

Workforce development strategy

Draft 2019-2024



"Great people, great teams and great results, making life
better for customers, better for business"



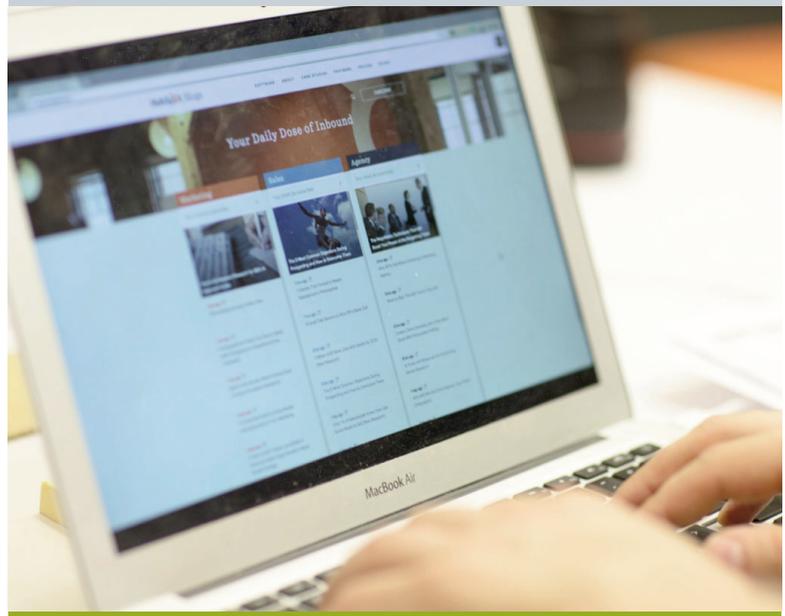
Transform
Tewkesbury Borough



**Tewkesbury
Borough Council**

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Part one - vision and priorities

The council's vision is "Tewkesbury Borough, a place where a good quality of life is open to all". The provision of high quality, customer focused and efficient public services is central to that vision and the delivery of the council Plan. The importance of having a skilled and highly engaged workforce, working in partnership with public sector organisations, other agencies and local business to provide those services cannot be overstated. As an organisation the council has a commitment to value its employees – "We will support, praise and invest in our workforce to develop our organisation".

The purpose of the Workforce Development Strategy is to identify how the council will meet current and future workforce needs to ensure it has skilled people to deliver high quality services. It sets out the critical challenges, opportunities and threats regarding workforce requirements and sets out a considered, flexible, set of responses to meet them. As such it provides a framework and direction to annual service planning (particularly the Human Resources plan) where the specific actions and objectives which will deliver the strategy will be contained and refreshed each year.

All sectors of the UK economy are seeing seismic shifts in the workforce which are forecast to accelerate further in the next decade. New digital technology, changes in society and demographics, reforms of education and qualifications, and alternative employment models related to the "gig" economy are just some of the forces at play which are creating new expectations between employers and employees, and vice versa.

In local authorities the needs and priorities of residents and businesses are also shifting, the financial outlook for councils remains challenging. Tewkesbury Borough Council faces a significant challenge given medium term financial projections and the continued uncertainty over future funding. The total workforce budget for 2018/19 is £9,063,121 (representing 88% of the council's net budget or 24% of gross expenditure excluding benefits spend). The projected budget for 2023/24 is £10,567,061.

The need to deliver services in increasingly innovative and cost effective ways has therefore never been higher. It is acknowledged that this economic climate may lead to difficult decisions being required in the future impacting on the size and composition workforce and the council's organisational structure.

However the emphasis on growing and developing people and the need to attract, retain and engage high quality staff are still the underlying themes of this strategy as the future success of the council and the delivery of its plans and priorities depend on them. But these will have to be achieved with tight control of costs.

Within the borough there is likely to be continuing competition to recruit and retain good staff, potentially exacerbated by Brexit. Shortages in certain professions where local government has long struggled to recruit and retain workers look set to continue. There is likely to be increased competition in the local job market for a wide range of skills with the

continuing growth of the local and regional economy. One way of illustrating this is by looking at “job density” in the locality. In 2016 there were 51,000 jobs in Tewkesbury, this equates to a job density of 0.97, which means there is almost one job for every resident of working age. In Gloucestershire the job density figure was 0.9. The local competition for a skilled workforce is therefore intense and is expected to remain so. Employers in the Gloucestershire area also face the challenge of losing younger workers to other parts of the country while the remaining working population age profile increases.

Economically the UK has been experiencing near full employment levels. Unusually this has not (yet?) led to strong and sustained growth in wages – economic uncertainty and low productivity are amongst the reasons that wage inflation has remained low. As a result competition for staff in the job market will continue to centre on the more intangible benefits an employer can offer (although the competitiveness of the pay and benefits package offered by the council cannot be ignored) - in particular providing meaningful jobs with a sense of purpose, giving progression and development opportunities, offering a healthy and positive working environment and providing greater flexibility in how, when and where work is performed. These are indicated in numerous surveys as amongst the most important factors for recruiting and retaining staff, although to make the job market even more challenging different generations in the workforce (from “millennials” to “Generation Z”) have different priorities and preferences related to their work, careers and family lives.

This rapidly changing employment landscape

means Tewkesbury Borough Council must build on its current strengths as a good employer and seize new opportunities to attract and develop the workforce it requires in the future. In a candidate driven job market playing “catch up” with other employers who can offer a more attractive and compelling overall package will prove very difficult if the initiative in making changes is lost.

Given this environment the council’s vision of its future as an employer of choice and the priorities it sets with regard to developing its workforce (effectively its employer brand) are as follows;

- To be recognised as a modern, attractive employer which is able to recruit and retain highly capable employees who share and demonstrate its values
- To have a highly connected workforce – connected internally across organisational structures, connected externally with partners, residents, customers and businesses to help create seamless services and places that prosper and grow
- To generate high levels of productivity through;
 - ✓ efficient and effective working practices and business processes
 - ✓ having a technologically confident and skilled workforce
 - ✓ high levels of engagement, commitment and trust across the workforce
 - ✓ providing excellent training and career development opportunities
 - ✓ high levels of leadership and management capability

- To be recognised as having a diverse and inclusive workforce employing a rich blend of different perspectives and life experiences in the workplace that make for better decision making and attract the best talent available from all walks of life.

Part two - the wider context

National and Public Sector/Local Authority environment

(Extracted from the LGA 2018 national workforce strategy "Great People for Growing Places")

The LGA has produced (in 2018) a national workforce strategy for the local government sector. This extract from the introduction describes some of the wider trends and pressures acting on all local authorities and is taken into account in the council's strategy;

"Over the next ten years the sector is facing a funding gap of £5.8b, changes to the financing structure of local government and further uncertainty over social care funding, as well as the impact of Brexit on the labour market, all of which make strategic planning and managing risks crucial. There is also a sustained drive to bring in service integration and partnership working under various umbrella policies, as well as the implications of devolution. With all this pressure it is clear that public service will need to continue on its transformation journey.

The world of work is changing as well. Just a few of the things we are seeing or expect to see in the near future are;

- Demographic change and growing diversity
- Changes to the state pension age

- Evolving consumer needs, including on demand services and gig economy models
- A workforce that will contain multiple generations from Generation Z to those in their 60s, with different needs and expectations
- Changing technologies, digital services and automation/robotics

From these shifts we can anticipate;

- Changing work environments
- Cross-disciplinary skills changing professional lives
- A growing desire for better work/life balance
- Income uncertainty
- A more commercial, income generating approach taken by councils

There is an urgent need to improve business efficiency and therefore productivity is an emerging priority. There are many approaches to improving productivity, including technology and restructuring tasks to add greater value. Undoubtedly reducing employment costs will always be a factor. However it will be important to focus on making sure people feel more engaged by addressing issues of wellbeing and personal development, as well as making the right investments in technology and processes. Generally innovations will only succeed if people are equipped to make use of them.

Improved internal communications, effective sickness absence management and promotion of a proper work/life balance are the next most important contributors to productivity beyond the development of leadership and management. Training and development of non-managers, proper team based working and

improved recruitment and retention are also regarded as boosting performance and productivity. Good relations with trade unions and robust inclusion and equality policies are also important.”

(LGA 2018 National Workforce Strategy)

Part three - strategic workforce themes and actions

To deliver the workforce vision and organisational priorities for Tewkesbury Borough Council identified in Part One of this strategy five strategic themes are identified as being key to success.

These five strategic themes are where the attention on workforce development needs to be focused over the next 3-5 years. Each of these five themes are described in more detail below and the strategic importance of the theme explained. The broad high level steps required to implement the strategy are set out underneath each theme.

Annual HR service and business plans (and where relevant service plans in other areas) should reflect the overall direction set out in the Workforce Development Strategy and set out the specific deliverables required each year, adjusted in the light of changing internal and external circumstances.

The five key themes of the Workforce Development Strategy are;

- Releasing productivity
- Digital Transformation
- Commercialisation

- Workforce resilience
- Being a great place to work

Each theme is described in more detail below and its strategic importance highlighted.

1 Releasing productivity

Strategic driver; increasing productivity (or producing more for every council £ spent) will be a continuing and ever more critical challenge given the financial pressures on the council. Increasing productivity is primarily achieved through a combination of effective working practices including - a strong and positive shared organisational culture, effective leadership and management, giving employees the right skills, tools and business processes to do their jobs efficiently and putting in place new digital solutions entering the workplace that will perform everyday tasks whilst releasing employees to focus on more complex customer needs.

Aim: to ensure all employees can work efficiently and productively as possible through the optimum use of IT systems and digital applications, inducting new employees successfully and quickly into their roles and harnessing the contribution of staff in the continuous improvement of the services they deliver.

Future Steps Required:

- 1.1 IT and digital skills; The core IT and digital skills required in each job role will need to be identified and effective timely training given to all employees to ensure the council

maximises the benefits from existing systems and the new digital applications it will implement over the next 5 years.

- 1.2 Induction; the induction process will be redesigned to ensure new employees meet the performance requirements of the role in the shortest possible time, can operate the systems necessary to be effective and display the values and behaviours required in the council
- 1.3 Culture of continuous improvement; All managers and employees will be provided with a set of practical tools and techniques which enable teams to work together to continuously improve service provision by streamlining business processes, increase the quality of service for the customer, and reduce inefficiencies.

2 Digital transformation

Strategic driver; Digital Transformation will shape the design, content (and possibly the need) for a wide range of jobs in the future. Digitisation will provide new ways for teams and individuals within the council to connect with each other, integrate services with partners and provide seamless products and services to people and places.

The council will need increasingly to recruit people with the technological aptitude, confidence and skills to operate in this environment and to develop its people quickly to enable them to adopt these new digital ways of working.

using technology and which embraces the new digital solutions and applications entering the workplace.

Future steps required:

- 2.1 Recruiting and selecting for a digital environment; Recruitment advertising and process will need to appeal to candidates with IT and digital skills; selection processes will be need to assess candidates' existing IT skills/aptitude and their ability/confidence to acquire new digital skills in the future.
- 2.2 Service reviews and business transformation; Business cases will need to specify clearly how people, processes and technologies will be successfully combined when service changes based on the implementation of new digital and IT systems are introduced.
- 2.3 Promoting Digital working; The successful introduction of new digital applications (including Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and further automation) will require the council to promote and champion a digital culture throughout the organisation - for example by providing opportunities for all staff to experience and learn from technological innovation inside and outside the organisation, identifying digital role models, working together on corporate digital project teams, publicising digital initiatives and successes across the council etc.

Aim: to have a workforce that is confident with

3 Commercialisation

Strategic driver; The council’s projected medium term funding gap and the uncertainty around future government settlements have contributed to the creation of a commercial strategy and a stronger commercial focus. This commercial focus has 3 core elements to it; i) developing new revenue streams and investment returns for the council, ii) making improvements in council business processes to increase customer satisfaction and improve access to services, and iii) helping businesses in the locality start, prosper and grow.

All three elements will require new and enhanced commercial and entrepreneurial skills and competencies in the workforce in order for the commercial strategy to be successful – though this will look different across job roles and teams depending on the level and type of participation required.

Aim: to identify, encourage and develop commercial skills and behaviours in the workforce in support of the council’s commercial strategy and objectives.

Future steps required:

3.1 Recruitment; The council will need to target applicants with relevant commercial skills and experience gained inside and outside the public sector in its recruitment advertising and marketing, and reflect its commercial approach in the employer recruitment brand.

3.2 Role responsibilities and skills; Job

descriptions and person specifications will need to include the specific commercial responsibilities and skills where these are required in individual roles, and selection processes will need to ensure these skills are appropriately assessed at interview stage.

3.3 Culture and behaviour; The council’s values and behaviours frameworks will need to be reviewed to ensure they include, and accurately describe for staff, what commercial behaviours look like within the context of delivering services to the local community.

3.4 Leadership and training; Senior leaders responsible for the council’s key commercial programmes will have recognised and specialist training to support them in their role (e.g. the LGA/Institute of Directors Commercial Skills qualification); training and development will be available for other staff where commercial responsibilities are a significant part of their jobs.



4 Workforce resilience

Strategic driver; Given the financial constraints of the last decade the majority of the council's workforce are currently dedicated to core rather than discretionary services. The services the council provides in the future may change depending on a range of factors - the economic climate, the introduction of new technologies, future structures for local authorities etc. As a result the council's current headcount (approximately 174 fte at the outset of the strategy) may need to change in response both in terms of shape and size. It will also change naturally through turnover in key roles due to the impact of retirement over the next 3-5 years which could potentially leave gaps in the structure.

In this context Workforce resilience is about i) ensuring that the council has available sufficient capacity to deliver its services in the future and ii) help ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt and to secure future employment when organisational change occurs.

It will therefore be important for the council to grow and develop its own talent, support employees through change and to continue to create opportunities to share capacity with partners in a variety of different ways.

Aim: to equip employees to meet the challenges of change in the workplace and develop the council's own talent pools for future roles.

Future steps required:

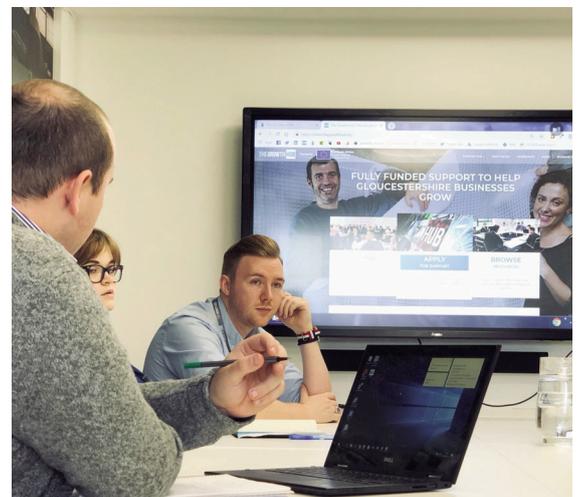
4.1 Invest further in apprenticeships; the council

will invest in the number, range and type of apprenticeships based on future workforce requirements.

4.2 Career progression; the council will design career progression routes where these support business need, strengthen staff retention, support succession into senior professional and managerial roles and create opportunities for shared working arrangements with partners.

4.3 Performance Management and Personal Development; The "one size fits all" approach to PPDs will need to change to a more flexible process reflecting the different performance and development requirements of individual services whilst continuing to support and promote corporate values and behaviours that underpin the council's wider organisational objectives and culture.

4.4 Succession Planning; Providing development opportunities to equip staff to compete effectively for more senior leadership and professional roles that become available in the council over the life of this strategy.



5 Being a great place to work

Strategic driver; In an increasingly competitive job market employers will increasingly seek to distinguish themselves in the eyes of their employees and potential candidates through a strong workforce brand and core people management competencies that make the organisation an “employer of choice”. To attract and retain staff organisations will need to excel in their approaches to;

- skills development, learning and career progression of their staff
- leadership of a 21st century workforce
- reward and recognition of staff
- engaging, motivating and involving their employees
- recruitment and selection

Council HR policies and practices will need to constantly evolve and adapt in response to the emerging and rapid changes in the world of work if it is to stay competitive in the job market. Current trends suggest that over the next 5 years employees will attach much greater importance to their employer – i) providing flexible and agile working opportunities (as increasing numbers of people in the workforce look to manage home and career commitments) , ii) providing healthy working environments (which promote both physical and mental wellbeing), and iii) demonstrating fairness and social purpose in their operations (for example commitment to a strong set of shared organisational values, showing care for the environment, and embracing the principles of diversity and inclusivity)

Aim: to attract and retain great employees who enjoy working for the council, feel motivated to give their best and are supported by modern

people management, policies and practices.

Future steps required:

- 5.1 Leadership; All leaders and managers (including those wishing to develop into a leadership role) will be supported by a structured leadership development programme focused on the skills of “enabling leadership” - the skills of leading within flatter organisational structures, managing teams and individuals operating with a wide range of flexible working patterns, using collaborative and inclusive influencing styles and being focused on outcomes rather than process.
- 5.2 Employer Brand and marketing; The council urgently needs to become more competitive in a fast moving and candidate driven job market by developing a strong and distinctive employer brand supported by modern recruitment systems to attract, engage and manage applicants effectively.
- 5.3 Flexible working; Flexible working opportunities, promoted at the point of hire, will become the default option for the majority of council roles to widen the pool of available applicants, retain existing staff and increase diversity (particularly in senior roles).
- 5.4 Health and wellbeing; A mental health plan will be developed with the objectives of reducing absence caused by mental health conditions and promoting greater understanding across the workforce of how to stay mentally healthy.

5.5 Everyone’s Council; The council will refresh its people policies, practices and training to promote greater diversity and inclusion in the workforce, attract a wider range of talent in the job market and take action to reduce/eliminate the gender pay gap (see Part Four below for further details on the gender pay gap).

5.6 Engagement and involvement; Implementation of digital systems to capture employee suggestions, feedback and insights in real time will supplement the current periodic employee survey and allow the council to measure and improve employee engagement more responsively.

5.7 Monitoring salary and benefits levels across the roles the council employees identifying competitive pressures in the market place so where necessary appropriate action can be taken



Part four - addressing the gender pay gap

The council will implement (and review) the actions from the table below as current good practice in reducing the gender pay gap adding organisational baseline information, identifying the evidence source to demonstrate what action has taken place, and where appropriate set targets. The model it will adopt is as follows;

ACTION	BASELINE	EVIDENCE LINKS	TARGET
Regular monitor across bands of the organisation/male/female ratio	As at 31/3/2017 Mean; Women’s hourly rate = 21% lower than men. Median; Women’s hourly rate = 22% lower (68% of the workforce = female 32% of the workforce = male)		
Check/audit policies to ensure opportunities for women coming back into roles following career breaks – eg target specific career fairs etc, mentoring of women in workplace			
Review all advertisement opportunities / methods of advertisement – best practice			
Audit flexible working arrangements across different levels – merit of retention and promotion of and access to flexible working in senior roles			

Part five - strategic workforce metrics

To measure the impact of the Workforce Development Strategy and guide workforce planning the following Key Performance Metrics (KPM) will be established and monitored.

KPM	What it will show	Why use it
Time to hire	Number of elapsed days from approval of Request to Fill to offer of appointment	To maintain effectiveness of recruitment systems; Impact on organisational capacity if recruitment delayed
Candidate attraction	Average number of candidates applying for each vacancy & posts filled on first advert	To track impact of changes to recruitment and selection branding, systems and processes to widen talent pools
Absence rate	Days lost per fte	Identify cost of absence and manage overall levels
Causes of absence	The most common reasons for employee sickness absence	Track effectiveness of well-being programme through patterns in causes for absence
Voluntary Turnover	% of workforce voluntarily leaving employment in a 12 month period	To indicate satisfaction with council as an employer; manage retention rates
Turnover of employees in year 1 of employment	% of leavers with 12 months service or less	To indicate satisfaction with council as an employer and effectiveness of recruitment and induction processes, manage retention rates
Apprentice retention	% of apprentices securing a permanent role at the Council	To indicate success of apprenticeship scheme in meeting future workforce needs
Employee Opinion Survey – Advocacy Question Council as an employer	% of staff speaking positively of Council as an employer	Overall measure of employee engagement, manage retention rates
Employee Opinion Survey – Advocacy Question Council as a service provider	% of staff speaking positively of Council as a service provider	Measure strength of support for Council “brand”
Employer Opinion Survey- % of staff looking for another job in 2 years	% of staff looking to leave employment in next 2 years – and reasons why	To indicate satisfaction with council as an employer and compare potential turnover with actual. Manage retention rates
Gender Pay Gap	% gap in mean and median earnings of male and female employees	To track success in addressing/reducing the gender pay gap
Diversity and Inclusion	% employees(and senior managers) by protected characteristic compared to local workforce census %s	To track effectiveness of diversity and equal opportunity policies and success in widening talent pools for jobs
Flexible/Agile working	% of Council vacancies advertised as open to flexible/agile working	To track success in widening talent pools for jobs and employee retention
Workforce costs	Actual and % total workforce costs compared to budget	Ensure control of expenditure on workforce
External pay and benefits checks	Key roles where council pay and benefits package varies from competitors	To manage recruitment and retention “hotspots”



**Tewkesbury
Borough Council**

Mike Dawson

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Tewkesbury Borough Council