

Birmingham City Council

Workforce Strategy

2018-2022

Research and Evidence



Introduction

Birmingham is one of the most culturally diverse cities in the UK. The council is a vibrant and dynamic organisation with a workforce that reflects the make-up of its community. The diversity of the city and the cohesion between its different communities are major factors in Birmingham's characteristic vitality and energy. In Birmingham, 70% of the working age population (16-64) are economically active; 64.4% are employed. As an employer, we have an indisputable bearing on the economic development of the city and an essential responsibility as a role model for other local employers.

As an organisation, our priority is making a positive difference every day to people's lives by providing efficient services through working differently. A growing and ageing population increases demand for services at a time when funding pressures are high. A skilled and engaged workforce is crucial to achieving our vision that Birmingham is recognised as a city of growth where every child, citizen and place matters. We are proud of our staff, we recognise the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for our city and it is only through our staff that these will be met. We are therefore pleased to introduce our Workforce Strategy.

Drivers for workforce change

As we work to turn the vision and priorities into reality, we must also continue to make significant savings. Funding cuts and local pressures have required annual savings of £642m over the last seven years. We anticipate having to make further cuts of £123m by 2021-22.

Consequently Birmingham City Council of the future will look and operate very different from the one we had ten years ago.

The Council Plan, 2018 Stock Take report and Corporate Improvement Plans have provided the strategic overview to this strategy, whilst the Staff Survey 2018 has provided a rich insight into the needs, aspirations and commitment of the workforce we have to take this forward together.

Moving forward workforce plans will focus on activities to recognise and embed a culture and workforce:

- Where the customer is at the heart of everything we do.
- Where performance is managed effectively.
- Where staff are fully engaged and feel involved in decision making and change.
- Where staff feel confident to take personal accountability for their decisions and actions.

Aligned to corporate improvements, plans will focus on a "One Council" approach to deliver:

Political Leadership - Effective political leadership and managerial leadership, working as a constructive partnership.

A modern and progressive organisational culture - Effective political and managerial practice underpinned by an organisational culture that promotes shared working across Directorates, encourages transparency and honesty, and supports leaders to take personal responsibility of issues and challenges.

Managerial Leadership - effective political leadership and managerial leadership, working as a constructive partnership.

Strategic Planning, Financial and performance management - effective corporate and financial framework to ensure strategic focus, transparency and governance.

Key Corporate Policies to enable effective **Corporate Governance**

City Partnerships- stronger links to peer statutory partnerships and stakeholders.

Communication and transparency - effective communication, engagement and marketing.

Where are we now?

The **Birmingham City Council Plan** forms the basis of organisational transformation which requires a workforce that is:

- Engaged and motivated
- Focused on finances and resources
- Customer focused
- Collaborative (across partners and the council)
- Skilled, effective and confident
- Innovative and accountable
- Fit for the 21st Century



What will be different?

- We will be a smaller organisation.
- The customer is at the heart of everything we do.
- Our staff will be more agile, skilled and collaborative, working with colleagues and partners and not limited by physical or structural boundaries.
- Managers and staff will use more commercial, collaborative and strategic commissioning skills and enhanced business acumen to obtain best value from our resources, partners and contractors.
- We will be more innovative, developing and embracing new ways of working, breaking down silos to function as “one council”
- We will use “digital” to be more efficient and effective.
- All managers and staff will role model organisational behaviours, values and competencies.
- Our managers will follow a clear set of management standards for managing staff, resources and budgets.
- We will have a culture of positive coaching and open engagement.

We will need the creativity, vision, imagination and innovation of our entire workforce if we are to find new ways of doing things, and sustain high standards of service in the face of rising demand and falling funding. These are summarised in the following tables as:

- Local Government 2018
- Digital
- Apprenticeship Levy, skills and demographics

LOCAL GOVERNMENT 2018

National context

Most councils in the country will have faced budget reductions of about 55% between 2010 and 2020 at a time when an ageing population and higher birth rate are increasing demand. Population growth in cities like Birmingham puts further pressure on housing needs and provision of services.

Financial pressures have forced councils to change service provision, manage demand and find different ways of working internally and with partners.

Joint strategic commissioning are ways in which working closely with strategic partners will benefit the whole community.

The way councils are being financed is changing. The revenue support grant will be replaced by business rates in 2020. Other income streams will be through council tax receipts, selling services, grants and joint funding.

Whilst no one knows the full impact of leaving the EU, of the workforce that make up social care, health and agriculture, 56% are from the EU.

BCC context

As we work to turn the vision and priorities into reality, we must also continue to make significant savings. Consequently Birmingham City Council of the future will look very different from the one we had before austerity began and what we look like today.

The Office for National Statistics projects that in Birmingham between 2018 and 2022 the number of residents over 65 will grow by over 4.4% (6.9% nationally) and the number of under 15s by 7% (2.2% nationally). This is in line with the population as a whole, where we see a forecast to grow by 2.8%. (1,147,300 to 1,179,700 people)

The council's vision for the city is already driving activities capitalising on opportunities such as significant regeneration projects and improving services and outcomes for residents whilst managing increasing demand.

Social care and health integration is a huge opportunity to improve customer experience, improve the quantity and quality of hospital discharges and reduce costs.

Workforce Implications

- Social care and health integration, change and project work in the council and across strategic partners, will create new career paths in the council.
- Different skills and behaviours from all employees will be needed to thrive in this new environment.
- There will be pressure to increase wages after years of austerity and this will put additional pressure on attraction and retention.
- A different type of leadership and management will be needed.
- Attraction and retention packages will need redesigning to develop workforce potential and improve engagement and well-being.
- Brexit and immigration controls will exacerbate current skills shortages so skills development for residents and the workforce will be crucial to maintain employment and employability.

DIGITAL

National context

The sheer speed of digital development makes this the biggest “disruptor” at work. The top 10 “in demand” jobs in 2010 did not exist in 2004 and 65% of school children today will be doing jobs not yet invented. It’s estimated that 15 million jobs will be replaced by robots in the next 20 years. The loss of jobs so far through introducing robotics have created a range of new roles which have tended to be better paid than the manual jobs they replaced.

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Digital provides opportunities for rethinking service delivery and to manage demand. The development of sophisticated algorithms and artificial intelligence (AI) will reshape workforce and resident interfaces with digital as well as replacing more professional roles especially in support services.

Social media has already profoundly changed how we communicate, creating opportunities and risks for every organisation that wants to communicate effectively with employees, customers and stakeholders.

BCC context

To support the council's vision and priorities and financial plan, the ICT and Digital Strategy includes 6 key themes:

- integrated ICT and digital
- digital facilitation
- insight
- commissioning
- governance
- innovation

As well as achieving savings, the investment plan and associated projects are based on a number of other factors:

- replacing systems that are nearing, or are at the end of their lives.
- this will be prioritised based on the level of risk to service areas due to systems failure or failure to replace, and dependencies on other projects.
- delivering greater flexibility and lower cost, by taking advantage of newer and cheaper technologies.
- creating the technical foundation for improved digital public services in the city and region.

Digital Skills could be defined as the ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share, and create content using technology and the Internet. Anything from the ability to find out your high-score on Minesweeper to coding a website counts as a digital skill. It could also be defined as a mindset as much as a hard skill.

Workforce Implications

By adopting “digital” our workforce will:

- flexible working will mean re-thinking how the workforce is given voice, is engaged and how values and trust are managed in such a different environment.
- Many functions will be done differently e.g. a virtual reality coaching session or team meeting optimising the use of Skype and Yammer.
- The workforce will need to be confident using multiple devices, manipulating data from a variety of sources, engaging with customers and citizens through social media and collaborating with colleagues from across the Public Sector in new ways.
- Through adopting a digital “mind-set”, the workforce will need to be more collaborative with an attitude to “explore the art of the possible” through innovation and creativity, working together in multi-disciplinary teams co-designing new public services for customers and citizens.

DEMOGRAPHICS, SKILLS AND APPRENTICESHIPS

National context

The government introduced the “Apprenticeship Levy” in April 2017. It provides opportunities to address some skills shortages and be integrated with learning and development priorities.

There are already skill shortages in areas such as IT, advanced engineering and health and social care. These will be exacerbated with Brexit and new immigration controls.

Thirty percent (9.4m) of the UK’s workforce is aged over 50 years and that percentage will continue to increase. With an ageing population, planning simply to replace those retiring with younger people won’t work in the long term. Older employees have strengths in knowledge sharing, problem solving and customer service so it’s important to prevent losing this from the council too quickly. At the same time the next generation (Generation Z) will be the first truly digital generation and have very different expectations of the workplace.

Thirty percent (9.4m) of the UK’s workforce is aged over 50 years and that percentage will continue to increase.

BCC context

We currently have 12,453 employees occupying 13,228 posts. Of these 4% are under the age of 24 and 4% are aged 65 and over with over a third aged between 45 and 54.

Last year we faced a further reduction in headcount of 1,529 staff with a wealth of experience and expertise walking out the door. A more strategic approach is required to succession planning so that we retain the organisational history and professional knowledge.

As a corporate parent, the council, with its partners, needs to ensure it is developing the skills and opportunities of its children and young people leaving care by working collaboratively to finding pathways into employment for them.

Leaving the EU is likely to place huge demands on the capacity to deliver social care.

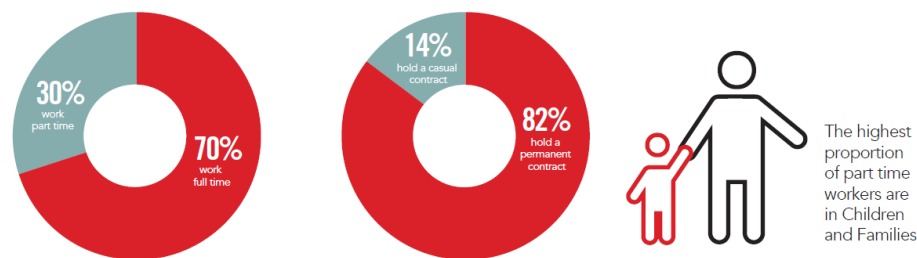
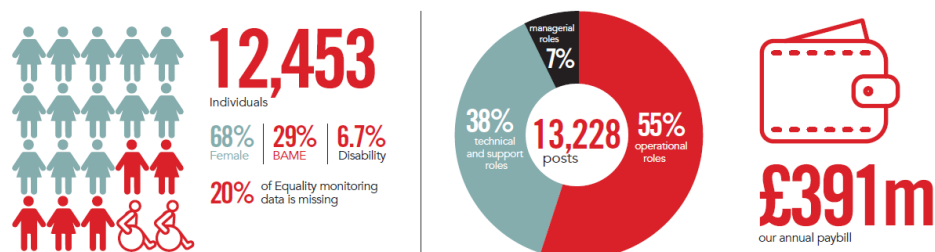
The council has an additional challenge of operating in a vibrant West Midlands economy where improving transport links enable any individual to live in one place but have a choice to work across the region.

The council annual levy contribution is c£1.2 million. The government target when combined with maintained schools for the number of apprentices under the levy scheme will be in the region of 600 per year.

Workforce Implications

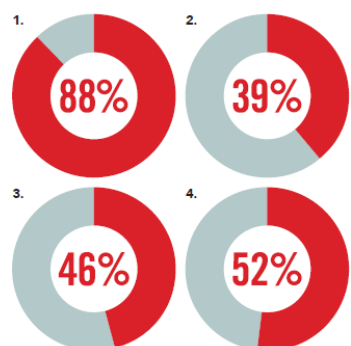
- Use workforce planning to adopt creative and flexible practices that retain and refocus existing staff to new opportunities whilst still attracting younger employees.
- Opportunity to improve skills development for those under 24 years old, including NEET and those leaving care, by utilising the apprenticeship levy as part of the solution for succession planning to meet demand especially in hard to recruit roles.
- Opportunities to tap into the local diverse graduate population through the offer of valued work placements, graduate schemes and internships.
- The council will leverage opportunities for better skill development across its strategic partnerships, for example, the integrated health and social care workforce and management development programmes.

Our Current workforce profile



And what they say

We have a diverse workforce operating across a variety of locations in the city and feel it is important to know what they think and feel. Our annual staff survey is therefore provided both online and in paper form to our staff. In 2018 the survey was completed by 26% of our workforce who said they would develop and go above and beyond to ensure the Council succeeds as a great place to work



1. 88% feel they would go above and beyond to help the council succeed
2. 39% would recommend the council as a great place to work
3. 46% are unlikely to look for another job outside of the council in the next 12 months
4. 52% wish to further their career with the council

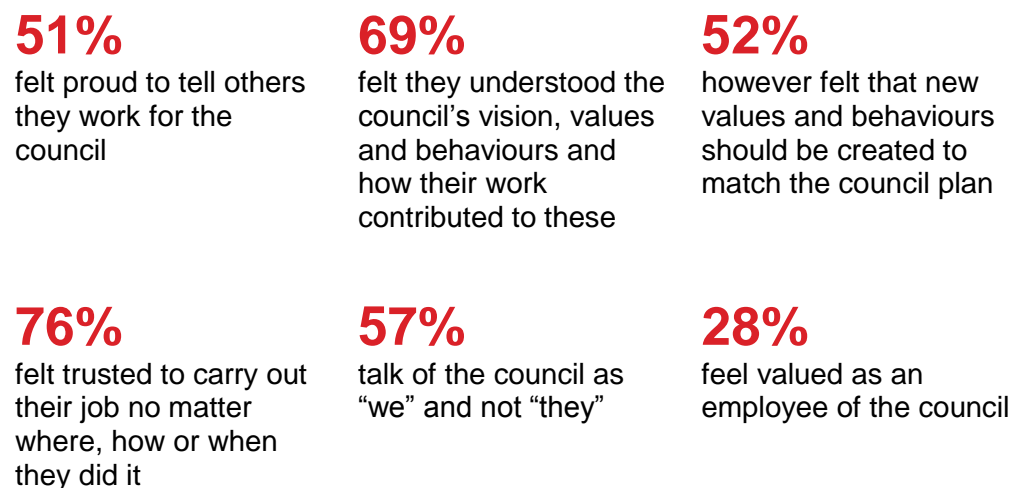
Staff are generally happy with their role but don't feel they have a career pathway with the council.



However staff felt that change was not communicated or managed effectively



Staff do feel proud and trusted to carry out their work, but reported that they don't feel valued.



Our Workforce challenges and opportunities

In 2017/18 we saw



12%
Resulting in a reduction headcount of 1,529

12,202
working days were lost
last year due to sickness



Average rate of sickness is
10.45
days per person

1 in 4 of sickness absence is
due to anxiety/stress/
depression



Current Apprenticeship
Levy target is

286
apprentices a year



Current performance is

59 (21%)



84%
of the workforce reported
to have had an appraisal

26%

Staff
Survey
2018
returned



Mandatory training
completion rate is



My job does not
improve my health
and wellbeing"

was the highest
negative response

Where do we need to be?

<p>Effective financial management and accountability which reduces duplication, drives efficiencies and balances the books.</p>	<p>High performing workforce where we have the right skills and behaviours, supported by an induction, appraisal and development programme. Change is embraced through effective internal communications and visible leadership to reinforce the direction of travel.</p>	<p>Recognised as a modern and fit for purpose employer of choice where our recruitment, career development and reward and recognition structure align with workforce plans and employee satisfaction levels and the number of people wanting to come and work for us increases.</p>
<p>Staff empowered to make creative and innovative decisions and equally participate in all aspects of service delivery and development.</p>	<p>Excellent management across the council supported by a regular leadership and management development programme and robust HR policies and processes, underpinned with positive industrial relations.</p>	<p>A highly motivated and engaged workforce who value the opportunity to feedback opinions and feelings through on-going engagement initiatives and the annual staff survey, in the knowledge that these are heard and acted upon.</p>
<p>Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery supported by accurate workforce data and projections of workforce needs and efficiencies both of our workforce and those we need to commission services from.</p>	<p>Effective Political Leadership and managerial leadership, working as a constructive partnership which generates solutions at the pace required.</p>	<p>Workforce policies and practices are positively embraced, embedded and consistently applied into everyday practice, supporting a culture of transparency and trust which embraces change.</p>

Building sustainability through skills

What are the new skills that will be needed?

As people step into spaces left by changing structures and reducing posts, they are asked to broaden the spectrum of their roles as we find new ways to manage the pressure on needs-led services such as social care and housing. So that our priorities, once delivered can be sustained, we now need to build resilience, capacity and capability.

The 21st Century Public Servant speaks of roles such as system architect, municipal entrepreneur, broker, commissioner, resource weaver story teller, networker and navigator.

Our Workforce Development Plans will focus on these several key areas to develop a confident and capable 21st century workforce.

DELIVER OUTCOMES

To support and sustain the delivery of core services we will need agility, adaptability, resilience and collaboration to pilot and test solutions rapidly and at reduced cost.

REIMAGINE SERVICES

To lift people out of poverty and welfare dependency and improve economic social and environmental conditions in the city we will need new knowledge and innovation to apply different commissioning and design principles.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

To support the delivery of core services and manage pressure on needs-led services such as social care and housing we will need to apply robust research and analysis skills to understand current demand, customer patterns and systems/procedures.



partnerships
financial
agility
commercial collaborative
digital adaptability
income analysis
change
leadership
management business
core
research
outcome

Values and behaviours

It's not just what we do, but how we do it is just as important. Our values are the foundation on which everything else is built and help shape and define the standard to which we work and the way that we do it. Our values express the over-arching importance to our organisation of being fully inclusive and welcoming of the broad spectrum of skills, experiences and perspectives represented in our communities and our workforce.

We put citizens first

We are empathetic and respectful in everything that we do

We are true to our word

When we make promises we keep them

We act courageously

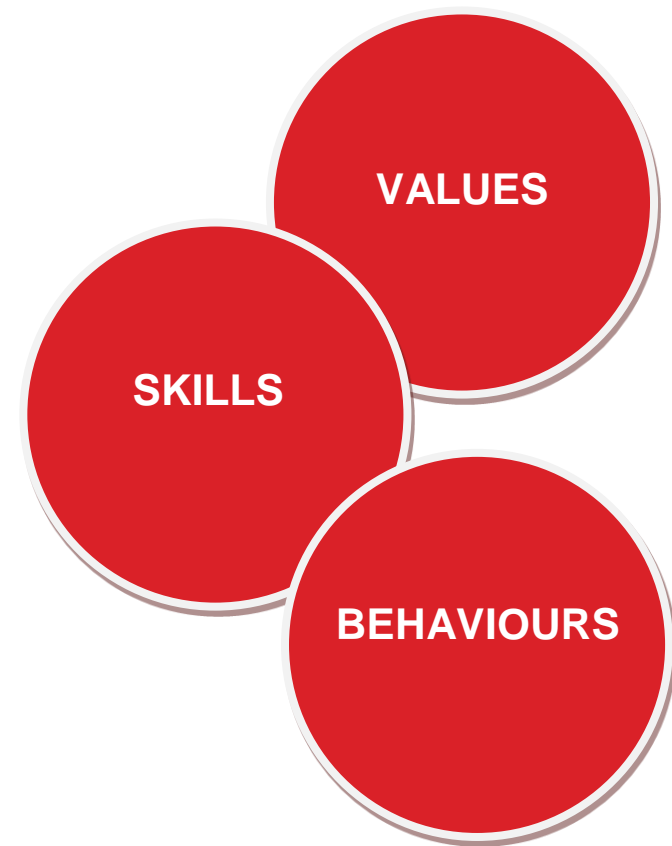
We lead, we manage and we tackle the difficult issues; every day, every one of us

We achieve excellence

We get things right. First time every time

Staff were asked as part of the 2018 staff survey whether they felt the values should be changed and over 1600 responses confirmed that whilst they were understood and adhered to, it is an opportune time to look at these again. A review will take place in 2018 in response to this feedback.

Our staff networks also play a valuable role in helping us express and uphold our values; celebrating the diversity across our city with our residents and communities. Strategies and policies align and a number of networks actively engage in the planning, development and evaluation of our workforce priorities.



Making it happen

The journey to transform the culture of the organisation is at the heart of sustaining the pace and depth of business change. Workforce engagement is the key to delivering the outcomes we seek. A priority will be to ensure that staff understands what part they need to play in achieving the vision, that the organisation values their involvement and can best succeed through their contributions.

This Strategy sets out the headline actions for the next four years. Workforce Plans will deliver these priorities and be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure the plans and outcomes remain fit for purpose.

These are the workforce priorities, with initial focus being on performance and development combined with increasing management capability and modelling the right behaviours. The table on the following page summarises those priority work streams which will be taken forward.

WORKFORCE PLANNING AND MANAGING POTENTIAL

- Right people, right time, right place, right numbers
- Attracting and developing employee potential

PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

- People skilled and confident
- Valued induction and appraisal
- High performing teams

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Effective, modern governance
- Right Behaviours
- Inspirational leadership

ENGAGEMENT, REWARD AND WELL BEING











- Having the right culture
- Customer is our focus
- Staff recognised and supported

“Forward Together” through staff engagement

To support the implementation of the Workforce Strategy we will introduce a series of staff engagement initiatives as part of a “Forward Together” programme. This approach will lead to more effective performance management and engagement of staff from all areas driven by what was said in the 2018 staff survey. Staff engagement and customer immersion experiences will be integral to our Culture Dashboard as collectively we embed new ways of working, deliver on-going improvements and shout loud and proud that we work for BCC.

PRIORITY ONE	WORKFORCE PLANNING AND MANAGING POTENTIAL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build positive industrial relations across the city council, working together to make a positive difference • Re-launch our workforce planning tool to help services think about, and plan, their workforce requirements • Revise our induction programme to successfully on-board new colleagues • Provide more opportunities to boost skills of the wider workforce through work experience, apprenticeships and graduate schemes that help improve economic productivity • Design Career Frameworks linked to service specific workforce plans to address recruitment and retention of hard to fill roles • Organisational agility and new ways of working is supported by the ICT & Digital Strategy and transformation teams to generate income and deliver transformed services • Review recruitment processes to ensure we attract the best people across the community and recruit for the right behaviour and value mind-set • Manage potential across our diverse workforce to ensure all staff have the opportunity to flourish to support and drive achievement of the council's priorities
PRIORITY TWO	PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable managers to support staff with development planning, supporting them to reflect on their performance, giving and receiving feedback and helping staff to be solution focused and to take personal responsibility for their own performance and development through a revised appraisal system • Focus development activities on increasing our leadership capability and capacity for leading employees through change and creating a culture of collaborating with others, having a commercial focus, and building a resilient customer focused workforce • Review performance processes, systems and technology to ensure they are fit for purpose for a smaller more agile and adaptable workforce • Ensure that staff understand their role, the contribution they make to the council and what they can do to achieve the required levels of high performance • Our learning and development offer is accessible to all, affordable, efficiently delivered and aligned to emerging development priorities to become 21st Century Public Servants • Ensure systems and processes facilitate the extraction of valid and reliable data to inform financial planning, business forecasts and monitoring of the “organisational health”.
PRIORITY THREE	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers develop their leadership capability at all levels to build trust and resilience, maximise the potential of their teams and lead the way in enhancing our capacity for working in collaboration and partnership. • Leadership is found at all levels of the organisation and we encourage our dispersed leadership to grow • Launch a management development programme for existing and aspiring managers which focuses on managing staff, resources and budgets based on analytical evidence based planning • “Balance the books” through strategic planning, enhanced business acumen and clear understanding of the impact of financial decision making • Effective joint working between members and officers will be evident through induction, governance, information sharing and peer support as part of member and senior officer development programmes • Senior officer development programme cements cross directorate team working and peer learning, effective governance and improved communication and engagement
PRIORITY FOUR	ENGAGEMENT, REWARD AND WELLBEING
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together to revisit the set of common behaviours that allow us to live our values every day and express our sense of personal responsibility and pride in working at Birmingham City Council • Be recognised as an employer of choice and celebrate diversity in our workforce and local community through staff awareness and a culture of respect and inclusivity • Revisit policies and practice to support staff to genuinely feel they can be who they are and feel confident in a supportive environment, able to contribute their ideas and opinions and work in partnership with others • Create development and network opportunities so staff relay to others positive stories about our council as a supportive employer that encourages confidence and diversity • Provide timely information and guidance to enable the proactive and consistent management of sickness absence • Promotional campaigns to ensure staff are aware of the benefits and well-being support available to them • Review our Staff recognition and rewards scheme to offer a more flexible and personal touch to celebrating the commitment and hard work of staff

How will we know we have succeeded?

 An increasing amount of staff choose to provide diversity data	 Increased numbers of opportunities for Care Leavers, Interns and Graduates	 Attendance rates are higher	 Reduced operating expenditure per employee	 All staff report having an appraisal
 Majority of staff report satisfaction with their development plans	 Staff survey completion rates increase	 We have more applications from local residents	 All new starters receive their induction within 2 months of starting	 Financial contracts for all managers

Next Steps

We have illustrated how this Workforce Strategy sits alongside a number of improvement plans which collectively focus on the corporate governance of the organisation, emphasising a change in culture to make the improvements needed. It addresses the recommendations in the Kerslake Report which identified the need for the council to make fundamental changes to its corporate culture to play the effective leadership role needed to help the city realise its full potential.

This 4 year strategy has set out aspirations and a vision for our workforce and has highlighted the wide range of activity already underway and where there are options to do more. A series of workforce and business plans implemented across the organisation will drive short and medium term service specific and corporate initiatives required to develop and sustain an engaged and high performing workforce.

The importance of effective communication is essential to the success of the strategy. We shall achieve this through a variety of media and consultations to reach all of our managers, staff and stakeholders. This will be a regular, open, and two-way process with close partnership working, sharing good practice and supporting innovation.

