

## REPORT TO AUDIT COMMITTEE – 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021

### WORKFORCE PLANNING – 6 MONTH UPDATE

#### 1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to note the 6-month progress of Workforce Planning in Aberdeenshire Council.

#### 2 Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- (i) **Note the progress.**

#### 3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 Workforce Planning was the subject of an Internal Audit Report in early 2020 and a Best Value recommendation in October 2020. The main recommendations were the establishment of formal workforce planning within services and a strategic/corporate framework. (An update re progress is outlined in Appendix 1)
- 3.2 Since the initial workforce planning report went to Audit and Business Services Committees a 6-month update report has been noted at Audit Committee and Business Services Committee in the Autumn of 2020. This report outlined the corporate tools and resources that have been put in place to facilitate formal adoption of workforce planning.
- 3.3 In Aberdeenshire Council workforce planning continues to take place naturally and successfully in all services. However, the process of capturing this work and expressing it in plans that allow for meaningful transparent engagement with the workforce, whilst being flexible enough to accommodate the ever-changing work context, remains the current challenge.
- 3.4 The Heads of Service and Trade Unions have been engaged throughout the development process. The profile of formal workforce planning has gained momentum in the organisation over the past 6 months. Increased requests for support from services to Legal and People have resulted in an increase in the HR resources allocated to achieving workforce planning outcomes.
- 3.5 Business Services and Infrastructure Services have incorporated workforce planning into their Directorate Plans which have been approved at their respective service committees in January and February.
- 3.6 The ECS Directorate Plan was approved at ECS committee in January and since then a workforce planning element has been developed and will return to committee for re-approval in April.
-

- 3.7 The high-level service Directorate Plans outline the budget and efficiency position, existing full-time equivalent workforce number and anticipated impact of service design, turnover and voluntary severance along with future skill requirements and numbers. Once the budget is approved at Full Council all Directorate Action Plans will be updated to include the impact of the budget on the workforce.

#### 4 Discussion

- 4.1 The corporate conversation around workforce planning is growing in volume, frequency, and impact. Our understanding of workforce planning in Aberdeenshire Council, during a pandemic and a financial crisis, is continuously emerging and evolving. Services already do workforce planning, and the key function of HR is to help capture that activity primarily for the purpose of transparency for our employees, their representatives, and other stakeholders.
- 4.2 Services embarking on this activity have so far shown a preference to integrate workforce planning into existing planning activity. For instance, Live Life Aberdeenshire and the Housing Service have incorporated workforce planning into their business planning process. Legal and People and ECS are building detailed workforce planning into their team planning process.

The HR service have responded to this preference for an integrated approach by breaking workforce planning outputs into 3 component parts:

Part 1 – the narrative (description of current and future service)

Part 2 - the workforce profile (resourcing spend, turnover, absence, age, gender, etc)

Part 3 – the actions.

These component parts can stand alone as a workforce plan or be integrated into other plans. See appendix 2 for an example of a standalone workforce plan. So, for instance, the business plans in place for LLA and Housing already include the narrative and direction of the services and enhancing this with the workforce profile leads to specific and transparent actions, for example reduction in % of relief contracts, identifiable future skill requirements and development plans, targeted succession planning.

- 4.3 Workforce planning is still a relatively young concept in Aberdeenshire Council. HR are working with services across the organisation to stitch workforce planning into the fabric of our service design and planning activity. HR will continue to support services to do this until it becomes a more real and instinctive process. Work is underway in the following areas: CLD, Children's Service, ECS Resources and Performance, Customer and Digital Service, Legal and People, Live Life Aberdeenshire, Housing, Planning and Environment.
- 4.4 HR continue to develop a menu of support for services to enhance their practice and confidence in workforce planning throughout the organisation, this includes toolkits, workshops, ALDO courses, workforce profiling and tailored support. The support packages continuously develop as the practice of workforce planning embeds and matures. As examples of good practice emerge, they are used to develop content and material for sharing and learning across the organisation.
-

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 This report addresses the Council’s new people priority and continuous to support “The right people, in the right place, doing the right thing at the right time”.
- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation is agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		x	
Staffing		x	
Equalities		x	
Fairer Scotland Duty		x	
Town Centre First		x	
Sustainability		x	
Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing		x	

- 5.3 An equality impact assessment is not required because the update on workforce planning applies to all employees and does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics. Service Workforce plans will require EIA’s.
- 5.4 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

The proposed workforce vision and subsequent service plan address the risk ACORP003 Workforce (attracting and retaining the right skills; performance; reward package) Managing the disruption to jobs as innovation and technology improve productivity.

## 6 Scheme of Governance

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 6.2 The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section C.1.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as relates to Human Resources and Organisational Design.

Ritchie Johnson  
**Director of Business Services**

Report prepared by Kay Hopwood, HR Manager  
Appendix 1: Internal Audit Recommendations relating to Workforce Planning – Progress Update on Report 1935

---

**Appendix 1: Internal Audit Recommendations relating to Workforce Planning – Progress Update on Report 1935**

Recommendation	Updated Position	Progress Tracker
<p>A corporate Workforce Plan should be put in place, agreed with stakeholders, and regularly reported on to SLT and Committee; the Plan should link to the Council's strategic objectives and financial goals.</p>	<p>A Corporate Workforce Plan has been agreed by SLT and Business Services Committee on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020. Trade Unions, Heads of Service and Service Managers were consulted during the development of the Plan.</p>	<p>Completed 100%</p>
<p>Each Directorate should work with HR&amp;OD to prepare Service-level Workforce Plans based on the Corporate Plan, using a structured and evidenced based approach.</p>	<p>Each Service to have a Workforce Plan in place by 31 March 2021.  Toolkit complete. Accompanying training and guidance through HR&amp;OD to support development to commence September 2020.</p>	<p>Commenced 95%</p>
<p>Worksmart guidance should be reviewed and updated.</p>	<p>The Worksmart Guidance was due to be replaced by the Flexible Working Policy and procedure in April 2020 but will now be reviewed again in light of the Covid 19 response and the impact on home working. The flexible working policy and procedure will now replace the worksmart guidance by April 2021  Modernise and automate.</p>	<p>Commenced 80%</p>
<p>The Workforce Planning training tools and guidance produced by HR&amp;OD should be reviewed and updated.</p>	<p>A Workforce Planning Toolkit has been developed for use. An ALDO Training Course is currently being finalised to accompany the toolkit and will be available by the end of August 2020.</p>	
<p>Guidance for preparing Service-level Workforce Plans should ensure they are coordinated with budget planning and savings monitoring.</p>	<p>As series of Workforce Planning Workshops are being finalised for delivery to Service Management Teams; providing guidance and support in the development of Workforce Plans. Delivery will commence in September 2020.</p>	<p>Completed 100%</p>

Recommendation	Updated Position	Progress Tracker
<p>a) E&amp;CS should ensure that recruitment incentives are recovered as appropriate following Council policies and procedures.</p> <p>b) The Teacher Recruitment Board should receive reports on costs of and savings from teacher recruitment strategies.</p>	<p>Agreed through Teacher Recruitment Board 2020.</p> <p>Teacher Recruitment Board reconstituted as ECS Future Workforce Board in 2020. Terms of reference include monitoring of budgets from workforce planning actions and initiatives.</p>	<p>tbc</p>
<p>HR&amp;OD should share workforce plans with CC&amp;I in order to inform and update the Office Space Strategy priorities and objectives.</p>	<p>As Service Workforce Plans are developed and agreed they will be shared with all relevant stakeholders to ensure workforce implications are considered.</p>	<p>Commenced 25%</p>
<p>HR&amp;OD should investigate whether training opportunities can be funded for reskilling employees on the redeployment list.</p>	<p>Funding opportunities have been identified through the Flexible Workforce Development Fund provided by Skills Development Scotland. Funding is also available through the wide variety of apprenticeship and training schemes also funded by Skills Development Scotland.</p>	<p>Completed 100%</p>
<p>HR&amp;OD should review the Redeployment and Employee Exit Information Procedures to ensure that they are effective in addressing staff retention issues.</p>	<p>Both procedures have been reviewed for effectiveness.</p> <p>Redeployment procedure updated to reflect current process and responsibilities.</p> <p>Employee Exit Information procedure remains valid following a review in September 2019.</p>	<p>Completed 100%</p>