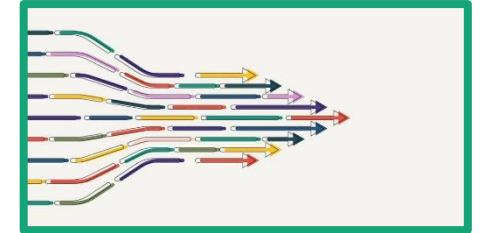


Our People Strategy

2024 – 27



‘A workforce of Flourishing People’

Establishing the culture, capabilities, and initiatives to enable our people and organisation to flourish

A vision for 2024 and beyond

Welcome Message

Introduction from Cllr Mrs Sally Tarry, Executive Board Member for Corporate and Community Services

The Our People Strategy is a key business tool within the organisation, along with the NK Plan and Financial Strategy. The Our People Strategy considers how to manage human capital to realise people's potential to create value for the organisation. It outlines initiatives to optimise stages of the colleague lifecycle and inspire colleagues to reach their full potential. It considers the future needs of the Council and plans to reduce workforce risks.

The revised strategy has received full engagement from colleagues within the Council and the people vision is now aligned to the overall council vision with a new theme using wildflowers to acknowledge the differences and growth potential of individuals.

Introduction from Ian Fytche, Chief Executive

The Councils Our People Strategy is a core part of the Councils corporate planning framework. Our colleagues are the Council's key asset and everyone has a vital role to play in delivering services to customers, developing policy, providing administration, managing our assets, supporting councillors or ensuring a strong financial position for the authority.

The latest version of the Strategy is based on an extensive and careful consultative approach which listened to groups of colleagues based on their generation. We know that attitudes to work are changing and it's important to us that we remain an employer of choice, seeking to offer flexible employment terms with a commitment to help colleagues develop their careers to become leaders of tomorrow.

We are proud of our track record and especially pleased to be awarded an Investors in People Gold rewards which recognises the supportive and nurturing environment provided at North Kesteven. At the same time we recognise that the world is changing and the shape of local government is likely to adapt over time to meet emerging challenges. This Our People Strategy focuses on the skills the Council will need in the future and the importance of adaptability to meet the fast-paced changes we are likely to see.

We will keep listening to colleagues as we roll out the actions set out in the document and look forward to the next Investors In People Assessment scheduled for later in the year.

Strategic Context

The NK plan sets out 5 clear priorities and key ambitions, with a number of sub-ambitions. The ambitions are focused on the priorities of Our Environment, Our Homes, Our Communities, Our Council and Our Economy. The Finance picture remains broadly positive, balanced for the duration of this strategy and creating the capacity to invest £255million in capital, across priorities, over the next decade to 2033. The 2021 Corporate Peer Challenge singled out our 'positive financial management and planning' and 'mature and well-considered' approach to risk, saying that it struck the right balance.

To enable the delivery of the NK plan and supporting Financial Plan, the Council requires a skilled, professional, and diverse workforce to drive the ambitions forward, highlighting opportunities, service improvements and methods for enhancing the service offer more generally. Whilst the financial position is strong, a programme of financial sustainability has been developed to ensure the longevity of the strong position and to safeguard against future reductions in central government funding.

The strategic context provides a strong foundation on which to enhance our people agenda, ensuring the long-term success of the Council and our people within it. The Council's vision is 'A district of Flourishing Communities' and therefore to align purposefully to the organisation, the vision for this strategy is a 'A workforce of Flourishing People'.

The Climate Strategy, Information Systems (IS) Strategy and Customer Access Strategy are other key documents where alignment to the wider Our People Strategy and supporting programme are significant. Colleagues within Human Resources will ensure regular communication with these strategy owners to drive positive change in a joined-up approach.

The organisational values of Professionalism, People Focussed, High Performing, Honesty and Teamwork are the key to drive behavioural change and are built into all performance management processes within the Council. These values will be considered at every stage of strategy implementation.

Introduction

This Our People Strategy has been developed through rigorous engagement across the organisation, from SMT workshops to colleague generational workshops. This Our People Strategy has been designed to evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of the organisation and the colleagues within it. The Human Resources team will drive the development of the Our People Programme, working closely with colleagues

across the organisation. This strategy has been designed to be inclusive of all colleagues and we hope that this iteration of the Our People Strategy will build on previous Our People Strategy successes.

To ensure this strategy is delivering what is needed for the organisation, we will regularly measure progress against the aims. Measurement could take many forms including colleague pulse surveys, workforce planning data, people related KPI's, management KPI's and polls. Due to the changing nature of the employment market and local government funding landscape, it may be necessary to make changes to the strategy prior to future formal review dates.

Governance

The Our People strategy and supporting programme actions will be reported to CMT quarterly and will go through the Resources Scrutiny Panel. In addition, the Our People Programme has successfully received Gateway 1 approval through the corporate Project and Programme Management process therefore it is anticipated that the wider programme will be subject to senior officer scrutiny via the Resources Project Board.

Our People Strategy Workstreams



Colleague Perspectives/ Engagement

During the planning stage of this strategy, focus groups were delivered across the Council. Research suggests that there are generational differences in what people want and need from their employer. With that in mind, North Kesteven District Council took the opportunity to hold generation specific focus groups to see whether there were any themes running across generations and how we can appeal to those in Generation Z who are currently joining the workforce.

One word that was common across all focus groups was 'flexibility', with many suggesting that flexibility was the single greatest benefit to them as colleagues of North Kesteven District Council. The qualitative data demonstrated that the expectation for flexibility is increasing, with colleagues in Gen Y and Gen Z expecting the most flexibility with how and when they work.



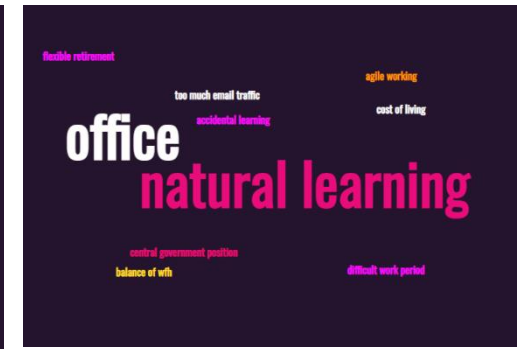
Generation Z



Generation Y



Generation X



Baby Boomers

Our People Strategy Workstreams

Talent Attraction and Retention

Current Position

North Kesteven District Council have made changes to talent attraction and advertising by working closely with local schools and higher education establishments, creating networks, and attending careers and jobs fairs. The organisation has also made steps to increase the flexibility offer at advertising stage to align with other key public sector bodies such as the NHS, with the ultimate aim of increasing applicant numbers.

Since late 2020, we have seen an increase in live vacancies and a decrease in applicants with the right skills and experiences for the roles we offer. There are particular positions across the Council where filling roles has been markedly difficult. These changes in the employment market have increased the number of career graded positions which currently sit at 15.

Future Actions

- Utilise online and social platforms to showcase our district and why it's a brilliant place to live and work, attracting people from other areas of the country.
- Keep recruitment approaches under review and continue to trial the use of alternative recruitment platforms, observing trends in applicant conversion.
- Utilise internal technology to conduct AB testing to understand the most effective methods of advertising.
- Continue to consider the flexible working offer, enabling the organisation to recruit from further afield – affording increased opportunity for flexible working.
- Conduct recruitment activities more sensitively, actively considering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion impacts at each stage of the recruitment process.
- Continue to be flexible to the changing employment market and resourcing trends.

Culture, Leadership, Values and Behaviours

Current Position

Like many organisations, there have been observable shifts in culture since the implementation of agile working. We recognise that colleagues have welcomed the flexibility that has derived from the agile/hybrid working movement, however, we acknowledge that more can be done to increase contact time across the organisation which will contribute to the reduction in silo working.

Our values are well embedded in the organisation and are included in all key performance management processes from annual EDI to our electronic 1:2:1 form. They feature regularly through leadership forums and away days and are used to drive behaviour through our values framework.

Future Actions

- Develop contact time for all to come together and collaborate, considering flexible workspaces.
- Continue to engender a culture of professionalism, teamwork, honesty, people focus and high performance.
- Develop cohesive organisational structures that support timely decision making.
- Develop a clear internal communications plan to maximise information sharing.
- To enhance LeadingNK, CMT Live, The Huddle and the Muddle and other key communications channels, ensuring they are fit for purpose.
- Work with the IT function to increase the provision of hybrid working tools to enable effective meetings.

Learning and Talent Development (aligned to policy)

Current Position

The organisation has benefited from Divisional Training Plans that have been developed based on EDI data and agreed with Assistant Directors. Post covid we have invested significantly in a variety of wellbeing-related training sessions such as Managing Emotions when Dealing with Customers, Motivation and Change webinars and Mental Health First Aid training.

We have also seen an increase in career graded positions with a formal learning element attached. In the last 18 months we have designed and implemented two talent programmes – AspireNK (A pathway for aspiring senior leaders) and SpringboardNK (aimed at professionals who are keen to enhance their personal skills). These programmes align to Workforce Sustainability workstream.

There has also been a significant investment in people management development including Managing Our People and HR Toolbox Talks.

Future Actions

- Offer opportunities for natural and accidental learning by bringing people together more often.
- Continue to upskill managers by widening toolbox talks to a wider variety of subjects e.g. finance/budget management, LEAN techniques and health and safety.
- Invest in talent programmes to support continued growth and development, contributing to career mobility within NKDC.
- Continue to review mandatory e-learning to ensure it is appropriate and proportionate to the role.
- Measuring the impact and return on investment on all learning activities.

Health, Wellbeing and Support

Current Position

The colleague wellbeing programme has been extremely well received by the organisation with a variety of clubs, activities and exercise classes on offer. Wellbeing time has been changed to reflect the seasonal changes. Mental Health First Aiders have recently been re-qualified and undertaken further training to support this important role.

Future Actions

- Bringing colleagues together more regularly – away days, CMT Live (face to face), Breakfast/ walking club
- Expanding the advertising the health checks to ensure colleagues are getting the right support.
- Create a level playing field for wellbeing time – ensuring all departments are able to access 1 hour a week to support their physical or mental health.
- Recognition of disability and neurodiversity providing opportunities for colleagues to learn more about themselves, utilising Thomas International assessments to increase self-awareness and work with TOHealth Health for reasonable adjustments.
- Offer opportunities for volunteering, particularly in relation to supporting local community groups e.g. Befriending / Digital Hubs
- Implement and embed the carer's passport initiative.

Workforce Sustainability

Current Position

At the beginning of 2022, the workforce planning tool was created and implemented, along with the supporting workforce planning dashboards. The dashboard data has been developed for each division covering a range of data including age profile, tenure and vacancies. The data is discussed quarterly with Assistant Directors and a divisional actions have been developed based on these discussions.

The organisation has made financial sustainability a focus and this workstream will align directly with that programme of work.

Future Aims

- Utilise data to build workforce planning dashboards, looking at workforce gaps, critical posts, and age profiles.
- Develop a skills profile to assist with skills mobility across the organisation.
- Expand our early career offer to include graduates, degree apprenticeships as well as the entry level apprenticeships. Consideration should be given to a roll-on/roll-off programme to allow for greater flexibility and to respond to the changing needs of the organisation and employment market.
- Expand TalentNK conversations to be more inclusive and include planning for the future e.g., retirement/ flexible working/retirement.
- Develop a clear plan for the future, understanding resources and skills/ knowledge gaps over a 5, 10 and 15-year period.
- Take steps to reduce the need for agency and/or consultancy work.
- Continue to contingency and succession plan accordingly.

Reward and Recognition & Benefits

Current Position

The last iteration of the Our People Strategy included a focus on Reward and Recognition. In 2021 the new Reward, Recognition and Core Benefits Policy was approved and changes to long service awards, as well as collective recognition were implemented. We have implemented a new Vivup Benefits system, made changes to the Healthcare offer for new starters.

Future Aims

- Encouraging meaningful thank you messages.
- Celebrating everyone's contribution to the organisation, recognising the diversity of skills, experience, and knowledge.
- Continue to develop collective recognition activities.
- Implement changes to the benefits offer such as the recently approved car leasing schemes.

Review and Monitoring

Progress towards the aims of the Our People Strategy will be monitored via quarterly reporting as part of the existing process for reviewing Our People actions. The strategy has been developed with input from a range of stakeholders and considers the wider strategic picture, internal and external factors, and market forces. The Our People Programme will sit alongside this and sets out our priorities, milestones and success measures. The Our People Programme is designed to evolve over time.

Review date: This strategy will be reviewed in 2027.