ever.

This strategy also plays an important part in the achievement of the Council's aspirations, ambitions and values of being a modern, high performing and trusted public sector organisation. Further, it has been informed by the Council's other key strategies, most importantly the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the Council's Improvement Plan.

Vision for our future workforce

This people strategy has been developed against a background of rapid change and sets out how the Council will adapt to meet the opportunities and challenges envisaged through the life of this strategy in supporting a Modern and Efficient council.

To achieve this we need the whole of our workforce to be:

- Customer focused
- Aspirational and optimistic with a 'can do' attitude
- Resilient to the challenges ahead
- Motivated, talented, competent and skilful
- Dynamic and responsive to the changing needs of our residents, customers and stakeholders

How will we achieve our vision?

The strategic priorities for 2016-2019 are:

- Planning the Workforce of the Future
- Developing Workforce and Leadership Capacity
- Managing Performance
- Recognition and Reward
- Enabling Change through Alternative Models

Key Outcomes

- Increased leadership and management capability
- A single consolidated workforce plan and supporting action plans
- Change will be managed fairly, consistently and transparently
- An environment in which managers are given the authority to take/accept responsibility
- A committed, motivated, flexible and professional workforce
- A workforce which is encouraged and supported to consider the health and well-being of themselves and others
- Simplified policies and procedures which are accessible and easy to read
- Improved attendance management interventions; and
- Development of an effective pay, recognition and reward framework

Guiding principles in delivery are:

- Supporting the business to achieve its objectives
- Recognising the changing work environment and adapting to those changes in a positive manner
- Maintaining legal compliance in all aspects of our work
- Working flexibly
- Continuing to develop and support our managers and employees to adapt to change
- Solution focussed

Planning the workforce of the future

Having a detailed understanding of our current workforce, changes in local and national labour markets and a vision for the future will enable us co-ordinate the development of detailed workforce plans. These should be an integral part of the business planning process. The plans will describe and address the gap between the current workforce, delivering the service today and what the future workforce needs to be to deliver the services of the future.

HR will focus on:

Supporting changes in future workforce numbers to meet service needs

Develop job roles to support changes and improvements in services

Being creative and building flexibility by using non-traditional working patterns.

Complying with the requirements for which HR and OD are responsible under the Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2016.

Key Actions:

Develop workforce information that indicates accurately the utilisation of the workforce for each service to include core employees/positions and the peripheral/flexible workforce.

Design workforce plans by portfolio to forecast requirements for the short, medium and long-term with specific actions for addressing challenges and risks (i.e. recruitment difficulties/skills shortages).

To achieve this

Chief Officers will:

- Actively promote the benefits associated with good performance management interventions.
- Ensure completion of appraisals, career conversations and development plans (as appropriate) in a timely manner.
- Sharing intelligence with regard to future service requirements affected by internal and external factors.

Managers/supervisors will:

- Ensure completion of appraisals, career conversations and development plans (as appropriate) for their areas of responsibility in a timely manner.
- Explore non-traditional working methods to improve service delivery and inform future working planning.

Employees will

- Actively embrace performance management interventions
- Engage with development opportunities

High Level Actions to Support Delivery

1.	Design workforce plans by portfolio to forecast requirements for the short, medium and long-term.
2.	Consider alternative methods of job design/evaluation to support the

	creation of alternative roles that meet the changing needs of the organisation.
3.	Facilitate and extend the use of flexible working options through the use of technology.

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We will build on the work of the previous people strategies by ensuring that our employees have the right skills, knowledge and competencies to carry out their roles as effectively as possible. In order to do that the organisation will need to identify gaps in skills and knowledge, future requirements and the most appropriate means of filling any gaps.

HR will focus on:

Knowledge, skills and competencies

Key Actions:

We will work with portfolios to identify their learning and development requirements, taking into account of future business needs including new roles.

We will provide employees with opportunities to develop professional and transferable skills.

We will equip our managers with the commercial skills and knowledge to operate effectively with reducing resources.

We will encourage and enable our managers and teams to be proactive, innovative and creative in delivering services differently.

Collaboration

We will work with other public sector Learning and Development providers to identify and develop appropriate and cost effective learning opportunities.

Managing Change

We will develop training programmes for managers which recognise and promote managing change as a key set of competencies.

To achieve this

Chief Officers will:

- Provide a consistent and high profile lead on promoting the importance of learning and development activities
- Be pro-active and role model the organisations commitment to learning through their own development activities

Managers/Supervisors will:

- Include relevant and achievable individual learning plans in formal performance management discussions
- Support employees to realise opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and competencies that benefit

- Ensure that learning and development features prominently in performance management discussions between management and employees in their service area
- both the employee and the Council
- Identify potential knowledge or skills gaps that may impact on current or future performance within their service (area of responsibility)

Employees will:

- Seek opportunities for their own development
- Undertake and complete agreed development actions

High Level Actions to Support Delivery

1.	Create a programme which supports leadership development
2.	We will improve the confidence and capability of our managers through an organised programme of coaching, mentoring and management development.
3.	Develop a range of training and development interventions for managers and employees to include stress awareness and stress management e-learning modules, face to face workshops and mental health first aid to support the overriding attendance management strategy.
4.	Further develop the apprenticeship programme as a 'talent pool' for the future

Managing Performance

We want our employees to be focused on delivering against their objectives and motivated to deliver services to a high standard for the benefit of the citizens of Flintshire. To support and enable this, our managers need to have access to timely, accurate management information.

HR will focus on:

Key Actions:

Performance Appraisal

Improve individual and team performance by implementing the competency based appraisal for all employees.

Provision of meaningful and timely management information

Implement talent management interventions to identify our talent at every level of the organisation.

Develop a HR dashboard for services and schools which provides suitably detailed in an accurate, consistent and timely manner to support managers in the effective and efficient management of their services.

Attendance Management

Implementing new interventions for managing long term and frequent absences.

Introducing a case management approach for longer term absences which involve the employee, the manager, HR and Occupational Health.

To achieve this

Chief Officers will:

- Provide a consistent and high profile lead on promoting the importance of performance management
- Promote the use of consistent interventions identified in the attendance management policy across their area of responsibility.

Managers/Supervisors will:

- Complete performance management discussions on an annual basis.
- Identify potential knowledge or skills gaps that may impact on current or future performance within their service (area of responsibility)
- Lead by example in terms of demonstrating desired behaviours.

Employees will:

- Comply with their obligations under the attendance management policy
- Contribute positively with the appraisal process
- Undertake and complete agreed development actions.

High Level Actions to Support Delivery

1.	Simplify the existing attendance management procedures to provide for greater management autonomy
2.	Introducing a standardised set of people objectives for employees with management responsibilities.
3.	Increase the number of services who achieve 100% attendance and 100% appraisal completion
4.	Achieve an improvement in the Health and Well-being our employees

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Recognition and Reward

We want our employees to be fairly and equitably rewarded for the work they do, within the confines of affordability and national pay policy. We want our employees to understand their contribution to the business, to receive suitable acknowledgement of their contribution and to understand the role they have in shaping our future.

HR will focus on:

Pay and Reward

Key Actions:

We will continue to undertake Equal Pay monitoring to identify any gender pay gaps and develop feasible proposals to address these.

We will explore non-financial forms of reward and recognition to develop a recognition culture, which acknowledges and recognised good performance and effort.

We will maintain an up to date knowledge of best practice initiatives and all legal requirements in respect of pay and recognition.

We will provide specialist policy, advice and guidance

Working Together

We will continue to work with the recognised trade unions and directly with our employees on issues affecting them.

We will be as open and transparent as possible in our communications with employees, and their representatives.

To achieve this

Chief Officers will:

- Maintain a consistent and high profile lead on pay and recognition
- Consult as appropriate on issues affecting employees
- Keep employees informed about issues affecting them and be as open and transparent as possible in communications

Managers/Supervisors will:

- Ensure that employees are aware of our approach to pay and recognition
- Carry out effective budget management
- Manage employee expectations (not over-promise)

Employees will:

- Familiarise themselves with our pay and recognition systems, including self-service

applications

- Participate in relevant consultation exercises affecting pay and recognition

High Level Actions to Support Delivery

1.	Create a total reward/benefits portal which provides access to a range of benefits and savings on everyday shopping, motoring and health and well-being spend.
2.	Review the current pay model to ensure it meets the obligations of the National Living Wage and consider options to 'bridge the gap' between the existing pay and grading model and the Chief Officer pay model.
3.	Explore alternative methods of communication to increase engagement levels with our employees
4.	Complete Equal Pay audits on an annual basis and develop proposals to address gender gaps identified (if any).

Enabling Change through Alternative Models

We want to help the Council protect front line services in whatever form that takes, as it responds to external and internal challenges and evolves in terms of its size, shape and models of service delivery. We need to equip our managers and employees with the appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours to be resilient and have the confidence to try new approaches and adapt their ways of working.

HR will focus on:

Developing appropriate frameworks (including service level agreements) to enable managers to assess feasibility of alternative models

Provide specialist advice and guidance in relation to legal obligations regarding employment issues.

Development of bespoke e-learning modules to support services transitioning out of the organisation.

Key Actions:

Provision of a model service level agreement which details options for continued provision of support services.

Development of appropriate toolkits and guidance documents for managers (i.e. TUPE and Code of Practice on Workforce Matters 'Two Tier Code').

Provide access to a range of modules which develop the commercial and financial awareness/acumen of managers transitioning out of the organisation.

To achieve this

Chief Officers will:

- Provide a consistent and high profile lead on promoting the benefits of alternative models.
- Engage proactively at all levels within their area of responsibility.

Employees will:

- Contribute positively to proposals for alternative service models
- Propose alternative models/ methods of working as appropriate.
- Engage openly and honestly during periods of consultation.

Managers/Supervisors will:

- Complete performance management discussions on an annual basis.
- Identify potential knowledge or skills gaps that may impact on current or future performance within their service (area of responsibility)
- Lead by example in terms of demonstrating desired behaviours.

High Level Actions to Support Delivery

1.	Review, rationalise, simplify and further develop HR policies and procedures and associated management toolkits to enable greater levels of self-sufficiency.
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2.	Develop programme on ADMs to prepare managers and employees for transition.
3.	Finalise model service level agreement and implement service level agreements for all portfolios.

Delivering the Strategy

How will we deliver the strategy?

The first key activity is the development of a detailed action plan which will identify the priorities, the key actions, who is accountable, who is responsible and when the actions will be completed.

The immediate priorities to be taken forward for the remainder of 2016/17 and into 2017/18 include actions in support of the following:

Developing leadership capacity

- Developing leaders
- Developing succession planning approaches and programmes

Developing workforce capacity

- Developing skills, attitudes and behaviours

Planning the workforce of the future

- Supporting changes in future workforce numbers to meet service needs
- Developing job roles to support changes and improvements in service delivery
- Being creative and building flexibility by using non traditional working patterns

Who will deliver the People Strategy?

The delivery of the strategy is the collective responsibility of the Council from Elected Members and the Chief Officer Team to front line employees, with Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR and OD) as part of the People and Resources Portfolio team providing specialist expertise, advice and support.

Reporting

A detailed action plan will be refreshed annually and reported to Cabinet.

Progress against specific actions will be reported to Chief Officers and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny.