

Appendix 2

Denbighshire County Council

Workforce Plan

2022



Our aim is to create an improved culture, a 'One Council' approach, with strong visible leadership and effective management in order to ensure high levels of customer service for our communities.

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Why do we need a Workforce Plan?

The council's current Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022 sets out our vision and aspirations for the residents of Denbighshire. We want to be a high performing council that works with residents, businesses, others organisations and its communities to be able to deliver the best possible services within the resources available.

The council has faced unprecedented times since the Covid-19 pandemic began in March 2020 and has maintained the provision of key services during this period. The pandemic has highlighted a number of pressure points, for example, the provision of care, however the pandemic has also presented some opportunities to work in a different way longer term. As a council, we will need to consider the opportunities and what that future workforce will look like.

To achieve this, we need to learn and adapt as a council and also find those creative solutions. The workforce plan outlines our commitment on how we will enhance and develop our workforce, now and in the future to deliver the best possible service to our residents within a changing economic landscape. Workforce planning will enable sustainable organisation performance through better decision making about the future people needs of the council.

The Process:

- The Workforce Plan is set in line with the Corporate Plan (2022 – 2027). This year's plan will see a cross over from the old to the new plan
- Individual Service Workforce Plans will be completed on an annual basis with services and HR Business Partners
- The annual Service Workforce Plan reviews will then form part of the annual review of the Corporate Workforce Plan

Denbighshire County Council Corporate Plan Priorities for 2017 - 2022:

1. **Housing**—everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs.
2. **Environment**—Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity.
3. **Young People**—A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so.
4. **Connected Communities**—Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links.
5. **Resilient Communities**—The Council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience.

The above priorities are coming to a conclusion; the council now are working on a new corporate plan which will be released after the May elections.



The Vision and 5 Key Principles for the Council:

<p>1. Culture Develop our own Denbighshire culture based on our 4 Values:</p>	<p>Pride: We aim to create a sense of pride in working for our organisation Unity: We all work for the same organisation Respect: We aim to treat all people equally and with fairness, understanding that there are views and beliefs that differ from our own Integrity: We manage to manage ourselves to maximise performance, act with high standard of conduct and present a positive image of Denbighshire</p> <p>As a council we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a 'One Council' approach to the way we work• Be transparent, honest and encourage challenge• Maintain a respectful, professional and enjoyable atmosphere
<p>2. Communities Work with our communities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Council close to its communities• Recognise the different communities• Build community confidence in the Council
<p>3. Performance Clear performance expectations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Realistic, open and honest about what we can do as individuals and as the Council• Remain ambitious in our key priority areas• New Corporate Plan agreed post May Election• Every officer to have regular 1:2:1s with their Line Manager• Everyone has clear objectives
<p>4. Member / Officer Relations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good Member/Staff working relationships critical• Mutual respect and understanding between Officers and Members
<p>5. Staff Support and develop staff:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff are our most valuable asset• Covid has changed the way we work; we need a clear vision for how we work in the future• Provide career development opportunities• Staff to feel part of something bigger

Our Workforce



4178 Employees as at 30th September 2021
(including schools but excluding casual/relief staff)



73% Female and 27% Male



Over 41% of our workforce is over 50 years of age and under 12% are aged under 30 years



The majority of employees work term time and are permanent



4.40% of employees can speak Welsh proficiently at level 5

Our Current Workforce

The council provides numerous facilities and services for the community, for example, education services and schools, waste and recycling, planning, social services, libraries, highway maintenance and environmental health.

The figures below give an overview of staff composition (excluding schools, casual/relief staff) as at 30th September 2021:

- The council employs a total number of 2187 staff which equates to 1838.28 Full Time Equivalents (FTE). There are a total of 2299 positions held within the council
- 65% of employees are Female and 35% are Male
- The turnover of employees is 8.4%, compared to the national average of 15%.
- 44% of positions are part time / term time with 56% being full time
- Attendance figures for the period of April to 31st December 2021 are at 7.94 days lost per employee
- Most employees are aged 40-49 (24%), only 0.3% of employees are aged 16 – 19 years old. 16% of employees are aged 60 and over
- On average we use the full time equivalent of 36 agency staff per month

- There were 480 new starters to positions, with 35.4% of those positions being filled by existing employees within the council. The highest number of starters were from the age group 30 – 39 at 25.2%
- We had 339 leavers to positions with just over half (54%) of those positions being vacated by employees leaving the council. The majority of leavers to positions (28.9%) were in Highways and Environmental Services – Contract Facilities, which include Catering and Cleaning. Community Support Services closely followed with 29.6%, with the majority of position leavers being in Support Services, i.e. Care positions.
- 1.6% of employees disclosed that they had a disability, however 44.5% of employees have either chosen not to disclose this information or have not completed the equality information, which could mean that this figure could be an under estimate
- 1.1% of employees are from a minority group, but again, 44.4% of employees have either chosen not to disclose this information or have not completed the equality questionnaire, which could mean that that this figure could be an under estimate
- Between the period of October 2020 and September 2021, 67% of employees have received at least one formal one to one meeting with their line manager, with 39% of those employees receiving at least 3 one to ones in that period
- 18.75% of employees classify themselves as Welsh speaking and listening level 3 – intermediate and above, with 6.13% of employees being proficient (level 5) in speaking and listening in Welsh. 16.75% of employees have chosen not to specify their Welsh language levels as this data is optional

Opportunities and Challenges ahead

There are a number of significant challenges and opportunities ahead for the council. It is crucial that we have employees who can overcome these obstacles and take advantage of the opportunities in order to maximise the benefits for Denbighshire's residents. The obstacles and challenges include the following:

- **Recruitment and Retention**

There are a number of services within the council which rely on specific skill sets from the workforce, which can be challenging due to shortages within the labour market. In addition to those pressures, as a council we are faced with differences in pay and grading systems between Local Authorities on a regional level and also public versus the private sector pay which can leave some positions vacant or impossible to fill.

- **Post Covid Recovery – New Ways of Working**

Since March 2020, the councils "office based staff" have been instructed to work from home where possible, which has resulted in a significant change in how "office based staff" carry out their roles. This new way of working has created a number of positive benefits to the council and its staff and we want to look at how some of the new working practices can be maintained and embedded in the future.

- **Senior Leadership Structure**

The new Chief Executive has been in post for 6 months. During this time, three positions within SLT have become vacant. These vacancies have provided the opportunity to review the structure to meet and deliver the vision and aims of the new CEO.

- **New Corporate Plan**

The existing plan concludes in 2022. As a council, we are in the process of creating our new Corporate Plan for 2022 – 2027, which will ensure we are making a significant and lasting difference to the people and the communities within Denbighshire.

- **County Council Elections**

Denbighshire has 47 county councillors, representing 30 electoral divisions. In May 2022, the County Council Elections will take place and the Council will need to manage this process and welcome the newly elected members into the Council. Post-election, there will be a training and development programme in place for new members, led by Democratic Services, with a requirement to ensure the workforce is aligned to this training in order to strengthen officer / member relationships.

- **Collaboration and Transformation**

There will be opportunities to do things differently in a more proactive, preventative and transformational way across the council and with other public bodies, sectors and organisations in order to improve service delivery. The workforce will be encouraged to develop new skills whilst maximising on these opportunities.

- **Financial Considerations**

The Council needs to deliver a balanced budget, whilst the recent draft settlement notice from Welsh Government indicates a positive settlement of 9.2%, it is lower than the national average of 9.4%. Welsh Government have advised that there are a number of new responsibilities for the council included in this settlement figure. However, not all of the responsibilities have clear funding consequential.

- **Other considerations**

Succession planning and skills gaps are a concern in some areas. Our workforce will need to learn new skills with the changing landscape and the requirement to deliver new services, which will impact us both now and in the future. Ensuring attendance management will continue to be a key priority for the council, ensuring we reduce days lost through sickness absence.

Risks and Priorities Analysis

Recruitment and Retention Risks

- Significant recruitment and retention issues in a number of services, which has been identified and placed on the Corporate Risk Register as a major concern.
- Wider pool of competition in terms of employers/employment available due to agile working opportunities
- Shortage of professional and technical staff due to agile working opportunities now available
- Difficulty in recruiting to Welsh essential posts in some departments, impacting service provision
- There are a number of key posts within the council where the knowledge will be lost if current post holder leaves the council
- A number of departments are unable to recruit using traditional methods for certain roles
- Increased need for agency workers and consultancies are required to fill recruitment gaps
- Agency worker costs are increasing

Development of Staff

- Workload and conflicting priorities, often prevent employees engaging with learning or development
- Colleges and Education providers have limited subjects and courses available
- Shortage of aspiring managers in some services
- Limited programmes available for future Managers and Leaders

Succession Planning

- Limited succession planning in service areas
- Grant funding limits the ability to succession plan
- Large pay gap between management and employees in some services
- Large pay gap from senior management to Head of Service level

Resources to Deliver Projects and Legislation

- Lack of resources to deliver funding grants
- Limited resources to implement Welsh Government Legislation in some service areas
- Lack of technical experience may impact strategic project delivery

Workforce Plan Delivery Aims

In order to ensure that we have the workforce in place to deliver the best possible services to our residents, we will be working towards the following workforce plan delivery aims:

1	Leadership and Management Development
2	Recruitment and Retention of Talent
3	Enable an Engaged, Empowered and High Performing Workforce
4	Develop a Flexible and Agile Workforce
5	Supporting Health and Wellbeing

1 Leadership and Management Development

To achieve organisational success, we recognise that the quality of our leaders and managers within the council is paramount. We want to continue to develop leadership capacity throughout the organisation so that our leaders and managers are supported and equipped to embed the Chief Executive's five principles, whilst facing the challenges ahead and manage the performance of employees in order to achieve the next Corporate Plan. Our aim is to create an improved culture, a 'One Council' approach, with strong visible leadership and effective management in order to ensure high levels of customer service for our communities.

Currently we:

- Offer a range of ILM Leadership and Management qualifications.
- Offer bite-sized online training sessions and e-learning modules on a variety of topics.
- Hold regular employee roadshows with the Chief Executive and the Leader of the council.
- Facilitate a Leadership Conference for SLT, Middle Managers and HR Business Partners.
- Use the one to one form to have open discussions with managers and aspiring managers about their development.

What we need to do:

- Develop a People Strategy to embrace a one council approach and give clear strategic direction for the organisation.
- Review and develop the approaches to Leadership and Management development within the organisation (for all levels)

- Improve our succession planning activity which will help reduce recruitment spending, enabling the council to manage the recruitment in-house.
- Implement the outcomes from the middle managers training needs analysis.
- Continue to refine information sharing, networking and communication across the council.
- Introduce a tailored induction for managers to ensure they have the knowledge to carry out their role well.

2 Recruitment and Retention of Talent

It is important, that as a council we both attract and retain employees who have the required attitude, skills and behaviours to be able to deliver the best outcomes for the residents of Denbighshire.

Currently we:

- Offer a competitive employment package, which helps the council attract and retain employees.
- Promote equality and diversity through the 'Disability Confident' scheme
- Promote a guaranteed interview scheme for Veterans.
- Are known as a voluntary 'national living wage' employer which ensures that our employees are paid the national living wage.
- Use Career Pathways to address workforce deficit and grow our own.
- Operate numerous funded strategies and schemes, which include Kickstart and Work Start.

What we need to do:

- Review the Recruitment Policy and processes for advertising, recruiting, selecting and on-boarding staff to ensure that the council is viewed as an employer of choice within the region and beyond, in order to attract candidates with the right skills and abilities to meet our future workforce needs.

- Work with individual services to address their recruitment and retention issues which have been identified within their service workforce plans.
- Continue to refine the career pathway process and encourage more pathways throughout the council.
- Explore different approaches such as apprenticeship recruitment, graduate placements and traineeships in order to address the workforce gaps through targeted recruitment procedures.
- Continue to implement the Welsh Language Strategy actions for recruitment.
- Continue to work closely with Community Support Services (CSS), investing in a programme of work which will focus on recruitment, succession planning and relieving the pressure that hard to fill vacancies place on services.

3 Enable an Engaged, Empowered and High Performing Workforce

In order to deliver the council's priorities, a high performing and engaged workforce will be essential. We want to foster a 'One Council' culture where good work is recognised, employees are respectful, professional and thrive in an enjoyable environment. Employees will be self-motivated with their values aligned to the goals of the organisation and enthusiastic about achieving the best for residents.

Currently we:

- Recognise the need to invest in the development of our employees in order to enhance their skills and performance.
- Operate an enhanced employee benefits package.
- Ensure employee consultation processes are in place with the recognised trade unions.
- Facilitate consultation and feedback via 'Staff Council' in order to improve service delivery.
- Conduct regular one to one meetings with all staff at all levels to support employee wellbeing and set clear and manageable objectives.
- Improve team performance through the use of away days and team building exercises, aimed at fostering good working relationships.
- Target interventions, such as mediation or coaching for early intervention of interpersonal workplace issues.
- Maintain good working relationships with the Trade Unions on all employment matters.

What we need to do:

- Maintain high standards of professionalism with strong leadership, accountable management and excellent front line customer service.
- Support the career and development aspirations of our workforce, combining business needs with personal career ambitions wherever possible.
- Source varied learning and development opportunities, highlighting these in one central location for all staff in all departments to access.
- Undertake a Training Needs Analysis of Services to ensure that training is targeting the business needs.
- Continue to use the Staff Council Forum as an ongoing method to capture feedback around key topics.
- Improve communication methods for all employees within the council, especially those who don't have access to an email address.
- Explore additional employee benefits which could be added to the current package.

4 Develop a Flexible and Agile Workforce

Our aim is to create a 'One Council' approach, with a workforce that works together and shares organisational knowledge to respond to customer demand. Agile and flexible working will support a culture whereby working across the organisation in different teams and services will be encouraged in order to share the knowledge and expertise which will ultimately improve service delivery.

Currently we:

- Use of a wide range of supportive policies to enable employees to balance work and life commitments.
- Look to implement New Ways of Working through various work streams.
- Make use of effective partnerships and networks to ensure that the public sector works together by targeting shared resources where possible.
- Ensure that employee consultation and the flow of information is enhanced through online access to cabinet and council meetings.
- Utilise team building and team away days.
- Encourage secondment opportunities in order to utilise in-house talent sharing knowledge, skills and expertise within other departments.

What we need to do:

- Further enhance the sharing of knowledge and information throughout the organisation.
- Explore methods to develop staff further and increase mobility, using skills and knowledge in other departments when required.
- Utilise opportunities for employees to work in collaborative networks enhancing service delivery, sharing of information and communication.
- Ensure those developmental and learning opportunities are available for those harder to reach employees on lower grades / part time employees.
- Finalise and review policies and procedures along with improved ICT approaches to facilitate a more agile and flexible way of working.
- Ensure employees have the tools and technology that they need.

5 Supporting Health and Wellbeing

In order to achieve all of the above 4 aims, the health and wellbeing of our workforce is the most important. Wellbeing will contribute to engagement and productivity, therefore we need a healthy workforce, who work in a safe environment within a culture of encouragement.

Currently we:

- Follow a recently revised Attendance at Work Procedure which has an emphasis on early intervention and strong management of sickness.
- Make use of a sickness absence management dashboard which is updated daily.
- Hold regular attendance meetings with managers and Head of Service to discuss individual cases, early intervention and support.
- The council recently signed the Time to Change Pledge, which outlines our commitment to changing to way we think and act about mental health at work.
- Recently implemented a new Mental Health Strategy and an in depth action plan.
- As a council, we have an in-house Occupational Health Department, who support the Attendance at Work Procedure and manage the referrals made by managers.
- Encourage open and honest conversations between managers and employees in regards to mental health and wellbeing in order to access timely support.

- Trained a large proportion of SLT and Middle Managers on Mental Health Awareness.
- The council now have a large number of employees at all levels who are trained in being Mental Health First Aiders.
- Regularly promotes health activities such as annual flu jabs, blood pressure checks and free eye tests.
- Utilise benefits, such as purchasing additional leave and leisure discounts to aid wellbeing.
- Offer an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which is available to all employees.

What we need to do:

- Ensure we have a number of wellbeing champions in the council to ensure the workforce are fully supported and an environment where wellbeing champions can support and coach each other.
- Distribute a wellbeing survey to quantify the success of the recent mental health strategy and action plan. The survey results will also assist with any interventions required in the short term.
- Provide additional training to both new and existing managers on attendance management so that they are able to implement the Attendance at Work Procedure and offer early, preventative and on-going support to employees.
- Continue to expand on the employee benefit offer for all employees in order to support wellbeing.

Workforce Plan Responsibility

The Denbighshire County Council Workforce Plan belongs to the whole council and this will need to be embedded throughout the organisation, therefore responsibility is distributed.

The Workforce Plan which is a core business process will form part of the wider HR People Strategy and align changing organisational needs.

Each Service will need to populate the Corporate Delivery Action Plan based on their individual Service Workforce Plans. The Delivery Plan will be monitored by each Head of Service and HR Business Partner on a regular basis to ensure the priorities are clear, gaps and challenges are addressed and any opportunities are maximised.

Monitoring the Workforce Plan



Regular basis



Head of Service, Senior Managers
and HR Business Partner



Formal Delivery Action plan