

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Workforce Strategy 2021-2026**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor S. Thomas - Leader / Cabinet Member  
Corporate Overview and Performance**

Report Submitted by: **Andrea J. Prosser – Head of Organisational Development**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance & Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	01.12.22	09.01.23			15.12.22	18.01.23		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with progress against the Council's Workforce Strategy delivery plan for 2021/22 and seek endorsement of the delivery plan for 2022/23.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Council's Workforce Strategy 2021-26 ('the Strategy') was endorsed at Council on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and is attached at Appendix 1.

- 2.2 The Strategy is a key enabler in delivering the Council's ambition, the New Council Operating Model, and key priorities. It has a focus on the future, integrating the Council's vision, objectives and financial planning arrangements. It links service outcomes with the workforce required to deliver them and an on-going understanding of how the workforce should look in the future through continual review, re-alignment and measurement of how outcomes are achieved. The Strategy aims to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right level, and at the right cost.

- 2.3 The five-year Strategy is underpinned by an annual delivery plan that supports its implementation. The delivery plans are developed and prioritised following engagement with key stakeholders including senior management, headteachers and trade union representatives.

- 2.4 The Strategy sets out five priority outcomes for the workforce:

- Healthy culture, effective leadership
- Excellence in management across the Council
- A highly motivated and engaged workforce
- Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery
- Modern 'Employer of Choice'

- 2.5

The delivery plan for 2021/22 focused on the transition from responding to the Covid-19 pandemic to a new future working model - “Agile Services delivered by an Agile Workforce” and set out the key actions under each of the priority outcomes. There has been good progress over the last year in achieving the priorities within the delivery plan given the backdrop of the pandemic and the need to focus resources on getting back to business as usual.

## 2.6

The key actions delivered in 2021/22 are set out in Appendix 2 and include:

- New Council operating model to include agile working for the workforce.
- Agile Working Policy developed in social partnership with the trade unions.
- Agile working hubs identified.
- Workforce engagement to design the agile workspaces.
- Transitional and strategic leadership of an agile workforce development sessions for the wider leadership team.
- Home working allowances and revised mileage policy implemented.
- Recruitment processes refined to support new ways of working.
- Annual workforce profiles published and an internal review of recruitment and retention, diversity and age in the current workforce to support the development of directorate workforce plans.
- External review of communications to include internal communications.
- Health and safety and workforce wellbeing focus to support agile working.
- Weekly Wellbeing bulletins published including a range of provisions for supporting staff wellbeing.
- Care First awareness sessions for managers and Mental Wellbeing sessions for employees.
- Annual review of sickness reported to the Corporate Leadership Team and Scrutiny Committee.
- Draft Leadership Development Model.
- Review of the position and ambition with the HR / Payroll (iTrent) system – identified need for development capacity.
- Medium / long term actions developed as part of corporate decarbonisation plan.

## 2.7

The second-year delivery plan has been developed and builds on the progress of the previous year and takes account of the key national, regional and local drivers, workforce trends and financial challenges that will be facing the Council. In addition, during 2021/22 a new framework for workforce planning was rolled out at a directorate level, key themes and actions from this process have been aligned to the Strategy priority outcomes. These include recruitment and retention, succession and workforce planning and wellbeing. The actions in the delivery plan were discussed and prioritised with the Council’s Corporate Leadership Team. The delivery plan for 2022/23 is attached at Appendix 3.

## 3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 This report and Delivery Plan has been reviewed and prioritised with the Corporate Leadership Team and considered at the Corporate and Performance Scrutiny Committee in December 2022.

3.2 **Option 1:** Cabinet notes the progress against the 2021/22 delivery plan and endorses the 2022/23 delivery plan.

3.3 **Option 2:** Cabinet notes progress against the 2021/22 delivery plan and considers the 2022/23 delivery plan making suggestions/amendments for improvement.

#### 4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

The Strategy aligns to the Corporate Plan and supports the delivery of Council priorities. It has been drafted in accordance with, and to comply with key employment legislation such as, the Equality Act 2010 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and to promote and support workforce wellbeing.

#### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

##### 5.1 **Impact on Budget**

There are no direct budget implications with the review and development of the delivery plan. Any financial implications linked to the priorities will be scoped out and considered as part of the implementation of the delivery plan.

##### 5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

The Strategy is a strategic plan to ensure the Council has a fit for purpose workforce to deliver services in line with Council priorities for the future.

##### 5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

##### 5.4 **Human Resources**

The workforce is critical and the most important resource the Council has in delivering services to the community. The Strategy demonstrates the Council's commitment to its workforce and aims to create a good place to work – developing a workforce that feels connected to and can meet the current and future needs of our community is critical in the Council's ability to deliver ambitious outcomes.

#### 6. **Supporting Evidence**

##### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

Annual workforce profiles are published for the Council, Directorates and Schools.

##### 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The implementation of the Strategy will support enhancing the reputation of the Council as an employer and assists the delivery of key Council services and future challenges.

##### 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

There has been engagement with the Corporate Leadership Team, Elected Members and Trade Unions in the development of the Strategy. The Corporate Leadership Team has shaped and prioritised the year 2 delivery plan in line with Council priorities.

- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**  
The Strategy is a 5-year commitment aiming to create a good place to work.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**  
Not applicable
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**  
Continued collaboration at a local, regional and national level to ensure that delivery actions in the Strategy are modern and in line with any legislative changes.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**  
The Strategy will continue to promote a 'one Council' approach.
- 6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**  
Medium to long term workforce actions have been developed as part of the corporate decarbonisation plan.
- 6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment**  
The Council is the largest employer in the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent and the Strategy demonstrates the Council's commitment to the workforce.
- 6.9b **Equality Impact Assessment**  
The Strategy will actively promote equality of opportunity and diversity in the workforce and as an organisation.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**  
The Strategy has an annual delivery plan and this will be monitored on an annual basis by the Corporate Leadership Team and Corporate and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

### **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Workforce Strategy 2021 – 2026

Appendix 2 – Workforce Strategy Delivery Plan 2021-22 Headline Achievements

Appendix 3 – Draft Workforce Strategy Delivery Plan 2022-23