

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	3 April 2019
Subject:	Workforce Development Strategy 2019-24
Report of:	Head of Corporate Services
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Organisational Development
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

This report introduces the Workforce Development Strategy (WFDS) for the Council covering the period 2019-24.

It is consistent with, and complementary to, other key Council strategies and policies notably the Council Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Commercial Strategy.

The purpose of the 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.

The Peer Review of 2014 noted the Council did not have an up to date Workforce Strategy in place and recommended one should be developed. The combination of the challenges arising out of the Council's financial position, the need for continuing service transformation and the rapidly changing nature of employment and the jobs market (both locally and nationally) now make such a strategy a necessity.

The Local Government Association has recently published (in 2018) a national Workforce Strategy for the local government sector (called "Great People for Growing Places") therefore it is timely for the Council to consider its own local Workforce Strategy drawing on the national strategy as appropriate.

This report explains what a Workforce Strategy is, describes the WFDS attached in the appendix to this report, and sets out the approach to strategy implementation over the coming years.

Recommendation:

To APPROVE the Workforce Development Strategy 2019-24.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To ensure the Council has in place a robust Workforce Strategy to support delivery of the Council Plan.

Resource Implications

None arising from the report.

Legal Implications:

When making decisions, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. A proportionate level of equality analysis is required to discharge the duty and information.

Any initiatives introduced need to comply with any legislation and statutory guidance issued. Particular attention should be given to the Equality Act 2010 and the protective characteristics and Equal Pay when looking at recruitment and retention.

Risk Management Implications:

If the future workforce capacity requirements of the Council are not planned, the Council's ability to deliver its Council Plan and meet agreed objectives and levels of performance will be compromised.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to monitor progress of the implementation of the WFDS through review of the relevant service plans and the performance metrics contained in Part 5 of the strategy document.

Environmental Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In recent years there have been significant changes in national, regional and local job markets impacting on all Councils. These have been driven by uncertainties over Brexit, continued growth of the UK economy and the growing impact of new technologies on how jobs are performed. These factors are expected to grow in influence over the coming years and will be compounded by significant demographic changes which will impact on the job market even further.
- 1.2 The WFDS is a necessary response to those pressures and challenges and reflects good practice in local authorities to set out plans and priorities for its most expensive resource – its staff. The Council employs approximately 200 people and total employment costs account for 88% of the Council's net budget (2019/20).
- 1.3 The Council's previous Peer Review stated; "A Workforce Strategy should be developed to identify, supply and deal with the new skills, flexibility, ways of working, succession planning and organisational development". The strategy at Appendix 1 deals with these issues.

2.0 THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2019-2024

- 2.1** It is important the Council has a Workforce Strategy to support the overall delivery of the Council Plan, achieve value for money in the expenditure on its employees, respond to challenges and opportunities in the job market and recruit, retain, develop and engage staff to deliver the range of services the Council is responsible for.
- 2.2** The WFDS is set out as follows;
- Part One – An overall statement of vision and priorities for the Council as an employer.
 - Part Two – A description of the national context for the local government sector which this council needs to take account of (as contained in the LGA workforce strategy 2018).
 - Part Three – Strategic workforce themes and direction statements for the Council. This section sets out the five strategic workforce themes relevant to this Council and under each theme a set of “future steps” (between three and seven per theme) which state how the Council should respond over the next five years.
 - Part Four – this section sets out a plan to address the Council’s gender pay gap identified in last years review of the earnings of men and women which was required by law. For most employers narrowing or eliminating this gap is going to be a medium to long term exercise and therefore the plan fits well within the WFDS.
 - Part Five - This section contains a suite of workforce metrics to enable senior management (and Members) to track more effectively how successful the Council is in relation to its ability to recruit, retain, develop and engage its employees in line with the ambitions in the Workforce Strategy. Current HR performance measures tend to focus on very specific issues (for example sickness absence and disciplinary/grievance cases) but these provide only a limited view of workforce health. A more rounded view is required.
- 2.3** The WFDS has been developed through discussion with members of the Management Team individually and collectively, Operational Managers, the Council’s Trade Union representatives and employees through recent staff briefing sessions. It has been informed through workforce and employment data available nationally and locally and internal HR information. On 26 February 2019 a workshop was held with members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss the background to the strategy and the strategy itself to seek Member’s views. The workshop led to further additions being made to the document in relation to attracting and retaining new entrants to the workforce and the threat of the Council’s pay rates becoming uncompetitive in the job market. The revised WFDS was recommended to the Executive for adoption at its meeting on 12 March 2019.
- 2.4** Implementation of the WFDS. The strategy sets out a direction of travel over the next five years. Given the potential for further change and new challenges emerging, the strategy has to be flexible and adaptable. As such it needs to be kept under regular review.
- 2.5** The WFDS is therefore intended to provide a framework for guiding and directing specific actions under each strategic theme contained in the strategy and these actions will be contained in annual service plans – primarily within Corporate Services and in particular HR. As a result, the WFDS itself does not include a detailed action plan. The intention is to translate the strategy into actions through the “business as usual” mechanism of annual service planning with the WFDS itself being subject to review and updating as circumstances change.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 Internal consultation has taken place through meetings with individual members of CLT, Heads of Service, a number of Operational Managers and specialist staff able to give specific information relevant to the strategy. Consultation has also taken place with the Council's recognised Trade Unions (Unison and GMB). Staff have been involved through presentations at Staff Briefings and information provided via the intranet. Members have been involved via consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as described in Paragraph 2.3 above.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 The WFDS has taken into account the Council Plan, MTFS and recent Commercial Strategy in particular.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 None.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None. The introduction of the strategy does not give rise to any additional staffing requirements and implementation will be through existing budgets and resources.

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

8.1 None.

9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

9.1 None.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices: 1. Workforce Development Strategy 2019-2024.