**IteWorkforce Development Plan (2010 - 2013)**

**Workforce Development Plan**

**2023 - 2027**

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8. **Foreword**

The current Chichester District Council Corporate Plan 2022-25 identifies five key priorities to drive forward the council’s vision for the District:

**Our Priorities**

* Homes for all
* Thriving Economy
* Supported Communities
* Financial Prudence
* A Cared-for Environment

In order to deliver these priorities several guiding principles were also identified and published in our Corporate Plan. One of these was to ‘keep our staff skilled, motivated and flexible within a supportive environment’. The Workforce Development Plan is designed to support this principle and set out how we will achieve it.

**2.0 Why We Need a Workforce Development Plan**

The public sector has experienced huge change in recent years. Government funding reductions have continued alongside rising community expectations and increased demand on some services. We continue to work hard to ensure our services are delivered in the most efficient and effective way, working towards more customer-focused service provision and encouraging self-service wherever possible.

The Workforce Development Plan is intended to help us make sure our staff are creative, flexible and have the right skills to respond positively to any challenges ahead. This refreshed Plan will set out what we are already doing and how we will address staffing issues effectively to meet the council’s aspirations in the future. Specific issues affecting Chichester include an aging workforce, recruitment, and retention, and developing skills to meet future demand.

Workforce Planning is about:

* The link between the Council’s strategies and its people plans.
* A knowledge of the current workforce
* Identifying future skills and competencies needed to deliver new and improved services.
* Comparing current skills and competencies with those needed in the future to identify any gaps between the two.
* Developing strategies and plans to eliminate any identified gaps.

1. **Current Workforce Profile**

Our current workforce is encouraged to be flexible and mobile. Most staff are able to work at any time between 7am and 7pm Monday – Friday, allowing for required breaks. This approach gives more flexibility for staff to work outside of normal office hours providing this is agreed with Service Managers and fits with the needs of the Services. Staff Surveys have shown how valuable this flexibility is to staff.

At the start of 2020, restrictions introduced due to the COVID pandemic and associated lockdowns meant that the majority of our staff quickly switched to working from home. At that time, we put in place the necessary measures to allow this, which included upgrading our VPN, and issuing ICT and other equipment to those staff who required them. Once the situation began to return to normal, many Teams adopted a hybrid approach, with staff spending some time in the office and some time at home or in other locations as required. This approach is encouraged and supported by further upgrades to equipment and changes to procedures to allow this. For many teams hybrid working is the norm and likely to continue, this creates some additional considerations in terms of culture and how staff interact and develop. We need to ensure that we reflect these changes and continue to ensure that our staff continue to meet the needs of our customers, maintain productive working relationships and a sense of organisational belonging whilst balancing the benefits of flexible working.

Workforce statistics for the year ending 31st March 2022 show that our workforce at that time was 51.9% male and 48.1%% female. There were significantly more males than females in lower pay Grades A-C but females tended to outnumber males in the middle Grades (particularly Grade D). Males again outnumber females significantly in Grade G, however, the split by gender evens out at the highest grades (H and above). In 2021/22, 1.48% of our workforce was from a non-white ethnic background; a figure that has not changed significantly since 2016. 7.95% of staff said they had a disability. This figure increased significantly in 2019/20 and, although it has decreased more recently, it remains much higher than the 4.69% of staff who said they had a disability in 2016/17.

Our workforce profile demonstrates some of the issues this Workforce Development Plan is intended to address. Our staff turnover rate for 2021/22 was 16.61%; a significant increase on the very low turnover seen during the height of the COVID pandemic. 45.7% of our workforce was over the age of 50 at 31st March 2022, higher than in 2017/18 (42.1%). This higher level of turnover reflects the national and local picture where there are a higher number of unfilled vacancies, this has created additional challenges to our ability to recruit and retain staff. We have reacted to this by investing more resource into marketing ourselves and an employer as well as recognising the need to grow and develop our own talent to progress within the organisation and fill key roles.

1. **Current and Future Activities**

The national ‘Local Government Workforce Strategy’ was published in 2010 and aimed to support authorities in delivering the sustained transformation needed to achieve faster, fitter, more flexible, citizen-focused and personalised local public services. In 2018 the Local Government Association consulted on an updated version called ‘Great People for Growing Places: Strategy for the Local Government Workforce’. The priorities set out in the document are:

* **Organisational development** – an approach to organisational change and development that is focused on people, their wellbeing and resilience.
* **Leadership** – building visionary, ambitious and effective senior leadership, with a focus on skills and capacity gaps, diversity, talent management and effective use of apprenticeships, as well as encouraging leadership behaviours at all levels.
* **Skill development** – an approach to skills development that is truly innovative and focused on combining organisational and individual needs.
* **Recruitment and retention** – taking action to recruit and retain the right workforce; address key future occupational skills shortages; promote jobs and careers; identify, develop and motivate talent and address diversity issues.
* **Pay and rewards** – implementing approaches to rewarding the workforce that truly motivate and help people throughout their careers and address productivity while helping to manage employment costs.

With these latest priorities in mind, Chichester District Council has refreshed the Workforce Development Plan to ensure our approach remains aligned to these key themes where possible. An action plan will be developed over the coming months to ensure that the key actions are planned, delivered and reviewed appropriately.

**4.1 Organisational Development**

**Accelerated transformation**

The council has reacted and evolved significantly over recent years; our service delivery shifted during the pandemic, and this has created an acceleration in terms of channel shift that hadn’t ever been achieved, this is likely to continue. Our technology has developed and now supports the new way of working in most cases. We have evolved in terms of how we manage and support our staff - the levels of change and disruption created increased anxiety and uncertainty and we have provided additional support for the wellbeing of staff.

**Service Provision**

The national Local Government landscape has continued to evolve in recent years with many Councils transforming to varying degrees from direct service providers to enablers. Here at Chichester the majority of our services are still provided in-house.

**The Future**

The council supports a mixed approach to service delivery. Where service reviews are undertaken, the model we choose will be dependent upon a sound business case and the most sustainable delivery method. We will retain services in-house or explore private sector delivery where appropriate to do so. We will also consider bringing together partner organisations and facilitating service delivery for common benefit.

There is a continuing need to develop a culture of flexibility and continuous improvement that evolves our services rather than waiting for potentially disruptive reactive change. Undertaking workforce planning at service level will ensure that we align our people and processes with the delivery models chosen for that service.

**Staff Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

The health, safety and wellbeing of our staff continue to be a priority for the Council. Our Wellbeing Team regularly deliver initiatives to promote staff health and wellbeing including a weekly run club, weight management support and awareness-raising sessions on a range of relevant health issues (e.g. men’s health, breast cancer, diabetes).

Since 2017, we have had in place an Employee Assistance Programme; a 24 hour telephone and web-based service to help employees deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their work performance, health, and wellbeing. In 2019, a new stress management and self-assessment tool was launched, alongside Employee Wellness Action Plans to encourage staff to identify what keeps them well at work, what causes them to become unwell and what support managers and the workplace can offer to improve/support wellbeing or to support recovery.

In September 2022, an enhanced discount scheme for staff accessing Everyone Active Leisure Centre membership was launched, which has proved very popular.

Further information about what CDC is doing to support the physical and mental wellbeing of our staff can be accessed by staff on our intranet.

**Equalities**

CDC is committed to providing equality of opportunity in all our activities and ensuring that discrimination does not occur. Our refreshed Equalities Strategy (2022-2026) sets out how we will ensure that we lead by example in our human resources practices on equality, ensure our policies on recruitment and retention of staff are sound and all our staff are well supported and adequately trained in equality and diversity matters.

In line with the Equalities Act 2010 and our Equalities Strategy, our HR team collects and monitors information about the protected characteristics (as identified by the Act) of staff. Numbers of staff with protected characteristics are published as part of an Annual Report on Equalities, which we are required to publish each year.

Our current Equalities Strategy and the Annual Report on Equalities for the previous calendar year can be found on our website.

**Organisational Development Key Objectives**

* Create a modern, efficient and effective workforce that is focussed on the needs of the customer.
* Establish effective partnership arrangements.
* Support the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees.

**4.2 Leadership Development**

**Strategic Leadership Team and Divisional Managers**

The Council’s Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) is currently made up of the Chief Executive, and 4 Directors. Beneath SLT, 13 Divisional Managers are responsible for the day-to-day running of the Council’s services.

Over recent years, both SLT and Divisional Managers have undertaken bespoke leadership programmes delivered by the University of Portsmouth Business School. Internal training sessions have also been organised for Divisional Managers covering areas including Emergency Planning, Health and Safety, Governance and Finance, a further training programme is to be developed as part of the emerging action plan.

The council is also committed to providing a learning and development programme for elected Members, the majority of which are arranged in-house. A full induction programme is provided for each new set of Councillors, with feedback from Members who have been through the process sought and taken into account each time the induction process is reviewed.

**Operational Managers and Aspiring Managers**

Operational and aspiring managers are developed through a variety of methods. In recent years selected staff have been able to access external Management development courses endorsed by the Institute of Leadership and Management and aimed at first line and middle managers. The First Line Managers course has recently been re-established and run internally in person. Council-specific management training or individual support is also provided or sourced by the HR Team as needed, covering areas including recruitment and selection, HR procedures and the appraisal process.

The Council remains committed to identifying and developing operational and aspiring managers, improving their career paths, and ensuring they have the right business and commercial skills to take decisions, manage their services and staff, and implement change.

**Leadership Development Key Objectives**

* Attract, develop and retain effective leaders.

**4.3 Skills Development**

It is essential that staff competencies continue to evolve to create a modern workforce that meets the needs of our customers. Key competencies for managers include good financial skills, staff management, commercial skills, procurement and project management as well as partnership working. Non-management staff are expected to be adaptable to new ways of working, be proficient in the use of ICT and possess the required customer service skills. Our training programmes for new and existing staff are kept under review to ensure they continue to reflect the competencies we need our staff to have.

**Sussex Training Consortium and e-Learning**

As part of our commitment to skills development, the Council are part of the Sussex Training Consortium (STC); a partnership of 12 local authorities aiming to provide targeted, relevant and high-quality training for staff. We recognise the value of e-learning in supporting learning and development and through our STC membership, we have access to Learning Pool; an online training resource to deliver a variety of e-learning courses.

Modules available as e-learning courses are updated in line with current requirements. Some are made mandatory for all or certain post holders and this is monitored by HR, for example a training module on Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging was introduced in 2022 and made mandatory for all staff to complete. We are likely to need to review the provision of our E-Learning provider to reflect the arrangements that our partner councils are putting in place. This will give us the opportunity to ensure we have the most up to date and effective system whilst gaining support from the partners and a reduction in the overall costs by being part of a consortium

**New Starter Induction**

Whilst there are still initial face to face inductions on Health and Safety, ICT and with HR, most of the training for new starters is now provided online via Learning Pool. This includes mandatory training in Equalities, Health and Safety, data protection and Whistleblowing. New members of staff cannot pass their probation until they have completed the e-learning induction programme. At the health and safety induction a member of SLT always attends to meet new employees.

**Corporate Training Programme**

The Strategic Leadership Team will consider the council’s goals and objectives when setting corporate plan priorities. Consideration will be given to the skills we need to deliver our key objectives and any areas where further training might be required. Each division provides a Learning & Development Plan putting forward training requirements for their teams to support delivery of Service Plans. Training needs for individual staff are identified as part of the annual Appraisal process. These routes to identifying training needs contribute to the Corporate Training Programme. Through the programme, funding will continue to be set aside to deliver any reactive training requirements that may arise in order to meet key objectives.

**Professional Training**

Support is provided to staff undertaking a professional qualification that is a requirement of their role, such as an accountancy or Housing qualification. Day release is given, and the fees paid for the duration of the course. Many professional training courses are available through the apprenticeship levy including MSC in Town Planning which means we can support staff to gain qualifications up to degree (Level 7) whilst ensuring we upskill our workforce to fill skills gap particularly in areas where it is hard to recruit.

**Skills Development Key Objectives**

* Ensure the necessary skills are developed to meet Corporate Plan objectives.
* Provide opportunities for staff to meet their full potential.
* Produce an annual Corporate Training Programme.
* Support managers and staff to be self-sufficient.

**4.4 Recruitment and Retention**

It is paramount that we continue to retain and attract employees with the right skills and attributes required for the future workforce.

**Succession Planning**

There are key posts across the organisation where the loss of knowledge or experience resulting from a staff member leaving the organisation, either planned or unplanned, could create a skills gap. We need to make sure any changes can be managed as proactively as possible. We have a Succession Planning Strategy that sets out key steps to ensure effective succession planning.

**Recruitment**

Vacancies at the Council are generally advertised through our website, social media channels or internal Intranet page as appropriate. Where recruitment to some roles is more difficult, it is sometimes necessary to advertise through professional websites or, less often, professional publications. This mixture of approaches gives us the best chance of ensuring the right people are recruited with the right skills.

**Attracting and Retaining Staff**

The council needs to recruit and retain talented and appropriately skilled people. With appropriate consideration of the needs of customers (the public, or other services), the Council adopts flexible policies wherever possible to support a healthy work/life balance for staff.

There are tangible benefits from supporting flexible working practices, implementing family friendly initiatives and assisting employees to achieve a balance between their work commitments and their life outside of work. The council has a range of policies that assist employees to achieve a healthy work/life balance, such as the flexitime and health at work schemes, the 9-day fortnight and the ability to work from home. The steps we have taken towards improving the flexibility of our ICT provision, are also helping our staff work more flexibly. Successive staff surveys have demonstrated how positively many of our staff view this flexibility.

Chichester still boasts an excellent geographic location and attractive lifestyle, however, the high cost of living and high house price vs income ratio in the area should also be acknowledged. Since 2017, the Council’s Pay Policy has included the use of temporary market supplements to ensure that the Council’s remuneration package remains attractive and competitive. These additional payments are made where there is evidence that the salary for a particular post is not sufficient for the Council to recruit and/or retain staff, subject to certain conditions being met, as set out in the Market Supplements Procedure, available to all Staff on the Intranet.

**Career Development**

Planning to grow our own talent is as important as attracting new talent. Due to the national and local increase in unfilled posts it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract fully qualified and experienced candidates for some of our key roles and we are increasingly reliant on the ability to develop our staff into these roles. The council will continue to identify key managerial and professional roles and provide opportunities and mentoring for employees to gain the skills and expertise to fill them. Career Development aspirations and career development plans are addressed for individual staff as part of the annual appraisal process. Staff are invited to propose development opportunities they think could benefit them, including training, professional training, mentoring, coaching or secondment to a different department. Managers are responsible for agreeing proposals and following up on any agreed plans, with the support of HR. Effective succession planning allows us to develop aspiring managers, aligning that development to the competency standards required to meet our Corporate Plan objectives. Succession planning issues should be a standard consideration for each service when compiling annual Service Plans with issues and proposed resolutions being documented.

**Choose Work**

Our Trainee and Placement Scheme sets out the different options for filling vacancies or sourcing temporary support. The Scheme names one of the options as Choose Work placements. Choose Work is a scheme to support people back into employment or into employment for the first time., Our current Corporate Plan gives a target for the Choose Work scheme to engage with at least 60 clients per year, as well as helping to secure work placements at local businesses, Chichester District Council also provides placements with some of our own teams, sometimes leading to permanent employment.

**Apprenticeship Levy**

The apprenticeship levy was introduced in April 2017 with 0.5% of our annual pay bill going into the levy fund. This can then be used to pay for the training fees of apprentices or to upskill the existing workforce to undertake apprenticeship training using approved apprenticeship programmes with registered providers. These courses have a minimum criterion that they must run for at least 12 months and require employers to free up 20% of the working week for training. The Council works with local colleges as well a range of other providers to encourage people to access apprenticeship training. There are new courses continually being made available on the apprenticeship levy scheme, particularly at a professional level and we need to continue to promote the uptake of these courses where appropriate.

Apprentices provide opportunities for people to develop their skills or gain experience in the workplace, regardless of age or previous work experience. We currently have two apprentices in post and eight members of staff undertaking apprenticeship training.

**Recruitment and Retention Key Objectives**

* Ensure our recruitment and selection processes attract and retain talented individuals with the necessary skills to successfully fulfil their roles.

**4.5 Pay and Rewards**

**Pay and Grading**

In April 2019, a corporate pay review was implemented, and a new rewards structure was implemented for all staff. This followed a comprehensive review of the Council’s salary grading structure and staff benefits package, a revised Pay Policy, and a wide-reaching review, of all roles across the Council to ensure job profiles accurately reflect the work undertaken and that an appropriate pay grade is applied to the role.

In addition to this, there are some non-cash benefits available for staff. A car loans scheme with a favourable interest rate is available to all permanent staff and discounted parking season tickets are available, including an option for a part-time ticket for part-time staff. In partnership with Tusker, the Council also operates a salary sacrifice scheme for staff to lease cars with CO2 emissions of no more than 110g/Km. A similar scheme to help staff purchase bikes is also available.

**Pay and Reward Key Objectives**

* Pay strategy that attracts, retains and develops a skilled and flexible workforce.
* Deliver affordable and competitive reward strategies.

**5.0 Employee Performance Management**

The Appraisal process was reviewed and changed, most recently in 2019. The appraisal process is the staff member’s opportunity to formally discuss all aspects of their work with their manager, and for the discussion to be documented.

The current appraisal process focuses on:

* reviewing performance and targets over the preceding 12 months,
* identifying strengths and weaknesses through constructive feedback and evidence
* identifying steps to improve performance if needed, including support required from others
* setting goals for future development

Targets should follow the “SMARTER” principle and be: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed, Evaluated and Reviewed.

From 2019, following the Pay Review project, the appraisal process has been linked to progression through the pay increments outlined in the Rewards Structure. Through the appraisal, Managers assess performance against the key competencies of:

* job knowledge
* collaboration/teamwork
* dependability/accountability
* communications
* Leadership (Managers and Supervisors only)

Staff are assessed as:

* exceeding expectations
* solid performance
* improvement required/development needs
* unacceptable performance

If a staff member is assessed to have more than one competency below ‘solid performance, they will not be allowed to progress to the next step in their pay grade (if they are otherwise eligible) and a Performance Development Plan is required. A template is provided for this, and HR support is available for the staff member and their manager.

It is also recognised that, for management to be effective, the appraisal process should continue informally throughout the year.

The appraisal form includes a section for staff to give feedback to their manager/supervisor and discuss how they can support the staff member and help them improve their performance.

Managers are also required to undertake an appraisal with all new managers joining the organisation to highlight any areas of training that are needed and also ensure introductions are made to the key services such as Finance and HR. This enables the new manager to gain information relating systems used such as Civica and Trent as soon as possible.

**Employee Performance Management Key Objectives**

* Deliver an appraisal process that continues to support staff development.

**6.0 Communications and Employee Engagement**

**Corporate Information**

Effective and timely communication of management information is vital for employee engagement Managers communicate information to their staff by holding regular team and one to one meetings. In addition, information is shared with employees through a variety of media such as the monthly Chief Executive news briefings sent by email to all staff, the council’s intranet and all staff briefing sessions, which are held on a selection of dates once or twice a year to brief staff on any corporate issues relevant at the time. In 2020, the Council also started using Facebook Workplace, later replacing it with Microsoft Yammer, as an informal staff engagement and virtual networking tool.

**Working with the Unions**

There is a good working relationship with the recognised unions (Unison, Unite and GMB) via formal and informal routes. A culture of engaging the unions has fostered trust and cooperation.

The council will continue to build on this and look to further engage with unions and non-union employees to ensure an environment of well-managed and equitable employee relations.

**Staff Survey**

During the pandemic, the format of the regular staff survey was adapted to become more dynamic and targeted on more focused subject areas to help inform how the fast-paced changes were being managed. It is intended that we re-establish a more wide-ranging staff survey during 2023 which can again be replicated, and the trends of results tracked over time.

**7.0 Review and Evaluation**

An Action Plan is to be developed to pull together the key workforce development actions, this can then enable to the planning of resources, tracking of progress and follow up as required. This will include a full review of the supporting schemes and policies that are currently available on the intranet. Divisional managers will, where appropriate, be provided with support from the HR team in considering how best to deliver their services, the skills required, career paths for staff, succession planning and recruitment and retention issues. All workforce planning information which is service specific will be reported in the individual service plans.

The following have been taken into account for this review and will be taken into account when the Plan is reviewed and/or evaluated in the future:

* Corporate Plan
* Council Budget
* Service Plans
* Performance Appraisals
* External and internal audit and inspections