

Human Resources Workforce Strategy 2019 - 2021

Working for a
brighter future
together



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Our Vision

Working for a bright future - together

Cheshire East Council will:

- celebrate the diverse and distinctive places and communities in the borough, working with them to achieve their hopes and aspirations
- be led by strong and responsible leadership who are committed to public service and rooted in their communities
- have valued staff who are proud ambassadors for the council
- reach out to our communities, neighbouring councils and partners, listen to what they say and act accordingly
- be a business-like, financially independent council which enables residents and communities to become more self-sufficient
- take decisions for the long-term, investing in the future and responding to changing circumstances

What our values are and what they mean

Flexibility: Be flexible by adapting quickly to changing circumstances and learning together from our experiences.

Innovation: Be innovative and creative in your thinking and the way you approach your work. Challenge the way we do things if you think there's a better way to do it.

Responsibility: Taking personal responsibility for your work. Deliver what you promise. Don't waste resources, whether this is our staff, funding, processes, information or technology.

Service: Deliver a world-class service by listening to our residents, staff and businesses and understand what they need, and responding appropriately.

Teamwork: Use effective teamwork by respecting and working well with others to achieve the best outcomes for residents, staff and communities.

The council is rapidly changing and delivering more than ever before and our values reflect what we collectively believe will stand us in good stead in the years to come.

Our Corporate Plan

Cheshire East have 6 strategic outcomes that are detailed in our Corporate Plan.

The priorities for each directorate support the delivery of the outcomes and are cascaded into Service Plans and through to individual objectives.

This ensure that every employee is working towards delivering the vision for the Council.



Vision for Workplace Culture

Cheshire East Council Working for a Brighter Future Together

- **We have a shared purpose**
- **We are supported and well led**
- **We are treated fairly and highly valued**
- **We succeed together**

Our vision for workplace culture was co-created with our employees and details the environment and climate that we want to create to support our employees to deliver exceptional services.

Purpose

Having the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time and at the right cost is critical to us achieving the outcomes set out in our Corporate Plan and for us to realise our vision for the Council. Furthermore we need to ensure that employees want to work for us, feel that they are valued and supported as individuals in order to retain and attract a talented workforce. Our workforce strategy sets out the framework that will enable our people to support the transformation of our Council.

At Cheshire East Council we have created a vision for our workplace culture which is aligned to our vision for the Council **Working for a Brighter Future – Together**; focused on having a shared purpose, being supported and well led, being treated fairly and highly valued in order to succeed together. We demonstrate this through our behaviours that are linked to our core values and underpinned by our employee deal.

The Council recognises that to deliver our outcomes we will need to engage effectively with our employees to inspire and encourage them to generate ideas and participate in improving how we deliver our services. We also need to continue to respond proactively to the feedback we get through our employee engagement activity and events.

This strategy sets out the key priorities to realise our vision for workplace culture that supports high performance and enables a flexible, innovative, skilled and diverse workforce to deliver in a safe and positive working environment. It is a framework that will support us creating the right climate for our employees to enable them to do their best work every day, working together as one team and one council to deliver the best service for our customers and communities.

Our employees need to clearly understand what we need them to do. We have a joint commitment within our employee deal to get involved, keep informed and share ideas. As an employer we need to understand the views and concerns of our workforce and more importantly how they can shape and contribute to us achieving our outcomes.

High levels of employment with a skilled and motivated workforce will place reduced demand on public services, freeing up more resources to focus on delivering more growth and prosperity and also ensure that the most vulnerable continue to be supported by the Community, the Council and its partners.

This document provides a strategic overview for the HR service and sets out the context that has informed the objectives and deliverables included in our Workforce Action Plan.

Brighter Future – Working Together to Transform Our Council

At Cheshire East we are focused on working to transform our Council to ensure that we have a Brighter Future for everyone by 2024.

The programme to transform our Council is informed by our Council Vision, the 6 outcomes outlined in our Corporate Plan and the strategies set out for our Place Directorate and People Directorate.

There are **five key strategic objectives** associated with transforming the Council:

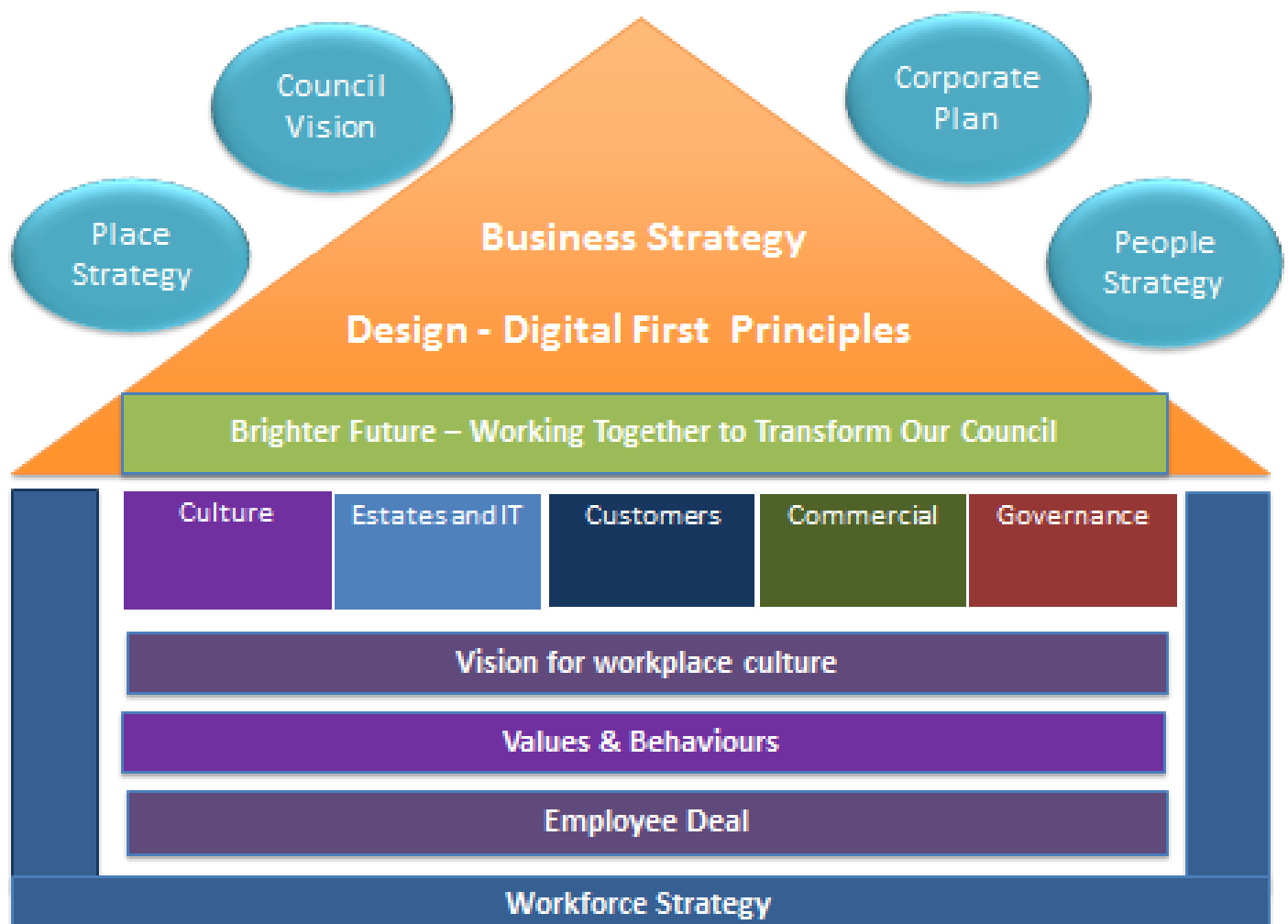


These objectives will be delivered through five work streams:

- Culture
- Estates & IT
- Customers
- Commercial
- Governance

Each work stream will work on designing solutions with a digital first principle. The benefits of this approach will result in improved customer perceptions and value and ensure that Cheshire East Council is known as a forward thinking Council and employer of choice. Our workforce strategy sets out the framework that will enable our people to support the transformation of our Council.

How the Workforce Strategy links to other strategies within the Council



Our workforce strategy underpins our vision for the Council, our Corporate Plan, business strategies and transformation plan. Having the right people, with the right skills, in the right place and at the right time will support and enable us to have a skilled, flexible, engaged

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workforce of high performing professional teams. Delivering the right services effectively and efficiently contributing to a sustainable, modern Council.

What informs our Workforce Strategy?



Workforce Strategy

Right People, Right Skills, Right Place, Right Time

Working for a **brighter future** together

WHAT INFORMS OUR WORKFORCE STRATEGY?

CORPORATE PLAN

The Corporate Plan details the 6 strategic outcomes for Cheshire East Council. Our Workforce Strategy has been created to support the delivery of these outcomes

VISION FOR WORKPLACE CULTURE

We have a clear vision for our workplace culture



*We have a shared purpose
We are supported and well led
We are treated and highly valued
We succeed together*

Our workforce strategy is aligned to our vision to ensure that we can create the right climate and culture

WORKFORCE STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Our Workforce Strategy Action Plan tells us how we will deliver our corporate objectives based on our culture, organisational development and our employee experience

Our workforce strategy sets the framework for the delivery of our plan

EMPLOYEE DEAL

At Cheshire East it is not just about what we do but how we do it. Our Employee Deal outlines what can be expected when working at Cheshire East Council

It clearly states our commitment as a Council and your commitment as an employee

This is how we do things and our workforce strategy supports us in upholding our commitments within the Employee Deal



MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

Our workforce strategy details ways in which we measure our success through performance data and collating information from our staff through opinion surveys and pulse tests to check the temperature



OUR WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHIC

Included within our workforce strategy is data about the number and types of employee we have working at Cheshire East.



Our Key Challenges for Workforce Planning

We aim to be an employer of choice, attracting the best of both local and national talent, to help us provide the very best services for local people.

Key workforce priorities are:

- **Keeping our customers and communities at the heart of what we do** – our workforce will need to continue to be customer focused on providing the very best service to our communities.
- **Outcome focused and high performing** – we will be more focused on outcomes and less on processes but continuously reviewing and improving our performance to be the best that we can be.
- **Well led and managed** – those with responsibility for directing and supporting the work of others will need to deploy a wider range of skills underpinned by our employee deal, living our values and demonstrating our behaviours to ensure fairness, equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that the workforce can address the challenges that the Council faces.
- **Engaged, motivated and resilient** – we will need to ensure that our workforce are fully engaged and motivated to contribute their ideas and views about the best way to deliver the Council's objectives. We will need them to be more resilient to deal with lots of change and fewer resources but remain focused on delivery
- **Professionally skilled and competent** but working across boundaries – we will continue to need highly skilled and competent professionals who operate safe practice and risk awareness but we will need them to work more effectively across internal and external boundaries as the structure and form of public service changes.
- **Flexible, adaptable and innovative** – our workforce will need to be flexible and adaptable to deal with a rapidly changing environment as well as finding innovative ways to organise and deliver services for our communities.
- **Working in a safe, healthy and supportive environment** – which enables the workforce to contribute effectively, reach their potential and maximise attendance.

Headcount analysis and trend

Despite increasing demands on the services we deliver, headcount has reduced over time. We have an ageing workforce with only 10% of our workforce being under the age of 30.

This creates challenges for the Council to find innovative solutions to transform our services to enable our workforce to work smarter. There is a need to create talent pipelines to ensure that we continue to meet customer needs and requirements whilst delivering exemplary service.

This is reflected in the deliverables within our Workforce Strategy Action Plan.

How will our Challenges be addressed?

We will address our challenges through delivery of our Workforce Strategy Action Plan and engage with our workforce by upholding our commitments as outlined in our employee deal and delivering our Well-being in Work Strategy and actions.

Workforce Strategy Action Plan

Our responsibilities to work collectively across service areas, with partners and to empower communities in their own success have never been greater and our approach must equip our staff in their capability, capacity and confidence to deliver positive outcomes.

The Workforce Strategy Action Plan Objectives and Outcomes

Our vision firmly places our workforce at the centre, acknowledging our staff as our greatest asset and recognising the employee experience as essential to our success. The purpose of the Workforce Strategy Action Plan is to support the delivery of the Council's objectives and transformation plans. This is a two-year plan in recognition of the work and time required to meaningfully embed such a comprehensive cultural change. The priorities outlined and required outcomes are aligned with the employee lifecycle;

Our Employee Lifecycle



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Attraction:	CEC is a desirable place to work with a good employment deal and a positive culture
Recruitment:	Identify the most talented staff who share our values and behaviours.
Onboarding:	Good quality induction, the right skills and the right behaviours
Development:	Equipping people with the right skills
Retention:	Progression, effective performance development, reward, recognition and well-being.
Leaving:	Effective processes, transfer of skills and knowledge, exit feedback

Embedding the work completed as part of the Brighter Future Together (Culture) programme is incorporated into our Workforce Strategy Action Plan.

Brighter Future Together (Culture) Programme Outcomes

People say they are proud to work for Cheshire East Council

1. Our people feel valued, trusted and supported and understand the vision of the organisation and the part they play in achieving it
2. All staff and members are even more aligned and accountable, acting on objectives and results and consistently role model the desired behaviours and delivers the vision for the organisational culture
3. All employees feel they can provide feedback, influence and feel they have their voice heard within Cheshire East Council
4. Our people are led by those who have the capabilities to build capacity and confidence to deliver high performing culture in a fair and consistent manner.
5. Cheshire East Council becomes an employer of choice
6. Members and officers have a shared belief attitude and value and create a supportive and safe environment in which all can excel

By 2020, the delivery of actions relating to these priorities will result in embedded behaviours, a positive culture based on shared values, a fair deal for employees at all levels including clarity of expectations and opportunities to develop and progress and therefore delivery of high quality services for our communities.

To achieve this, three broad objective areas form the basis of the Workforce Strategy Action Plan, which underpins the Brighter Future Together (Culture) Programme and contributes directly through a programme of culture change;

- **Our culture – establishing and enabling our workplace vision**
- **Our organisational development and delivery**
- **Our employee experience**

The Workforce Strategy Action Plan document outlines the priorities within each objective and the measures against which progress and outcomes will be monitored. Achieving the actions set out in the Workforce Strategy Action Plan will support the delivery of our Workforce Strategy.

Learning & Development

To help implement our vision, it is important that we make effective use of our most important resource, our people. There are a number of key priorities in place to ensure that all those working at Cheshire East Council have the right skills and are also supported to identify and develop new skills.

PDR & Talent Management Process

To provide an automated appraisal system that is aligned to the Vision for workplace culture, values and behaviours with the capability to capture training data. Complimented by a detailed toolkit, talent management process and appropriate training interventions.

Training and Development Programme

To offer corporate and service specific training programmes that allow staff to acquire new skills as well as enhance their existing skills. Training and development is offered through a wide variety of delivery methods.

Leadership and Management Development Programme

As part of the Council's vision, the importance of ensuring managers across the Council have the right skills and behaviours to motivate, manage and support their teams is recognised. In order to support this, a revised management development programme for all managers is in place. This programme will also support managers to uphold our commitments as outlined in the Employee Deal.

Career Progression Pathways

To continue to map out and demonstrate clear career progression opportunities for all service areas across the council.

Apprenticeships

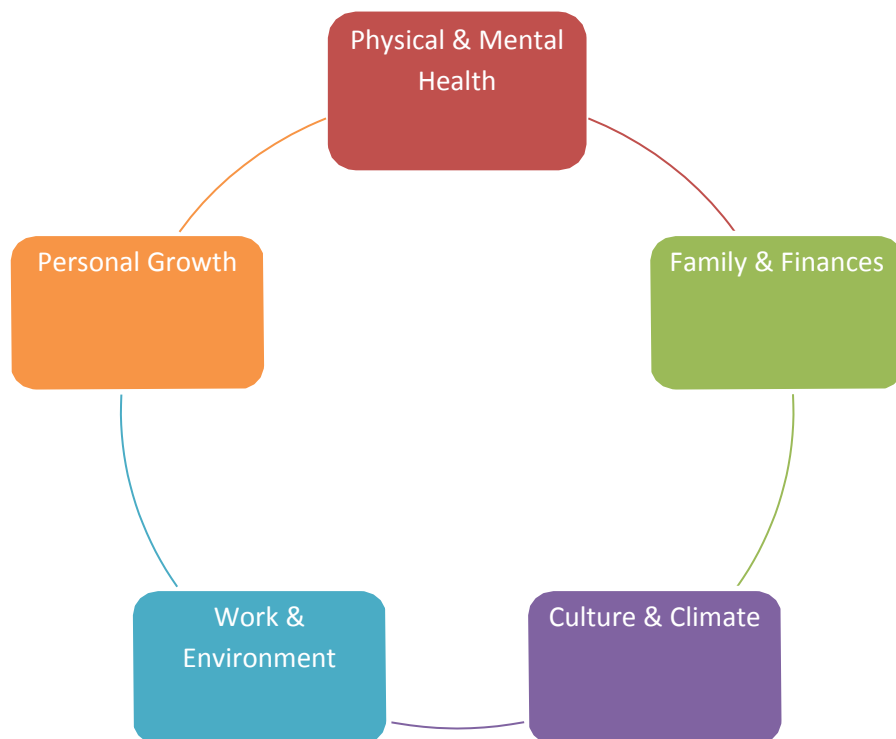
To build on the opportunities presented by the apprenticeship levy to develop and strengthen capacity amongst our workforce, offering career progression pathways and succession planning.

Well-being in Work

The Wellbeing in work strategy and action plan sits alongside the Workforce Strategy and supports the Council in upholding our commitments relating to well-being outlined in the employee deal.

Drawing from best practice the Council's Wellbeing in Work framework takes a holistic approach and focuses on five interconnected areas as outlined below:

Well-being in Work framework:



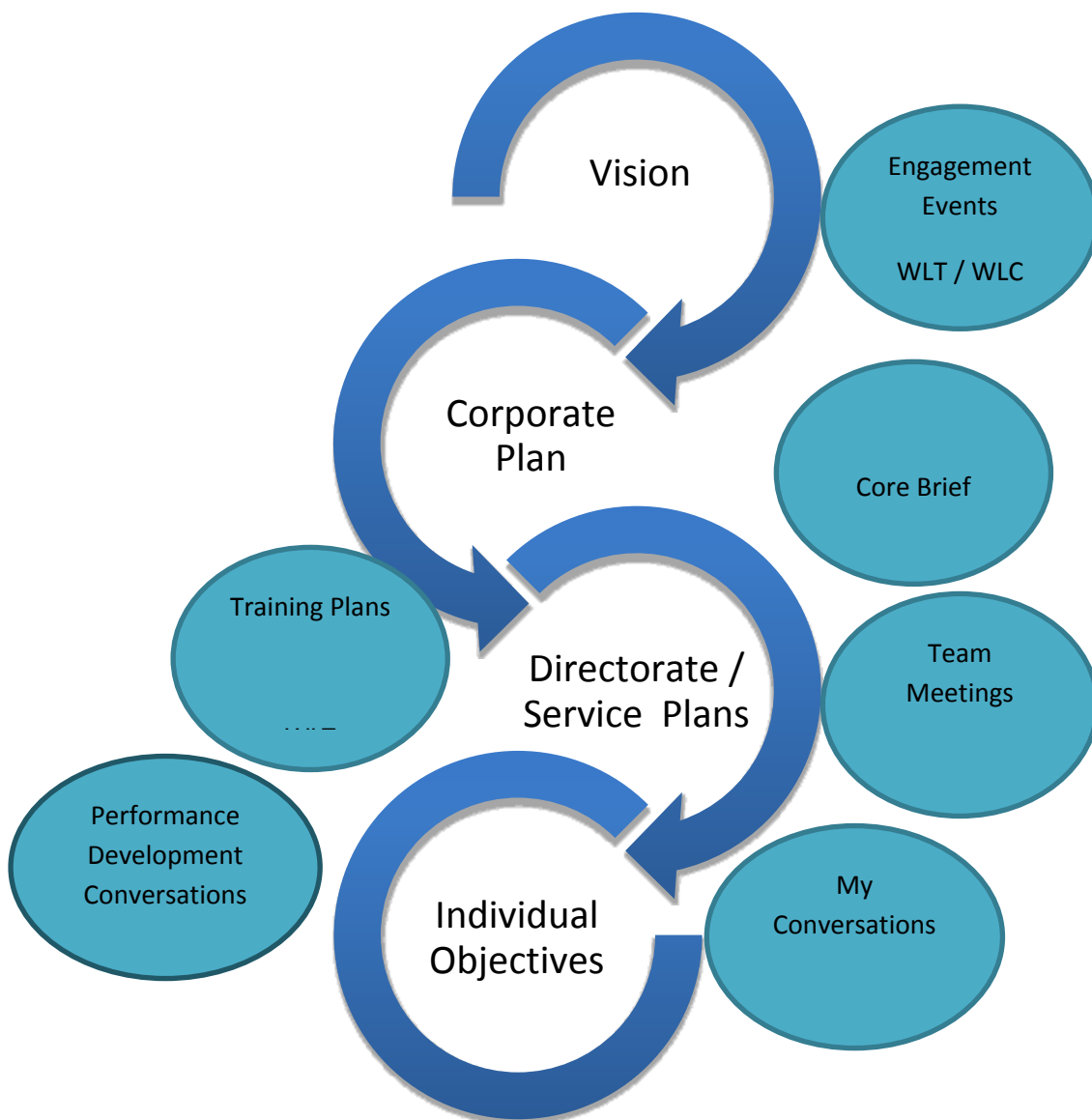
The Well-being in Work programme will support our workforce strategy by

- Building individual, team and organisational resilience
- Helping to prevent and reduce levels of absence
- Helping to improve productivity and performance
- Helping to improve levels of employee engagement and alignment
- Supporting the ongoing development of a positive organisational culture as outlined in the Council's Vision for Workplace Culture and the Council's Employee Deal.
- Supporting the meeting of outcome 6 of the Corporate Plan – a responsible, effective and efficient organisation

How are we taking our staff on this journey?

We engage our workforce by cascading our vision for the Council and our 6 outcomes outlined in our Corporate Plan through to our Directorate and Team Plans and individual objectives.

To support this there are a number of engagement and communication events and opportunities for our workforce to participate in in order to keep informed, and gain a clear understanding of our shared purpose and to ensure that the Council upholds its commitments as outlined within the Employee Deal.



Engagement with our Brighter Future Community

We work collaboratively with our Brighter Future Community, which is made up of 150 staff from across the Council. The role of the Brighter Future Community is to communicate with the workforce at a local level and seek and share feedback with the Council. The Brighter Future Community meet on a monthly basis and have been a key stakeholder in the Brighter Future Together (Culture) programme and this will continue as we embed our vision for workplace culture, values, behaviours and employee deal.

Engagement with this key stakeholder group supports our workforce strategy by helping us to understand the views and concerns of our workforce and more importantly how they can shape and contribute to us achieving our outcomes.

Engagement with Trade Unions

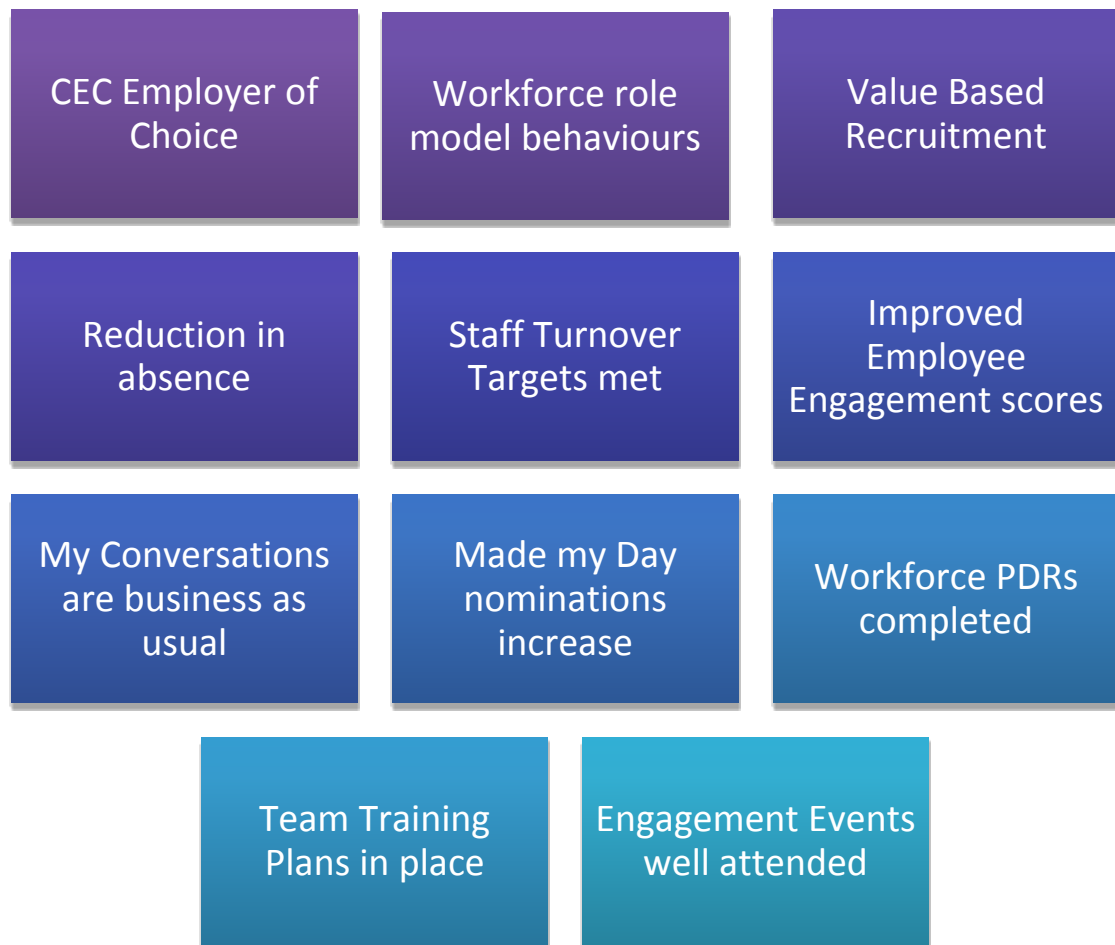
We work collaboratively with our trade unions through a number of regular and established frameworks. We engage with them on a regular basis through:

- Joint Trade Union/Management Meetings. These meeting established in all three directorates;
- Health and Safety Joint Trade Union meetings;
- Consultation meetings in relation to organisational changes within the directorates;
- Policy review meetings;
- Ad hoc consultation processes as and when required.

They are invited as members of the Brighter Futures Together Culture Programme Steering Group.

We encourage the sharing of ideas, views, knowledge and experience to inform our continued development as an organisation. We recognise the value of listening to and considering their positive contributions to the organisation and the delivery of our services. We ensure that they have timely and early involvement so they can contribute to the development and implementation of the Council's initiatives and programmes.

Key Measures of Our Success



The measures will be tracked through the HR Service score card and regular employee engagement and pulse surveys.

Profile of our workforce

Age Distribution	
Under 20	23
20-29	285
30-39	639
40-49	970
50-59	1205
60 and over	460

Gender	Total
Female	2682
Male	852
Grand Total	3534

Ethnic Origin	Total
1.1 Eng, Scot, Welsh, NI	3055
1.2 Irish (Republic of)	14
1.3 White - Other	46
2.1 W & B Caribbean	7
2.2 W & B African	9
2.3 White & Asian	8
2.4 Mixed - Other	4
3.1 Indian	7
3.2 Pakistani	4
3.3 Bangladeshi	1
3.4 Asian - Other	7
4.1 Caribbean	7
4.2 African	6
4.3 Black - Other	10
5.1 Chinese	2
5.2 Other	14
5.3 Arab	1
NULL	297
Undisclosed	35
Grand Total	3534

Sexual Orientation	Total
Bisexual	3
Gay	14
Heterosexual	1213
Invalid Form	6
Lesbian	9
NULL	2106
Prefer not to say	183
Grand Total	3534

Religion	Total
Buddhist	4
Christian	924
Hindu	1
Jewish	1
Muslim	6
None	310
NULL	2090
Other	16
Sikh	1
Undisclosed	181
Grand Total	3534

Figures are as at 30th September 2018 based upon information held within Oracle on 10th October 2018.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We work in a changing world which offers great opportunities for people with diverse backgrounds and experiences. We seek to attract and employ the best people from the widest talent pool, as well as those who reflect the diverse nature of our society. And we aim to encourage a culture where people can be themselves and be valued for their strengths. Creating value through diversity is what makes us strong as a business and as an

organisation with an increasingly agile workforce and are open to flexible working arrangements where appropriate.

Appendices

Vision for Workplace Culture

Behaviours for Everyone

Behaviours for People Managers

Behaviours for Members

Our Employee Deal



Cheshire East Council, working for a brighter future together -
shared purpose, well led, valued people... succeeding together

WE HAVE A SHARED PURPOSE

- We hold our customers and communities at the heart of what we do, keeping them informed and engaged
- We have a clear understanding of the council's priorities and how we all contribute to achieving them
- We're committed to building a positive workplace culture and living our FIRST values

WE ARE SUPPORTED AND WELL LED

- We feel confident and are supported in challenging all unacceptable behaviour
 - We are well led by people with the right skills and behaviours to motivate, manage and support their teams
- We are supported, developed and trusted to do our jobs, to try new ways of working and to learn from both our successes and mistakes
 - Ultimately, we feel free to speak and safe to act

WE ARE TREATED FAIRLY AND HIGHLY VALUED

- Our work and behaviours are recognised, valued and rewarded and we celebrate success
 - We respect and value each others' differences and well being
- We apply policies and processes equally and fairly, to enable the right outcomes to be achieved quickly and responsibly
 - Our concerns are listened to and where action is required - we act on it

WE SUCCEED TOGETHER

- We look forward to giving and receiving constructive feedback as a way of continually growing together
 - We clearly understand our roles and responsibilities and know and build on each others' strengths
- Working together across the organisation and beyond, we are positive partners, collaborating and co-producing to achieve our goals
 - We enjoy coming to work - working together to do a great job

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VALUES & BEHAVIOURS

FOR EVERYONE

I WILL

I WON'T

FLEXIBILITY

- Actively participate in and contribute to change
- Seek to understand and speak positively about changes
- Continue to learn and improve for the benefit of myself, my team and my customer
- Be flexible at work and willing to try new things
- Listen to others' opinions without judging

- Say 'that won't work, we've tried that before' and then do what I've always done
- Say 'it's not my job' or just moan
- Give up when things don't go as I planned

INNOVATION

- Regularly and positively challenge myself and others about the way we do things
- Ask curious questions
- Work collaboratively to solve problems
- Constantly look for new ways of working
- Take a risk and make a suggestion

- Ignore something or say nothing when something seems wrong
- Dismiss or be negative or overly critical of new ideas
- Just deliver something because that is what we have always done

RESPONSIBILITY

- Be honest and realistic about what is achievable and seek to exceed wherever I can
- Keep my word and do what I say I am going to do
- Be responsible for my own behaviours and actions
- Always strive to be the best I can, asking for help if I need it
- Own up when things go wrong

- Make promises I can't keep or just not deliver on them
- Fob people off
- Blame others - pass the buck

SERVICE

- Deliver the very best service I can to my customers, my colleagues and our partners, constantly, responsibly and reliably
- Actively listen to people and take their opinions into account before I respond appropriately
- Seek and value feedback and act on it
- Constantly look for ways to help and support others
- Put myself in other people's shoes

- Assume I know what people want and act on my assumptions
- Ignore the concerns and needs of others
- Keep information, advice and ideas to myself

TEAMWORK

- Take time for people, be mindful of them and my impact on others
- Value individuals' strengths and differences and treat others as equals
- Actively encourage and support people to get involved and collaborate, both in my team and across others
- Be open, honest, friendly and respect others
- Thank and praise people for a good job done

- Ignore or put down any member of my team or others, especially if they are struggling
- Turn a blind eye to poor behaviours or unacceptable language
- Take credit for other people's work

VALUES & BEHAVIOURS

FOR PEOPLE MANAGERS

I WILL

FLEXIBILITY

- Give people the space and time to grow, develop and seek promotion
- Keep my people informed and updated, especially in times of change
- Seek and learn from feedback about my management style

INNOVATION

- Take time to clarify an issue or opportunity and then drive creative changes and solutions
- Seek and listen to bottom up ideas
- Check that ideas are realistic and achievable
- Encourage people to experiment and try new ways of doing things

RESPONSIBILITY

- Make timely decisions and be accountable for them
- Lead by example and role model positive behaviours
- Make sure that decisions are made by people closest to the customer or problem
- Always be timely in giving constructive feedback and coaching

SERVICE

- Encourage my staff to share their concerns
- Seek feedback from my people, and customers and act upon it
- Be clear in my directions, communicate the priorities and explain the reasons why
- Identify, coach and build on people's strengths

TEAMWORK

- Make time for my team and individuals
- Ensure that all my team are heard and respected
- Treat my team and individuals fairly
- Be my team's champion
- Act in the best interests of the whole council - adopting a "one team" approach

I WON'T

- Exclude staff from meetings or decisions that impact on them
- let the skills and knowledge of myself and my team slip
- neglect the wellbeing and work life balance of myself or of my team

- Treat any idea as a silly idea
- Accept my team "staying the same" because they've always done it that way
- Hide mistakes under the carpet

- Shirk my responsibilities as a leader, manager or supervisor
- Allow my staff to side step responsibility
- Ask people to do things I know they are not capable of

- Ignore the voices of those who are quieter or more challenging
- Ignore a request for my help
- Allow unrealistic expectations or priorities to go unchallenged or unmanaged.

- Allow bullying or negative behaviour in my team
- Micro manage people
- Just work independently as the manager of the team rather than as part of the team

VALUES & BEHAVIOURS

FOR MEMBERS

EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR

I WILL

FLEXIBILITY: adaptable, open to learning and resilient

- actively participate in and contribute to change
- listen and engage with others' opinions
- be open to new opportunities and personal development

INNOVATION: creative, challenges convention and always looks to improve

- regularly and positively challenge myself and others about the way we do things
- ask searching questions in a polite and respectful manner
- work collaboratively to solve problems
- encourage new conversations about what might be possible

RESPONSIBILITY: delivers on promises, efficient and has integrity

- be responsible for my own behaviours and actions
- keep my word and do what I say I am going to do
- always strive to be the best I can, asking for help if I need it

SERVICE: listens, quality and reliability enables others

- treat others as I would expect to be treated
- actively listen to people and respond appropriately
- seek and value feedback and act on it positively
- deliver the very best service I can to my constituents, my colleagues and our officers
- be publically positive about services that are delivering high quality service

TEAMWORK: respect and inclusivity, contributes to team, leadership at all levels

- take time for people, be mindful of my impact on others
- value individuals' strengths and differences and treat others as equals
- actively encourage and support people to get involved and collaborate, both in my party and across all boundaries
- be open, honest, courteous and respect others
- thank and praise people for a job well done

PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR

I WON'T

- have a closed mind
- ignore my own emotions and well-being
- give up when things don't go as planned

- ignore wrongdoing
- dismiss or be negative of new ideas

- make promises I can't keep
- blame others or pass the buck
- expect officers to reply to emails outside of working hours

- assume I know what people want and act on my assumptions
- ignore the concerns and needs of others
- keep information and ideas to myself
- be critical of officers in the press or social media
- forget that officers have no right of reply

- ignore or be personal about others when putting forward an opinion
- turn a blind eye to poor behaviours or unacceptable language
- micro manage officers
- try to ambush officers with unexpected questions in meetings



Our COMMITMENT

Shared purpose

- Provide a safe and positive working environment
- Setting clear performance objectives with realistic timescales for delivery
- Having fair and efficient policies and procedures in place and applying them consistently
- Listen, respond and act appropriately when you tell us about something that is inappropriate or wrong

Well led

- Provide honest, respectful and responsible leadership
- Be fair, consistent and timely in our decision making
- Work with you, enabling you to do your best work every day with the right resources, tools and technology

Valued people

- Have regular, useful team meetings, keep you informed and provide an opportunity for everyone to share their views
- Treat you as individuals, be respectful, flexible and supportive
- Care for your health and well-being
- Provide you with regular, meaningful and constructive feedback on your performance through one-to-ones and performance review meetings

Succeeding together

- Offer you opportunities for learning and developing
- Recognise and value your hard work and contribution
- Work together as one team and one council to deliver the best service for our customers and communities

Your COMMITMENT

Shared purpose

- Bring a positive and can do attitude into work
- Be proactive and always responsive to our customers and communities
- Work responsibly and ask for help if you need it
- Tell us if you see or experience anything that is inappropriate or wrong

Well led

- Be honest and reliable
- Get involved, keep informed, make suggestions and share your ideas
- Embrace technology and new ways of working

Valued people

- Participate fully and make helpful contributions to team meetings
- Be respectful of others and work flexibly and collaboratively with colleagues and partners
- Care for your health and well-being enabling you to maximise your attendance at work
- Value helpful constructive feedback and act upon it

Succeeding together

- Take the opportunity to learn and develop
- Be supportive and appreciate others
- Work together as one team and one council to deliver the best service for our customers and communities