

## **People Strategy 2015-17**

### **Report by Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive**

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

This report seeks Council's approval for the People Strategy 2015-2017.

#### **2 Background**

- 2.1** Our current People Strategy was launched in 2011 to support our aim of developing a supported, engaged and highly performing workforce. The five key strategic themes of the strategy were: Culture, Recognition, Working Lives, Management, Performance and Development. This work helped to build the foundation on which we delivered on our transformation programme and the Council's priorities.
- 2.2** Over the period covered by the first People Strategy we have delivered significant changes including the introduction of Making Performance Matter, the development of the People Values, the Leadership Pathway development programme, our employee magazine Inside Midlothian, the achievement of the Healthy Working Lives gold award and the Celebrate Midlothian awards.
- 2.3** There is a different context now than in 2011. There is a greater need to ensure that our workforce will continue to perform in an environment with a greater focus on partnership working, for example the integration of Health and Social Care, and in the context of a no compulsory redundancy policy along with a range of other internal and external factors.

#### **3 People Strategy 2015-17**

- 3.1** The 2015-17 People Strategy is set out in appendix 1.
- 3.2** The development of People Strategy 2015-17 involved reviewing the evidence we currently have, including the Employee Survey results, intelligence gathered through the employee engagement sessions, the Leadership Pathway programme, and external assessments of the Council's performance. We also ensured that managers and employees were involved in the development, in particular through the use of focus groups to refine our key themes and priorities. Ongoing discussions have also taken place with the Trade Unions and the spirit of the People Strategy is agreed, with all being committed to supporting our employees and to achieve organisational progress and success.

**3.3** The new strategy will come into effect immediately after its approval by Council. The strategy will support the new management and organisational structures providing an opportunity for new ways of working with a strong emphasis on the employee proposition: The experience offered by us as an employer in exchange for the productivity and performance of an employee - 'The Give and the Get'

**3.4** The new strategy has a stronger emphasis on outcomes and business results and has three key strategic purposes;

**Attract, engage and retain our workforce:** including strengthening our recruitment strategy, actively planning for succession as part of workforce development and supporting our employee engagement and productivity. The right culture creates opportunities and greater empowerment of our lowest paid employees and opportunities to enhance their prospects through learning and development and career progression.

**Make sure our organisation is fit for the future:** including integration and partnership working, strengthening our Making Performance Matter outcomes and a focus on culture change through great leadership.

**Develop our talent:** includes identifying our leadership talent and strengthening succession planning opportunities. As well as developing a coaching approach across the organisation and encouraging a mentoring approach to increase leadership effectiveness.

**3.5** The success of the strategy will be measured through improved outcomes within service plans. Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that agreed actions and outcomes are effectively integrated into service plans and activities. This includes ensuring the implementation of effective employee engagement, listening to employees, motivation and development, performance management, health and safety, equality and diversity measures and workforce planning.

**3.6** Feedback suggests we need to focus more closely on workforce planning and HR measures and metrics. The Switch strand of the MiFuture project has been successful in supporting our employees who are in transition to find suitable and alternative employment as part of our overall approach to workforce planning however there remains further work to progress the other aspects of MiFuture, for example **strengthening** the Internal Jobs Market.

- Reduced reliance on agency workers and fixed term contracts through SWITCH placements
- Assessment of poor performing employees as to whether they should be moved to a new role through SWITCH

- Expanded use of apprenticeships and traineeships

- 3.7** In our quest to be an employer of choice we want to make sure there are opportunities for our organisation to develop and for our people to grow. Our culture and our style of leadership have a significant influence over this. Therefore there is a focus on developing our talent and through workforce planning, considering our succession planning opportunities.
- 3.8** An internal communications strategy to ensure we communicate regularly and consistently will support the development of our organisational culture and it will enhance and reinforce leadership messages and give opportunities to employees to engage in wider dialogue throughout the organisation. The organisations vision and brand will be strengthened by good communication, and this will lead to higher levels of engagement and productivity.
- 3.9** During the life span of People Strategy 2015-17 the landscape in local government will continue to change. This includes the integration with health, providing services in new and different ways, providing opportunities to do things differently. There is therefore an acknowledgement that the strategy needs to be responsive to changing needs and is not fixed in time at the point that it is written.

## **4 Report Implications**

### **4.1 Resource**

The original people strategy required additional funds of £300,000 over a three year period. Recognising the financial constraints the Council faces the People Strategy 2015-17 has been developed to ensure that it can be delivered within the substantive Organisational Development and HR team establishment. There is therefore no requirement for additional funding.

### **4.2 Risk**

There is a risk that if we do not continue with the work we have been doing during the first People Strategy we will not get the long-term outcomes and change we need in the organisation to deliver on our priorities. By not taking control of this agenda we would be at risk of creating a negative employee experience and therefore limit the Council's ability to be a successful and progressive organisation.

### **4.3 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

#### **4.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

Development of the organisation and our leadership through the People Strategy is key to ensuring that the organisation can deliver its outcomes.

#### **4.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

The strategy will avoid negative workforce issues.

#### **4.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

Trade Unions have been informally consulted and formal consultation is expected to be completed before Council.

#### **4.7 Ensuring Equalities**

Promoting equalities in employment has been a key part of the first People Strategy. EQIAs will be completed for actions and projects in the new action plan as required.

#### **4.8 Supporting Sustainable Development**

No sustainability issues have been identified.

#### **4.9 IT Issues**

No IT issues have been identified.

### **5 Recommendations**

It is recommended that Council:

- a. Note the strategic aims of the People Strategy 2015-17 as set out in section 3.4;
- b. Approve the people Strategy 2015-17

**16 March 2015**

#### **Report Contact:**

Marina Naylor                      Tel No 0131 271 3988  
[Marina.Naylor@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Marina.Naylor@midlothian.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:** people strategy 2015-17