

Workforce Strategy

Report by Gary Fairley Head of Finance and Integrated Service Support

1 Purpose of Report

This report presents the first Council wide Workforce Strategy, the purpose of which is to ensure that Midlothian Council continues to have a workforce that is able to deliver positive outcomes for the people of Midlothian. It sets out an approach to supporting, developing and reshaping the workforce now and in the future in response to changes whether as a consequence of national or local issues. It is underpinned by the Council's values and vision.

2 Background

Midlothian Council along with all other Councils in Scotland is required to complete a workforce strategy. Both Audit Scotland and the Council's external auditors will expect to see a workforce strategy that sets out plans for the workforce over the medium term. The Audit Scotland Report 'Local Government in Scotland: Performance and Challenges 2017' reiterates that with reducing budgets and workforce, Councils will find delivering improvements increasingly difficult. It is critical, therefore, that Councils have in place workforce strategies and plans that target effort on priority areas.

Midlothian is the fastest growing council area in Scotland; the Council will lead this change with our partners and communities. The proposed Council wide Workforce Strategy will help ensure the Council has the right people at the right time and who have the right skills, knowledge and attitude to provide services confidently and competently within this context.

The Workforce Strategy is important as it outlines the organisation's approach to articulating how workforce issues will be managed to ensure the Council has the people and skills to manage change and deliver service. In addition to the workforce strategy itself a workforce plan is being prepared, which will set out the programme of work required to deliver the objectives set out in the workforce strategy. There are also eight service specific workforce plans, which will set out the service specific workforce actions. These service plans have been developed alongside the budget proposals and together they form cohesive plans for the management of workforce issues across the Council.

3 Workforce Strategy

The proposed Workforce Strategy is set out in appendix 1 and includes the elements identified below:

- a) Foreword, vision and purpose of the workforce strategy
- b) Strategic overview of transformation themes
- c) Midlothian labour market context
- d) Workforce themes:
 - Employee Terms and Conditions
 - Employee performance
 - Recruitment and Retention
 - Reshaping the workforce
 - Health and Social Care integration
 - Expansion of early learning and childcare
 - Building leadership capacity
 - Digital leadership
 - Delivering excellence and talent management
 - Employee relations
 - Midlothian as an equal opportunities employer
 - Managing an ageing workforce
 - Volunteering
- e) Workforce overview and profile of the current workforce

4 Other Issues identified for consideration

At the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) meeting on 31 October 2017 it was requested by the Trade Union Side that there be Elected Member support and representation on the Lifelong Learning Committee. This requested was welcomed and supported by The Chief Executive. . Arising from the JCG discussion it was agreed to recommend to today's Council meeting that there be elected member representation on the Lifelong Learning Committee and that if supported that Council also appoint a representative.

5 Report Implications

5.1 Resource

There will be financial issues which will arise as the workforce is reshaped and the detailed interventions progressed.

5.2 Risk

There are risks associated with the partial / non delivery of the actions contained within the workforce strategy. If the actions are not realised then this will have an impact on the workforce of the future and the Council's commitment to achieve the right outcomes with our communities.

There are risks of not managing the workforce and the consequence could include, over or under capacity in service areas, people policies

not being implemented, and lack of employees engagement resulting in reduced capacity to deliver on commitments to our communities.

Effective measures to reshape and reduce the workforce are increasingly critical in supporting the Council to manage services within the resources available.

5.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☒ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

5.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The workforce Strategy supports employees to be in a position to perform to the standards that are required and to meet the performance outcomes identified in the Midlothian Local Plan and Service Plans. It supports a change in the workforce to ensure future service delivery.

5.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The workforce strategy will help ensure the Council can continue to have a workforce that supports a preventative approach when working with our communities.

5.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The recognised Trade Unions were consulted on the content of the workforce strategy recognising that working in partnership with Trade Unions is an important part of the development and engagement of the workforce.

5.7 Ensuring Equalities

Assessing and responding to equality issues will be a key aspect and taken into consideration when implementing all aspects of the workforce strategy themes. An initial Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been prepared in support of strategy and a comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment will be central to the continued development and delivery of the workforce plans.

5.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

No consideration of this is required.

5.9 IT Issues

No consideration of this is required.

6 Recommendations

The Council is recommended to:-

- a) Approve the corporate workforce strategy
- b) Note that the workforce strategy will be supported by a detailed workforce plan and eight service specific workforce plans:
- c) Agree that there be elected member representation on the Lifelong Learning Committee and that if supported that Council also appoint a representative. .
- d) Note the commitment to continuing to consult with the recognised Trade Unions on the further development and implementation of the workforce strategy and plan.

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Background Papers: