

Hertfordshire County Council's People Strategy



#making inclusion
part of our DNA

Foreword

I am very proud to be the council's Chief Executive, never more so as the annual update of this People Strategy comes at a time as we respond to Covid-19. I feel privileged to lead a workforce with such a diverse range of skills and experience who deliver such important services to Hertfordshire citizens every day.

Developing our people and our organisation is an integral part of our strategic approach, particularly at a time of increasing demand for our services and a backdrop of the Covid-19 landscape of high rates of unemployment and terrible personal tragedies.

This has also been a time where the impact of Covid-19 on the BAME community and the voice of Black Lives Matter has risen to the forefront and so it is even more important to not only state our commitment and determination to condemn racism where we see it, but to develop and maintain a proactive anti-discrimination approach within our council.

We need to be regarded as an employer that offers interesting and worthwhile work, that respects and develops its workforce and offers a fair, transparent and competitive pay and reward package. That is what being an employer of choice means to me and attracting, retaining and developing talented people is essential to achieving it.

This People Strategy sets out our strategic priorities for achieving this aim, both organisationally and by department. Given how fast our environment is changing, we have to be agile and ambitious as we look to transform the way we work. Part of this includes attracting and retaining a more

diverse workforce to help us do this. We have a separate Diversity & Inclusion Strategy to ensure that we are taking all elements of equality, diversity & inclusion into account in all of our decision making and practice.

Hertfordshire County Council is a great place to work, where our staff really do make a difference every day. Whether you are an existing member of staff or thinking of joining us, thank you for taking the time to consider our People Strategy.



Owen Mapley
Chief Executive Officer

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Introduction

Hertfordshire County Council employs over 8,000 staff providing Adult Care Services, Children's Services, Community Protection, Environment & Infrastructure, Libraries, Public Health, and Resources.

In order to deliver on all of these services the council's revised Corporate Plan for 2019-2025, entitled 'Hertfordshire - County of Opportunity' sets out our key priorities for the County and how we intend to deliver our vision for Hertfordshire. Our People Strategy is aligned to the Corporate Plan, with the same ambition for equal opportunity for our staff as we have for our residents.

We recognise that the greatest asset we have to deliver these services is our people, and we are proud to support a diverse range of staff who reflect the Hertfordshire communities we serve. It is important that, operating in an ever-changing and often challenging environment, our People Strategy articulates the ambition of how we want to

attract, reward, engage and develop our staff, outlining the key priorities and drivers for our workforce from 2021 and beyond.

In establishing and developing its priorities, the council always takes into account the requirements of central government and the views of its citizens, its partners and staff. The council is a large and complex business. With a net revenue budget of around £818m a year (excluding direct school funding), it represents just under 1.2 million residents and delivers a range of vital services through its 8,000 staff. At the forefront of the organisation are the 78 County Councillors who represent and serve the communities of Hertfordshire. Political control is currently with the Conservative Party.



Principles

To deliver the Corporate Plan we need a diverse, committed, competent and valued workforce which embeds the council's Values and Behaviours and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in everything we do.

The People Strategy is supported by the council's Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and links the commitments set out in the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy to the priorities set out in the People Strategy which together will achieve the Corporate Plan objectives.

Our Workforce Equalities Report provides an overview of our key workforce equality issues and what is being done to address them.

The People Strategy takes into account the response to the Covid 19 pandemic, which has shown that there is a clear ambition to have a more efficient workforce by providing staff with better tools, more flexible working environments and to develop the skills that are required in an ever-changing world.



To support accountability and delivery of the People Strategy, all key deliverables will be based upon these four key principles:

1. Designed with the user in mind
2. Appropriate governance, project management and user engagement put in place
3. Robust evidence-based research conducted before moving to a solution
4. Committed to collaborative working

To ensure the People Strategy is integrated into the wider council work programmes, and that the Strategy aims are achieved, it is aligned to the following:

1. [Ways of Working Programme](#)
2. [Diversity & Inclusion Strategy](#)
3. [Future Workforce Project](#)
4. [Learning & Development Strategy](#)
5. Service Directorate's Workforce Plans

Priorities

As one of the largest employers in Hertfordshire, we are committed to achieving a diverse, committed, competent and valued workforce who have a strong sense of belonging. We will achieve this by focussing on key workforce priorities and actions, some of which link to the priorities and actions within the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy.

The People Strategy sets out our overarching people priorities for the council as a whole but it also links into the individual Service Directorate's priorities which are summarised later in this document, with links to each Directorate's Service Workforce Plan in full.

The People Strategy priorities focus on the five key areas of people management which form the employee lifecycle:



Below sets out the council's overarching people priorities related to each employee lifecycle. Following this section, we look at the specific people priorities for each council Directorate.



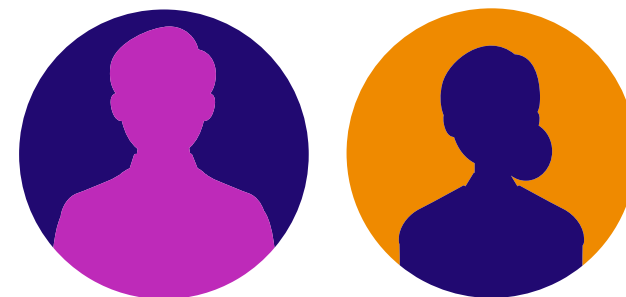
In a highly competitive job marketplace, against the backdrop of increased demand on services and less resource, it is vital that the council is an employer of choice and builds a sustainable and inspired workforce by:

- Attracting and Recruiting a diverse and competent workforce whose values and behaviours align with those of the council.
- Valuing and listening to staff, offering a flexible work life balance.
- Committing to recruit directly employed staff and volunteers at the same time recognise and value our contingent temporary workforce.
- Upholding high standards relating to safe and compliant recruitment working with the Disclosure and Barring Service and relevant government agencies.
- Committing to ensuring asylum and immigration rules are adhered to.
- Committing to use innovative and cost-effective methods to attract a wide range of candidates.
- Ensuring that the application and selection process is inclusive and accessible to everyone.
- Identifying future skill shortages and developing our own candidate pipelines, examples such as use of the Apprenticeship Levy and other internal development initiatives.
- Increasing the use of digital technology/ social media to continue to simplify and improve the candidate experience.
- Developing the ability to redeploy resources in a flexible way to respond to emerging national/service needs .





To create a committed, resilient, diverse and agile workforce it is essential that colleagues are engaged, listened to, and know at every level how they are contributing and why it matters, with a flexible approach that helps meet organisational priorities and new ways of working. The council aims to achieve this by developing a working environment and culture where:



- Staff are healthy and safe (this will include a focus on Mental Wellbeing during and post COVID19).
- Staff feel a strong sense of belonging and are included and have fair access to opportunities and know how to seek advice or support when needed.
- We can retain the right talent and mindset, with a focus on workforce planning, managing people to best effect and developing future leaders.
- Work is informed by data and prioritised by need.
- Work is outcome and delivery focused, linked to where resources are assigned to organisational priorities and reflects the needs of Hertfordshire residents and service users.
- Good employee relations and engagement are encouraged through openness and integrity.
- The workforce is flexible, with staff having core transferable skills which enables movement and career development across the organisation, reflecting the Shaping Our Future programme.
- Inclusive leadership is demonstrated through our leaders role modelling the organisations core values and behaviours.
- All council policies are fair and non-discriminatory.
- Flexible working opportunities are available to ensure staff are able to have a balance between their work priorities and their home life. This includes annual leave, pregnancy leave, disability leave, carers leave, leave for religious festivals and compassionate leave as well as our new ways of working, enabling many staff greater choice over their working location allowing for greater flexibility and work/life balance.
- Compliance to statutory requirements, such as visa and immigration (right to work) is maintained.
- Safeguarding is part of our monitoring of performance and behaviours.



Our vision is to maximise the potential of each individual and team. To develop our workforce with the skills and behaviours they need; to collaborate and integrate within the business to enable, equip and empower all to make a difference, and evidence the value they bring within their role by:

- Maximising behaviours of all our staff through opportunities across a range of learning activities.
- Keeping up with the latest thinking in learning and development, utilising technology to enhance the learner experience.
- Providing staff with the tools, resources and enabling environment to realise their full potential through the alignment of strategic delivery and performance objectives.
- Incorporating learning and development so that it becomes a natural and integrated part of the overall Human Resources service.
- Engaging with the workforce by reporting, communicating and collaborating.
- Designing a learning journey that optimises the opportunity to transfer learning back into the workplace.
- Ensuring the technology, methodology and infrastructure used is both intuitive and innovative.
- Using evaluation and measurement to evidence the added value and successes. This in turn helps us understand how we support the achievement of the council's strategic objectives.
- Recognising the evolving skills requirements of our workforce enabling them to adapt to more digital, remote and flexible ways of working.

Further details can be found on our [Learning](#) intranet page.





The council are committed to ensuring that staff are rewarded fairly and feel their work is valued and they are motivated to maintain or improve their commitment to the organisation and prosper. This will be informed by working with our diverse range of staff groups, and achieved through:

- A full review of the existing pay and reward structures (as part of the transformation) to ensure the approach to reward is:
 - Fair and transparent
 - Sustainable
 - Market relevant
 - Understood by the workforce, in an environment where they can prosper
 - Simplified by the concept of generic job roles/job grouping (job families) to enable a more flexible and agile workforce
- Continued development of a competitive reward & recognition package – and celebrating successes in the organisation.
- A comprehensive Wellbeing offer which supports our staff.





The council aims to retain its staff and ensure that they are engaged and productive. However, it also acknowledges that in the constantly changing job market, movement of the workforce is inevitable and so welcomes any new opportunities that this creates. The council will ensure that those leaving the organisation will be treated fairly and that staff turnover is monitored. This will be achieved through:

- Retention through reward and development opportunities.
- Succession planning.
- Retirement opportunities and advice and support.
- Fair and transparent processes.
- Continued efforts to assess and analyse why people leave the organisation and taking this data forward to inform recruitment and retention strategies.



Service Priorities

Each Service Directorate has a specific Strategic Workforce Plan which sets out its service and people priorities. Below is the summary of each Directorate's priorities with a link to their full Strategic Workforce Plan.

Adult Care Services

Adult Care Services (ACS) operates within the overall context of a county council which is committed to fostering healthy and vibrant communities. Our starting point is to delay, minimise or prevent the need for adult social care altogether.

Alongside our partners, we work to create a county where people lead healthy, purposeful, self-supporting lives, and so help to prevent and reduce care and support needs.

Our vision for people who need care and support is that they will have the same opportunities for a good quality of life as people who do not. We offer services to maximise independence and support freedom to choose, helping people at risk be safe. All care and support are personalised to the individual and directed by them over their life. It is based on their own strengths and their connections with family, communities and professionals.

Adult Care Service's Top Priorities

1. Ensure that residents have the information they need, when they need it and in a way that works best for them, in order for them to stay well and independent for longer
2. Connect people to sources of support in their own personal networks and local communities, helping them overcome loneliness and isolation
3. Work on services that prevent future need and help people get back on their feet as quickly as possible after illness
4. Deliver services that are: personalised, of good quality, that address people's wellbeing and keeps them safe and resilient and aim to join-up around an individual's needs and those of their carers
5. Responding to and planning recovery for COVID19

[Adult Care Services Strategic Workforce Plan](#)



Children's Services

Hertfordshire County Council's vision is to support Hertfordshire's children and young people to be happy and thrive in their family and community.

Hertfordshire's focus is on early intervention and prevention to reduce the need for protection.

Co-production in planning and service design underpins the approach in Children's Services. The 'Voice of the Child' is key in improving and developing services and the ambition is that Children and Young People (CYP) play an active role to influence the service and have the opportunity to be involved in discussions around future provision, priorities and changes to services. Children's Services want CYP to be consulted, to be able to express their views about how well we meet their needs and be engaged in the commissioning and improvement of our services.

Children's Service's Top Priorities

1. Meet children's needs by providing sufficient and appropriate provision in Hertfordshire and within their community
2. Support children and young people to get their lives back on track following the pandemic
3. Plan and deliver services that are flexible and respect individual wishes and meet individual needs, including diversity and inclusion
4. Continue to develop a skilled, learning workforce that strives for excellence and staff are proud of their own achievements and those of others
5. Work in partnership with other organisations to deliver the right services at the right time to prevent problems escalating.

[Children's Services Strategic Workforce Plan](#)



Community Protection

Community Protection's vision is to make Hertfordshire the safest county in which to live, work or visit and to protect consumers, the environment and support economic prosperity.

As a critical service for the Hertfordshire community our key functions are Prevention, Protection and Response. In order to deliver our service, we need a highly skilled workforce who can provide swift and effective responses, support and encourage a safe and just trading environment for consumers and businesses, help make communities safer and play a full role in preparation for, and contribution to, multiagency major incident response. A key focus has been on the response to COVID19 including working with and supporting Ambulance services. The recovery phase of this will impact future workforce planning.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England and the HMICFRS both suggest the need for the Fire and Rescue Service to have a clear and transparent People Strategy, to help reform and transition Fire & Rescue Services into a 21st Century Employer.

Community Protection's Top Priorities

1. Attracting more people from under-represented groups at all levels
 2. Improving the way in which we deliver our services
 3. Shaping our workforce
 4. Developing outstanding leaders
 5. Developing our Workforce
 6. Engaging with our Workforce
 7. Instilling a positive culture and embedding inclusivity
 8. Responding to and planning recovery for COVID19
- [Community Protection Directorate People Strategy](#)



Environment and Infrastructure

The work of the Environment and Infrastructure Department touches the lives of everyone who lives in, works in and visits Hertfordshire. The department works closely with partners (including WSP, Arup and Ringway) to deliver services such as Waste Management, Highways, Transport and Development Management to ensure the wellbeing of our residents and businesses.



Through the running of essential services, the department plays a vital role in helping to secure the future prosperity and quality of life of people living in the County.

Environment & Infrastructure's Top Priorities

1. Attraction & Retention – we recruit and retain excellent staff
2. Leadership & Succession Planning – we support high-performing staff to progress their careers
3. Workforce Capability & Capacity – we provide high quality training to meet the needs of all staff
4. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – we provide an inclusive and supportive environment for our staff to work in
5. Responding to and planning recovery for COVID19

[Environment & Infrastructure Strategic Workforce Plan](#)

Public Health

The Public Health team works closely with other HCC departments and external partners. These include district and borough councils, and NHS organisations such as Public Health England and the Clinical Commissioning Groups. Together we commission a variety of services to protect and improve the health of Hertfordshire residents.

The main focus for 2021 is the response to and recovery element of COVID19 to which Public Health take a crucial lead within the Council but also across Hertfordshire.

The team commissions the NHS, third sector or other agencies to provide services directly to the people of Hertfordshire. The team also protects the

public from threats to its health, providing advice on threats and hazards to health, and assuring and checking the quality and safety of some essential services like cancer screening and immunisation. In addition, it provides assurance that there are arrangements in place to protect the health of residents in the event of an emergency.



Public Health's Top Priorities

1. Responding to and planning recovery for COVID 19
2. Develop leadership, technical and scientific skills to deliver the expectations of the Council and NHS
3. Ensure that staff are equipped to work in a culture of austerity, to understand economic impact of public health services, to be able to deliver leadership on prevention and to understand the role of behavioural sciences in public health.
4. Succession Planning – continuing to invest in and learning and development
5. Recruitment & Retention of high-quality Consultants in Public Health

[Hertfordshire Public Health Service Strategy 2017-21](#)

An updated Strategic Workforce Action Plan will be developed to address the service priorities and challenges in 2021.

Resources

The Resources Department provides support to the whole organisation through the delivery of vital corporate and front-line services.

These services enable departments to manage and deliver a range of services to staff and the citizens of Hertfordshire as well as supporting vital transformational change projects and initiatives. The department can be categorised into the following three areas:

- Corporate & Enabling services
- Citizen Engagement and Customer Service
- Oversight/sponsorship of Commercial and Traded Services

To deliver on these areas the department consists of numerous services which include:

- Property
- Legal, Democratic and Statutory Services
- Human Resources
- Finance (and Hertfordshire Business Services/Herts FullStop)
- Improvement and Technology
- Assurance
- Customer Engagement and Libraries



Resources' Top Priorities

1. Leading on the future sustainability of the organisation through collaborative innovation and the delivery and support of major change initiatives: Transformation, Ways of Working, Future Workforce
2. Attracting more people from under-represented groups and embedding the Diversity & Inclusion agenda
3. Responding to and planning recovery for COVID19
4. Continue to strengthen HCC's technological capabilities through Next Generation programme and the organisation's Commercial Strategy and Delivery Plan
5. Promotion and utilisation of the Apprenticeship Levy in the development of the workforce

An updated Strategic Workforce Plan will be developed to address the service priorities and challenges in 2021.

Partnerships

External Partners

To deliver our services every day we recognise the importance of working closely with Partners such as the NHS, Hertfordshire Police, Strategic Development Partnership, Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), voluntary bodies and the ten Districts. We will also be relying on these partnerships to help us deliver our People Strategy.

Unions, Boards and Committees

The People Strategy will be delivered in close liaison with Unions, Staff Network Groups, and Diversity and Inclusion Boards. This partnership approach will ensure users help to form the outputs and deliverables.

Traded Services

To support the core workforce, Hertfordshire County Council is proud to partner with and be responsible for the following traded services:

Herts Catering Ltd (HCL)

Hertfordshire Catering Ltd (HCL) Is a limited company, wholly owned by Hertfordshire County Council. Primarily they are an education caterer for both the primary and secondary sectors, but also have some commercial contracts including the catering service at HCC.

Herts at Home

Herts at Home is owned by Hertfordshire County Council and has been established to provide local care services, including flexi-care, support at home and specialist care at home. The aim is to provide the best quality care by supporting staff to help our customers do the things they want to do and enable them to remain independent.



Herts Living Limited

Is a private limited company, owned by Hertfordshire County Council, established for the purposes of buying, developing and selling real estate.

Libraries for Life

In August 2019, Hertfordshire County Council awarded the contract to deliver library services in Hertfordshire to Libraries for Life, a Public Service Mutual with charitable status established by the County Council. Covid-19 has delayed the transition of this service.

Delivery

Managers and Staff

The People Strategy can only be fully realised with full buy in and ownership of managers and all staff. The key part managers and staff can play is helping with the overall organisational ambition to modernise and simplify the processes and work that we do to aid productivity and the best use of resources. The organisation values diversity in its decision making, ensuring all staff are included and engaged from the outset.

How we will do this

The People Strategy will inform employee engagement and the decisions we make about our future workforce planning. Our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy will underpin this work, with any diversity and inclusion actions being pulled through to each separate Directorate's Strategic Workforce Plan.

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HCC People Strategy

Resources Directorate

To be fully realised, the People Strategy has a number of key internal dependencies summarised as: managed service contracts, Finance, Information Technology and Systems alongside the Ways of Working Programme, Intelligence Team, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, Equalities Team and project management. These internal dependencies will be integral to the People Strategy from concept of ideas and projects through to delivery and implementation.

How we will do this

The People Strategy will be integrated into other key organisational ambitions and the overall transformation plan. The visions of these major organisational change projects are set out below (page 12).

In addition, the council along with KMPG has jointly developed a support programme for its leaders called 'supporting leaders through change' This programme will equip our leaders to help them deal with the challenges ahead.



Delivery

Service Delivery

The People Strategy sits alongside the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, and the strategic objectives of the services to promote inclusion and help them meet increased demand, key challenges and priorities.

How we will do this

To ensure this joint working is achieved, service boards have been involved in forming and shaping the aims and objectives of the People Strategy. This engagement will continue as the People Strategy is implemented.

External Partners

The council prides itself on strong external partnership working, demonstrated through close liaison with the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Hertfordshire Apprenticeship

Alliance and Partnerships, Districts, Community Groups and recognised Unions. These relationships are key to ensuring we have the skills and knowledge to deliver the People Strategy.

The external context, ranging from Brexit, advances in automation to employment law changes through to economic factors which will be considered as the People Strategy evolves.

How we will do this

The People Strategy will be shared with District Councils, the Local Enterprise Partnerships, Police and Crime Commissioner and the Regional Government Association and the recognised Unions to ensure these key partners are aware of our aims and ambitions in respect of the management of our people.



Governance

The responsibility of delivering the People Strategy sits with each and every employee. Governance of meeting the People Strategy priorities as set out above sits directly with each council Directorate Board and will be realised through each Directorate's Strategic Workforce Plan which is linked to the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and overall Corporate Plan.

Monitor and Review

The People Strategy will undergo an annual review led by the HR Senior Management Team, in liaison and consultation with services, to include customer feedback and consider external factors, organisational priorities and continuous improvement.





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