

‘People First’

Action Plan

**Empowering our people to
make a difference**

2023 - 2025

Our Underpinning Culture Commitments



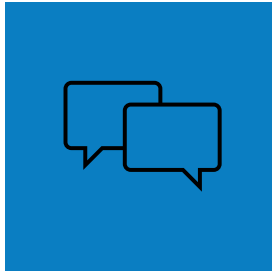
Working together as one council to deliver 'People First'



Making informed decisions using evidence, data & intelligence



Always upholding an inclusive and fair approach



Behaving restoratively by default



Supporting our role as corporate parents



Celebrating achievements



Aligning our People Strategy to our organisational priorities



Benchmarking and learning from other organisations



Adopting an 'outward mindset' focused approach, underpinned by our Principles & Behaviours, to create a culture where our people are empowered to perform well

Action Plan Year One



Voice



Sponsor: Matthew Jones – Director of Transformation and Business Services

Aim

To create an effective ongoing dialogue between leaders and the wider workforce, to engage, listen to and gain clarity about what is important to them. We will feedback on what we have heard and deliver actions.

Action

Having clear, inspiring, and regular messaging about what is happening within the organisation and what the key priorities are.

Listening to our people, using a variety of different methods to engage with, listen to and respond to their views. This includes supporting our diversity networks

Implementation

Timeline

Develop and implement a communication and engagement strategy to deliver a one council approach. Transparent communication about organisational change and updates, and being clear when we are informing, consulting, or co-creating.

Use a structured approach to engagement and co-creation to maximise the value achieved from hearing our peoples' voice. Identify one council approaches and be clear on how and where professional or service specific needs fit within the framework

Sept 23 – Mar 24

Review and confirm with our people the best use of digital platforms and mechanisms, to provide multidirectional communication across the organisation.

Sept 23 – Mar 24

Creation of a safe and shared space for achievements, success, kindness, and general feedback.

Sept – Dec 23

Recruitment



Sponsor: Meg Booth– Director of Climate Change, Environment & Transport

Aim

To attract and retain an agile and flexible workforce with the knowledge, and behaviours to make Devon the best place to live and work to achieve our organisational priorities.

Action

Completing a cycle of Workforce Planning. to identify current and future workforce needs.

Using a variety of recruitment approaches which will be responsive, inclusive and enhance the candidate experience. Recruiting the best people into the organisation to deliver our services



Implementation	Timeline
Complete a cycle of workforce planning to identify workforce needs and ensure alignment to current organisational priorities.	Dec 23 – June 24
In response to the identified needs within the workforce planning cycle, take action to address specific challenges.	June 24 – August 24

Implementation	Timeline
Design a recruitment strategy to deliver a balance between internal movement and external recruitment, to include reviewing our image and make us the employer of choice	Sept 23 – Jan 24
Incorporate learning from an 'outward mindsets' approach with a review of the Principles & Behaviours, to ensure that our recruitment encompasses and helps to embed this culture effectively across the organisation	Oct 23 - Mar 24

Wellbeing



Aim

Providing a safe, stable, and sustainable working environment with wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.

Action

Prioritising the health, safety and wellbeing of our people, creating the conditions for them to be safe and well.

Ensuring we meet our statutory obligations in respect of health, safety, and wellbeing of our people. This will include achieving the standards set out in our ongoing national accreditation frameworks

Sponsor: Steve Brown – Director of Public Health

Implementation	Timeline
Design and implement a preventative approach to reducing sickness absence and proactively managing cases of ill health to keep individuals at work or facilitate a timelier return.	October 23 start
Review and update the 121 and appraisal conversations, ensuring wellbeing, learning and organisational objectives are included.	September 2023
Procurement of an Employee Assistance Programme ensuring it delivers best value, is effective and meets the needs of the organisation	Sep-23 – Feb-24
Procurement of an Occupational Health service ensuring it delivers best value, is effective and meets the needs of the organisation.	Aug-23 - Feb-24
Review, update and promote current wellbeing resources and support to include our networks, training and communication channels	Ongoing

Implementation	Timeline
Achieving safety for our people through our HR policies and practices.	2023 - 2024

Reward



Sponsor: Maria Price – Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Aim

A reward package that is flexible, equitable, and transparent to provide benefits to our workforce, by connecting them to what they value.

Action

Developing a 'one council' approach to reward and celebrating success.

Have an approach to pay and reward that is fit for purpose, equitable, transparent and allows us to recruit and retain a high performing workforce.

Providing a total reward package that is more than just pay and connects our people to what they value



Implementation	Timeline
Modernising our Terms and Conditions to ensure they are fit for purpose, provides best value and are equitable and transparent. Wider review of pay and grading scheme and where necessary & appropriate, redesign, negotiate and agree changes to the grading structure.	Ongoing
Updating our policies to ensure they are fit for purpose, equitable and transparent.	Ongoing
Develop and deliver a framework to celebrate achievements in both formal and informal ways, creating a one council approach.	Oct 23 – Dec 23

Implementation	Timeline
Deliver a benefits platform to broaden the benefits we can offer to our people.	October 23
Design and deliver a total reward strategy.	Ongoing

Belonging



Sponsor: Angie Sinclair – Director of Finance

Aim

To have an inclusive culture that celebrates diversity, where everyone can feel safe, well and able to be themselves. To grow and retain a workforce that feels it belongs and is supported to thrive.

Action

Engaging with our people to understand what is important to them to allow them to thrive, belong and feel safe at work. Take action to address imbalances and inequalities identified within the organisation

Reviewing and updating our policies and practices to include the lived experience & diversity our people.



Implementation	Timeline
Support the Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to include: Improving organisational understanding of EDI through updated mandatory learning modules	Sept 23 – March 24
Support the Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to include: Improved availability and analysis of data to identify and inform strategic action	Ongoing
Use learning and data from engagement strategy, including staff surveys and exit interview feedback, to help better understand what makes our people feel safe and belong	Sept 23 – Jan 24

Implementation	Timeline
Policies are reviewed to consider the impact of lived experience.	Ongoing

Learning



Sponsor: Tandra Forster– Integrated Adult Social Care

Aim

To be an organisation that learns and is committed to developing its workforce through a variety of opportunities.

Action

Develop and upskill our people, including elected members, to fulfil their potential and be agile and responsive to deliver changing organisational priorities

Implementation

Timeline

Design and deliver a corporate learning strategy that is aligned to our priorities, supports our people to understand our council and develops professional learning. This includes developing a programme to roll out an 'outward mindsets' approach to support the foundations of a collaborative and innovative culture.

August 23 – August 24

Using the outcomes of workforce planning cycle, work alongside service areas to design career pathways that meet service and generational needs, and consider the impact of the changing internal and external context.

June 24

Conduct a feasibility study about the best way to conduct a skills audit to capture the key skills of our people.
Scope the approach to record and store skills audit in an accessible place to allow matching of skills to organisational priority work.

April 24

Action Plan 2024-2025 (Year Two)



Year Two & Three Activity

Theme	Implementation
Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving the analysis and reporting of qualitative and quantitative employee voice feedback to make informed decisions.• Having clear, inspiring, and regular messaging about what is happening within the organisation and what the key priorities are. Listening to our workforce using a variety of different methods to engage with, listen to and respond to their views. This includes supporting our staff diversity networks.
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using a variety of recruitment approaches, which will be responsive, inclusive and enhance the candidate experience. Recruiting the best people into the organisation to deliver our services.• Sharing what it is like to work for Devon and the impact this can have on the community and environment around us.
Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritising the health, safety, and wellbeing of our workforce, creating the conditions for them to be safe and well.• Ensuring we meet our statutory obligations in respect of health, safety, and wellbeing of our workforce. This will include achieving the standards set out in our ongoing national accreditation frameworks• Empowering our workforce to feel safe and encouraged to have open conversations about their wellbeing and what works for them and their teams.• Exploring what additional national frameworks could enhance our approach and offer to our workforce.

Year Two & Three Activity

Theme	Implementation
Reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a 'one council' approach to reward and celebrating achievements. • Having an approach to pay and reward that is fit for purpose, equitable, transparent and allows us to recruit and retain a high performing workforce. • Modernising our Terms & Conditions and policies to ensure they are fit for purpose, provides best. value and are equitable and transparent • Providing a total reward package that is more than pay and connects staff to what they value. • Having a flexible approach to work ensuring policy and process are aligned and support the priorities of the organisation.
Belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking action to address imbalances and inequalities identified within the organisation. • Reviewing and updating our policies and practices to include the lived experience of our diverse workforce. • Engaging with our workforce to understand what is important to them to thrive, belong and feel safe at work. • Providing a working environment that meets the needs of the workforce and improves job satisfaction.
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and upskill our workforce, including elected members, to fulfil their potential and be agile and responsive to deliver changing organisational priorities • Developing career pathways and progression opportunities, including early careers, professional and leadership pathways, utilising apprenticeship opportunities • Having governance in place to enable us to measure the impact of learning activity and drive continuous improvement. • Having a holistic approach to learning that is tailored to support the individual and the organisational priorities.

Governance and Performance



Governance

Evaluation of the impact of the People Strategy is critical to understanding how we are performing as an organisation and the experiences of our people, and will feed into our corporate Performance Framework. Reviewing our data to analyse trends and impact of activities will be a key part of knowing if the People Strategy is delivering against our aims for each theme and the achievement of our organisational priorities. We will do this by gathering both qualitative and quantitative data. Key performance measures will be reviewed each year, and if necessary adjusted to reflect any change to DCC priorities or external factors. Some of these measures include:

Monitor and review of:

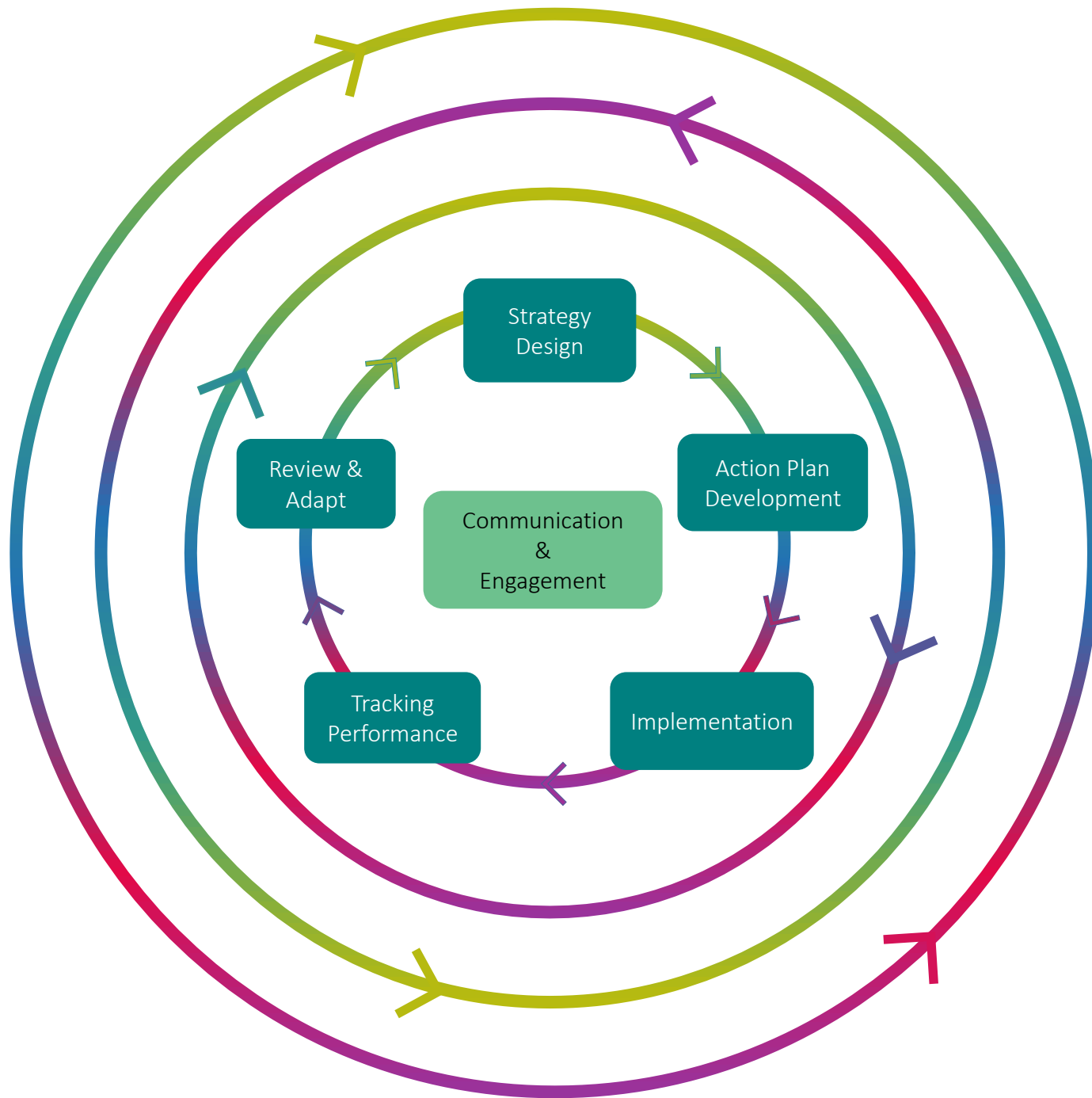
- Progress against the delivery plan, through a dynamic and interactive dashboard
 - HR data and making yearly comparisons
 - HR operational cases holistically to identify themes
 - Usage of Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme support
 - The monitoring of the Care Leaver Commitments will be achieved through the Corporate Parenting Board and it's associated sub groups.
- Feedback through the cross-organisational staff reference groups, focus groups and listening to the voice of our employees
- Monitor and review of progress by:
 - People & Culture Leadership Team (monthly)
 - Cabinet Member for Organisational Development, Workforce & Digital Transformation (monthly)
 - SLT sponsor for each theme (quarterly)
 - Stakeholder group (quarterly)
 - Senior Leadership Team (six monthly)
 - Cabinet (6 monthly)
- Evaluation of events and activities

Supporting

Support and Challenge Group

Senior Leadership Team Sponsors

People & Culture Leadership Team



Reporting

Cabinet: 6 Monthly

Senior Leadership Team: Quarterly

People & Culture Leadership Team: Monthly



Care Leavers Commitments

The following actions outline the work currently underway; many of which are part of the activities that are being delivered as part of the ongoing improvement programme in the Children & Young People's Futures Service, with support from the wider organisation, in particular the Economy, Enterprise and Skills Service.

Further information along with timescales for delivery can be found in the LG Advisor Review Action Log.

[Stand Up Speak Up Action Plan](#)

[Corporate Parenting Strategy](#)



Voice



Our Commitment to Children in care and Care Leavers:

We will listen to the needs of our children in care and care leavers. As corporate parents we will engage with them in the most appropriate way and ensure they feel heard.

What we are doing	Next Steps
The Stand Up Speak Up (SUSU) Council provide opportunities for care leavers to share ideas, information and explore options to meet their needs and aspirations	Development of the Councils employment hub offer with a feedback loop, seeking to build upon concerns and needs
Regular meetings with District Councils to progress collective parenting responsibilities	
Redesign of current Corporate Parenting Board and re-structure of Champion Model Approach	Invite care leaver champions to be active participants in the corporate parenting board and sub groups.
Run regular forums to allow children in care to have a voice with elected members	
Education, Training & Employment (ETE) Personal Adviser's work directly with individual care leavers to identify ways to best support and meet their needs	Implementation of the Treating Care Experienced as a protected characteristic
Implementation of Local Offer for Care Leavers	
Approval for treating 'Care Experience' as a protected characteristic	

Recruitment



Our Commitment to Children in care and Care Leavers:

We will support our children in care and care leavers to achieve their potential. As corporate parents we will work together to identify and support what pathway is right for them in their adult life.

What we are doing	Next Steps
Promoting high aspirations for work by supporting care leavers in preparation for employment	Updating the care leavers Protocol to ensure a steady focus on immediate needs and progression
Increase focus on developing education, employment and training opportunities	
Creation of a DCC Family Business Offer including seeking opportunities through our suppliers, procurement and partnership with district councils and key stakeholder.	Develop in each Directorate work experience and interview skills opportunities.
Ring fence opportunities after the completion of apprenticeships	
Enhance employer engagement events to identify areas for joint working, ringfencing offer to care leavers	
Set up a plan for 6 monthly business events to create opportunities for Care Leavers	Work with DCC workforce to ensure they understand the family business approach and how to fully support care leavers.

Wellbeing



Our Commitment to Children in care and Care Leavers:

We will prioritise the wellbeing of our children in care and care leavers. As corporate parents we will strive to keep them safe, healthy and well.

What we are doing	Next Steps
One to one support through Personal Advisors on health and wellbeing for care leavers including a Pathway Plan	Opening up the use of the Employee Assistance Programme for care leavers
DCC/District focus on council tax exemption for care leavers (up to age of 26)	Free prescriptions and support with dental/eye care for care leavers
Mental Health and Wellbeing has a specific action plan through the Stand Up Speak Up Website: SUSU council action tracker - Children In Care and Care Leavers - Children In Care and Care Leavers (standupspeakup.org.uk)	Development of a Physical and Mental Health Task Force to build on existing wellbeing services

Reward



Our Commitment to Children in care and Care Leavers:

In our roles as corporate parents, we will celebrate the achievements of our children in care and care leavers

What we are doing	Next Steps
Recognising and celebrating the continued work of those contributing to the 'Stand Up Speak Up' website, events and development of initiatives	Giving access to Care Leavers and Foster Carers to the new Benefits Platform to access a range of discounts schemes
Celebration at the annual 'Youth Voice' event	
Recognise and celebrate accomplishments at the Annual Achievements Awards	Involving Care Experienced young people in the induction process of new leaders joining the organisation, to increase organisation understanding and support by sharing their lived experience.

Learning



Our Commitment to Children in care and Care Leavers:

We will develop a range of learning opportunities for our children in care and care leavers, giving them options and pathways that best suit their future aspirations.

What we are doing	Next Steps
Promoting through the 'Virtual School' to ensure care leavers individual strengths and talents are recognised, supported, encouraged and celebrated	Expand Youth Hub offer to North Devon
Enhance the collective work with Further Education and partners around apprenticeships, work experience, wider learning opportunities including reinforcing the Employment Hub offer	Virtual School Head to share data on care leavers aspirations, identifying family business and offer opportunities to match young people.
Improve the quality of training through the DfE Skills 'Bootcamp' Programme.	Develop in each Directorate an opportunity for mentoring and shadowing
Providing access to Learn Devon training opportunities	
Under University Civic agreement, Exeter University will be offering a social worker apprenticeship to be launched in 2024, with care leavers given priority status for the scheme	Sign up to the 'Care Leavers Covenant'
Bespoke apprenticeship service development with Exeter College	

Belonging



Our Commitment to Children in care and Care Leavers:

We will support our children in care and care leavers to feel valued and part of our community. This includes a commitment to listen, engage and support our foster carers to build a sense of belonging.

What we are doing	Next Steps
Working with existing Local Offer providers to improve responsiveness and embed work within DCC Teams	Service review and redesign to launch a refreshed Devon Local Offer
Ensuring that opportunities are given to prepare care leavers for adulthood to feel safe, stable in their relationships and independent living	Set a terms of reference agreement so DCC/Districts can work together across the housing and care system, developing joint commissioning activity
	Implement a multi-discipline team approach to inform a potential future business case for multi-disciplinary/multi agency team working
Continuing joint initiatives with the local community to support care leavers, developing a sense of belonging in the community	Sign up to the 'Care Leavers Charter'
	Discuss with District Councils developing further Youth Hubs across Devon