

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

22nd JUNE 2022

COUNCILLOR MIKE HALLAM, LEAD PORTFOLIO HOLDER

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| Report Title | Workforce skills and capacity – Risk E04 Update |
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Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

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| MO Catherine Whitehead | 13 th June 2022 |
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The Audit and Governance Committee has requested an update in respect of risk **Workforce Skills and Capacity**. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on work being undertaken to mitigate this risk.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the committee note the actions that have been taken to mitigate this risk.

3. Report Background

3.1 **Risk EO4 Workforce Skills and Capacity** relates to - Inability to attract or retain staff with the right skills, experience and understanding to deliver outcomes.

3.2 One of the key factors in ensuring the successful delivery of our Corporate Plan and ensuring that everyone THRIVES in West Northants is the workforce on whom we depend on to deliver and commission services to our residents and other stakeholders, including the most vulnerable in society. It is acknowledged that our local service commissioners and providers will need to take the necessary action to ensure that their workforce is sufficient and skilled, actively customer-focused and living the THRIVE values, well led and supported to ensure the delivery of high quality and impactful services.

3.3 Working through Covid has also certainly been a big challenge for all organisations and the need to adapt ways of working to enable safe passage through the pandemic. Nationally the overall workforce situation is a challenge with overall job vacancies at their highest recorded and research indicating that 1 in 4 workers are considering changing their jobs.

3.4 As well as managing the here and now, it is also important to consider future needs and to kept abreast of national and system changes and ensuring we deploy the right interventions and support in line with future training and employment requirements to deliver multi skilled workforce that services of the future will need.

3.5 **Risk EO4 has a residual risk score of 9, which is low risk.** The latest update (presented at Audit and Governance Committee last month – up to December 21) also showed the impacts arising from the Covid response in relation to care and health-based employees.

3.3 Good Controls had been assessed in relation to:

- Resources are aligned to priorities and staff deliver value
- Strong staff engagement and culture of support and development for all staff
- Succession planning for key roles and monthly monitoring of turnover and vacancies.
- Arrangements in place to source appropriate interim resource if needed

3.4 Reasonable controls had been assessed in relation to:

- Recruitment and Retention Plan in place to ensure workforce capacity maintained
- Terms and conditions provide a positive framework for workforce
- Council has good management policies and practices as working towards increasing visibility as a local employer and been seen as an employer of choice
- Terms and conditions are comparable and benchmarked to attract and retain staff
- Permanent transformation team in place and ability to access resources so services can be delivered with minimal disruption to staff and customer
- Manager's forums and engagement in place to support strong and positive workforce plans and approaches
- Working towards ensuring succession planning in place across directorates and teams to ensure that resilience in teams and services
- Staff development programme and graduate development programme as part of workforce plans

- Delegations to Chief Exec and other senior officers agreed to ensure timely decisions

4.0 Update on progress with Risk E04 since December 2021

4.1 Creation of a People Strategy

Statement of Importance – The creation of a Workforce Strategy development helps WNC equip itself with the skills, knowledge, competence and the tools and techniques to lead and develop the organisation. Aligned to the Corporate Plan it sets out the strategic direction of travel for the council and provides a framework to source the new workforce from and what development staff will need to produce the workforce capacity expected.



Actions Taken – this has been a significant undertaking and will provide a robust framework with its clear statement of intent. Our People Strategy is about our workforce. It explains what we will do to make sure that we have the skills to deliver the outcomes for West Northants set out in the Councils Corporate Plan.

To attract and retain those skills, we aim to ensure the Council is a place where:

- people aspire to work,
- there is an opportunity to learn and grow,
- workforce achievements are acknowledged and recognised,
- the work environment is safe, healthy, diverse and engaging

4.2 Work strands under the People Strategy

Statement of Importance – there are 50 key workstreams that allow key actions to be implemented across all the domains of the People Strategy which will help to deliver on the key themes of the strategy.

Actions Taken – below is a summary of the key workstreams outlining year 1 of the implementation.

| Programme / Workstream / Projects | Start Date | End Date | Jun-21 | Jul-21 | Aug-21 | Sep-21 | Oct-21 | Nov-21 | Dec-21 | Jan-22 | Feb-22 | Mar-22 | Apr-22 | May-22 | Jun-22 | Jul-22 | Aug-22 | Sep-22 | Oct-22 | Nov-22 | Dec-22 | Jan-23 | Feb-23 | Mar-23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| 1. Attracting & Retaining Talent | Jun-21 | Mar-25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1 Talent Acquisition & Organisation Orientation | Sep-21 | Mar-23 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.1 Identification and implementation of specialist recruitment activity for hard to fill roles | Oct-21 | Apr-22 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.2 Procurement and implementation of replacement recruitment system | Sep-21 | Dec-22 | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | |
| 1.1.3 Develop employer brand and define Employer Value Propositions (EVP) | Dec-21 | Sep-22 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.4 Development of an advertising strategy ensuring diversity, inclusivity and maximum coverage | Nov-21 | Dec-22 | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | |
| 1.1.5 Development of a work experience, Intern & volunteering policy (Working with our schools and universities to develop work experience, intern and volunteering programmes) | Jan-22 | Mar-23 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 1.1.6 Research & Design a Three-Tier induction programme: Employee, Manager, Leadership | Nov-21 | Aug-22 | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.7 Development of WNC Employee Welcome Pack, which embeds and reflects who we want to be | Dec-21 | Apr-22 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.8 Production of a induction video outlining key corporate information and WNC values | Jan-22 | Jun-22 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.9 Implementation of quarterly senior management 'meet and greet' sessions | Jan-22 | May-22 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.10 Development of internal manager resources to aid effective on-boarding and on-going management | Jan-22 | Apr-22 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.11 Delivery & Launch and promotion of complete offer | Jun-22 | Jun-22 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.12 Implementation of a buddy system to ensure a supportive, worry-free induction | Apr-22 | Jun-22 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.2 Talent Management | Dec-21 | Mar-25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.2.1 Retention planning - Review exit interview process to create a consistent approach, metrics to inform retention strategy | Dec-21 | May-22 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.2.2 Development of in-house 'West Northamptonshire Futures Development Programme', in addition to NGDP offer | Jun-22 | Apr-23 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 1.2.3 Talent mapping & succession planning, identifying skills / capabilities of existing workforce, aligning to growth strategy | Apr-23 | Mar-25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| 1.2.4 Assurance reviews to ensure Diversity & Inclusion underpins talent management and progression | Apr-23 | Mar-25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| 1.3 Pay, Reward & Recognition | Jun-21 | Mar-24 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.3.1 Pay & Grading Phase 1 - Delivery & Implementation | Jun-21 | May-22 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.3.2 Pay & Grading Phase 2 - Scoping & Delivery | Jun-22 | Sep-22 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 1.3.3 Pay & Grading Phase 3 - Options Appraisal, Decision Making, Approach Scoping & Delivery | Nov-22 | Mar-24 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |

4.3 Manager Guide

Statement of Importance: Managers at all levels have a key role to play managing staff and helping to mitigate this risk

Actions Taken – As well as guidance coming out regularly to all managers and more detailed sessions with Assistant Directors and Executive Leadership Team, this summary guidance, the basics of being a good manager at WNC helps clarify all the actions needed by managers and their responsibilities in relation to people, resources, systems and a focus on their management behaviours.

4.4 Ways of Working

Statement of Importance – To retain and attract the best workforce for WNC, good working arrangements help to make us an employer of choice.

Actions Taken – Worker Types have now been established for all employees (Fieldworker, Fixed, Flexible and Fully Flexible) and this builds upon the learning from Covid and living with the restrictions. It allows the focus to be on work is what you do, rather than where you do it. This forms part of a key transformation programme – West Way of Working.

4.5 Employee Survey

Statement of Importance – this has provided detailed insights from all directorates and staffing groups to help shape the current and future organisation

Actions Taken – The insights from the survey have helped to shape our overarching People Strategy. The detailed feedback has been shared with each service area (assistant director level) to enable them to also develop localised action plans.

4.6 Employee Awards/Recognition

Statement of Importance – this aligns with the council coming up to its first birthday and creates a sense of belonging and pride and an opportunity to celebrate those who are visibly living the THRIVE values

Actions Taken – nominations have been received from members of staff and will be judged by a panel of employees from across the directorates with an awards ceremony at the end of March. There has also been a workforce recognition kudo board launched to capture wider workforce achievements and the end of year valuing individual performance conversation is being rolled out during March.

4.7 Employee Benefits

Statement of Importance – this provides a wide set of additional benefits that help to retain and attract staff

Actions Taken – increasing package of employee benefits available for staff (including car leasing, local discounts) alongside a substantial wellbeing offer for all.

4.7 Changes to Recruitment

Statement of Importance – the jobs market has become increasingly competitive and different recruitment techniques are needed

Actions Taken – there is now dedicated recruitment specialism in HR and this has helped to successfully support recruitment and retention areas across the council – e.g. adults care and social worker campaign. Work is also underway to implement an improved recruitment platform alongside digital campaign.

4.8 Pay and Grading

Statement of Importance – the current market conditions and buoyancy of market for certain role make this a critical issue for recruitment and retention

Actions Taken – the council has been working on a full Pay and Grading transformation as well as ensuring the council pays the Living Wage.

5. Implications (including financial implications)

a. Resources and Financial

The financial implications relating to HR pressures have already been flagged as part of revenue reporting and proposals are being developed for the medium-term financial plan.

b. Legal

There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

c. Risk

The Council's strategic risks include the one risk covered within this report

6. Background Papers (with links)

Please email Sofia Neal-Gonzalez at democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk for a copy of the documents listed below.



People Strategy.pdf

a. People Strategy



People Strategy On
A Page

b. People Strategy on A Page



Portfolio Plan

c. People Strategy Action Plan



West Ways of
Working - Defining



One to one
guidance.pdf



V.I.P End of Year
Conversation Form,



1-1 Form.pdf

d. Manager Checklist



Worker Types.pdf

e. West Way of Working and Worker Types

f. Example of recruitment campaigns: [West Northamptonshire Council | Recruitment in care \(allinadayswork.co.uk\)](#)