

Cabinet

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| Report Title | People Plan (Workforce Strategy) 2024 – 2027 |
| Date of Meeting | 30 April 2024 |
| Report Author | Luci Robb Assistant Director HR/ OD |
| Director | Paul Robinson, Director of Enabler Services |
| Lead Cabinet Member | Cllr Jonathan Brook Leader of the Council |
| Why is this a key decision? | <p>1. An executive decision which is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates. NO</p> <p>2. or is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the Council. For these purposes, savings and expenditure are “significant” if they are equal to or greater than £500,000. NO</p> <p>For clarification, no treasury management decision shall constitute a Key Decision.</p> |
| Wards Affected | (All Wards); |
| Identify exempt information and exemption category | None |
| Reasons for urgency (only where applicable) | N/A |
| Appendices (if any) | Appendix 1: People Plan 2024 - 2027 Appendix 2: People Plan Delivery Plan 2024-2025 Appendix 3: Equality Screening |

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report recommends that Cabinet approves the People Plan 2024 – 2027.
- 1.2 The People Plan sets out the high-level direction of travel and aspirations for our workforce and is supported by a delivery plan which will be updated on an annual basis. Equality screening of the strategy has been undertaken and accompanies this report.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, Cabinet is recommended to:

2.1 Agree the People Plan 2024-2027 and year 1 Delivery Plan 2024 – 2025.

3. Information: the Rationale & Evidence for the Recommendations

3.1 The People Plan is the one the Council's foundational strategies that will support the delivery of the Council's vision and priorities. The vision for our workforce has been shaped by the Westmorland and Furness Council Plan, Council Plan Delivery Framework and our Target Operating Model. It describes our aspiration to have a confident, empowered and inclusive workforce.

3.2 Our People Plan describes how our workforce will achieve the vision and priorities for the Westmorland and Furness Council, it acknowledges how our employees are the driving force behind our services, and as a 'live document' it will be reviewed annually to ensure it reflects our priorities, values and our changing world of work.

3.3 We want our Council to be an employer of choice, not one of necessity, with a strong focus on improving health, safety and wellbeing, trust and inclusivity. We recognise that our strength as an organisation is our workforce, who have achieved so much to date, since we formed as a new unity council.

3.4 Much more however remains to be done, so our aspiration is to further create a positive and inclusive workplace culture, where our employees have a sense of belonging and feel valued, can reach their full potential and can actively contribute to the Council's priorities.

3.5 The Council's Customer Strategy and ICT Strategy, together with the People Plan will support the development of our workforce that operates in a customer focused way. Alongside other strategies, these will reflect the importance of developing a digitally skilled and confident workforce, with the ability to meet the expectations of effective and easy access to services.

3.6 In the creation of our People Plan, we have engaged with various groups to understand what is important to our employees. Additionally, we have drawn on good practice from the public and private sectors, and feedback from staff, Trade Unions and elected members to help shape our strategy, our key priorities and our delivery plan.

3.7 Our People Plan is structured around the employee lifecycle and will focus on the following three priorities:

- To attract and retain a talented workforce;
- To create a culture of engagement and wellbeing;
- To develop our workforce to support the achievement of great outcomes.

3.8 The 2024-2025 Delivery Plan sets out the key activities for year 1 of the strategy, many of which are important to lay firm foundations for developing a strong and inclusive workplace culture over the medium to longer term.

4. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (People, Climate, Communities, Economy and Culture, Customers, Workforce)

4.1 The People Plan supports the delivery of the Council Plan and Council Plan Delivery Framework.

5. Consultation Outcomes

5.1 The People Plan has been informed through engagement with a wide range of stakeholders including our workforce, recognised Trade Unions, Change Champions and elected members. This insight and feedback supplemented the information gathered from best practice research.

5.2 Overview and Scrutiny members have helpfully explored the topic on a number of occasions and a workshop open to all councillors took place in December 2023 to develop the strategic direction of travel.

5.3 The engagement and feedback provided overwhelming support for the development of a People Plan, which supports the full employee lifecycle, including how we want to attract and retain our employees, how we want to engage and motivate our employees and how we will develop our workforce for the future.

5.4 Findings from our initial staff survey also provided helpful insight to how our workforce were feeling following Local Government Re-organisation. From this, we identified the need to ensure we focus upon developing a strong, positive workforce culture, that supports wellbeing, fairness, transparency, and clear management expectations, ensuring we think about our employees as individuals. Within our proposed measures of success, we will continue to draw on the findings from subsequent staff surveys to help inform our progress and performance against key People Plan priorities.

6. Alternative Options Considered

6.1 Members may decide not to agree the People Plan and supporting delivery plan as recommended or may decide to amend the strategy to reflect a different approach to our workforce.

7. Reasons for the Recommendations

7.1 Our employees are at the heart of the delivery of services to our residents and the communities we serve. The People Plan recommended provides a strategic overview and is accompanied by an annual delivery plan of how together we will achieve the vision and priorities for Westmorland and Furness Council.

8. Climate and Biodiversity Implications

- 8.1 Our People Plan strategy references our values and the importance of being “ecologically aware”. Within our key people priorities and activities, we will focus on how the development of our people policies and practices we can consider the impact on climate and diversity and how we can support a reduction in the carbon footprint for Westmorland and Furness.

9 Legal and Governance Implications

- 9.1 This is a decision for Cabinet and has been on the Council’s Forward Plan.

10 Human Resources Health Wellbeing and Safety Implications

- 10.1 The Human Resources and Health, Safety and Wellbeing implications are outlined within this report and the supplementary appendices.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications of the recommendation to approve the People Plan 2024-2027 and the year 1 Delivery Plan 2024 – 2025 as set out in Appendix 2.
- 9.2 It is anticipated that existing resources will be used to support the delivery of the year 1 plan.
- 9.3 Should members not approve the recommendation within this report but which to take a different approach, then the financial implications of this would need to be considered.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications (please ensure these are compliant with the EIA Guidance)

- 10.1 Equality screening is provided in Appendix 3.

11. Background Documents

- 11.1 Not applicable