

**HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX COMMITTEE
30 JULY 2024**

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PARTNERSHIPS

A.1 – People Strategy

(Report prepared by Carol Magnus, Organisational Development Manager)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee with an overview of the updated People Strategy 2024 to 2029. The Committee is asked to endorse the Strategy for adoption by the organisation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The organisation's People Strategy has been updated following the adoption of the Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028. The strategy complements the Corporate Plan and provides the underpinning for a number of other key strategies. It sets out the organisation's approach for ensuring it is an 'employer of choice' within the district, that it follows the required employment legislation and best practice, and that it supports its staff to enable them to perform their duties professionally and with confidence.

The strategy recognises the increasingly complex context within which Tendring District Council carries out its work and places a focus on 'getting basics right'. This includes a focus on core mandatory training, increased expectation that staff will manage their own learning by utilising online tools as appropriate, the introduction and implementation of updated employment legislation, including expected changes to the Equality Act.

The Strategy uses the framework of the employee life cycle (Joining, Staying and Leaving) with a number of subheadings within each stage.

The adoption of the People Strategy will set the focus and priorities for the next five years. It has realistic targets which recognise the current climate, and which seek to ensure the organisation's workforce is in the strongest possible position for whatever challenges come along in the coming years.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that:

- **The Human Resources and Council Tax Committee endorses the adoption of the People Strategy 2024 to 2029.**

REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)

The adoption of the People Strategy will set the focus and priorities for the next five years. It has realistic targets which recognise the current climate, and which seek to ensure the organisation's workforce is in the strongest possible position for whatever challenges come

along in the coming years.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not to update the expired People Strategy and continue without one. This option was rejected. The organisation recognises the importance of its workforce and continually seeks to ensure that it is meeting the legal and best practice requirements for its staff. It is appropriate therefore to develop a strategy to set out how this will be achieved.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Whilst this Strategy provides overall support for the delivery of the Corporate Plan it most specifically contributes towards:

- Pride in our area and services to residents
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities
- Financial sustainability and openness

The People Strategy sets out the priorities and approach for staff employment and development and the behaviours the organisation particularly values and expects to see demonstrated across the workforce. All of this will enable staff in delivery of high-quality services for the people it serves.

Seeking to ensure that the organisation 'gets the basics right' includes ensuring that staff understand the key aspects of corporate governance requirements as they relate to their role and associated responsibilities.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)

The Human Resources & Council Tax Committee have responsibility for the discharge of the Part II – miscellaneous functions as set out in Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), and as detailed in Appendix 1 to Part 3 of the Constitution; including the 'decision-making on key Human Resource and Personnel issues not reserved by the Council or delegated to officers. This extends to the agreement of key personnel policies.

The Constitution Part 6, Codes and Protocols, Protocol on Member and Officer Relations 3.3 states that "Staffing matters (including discipline, training, setting and monitoring targets) are dealt with by the relevant managers, although the relevant Portfolio Holders/Cabinet Members will agree to targets in the case of the Chief Executive. All other targets are set at Officer level." The People Strategy supports managers in the discharge of this requirement.

The organisation is required under UK law to adhere to various employment Acts including but not limited to Employment Rights Act 1996; Employment Relations Act 1999; The Equality Act 2010; National Minimum Wage Act 1998; Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000; Health and Safety At Work Act 1974; Data Protection Act 2018; Working Time Regulations 1998; Maternity and Parental Leave etc Regulations 1999; Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
There are no implications of the proposal beyond established budgetary levels agreed year on year.	
USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY	
A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;	The proposals set out within the People Strategy will be delivered within agreed budgets.
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and	The Strategy sets out the priorities for compliance with employment law and best practice and for the core development of staff.
C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.	Ensuring managers are suitably skilled alongside a focus on project management as appropriate will support the organisation's focus on effective governance, efficiency and effectiveness.
MILESTONES AND DELIVERY	
The strategy contains some carefully identified major milestones for delivery of specific activities over the period. These include a focus on mandatory training, updates to employment law, establishing an organisational approach to project management, updating and rolling out a revised Equality and Inclusion policy for staff as well as ongoing growth of apprenticeships and 'growing our own'.	
ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION	
No significant risks for the proposed People Strategy have been identified. The implementation of the strategy acts as a mitigation against risk by ensuring the organisation remains compliant within employment law and best practice. A skilled and knowledgeable workforce also helps to mitigate risk of errors, poor practice and failures in governance.	
OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT	
Informal consultation with operational managers has informed this strategy along with discussions with senior managers. The strategy has been shared with Unison and has their support.	
EQUALITIES	
Having undertaken an equalities impact assessment, the conclusion is that the proposal does not have a negative impact on the protected characteristics.	
SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Promote Skills and Employment: To promote growth and development opportunities for</i> 	

all within a community and ensure that they have access to opportunities to develop new skills and gain meaningful employment.

The People Strategy supports the above social value area by seeking to ensure that Tendring District Council, as a major employer within the district, is seen as an employer of choice. The proposed approach for recruitment alongside the development opportunities and the 'grow our own' approach demonstrate the authority's commitment to meaningful employment and skills development. This is further supported and evidenced via the organisation's commitment to apprenticeships and its Career Track service.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2030

No implications have been noted.

OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder	The Council has a statutory duty for Community Safety and to support the reduction of crime. This strategy supports this work across the Council.
Health Inequalities	Tendring is a major employer in the District of Tendring and employs 530 staff. Employment is a significant factor in supporting good health and contributes to the wider determinants of health agenda.
Area or Ward affected	N/A

ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

N/A

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

This People Strategy 2024 to 2029 replaces the expired document of 2016 to 2020. Unfortunately, as a result of Covid from 2020 to 2022, it was not possible to update the document at the time. Since that time, with organisation restructures and full council elections it was decided that it would be more prudent to update the document in 2024, in line with the adoption of the Council's Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028.

The revised document follows a similar structure from the previous document by following the employee life cycle. All of the text has been fully updated to take account of the council's updated priorities and circumstances. Additionally, the document notes the changes that have taken place over the past eight years.

It notes that working practices have changed to a hybrid model where practicable, that

partnership working, especially with other public sector organisations has increased, and staffing includes more secondments and short term (less than two years) contracts. It notes that many of these changes reflect the challenging economic environment and the organisation's considerable success in gaining grants which, in part, ameliorate some of the impact of reductions in government funding.

It is noted that the use of IT has grown significantly and will continue to do so especially with the forthcoming, though as yet unknown, changes that the use of AI (artificial intelligence) will have during the coming years.

The document outlines a number of specific priorities that form part of an overarching theme of 'getting the basics right'. These priorities include ensuring mandatory training is completed, that new initiatives to establish a project management practice and an update to the council's equality and inclusion practice and policy are implemented alongside ensuring that the organisation's employment practices and policies reflect changes in policy and best practice.

The organisation's focus on developing talent via apprenticeships and 'grow our own' remains a core part of the People Strategy.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS TAKEN BY COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE ETC.

The previous People Strategy, 2016 to 2020 was approved by the Human Resources Committee at its meeting on 15th November 2016.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

APPENDICES

Appendix A – People Strategy 2024 - 2029

REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Name	Carol Magnus
Job Title	Organisational Development Manager
Email/Telephone	cmagnus@tendringdc.gov.uk