

# **Workforce Development Strategy 2020 to 2024**

*A Strategic Alliance where everybody has the opportunity to thrive.*

### **The Council's role**

The primary role of a Council is to protect and support the community's people and places where there is a duty and a need to do so. It achieves this by delivering a wide range of services that it is legally required to provide (statutory); and services that the Council decides are important to the community (discretionary) because they directly help vulnerable residents, contribute to health and wellbeing, or enable an environment to help people and businesses to contribute to achieving a prosperous and vibrant community.

This Strategy supports the Corporate Strategies of Boston Borough Council and East Lindsey District Council by:

- Enabling and supporting colleagues to deliver the aims of the Corporate Strategies.
- Establishing a healthy environment of trust and support.
- Placing a focus on staff health and resilience.
- Improving outcomes by focusing on people – customers, residents, elected members, partners and colleagues.
- Delivering integrated services and matching the right skills to the right roles.

## Appendix A

### **Introduction**

Welcome to our Workforce Development Strategy.

The Workforce Development Strategy is a blueprint to support the workforce of Boston Borough Council and East Lindsey District Council, as they work together as a Strategic Alliance to deliver on the Councils' priorities.

This Strategy will help deliver both Councils' Corporate Strategies, which provide our strategic framework. The Workforce Development Strategy aims to provide a guide that builds on and takes forward existing achievements, developing a cohesive structure for transformational change and future success. The Strategy will be supported by a Delivery Plan.

Altogether we employ some 685 people in a range of roles and working from a range of locations. The workforce is split around 50/50 between office-based and non-office-based colleagues. All have a clear and common purpose – delivering on the Councils' ambitions for Boston Borough and East Lindsey.

This plan provides the framework for how we will develop our workforce over the coming four years, setting out a number of priorities and the associated actions to be taken forward.

Colleagues working across the Strategic Alliance are instrumental in the realisation of our Councils' Corporate Strategies.

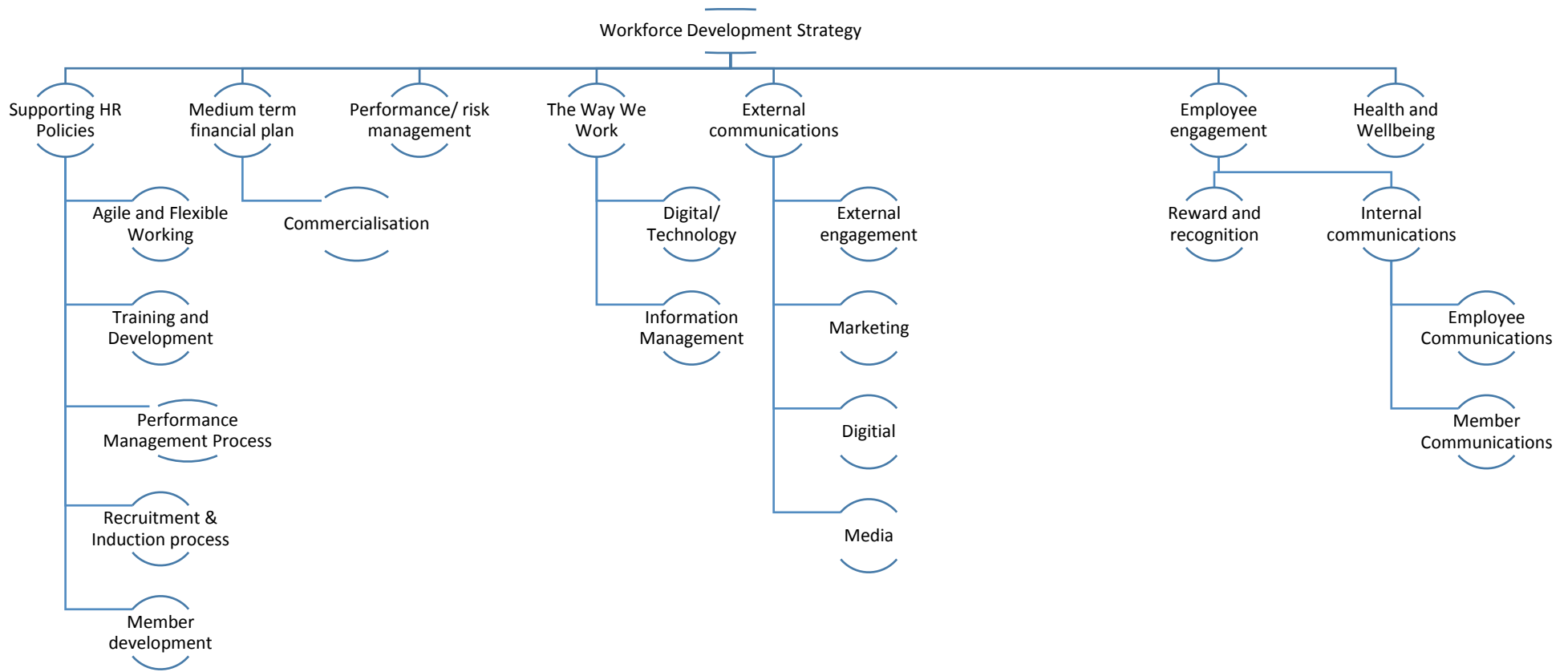
We are committed to nurturing and developing our people and maximising the opportunities for everyone to contribute to attaining our aspirations.

To achieve our Councils' ambitions, as a Strategic Alliance we need all colleagues to be adaptive, flexible and empowered to make positive changes to the way we go about our business.

I'd like to thank all who have contributed to this strategy.

Rob Barlow, Joint Chief Executive

Appendix A  
**Supporting and/or connecting work programmes**



## **Vision**

A talented workforce that is agile, efficient, empowered and engaged in the visions of the Councils' they serve.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of our Workforce Development Strategy is to support our workforce and deliver continuing structural and cultural change, with a clear ambition to ensure our teams are well placed to deliver on the Councils' priorities.

## **What do we want to achieve?**

- Motivated and empowered workforce
- A flexible and sustainable workforce
- Workforce that is efficient, effective and equipped to deliver the Councils ambitions
- Greater efficiency through collaboration

Ultimately, our success will depend on a culture that rewards talent and success, empowers and enables people, and an environment that promotes and provides employee wellbeing, and work-based learning that gives people the skills they need and the confidence to take decisions where it is necessary and appropriate to do so.

## **Governance**

This Strategy's delivery will be overseen by the Assistant Director (Organisation & Corporate Services) supported by the formation of a Workforce Development Board. The Board's role will be to drive the Strategy's implementation and provide a check/balance on core actions of the Delivery Plan as they are taken forward, including insight from across the Strategic Alliance. The One Team Voice employee reference group will be a key link for the Board into the workforce and will be invited to have a representative on the Board.

External partners may be invited to attend Board meetings where they have knowledge or experience on a particular issue for consideration.

## **Strategic Priorities**

We are committed to working with our workforce and elected members in developing a culture that embraces change and seeks continuous improvement.

A number of strategic themes underpin the Workforce Development Strategy, which are listed below and detailed further on the subsequent pages:

Appendix A

Attract & retain talented employees

A flexible approach to service delivery

A healthy and active workforce

Shape our organisational culture and maximise  
staff engagement

Be efficient and effective in all we do

Celebrate our success and reward excellence

## **1. ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENTED EMPLOYEES**

### **Why is this a priority?**

The Councils have, or are developing, ambitious Corporate Strategies that require skilled officers to deliver.

Given our geographic locations, recruitment can be a challenge. Whilst we have a relatively low turnover of staff, we do struggle to recruit in some areas of the business, particularly the roles considered more specialist.

In order to attract and retain employees we need to ensure we offer progressive development opportunities, which enable them to move forward in their careers.

We passionately believe colleagues should be given the opportunity to grow as individuals to reach their full potential.

Investing in the development of our workforce has the following benefits –

1. It ensures our workforce is equipped to do their job.
2. It ensures our workforce has opportunities to develop as individuals.
3. It supports retention.
4. It makes us attractive employers.
5. It enables succession planning and provides leadership opportunities.

We have many colleagues, at a range of levels, who, with the right training and development opportunities, have progressed positively in their chosen area of work.

### **What are we going to do?**

- Develop a Resourcing Strategy, including Apprenticeships and Graduate programmes, to attract the best talent, and enhance the employers' reputations and brand to make the Councils attractive employers.
- Provide a robust annual training plan to support the development of the workforce.
- Maximise the use of the Apprenticeship Levy and ensure Apprentices have the opportunity to secure wider experiences than the role they have been recruited to.
- Maximise the use of internal and external secondment opportunities to enhance the skills of our workforce.

## Appendix A

- Provide a range of networking and learning opportunities for colleagues to share knowledge and experiences across service areas and with partner organisations.
- Develop performance management processes which empower individuals to identify, access and develop their potential.
- Launch a development framework identifying the skills and behaviours we require of individuals operating at the different levels to support in career progression.
- Provide mentoring opportunities through shadowing and vocational learning and development.
- Ensure all service areas have clear succession planning arrangements.
- Raise the profile of the benefits of working for the Councils through recruitment advertising; and ensure recruitment advertising is effectively targeted.
- Provide opportunities to draw people across services to work on corporate-wide projects based on skills not just posts.

## **What will success look like?**

- Colleagues telling us they feel valued and fulfilled in their role.
- Colleagues who achieve career advancement.
- We will have identified succession plans and career pathways for professional roles.
- We are recognised as employers of choice
- An increased number of our Apprentices successfully securing permanent positions.
- Increased applications for the Future Leaders Programme



## **2. A FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **Why is this a priority?**

We recognise that Local Government has been slower than some sectors to fully embrace flexible and agile working. This has however been expedited for us by the Coronavirus pandemic. Some of our teams have worked in this way for some time – and for some it is still very new.

Technological investments are providing new opportunities for our teams to provide services in a more agile and flexible way. In line with our Agile Working Policy, and subject to service demands, we want colleagues to have greater choice and freedom in how and where they work in order to fulfil their duties. We recognise that work is one element of our busy lives and that we all need to find the right work / life balance – technology can help us achieve this.

We want our teams to have access to the technology they need to do their job in the most efficient and effective way.

### **What are we going to do?**

- Deploy technology that enables our teams to work in a more agile and flexible way.
- Ensure there is a robust training package to support the use of new technology, so we maximise its benefits.
- We will equip our Managers with the skills they need to effectively manage in line with our change in working practices.
- Promote the use of video conferencing as a mechanism to communicate with colleagues, elected members and partners and increase efficiency through reduced travel.
- Encourage colleagues to consider how they can work in an agile and flexible way whilst still fulfilling their duties.
- Promote cultural change in the way we work and deliver services

### **What will success look like?**

- Increased capacity to deliver services to customers – measured through the performance and productivity framework.
- Colleagues having a healthy work / life balance – measured through the staff survey and HR data (such as sickness reporting).
- We are recognised as being advanced and forward-looking.

### **3. A HEALTHY AND ACTIVE WORKFORCE**

#### **Why is this a priority?**

We have high long-term sickness rates in some service areas. This isn't good for the employee or the running of Council services. Healthier employees are absent less often and are more motivated to stay in work. Healthy employees also recover from sickness quicker and are at less risk of long-term illness.

We have placed a focus on raising the profile of 'health' amongst colleagues for some time, but this priority will provide a greater, more co-ordinated, focus on that ambition.

#### **What are we going to do?**

- Develop a targeted workforce Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- Ensure the mental health and physical health of our colleagues are valued equally.
- Proactively promote staff health, wellbeing and safety ensuring appropriate mechanisms and provisions are in place to support colleagues and maximise attendance at work.
- A business case approach to the introduction of early intervention options through our Occupational Health services.
- Secure Disability Confidence Level 3 accreditation which demonstrates that we are acting as a champion for Disability Confident within our workforce and our local and business communities.
- Accreditation of a Workplace Wellbeing Charter including Time to Change and the Mindful Employer Charter.

#### **What will success look like?**

- Reduced long-term and short-term sickness.
- Greater capacity to deliver services.
- Healthier workforce.
- Improved employee resilience and ability to cope with change.

#### **4. SHAPE OUR CULTURE AND MAXIMISE STAFF ENGAGEMENT**

##### **Why is this a priority?**

There is a strong correlation between the extent to which people perceive a connection with their employer and its culture and high performance. This kind of engagement is positively influenced by factors such as effective leadership, empowerment, shared values, a supportive infrastructure and work / life balance.

Our workforce is made up of both office based and non-office based staff, and our internal communications processes need to take account of this. Effective internal communication and engagement helps ensure that all members of the workforce and elected members are working collaboratively towards a common goal. It develops a cohesive culture and empowers employees to make the right decisions in line with our goals.

##### **What are we going to do?**

- Review internal communication channels to ensure there are clear channels for the dissemination of information to colleagues in a timely manner.
- Develop, clearly articulate and promote behaviours among all colleagues that are compatible with the aims and values of the Councils.
- Adopt progressive employment practices, developing an accessible and simple to use HR policy framework.
- Further develop positive and constructive employee relations with Trade Unions.
- Develop a workplace culture that encourages colleagues to think innovatively, generate ideas and undertake continuous improvement to our services and processes.
- Maximise the use of video conferencing capabilities to conduct employee briefings on major issues as a mechanism for communication and improving the visibility of leadership.
- Further embed the Officer/Member protocol to ensure shared involvement, understanding and commitment to the delivery of the Corporate Strategies.

##### **What will success look like?**

- Colleagues understanding how they contribute to the Councils' objectives, regardless of role.
- Consistent levels of improvement of 'informed' and 'valued' ratings for all colleagues.

## **5. BE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE IN ALL WE DO**

### **Why is this a priority?**

The Councils' workforces are significantly smaller than they once were. Teams are doing more with less – being more innovative and creative in the way they deliver services.

The people closest to the processes and procedures within our services are the people best placed to improve them.

We want to ensure our teams feel empowered to identify and implement positive changes to working practices, with the support they need to become even more efficient which releases capacity. We want our teams to seek new opportunities to improve performance and service delivery to our customers. This includes challenging traditional service boundaries and structures to deliver joined up services that are useful and relevant to our communities and working more closely with our partner agencies.

### **What are we going to do?**

- Empower our teams through positive leadership to bring forward improvements to processes and procedures, with a view to improving efficiency and the customer experience.
- Invest in technology where a business case demonstrates improved performance and efficiency.
- Continue to develop our online systems (internal and external) to provide services in the most efficient way. This includes pushing more information and services online for customer self-serve where appropriate.
- Develop solid relationships with other organisations where there is clear benefit for both parties.
- Monitor performance through an effective Performance Framework.
- Embed a Matrix Management approach to move beyond structure and enable a flexible approach to structuring teams and sharing resources.
- Undertake a programme of service reviews to improve service delivery.

### **What will success look like?**

- Increased functionality of intelligent automation of our services.

## Appendix A

- Increased and sustained improvement through our key performance indicators.
- Streamlined processes and procedures which have reduced duplication of work and deliver services that are comprehensive, coherent and cost effective.
- A workforce that champions and embraces technology.

## **6. CELEBRATE OUR SUCCESS AND REWARD EXCELLENCE**

### **Why is this a priority?**

Traditionally, Local Government has never been great at celebrating the essential and vitally important work it does for communities. We firmly believe we should all be very proud of what we do and the contribution that we make to improve society and support our residents.

We need to be better at celebrating our successes!

### **What are we going to do?**

- Continue to develop the Employee Recognition Awards as a programme that celebrates achievement, including the launch of an Annual Awards event to celebrate the success of teams and individuals.
- Promote to residents, businesses, Councillors and partners our successes through our communications channels.
- Where we have a strong story to tell seek regional and national profile through Awards and publications.
- Ensure we have a robust scheme to measure jobs and provide a fair and equitable pay scheme.
- Implementation of Total Reward System\* as a long-term approach to employee recognition and reward.

### **What will success look like?**

- Staff feeling their contribution towards service delivery and its success is recognised and valued.
- Staff understanding that opportunities for career progression exists.
- Staff empowered to create a culture of accountability and responsibility in delivering success.
- Staff perceive base pay to be fair and equitable.
- Staff recognise the full value of the totality of their employment package.

\* A total rewards system comprises all the investments an organisation makes in its workforce; pay, benefits, professional development, recognition and work /life balance.