

# Impact Assessment



Assessment of: People Strategy and Action Plan

Service: DCC

Head of Service: Maria Chakraborty

Date of sign off by Head of Service: 25/8/23

Assessment carried out by : Sandra Sidgwick – Senior Strategy & Performance Advisor

## 1. Description of project

The People Strategy and accompanying action plan identifies the key priorities to take forward for the next three years to ensure DCC has a skilled and talented workforce to deliver for Devon and ensure the council is financially sustainable and stronger. This is a refocus for DCC and is about putting our “People First”. The strategy has six themes to support renewed focus on people and culture and us being more values based, purpose driven, and people centred in our work. The action plan covers activities for all six themes and identifies where additional budget to secure resources is required. The impact of strategy and action plan reaches to the whole organisation, including elected members and upholds our collective role as corporate parents and our responsibility to our care leavers.

## 2. Proposal, aims and objectives, and reason for change or review

As part of the new Chief Executive joining DCC in February 2023 and the Governance review that was undertaken, urgent priorities were identified. One of these was to refocus on putting people at the heart of what we do as our greatest asset. There is an organisational requirement to have a consistent and collaborative approach to deliver strategic improvements across the Council. The People Strategy outlines how we will ensure our workforce is fit for the future, and able to support a sustainable council that is taking charge of its own destiny. A detailed action plan is required to ensure key priorities are linked and resourced across DCC and that these are regularly reviewed to consider the rapidly changing external and internal context in which the council is operating.

## 3. Risk assessment, limitations and options explored (summary)

DCC is committed to its People Strategy to enable the workforce to provide better outcomes for the people of Devon. We recognise that putting people at the heart of everything we do is the

only way to achieve this, we must invest in our people. The action plan will focus on the most impactful priorities that will move the council forward.

#### Governance and Monitoring:

- Appropriate strategic oversight by Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Sponsors, Strategic leads and Director of People and Culture
- Appropriate oversight by Cabinet Member for Organisational Development, Workforce & Digital Transformation: Councillor Andrew Saywell
- Appropriate arrangements put in place to ensure good governance, regular touch points and delivery plans established for each strategic theme (Governance structure and outline is included within the action plan brief)
- Organisational needs are understood and identified to inform actions and decisions

#### Limitations:

- The action plan will only focus on 1-2 key priorities within each theme for the first year. This is due to capacity to deliver people strategy work against the ongoing business as usual work and transformation work to deliver financial sustainability. This means that other identified activities to support the delivery of the strategy won't be addressed during this 12–18-month period.
- We have considered future external contextual changes that may impact the delivery of the People Strategy however if the outcomes of those changes are worst case scenario (for example the significant budget overspend for 2023/24 is impacted by the SEND safety valve decision) the ability to deliver the activities detailed in the action plan could be affected.
- The People Strategy could have limitations in its effectiveness. The action plan and further delivery plans aim to cover key actions over the next 12 – 18 months, however, there is no guarantee that this will solely change the current culture of the organisation or be the only approach to adopt 'one council'. The work across the organisation needs to embody the "people first" approach and ensure activity is linked and taken into everyday life working within DCC.

Despite the limitations, the action plan for the People Strategy is the best option and has been developed in consultation with a wide variety of internal and external influences.

#### Options:

The options considered to deliver the people strategy have been reviewed and a decision was taken to proceed with an achievable twelve-month programme of work. If the activities within the first phase of the action plan are delivered this will significantly improve the experience for all DCC employees in relation to the six themes and we will have confidence that we are getting the basics right. Upon successful completion of this initial phase, we can then look to prioritise and resource the second phase of activity. **People affected, diversity profile and analysis of needs**

## People Affected:

All employees, including elected members will be impacted in varying capacity by the People Strategy. This is dependent on the tasks detailed within the action plan. The headcount for DCC employees is 5560. The headcount for elected members is 60.

As part of the strategy, we have actively sought to highlight our collective role as corporate parents and our responsibility to our children in care and care leavers. As a result, each theme has a commitment in relation to this. Care Leavers are a key strand within the action plan and will be affected by the positive outcomes of the People Strategy. The headcount for care leavers as of August 2023 is 848.

The data provided below is based on the number of people who have completed this area of sensitive information and is specifically corporate employees only.

## Workforce profile (August 2023)

Age	94.42% completion rate (Count 5344)
0-19	28
20-29	536
30-39	939
40-49	1337
50-59	1709
60-69	744
70+	54

Nationality	completion rate 63.99% (Count 3622)
British (English)	63.28%
British (not Channel Islands or IOM)	30.07%
Other	3.45%
British (Welsh)	1.21%
British (Scottish)	0.72%
Irish	0.69%
Zimbabwean	0.58%

Marital Status	completion rate 59.82 (Count 3386)
Married / Civil partnership	58.27%
Single	16.95%
Partner	13.44%
Divorced	8.24%
Prefer not to disclose	1.8%
Widowed	1.3%

Religion	completion rate 44.95% (Count 2544)
Christian	41%
no religion/belief	37.11%
atheist	12.19%
other	5.27%
prefer not to disclose	4.44%

Ethnic Origin	completion rate 44.95% (Count 2544)
White British	91.22%
White other	4.11%
Other	2.46%
Mixed Heritage	1.24%
Black/Black British	0.97%

Disability	37.9% completion rate (Count 2145)
Not disabled	87.18%
Disabled	9.14%
Prefer not to disclose	3.68%

### Diversity Profile:

The intention of the People Strategy is to improve the experience of the workforce included those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This is extended to include our Care Leavers. Through the action plan the intention is to strengthen the involvement and inclusion of those with lived experience. The very essence of the people strategy is to create a work environment where they can feel safe, included and that they have a voice. It is not anticipated that any of the actions within the plan will have an adverse impact upon any group of our employees. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) actions within the People Strategy and action plan have been considered alongside the development of a new EDI action plan and will also be embedded in the EDI action plan, ensuring that diversity and inclusion is aligned and an underpinning commitment within the organisation. The strategy and action plan has been developed in liaison with DCC's Equality Team. Throughout the activities detailed within the action plan each lead officer will undertake a more detailed change programme including implementation plan which will be supported by a standalone Equality Impact Assessments.

### Analysis of Needs:

We have consulted via a variety of different methods to inform the themes, aims and desired outcomes for the People Strategy (see section 7). Through the identified governance channels, we will be reviewing and analysing the progress of the People Strategy and understanding the needs of the organisation. This may flex and change in accordance with the organisation's priorities and feedback.

## 4. Stakeholders, their interest, and potential impacts

### **Stakeholders:**

Every member of the DCC workforce is a stakeholder to the people strategy and action plan but those highlighted below are additional groups outside of this:

- Trade Unions will be supporting some aspects of the action plan through appropriate consultation and engagement.
- Elected Members will have interest in the progress of the People Strategy and form part of the plan, particularly within the Learning Theme.
- Care Leavers and Foster Carers are significant stakeholders through their own strand running throughout the 6 themes and will have significant interest in the progression of the opportunities we can provide.
- Staff diversity and reference groups are key representation within the action plan activities ensuring we hear our employee voice through a variety of different networks and lived experiences.

Collectively, these stakeholder groups will provide valuable insight to ensure that we can embed our strong values and collective approach, ensuring the best outcomes for the people of Devon.

### **Potential Impacts:**

**Social and Equality Impacts** – The people strategy action plan is likely to have a positive overall impact on social issues by providing the workforce with effective platforms to communicate their feedback and improve communication between leaders and the wider workforce. This will include proactively supporting and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity in a variety of different work streams.

**Environmental Impacts** – The people strategy and action plan is likely to have a positive overall impact on environmental issues by providing a safe, stable, and sustainable working environment, ensuring we meet our statutory obligations in respect of health, safety, and wellbeing of our workforce.

The people strategy action plan will be monitored by People and Culture leadership team with the Director acting as the lead and responsible body. The impact of the actions within the plan will be identified at theme level and tracked through an interactive, dynamic action plan dashboard. Further thought to how the impact of the people strategy action plan can be attributed towards the overall performance framework for DCC needs to be given once the DCC performance framework has been developed.

### **Additional relevant research used to inform this assessment**

Feedback and consultation (detailed in People Strategy Committee Report, Section 5) have been used to inform priority actions to take forward for the next 12-18 months.

## 5. Description of consultation process and outcomes

We have designed the strategy collaboratively, with Senior Leadership Team engaging with staff, Trades Unions and elected Members throughout its development, to gain their views about what matters from their perspective. The draft strategy has been shared at different stages of its development to seek feedback and further comments to form it. The feedback has shaped the Strategy and has been used to design the supporting Action Plan to deliver this.

The following methods of consultation were used to inform the themes, aims and desired outcomes of the People Strategy:

- Staff engagement survey in November 2022 which received 1857 responses, the themes from this are shared here: [What you told us in our Autumn 2022 People Survey - news \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)
- Feedback from staff following Senior Leadership Teams virtual briefing sessions held on 14 March & 2 May 2023 [Catch up on our May Microsoft Teams Sessions with our senior leaders - news \(devon.gov.uk\)](#). Following the second briefing, 46 responses received to this survey.
- External survey and analysis undertaken by our external recruitment agency, ThirtyThree, to understand the ways of working people find most appealing; the perceptions associated with County Councils as employers and why someone may or may not want to work for a County Council. This survey had 2005 respondents working in the private sector.
- Regular consultation has taken place with Senior Officers across all parts of DCC over the past 3 months and members of the corporate Equality team.
- HR senior leadership team and key stakeholders, including Trades Unions, have been consulted and provided detailed feedback.
- Multiple visits to DCC offices by the Senior Leadership Team to engage, in person, with staff and gain a greater insight into the key factors that are important for them about working for DCC
- Session with care leavers and senior officers to understand their perspectives
- Exit interview data has been reviewed from those leaving DCC to understand their reasons
- Engagement with over 30 cross-party elected members who attended the Member engagement day on 12 May 2023 and provided feedback
- Race Equality Audit [Race Equality Audit 2021 \(Anti-racism at Devon County Council\) - tasks and guides](#)
- Equality action planning event to identify issues, priorities and opportunities - 10<sup>th</sup> July, engaging with staff diversity networks, Equality Commission (elected Members) and the Equality Reference Group (voluntary and community sector representatives).
- Benchmarking and review of Workforce and People Strategies from other organisations across the public sector.
- The People and Culture Leadership Team have been consulted regarding a full costed analysis and resource scoping exercise over a concentrated 4 week period during August 2023.
- A Challenge and Support Group consisting of representatives across the council to provide collective focus on identified priorities for the first 12 months.

Feedback and consultation will be ongoing throughout the action plan to ensure the workforces views are accurately represented in the work carried out.

---

## 6. Equality analysis

Under the Equality Act 2010, the local authority must consider how people will be affected by a service, policy or practice. In so doing we must give due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (for work), sex, sexual orientation, race, and religion and belief. The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation does not prevent the Council from taking difficult decisions which result in service reductions or closures for example, it does however require the Council to ensure that such decisions are: informed and properly considered with a rigorous, conscious approach and open mind, taking due regard of the effects on the protected characteristics and the general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations; proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision); fair, necessary, reasonable, and those affected have been adequately consulted.

Equality matters are a focus of each theme within the Strategy and the area of 'Belonging' will predominantly centre around delivery of actions in relation to DCC's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion agenda. The strategy has been developed in liaison with DCC's Equality Team. Where relevant, policy and practice developments arising from the strategy will undergo Equality Impact Assessments.

## 7. Human rights considerations:

We need to ensure that human rights are protected. In particular, that people have:

- A reasonable level of choice in where and how they live their life and interact with others (this is an aspect of the human right to 'private and family life').
- An appropriate level of care which results in dignity and respect (the protection to a private and family life, protection from torture and the freedom of thought, belief and religion within the Human Rights Act and elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations under the Equality Act 2010).
- A right to life (ensuring that nothing we do results in unlawful or unnecessary/avoidable death).

Devon County Council is committed to eliminating discrimination, providing equality of opportunity and challenging prejudice to advance the achievement of equality and foster good relations between diverse groups in Devon. Devon County Council has a clear Equality Policy, which recognises the Council's aims and responsibilities in this respect and the delivery provider holds a similar policy.

## 8. Environmental analysis

An impact assessment should give due regard to the following activities in order to ensure we meet a range of environmental legal duties. The policy or practice does not require the identification of environmental impacts using this Impact Assessment process because it is

subject to (please mark X in the relevant box below and proceed to the 11, otherwise complete the environmental analysis information below):

The people strategy and action plan have no specific environmental sustainability impacts; however, depending on the activities that will be recommended for implementation within the action plan, there may be impacts, for example in relation to staff travel or office accommodation, and the subsequent effect on the environment, that will need to be considered. Therefore, in the same way that Financial and Legal considerations will be reviewed, and recommendations made in relation to the themes in the strategy, this will also be undertaken in relation to Environmental Impacts.

## 9. Economic analysis

### **Impact on knowledge and skills**

For all areas described, the people strategy and action plan is likely to have a positive overall impact on the workforce as one of the key themes (Learning) is to upskill and expand knowledge for the future of the organisation. This will enable the workforce and elected members to fulfil their potential and be agile and responsive to deliver changing organisational priorities.

### **Impact on employment levels**

The people strategy and action plan aims to support Care Leavers by encouraging young people to have fulfilling careers and improve their employment levels, this could be through apprenticeships or ring-fenced vacancies within the organisation or through the DCC Family Business Offer.

### **Impact on local business**

In some areas of the people strategy and action plan, we will be working with external providers to deliver services and where possible we will be using local organisations and approved DCC providers.