



Item: 8

Policy and Resources Committee: 26 November 2024.

People Plan – Progress Update.

Report by Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

1. Overview

- 1.1. The People Plan 2022-26 is the Council’s strategic workforce strategy and was recommended for approval by the Policy and Resources Committee in June 2022. This report provides an update on progress, with the agreed priorities covered in detail within the Appendices to this report.
- 1.2. Actions that were previously reported as complete in the November 2023 progress report to Policy and Resources Committee have been removed from the detailed progress updates.
- 1.3. The overall position in respect of agreed actions, accurate as of 30 September 2024, is as follows:
 - 16 Actions were agreed for year 2022-23. Out of these 14 are complete with 2 still in Progress. Progress updates against actions not previously reported as complete are attached as Appendix 1 to the report.
 - 21 Actions were agreed for year 2023-24. Out of these 7 are complete with 14 still in progress. Progress updates against actions not previously reported as complete are attached as Appendix 2 to the report.
 - 14 Actions were agreed for year 2024-25. Out of these, 1 action is considered to be business as usual, 1 action should have been included for the 2025-26 list of actions, and the remaining 12 are in progress.
- 1.4. As well as providing an update for the Committee, the report also advises of a forthcoming review of the People Plan.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Scrutinise the progress against the Delivery Plan priorities, as outlined in the Appendices attached to this report.
 - ii. Note the agreed review of the People Plan and associated timeframe, as per the Best Value Thematic Review conducted by the External Auditors.

3. Background

- 3.1. The People Plan and Delivery Plan can be found at the following link:
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/uu4hkgsg/item-08-people-plan.pdf>
- 3.2. The previous progress update report was submitted to Policy and Resources Committee in November 2023.

4. Review of the People Plan

- 4.1. A recommendation from the recent Best Value Thematic Review conducted by KPMG, our external auditors, in 2024, was that the timeframe of the People Plan should align with those of the overarching strategic plans, such as the Council Plan and the Directorate Delivery Plans.
- 4.2. This recommendation was welcomed by Officers and scrutinised by the Monitoring and Audit Committee on 26 September 2024. A target date of November 2025 for completion of the review and agreement of a new Plan has been set.
- 4.3. It would therefore be the intention of Officers to present a revised People Plan for the period up to 2028 to the Policy and Resources Committee by November 2025 at the latest.
- 4.4. As well as meeting the recommendations from the External Auditors, this review will provide the Council with an opportunity to re-assess the priority actions and areas for focus in terms of its People Strategies.
- 4.5. Officers believe this to be timely as the challenges facing the Council and the climate in which it operates, have changed significantly since June 2022.
- 4.6. Notwithstanding the audit recommendation, the Human Resources and Organisational Development service had already identified that some of the actions agreed in 2022 would now be challenging to deliver and that some no longer align with the Council's needs.

- 4.7. In particular, many of the actions agreed for this current year and future financial year in respect of Learning and Development, are considered to require review and re-focussing to ensure our fundamental training provision is secure, meets the Council's needs, and is affordable.

For Further Information please contact:

Andrew Groundwater, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, extension 2253, andrew.groundwater@orkney.gov.uk

Implications of Report

1. **Financial** - As noted in the report and the progress update detail, some priority actions that were identified in 2022 may have financial implications that need to be considered within the proposed review of the Plan and alongside the ongoing medium term financial strategy and budget setting process the Council has in place.
2. **Legal** - There are no significant legal implications arising directly from this report.
3. **Corporate Governance** - Not applicable.
4. **Human Resources** - The Human Resources implications are outlined throughout the report and appendices.
5. **Equalities** - An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for performance monitoring.
6. **Island Communities Impact** - An Island Communities Impact Assessment is not required for performance monitoring.
7. **Links to Council Plan** - The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - Growing our economy.
 - Strengthening our Communities.
 - Developing our Infrastructure.
 - Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan** - The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - Cost of Living.
 - Sustainable Development.
 - Local Equality.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk** - Not applicable.
10. **Risk** - Not applicable.
11. **Procurement** - Not applicable.
12. **Health and Safety** - Not applicable.
13. **Property and Assets** - Not applicable.

14. **Information Technology** - Not applicable.
15. **Cost of Living** - Not applicable

List of Background Papers

People Plan 2022-2026

Appendices

Appendix 1: Progress update against People Plan actions 2022-23.

Appendix 2: Progress updaters against People Plan actions 2023-24.

Appendix 3: Progress against People Plan actions 2024-25.

Appendix 1 – Progress against 2022-23 Actions

Building a talented, confident and resilient workforce with the capabilities to adapt to our changing environment.

2022-23 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
Implementation of 3 rd edition Job Evaluation scheme.	Partially complete – awaiting final stages of national work.	This work has been completed in so far as it can at local level with drafting of new associated policies and agreements via a working group and delivery of training. There has however been a delay at national level in terms of final SJC agreement on revised wording within the scheme.	SJC agreement has been reached however the amendments to the Gauge Job Evaluation software are still work in progress at national level.
Future-proof Occupational Health provision.	In progress.	The service specification required for a more comprehensive Occupational Health service has been drafted and provider options are being explored.	A tender for provision of Occupational Health Services is currently live. Discussions with NHS Orkney on local solutions also remain ongoing and there is also exploration of national solutions being taken forward, although this is at an early stage. Interim provision arrangements for Occupational Health services are in place.

Establishing a new people & learning infrastructure to drive transformational change & enable growth in key areas.

2022-23 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
Create one source of trusted employee data.	Complete.	ResourceLink, the HR/Payroll System, continues to be developed as the primary source of employee information.	As far as the aims of the original action were envisaged this action is complete.

Appendix 2 – Progress against 2023-24 Actions

Creating a shared leadership culture that underpins our agenda for change and organisational growth.

2023-24 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
Develop comprehensive leadership offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New leaders & managers. • Aspiring leaders. • Senior/Executive leaders. 	In progress.	A leadership development programme has been designed and approved by CLT with rollout due to commence in January 2024.	A coaching and mentoring programme has been launched for senior managers. Leadership development has remained a focus within the Leadership Forum with sessions on transformation and financial challenges in 2024. The wider programme is currently being reviewed.
Develop a toolkit for People Managers.	In progress.	Development of a toolkit is underway.	The first 'how to' short video sessions for managers have been produced, focussing on sickness absence management. Progress has been made on the technical build of iLearn delivery for the wider toolkit which will cover a full range of manager processes.
Introduce Personal Development Programme for Elected Members.	In progress.	Following adoption of the Political Skills Framework, a survey of Elected Members is currently taking place to help inform the development programme and individual Personal Development Plans.	Further engagement with Elected Members is planned to develop the future programme.

Building a talented, confident and resilient workforce with the capabilities to adapt to our changing environment.

2023-24 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
New pay and grading model.	In progress.	A new pay and grading model was introduced to address pay compression in the lower grades. Consideration of further work in this area is ongoing taking cognisance of the budget pressures the Council faces.	The significant financial challenges the Council faces means that any wider work on pay and grading is to be considered by the Corporate Leadership Team as part of the review of the People Plan and taking cognisance of the budget strategy.
Redesign recruitment approaches to optimise impact and personalisation.	In progress.	A short life recruitment taskforce was convened comprising officers from across the Council. The outcomes of this and actions already taken are due to be reported to Corporate Leadership Team imminently and a seminar for Members will take place.	A recruitment seminar for members was undertaken in March 2024 along with a report to the Corporate Leadership Team to agree priority actions. A working group on recruitment branding and marketing was formed and aims to complete a rebranding exercise by end of 2024. Systems and process development has been ongoing. Specific work for Orkney Health and Care has been prioritised around the Growing a Sustainable Social Care Workforce (GaSSCW) Project. Along with these actions a new Recruitment and Selection Policy will be produced to underpin the work already done and should be presented to Committee by the end of 2024-25.
Identify other key “moments that matter” and build a framework for	In progress.	There are a number of interlinked priorities that contribute to the progress against this action including reviewing the onboarding	System and process improvements have been made to the recruitment process, the induction and onboarding process and the Employee Review and Development

2023-24 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
enhancing employee experience.		and induction processes and guidance, recruitment improvements and revised Employee Review and Development scheme.	process – these were identified as the top three priorities for attention in terms of employee experience. There remains further work to do in completing the work around recruitment and onboarding, thereafter officers will review whether there are any other areas under this action that require further work.
Launch wider apprenticeship/trainee programme.	In progress.	Following the onboarding and induction of apprentices and trainees, the Organisational Development team are currently designing wider corporate programmes to enhance their experience.	A network group with support from the OD team has been formed to support our apprentices and trainees and offer wider experiences and development opportunities. This is now business as usual.
Redesign the approach to casual/relief staffing.	In progress.	Discussions have taken place with services who have high volumes of relief staffing to explore different models, however progress has been somewhat delayed due to management and service pressures. This action is therefore likely to continue into 2024-25.	In terms of officer capacity, the work around the GaSSCW project has been prioritised. Within that workstream one action taken forward was to offer permanent or temporary contracted work across our relief staffing cohort in Orkney Health and Care. Orkney Health and Care and Human Resources & Organisational Development have reviewed the action and re-affirmed this remains an issue for the Service and an analysis of current relief working hours and practices has commenced.

Establishing a new people & learning infrastructure to drive transformational change & enable growth in key areas.

2023-24 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
Skills analysis of main job populations; build skills profiles for job families.	In progress.	This work will be considered as part of the development of workforce planning below.	Please see update below in terms of Workforce Planning.
Develop integrated workforce plans.	In progress.	Planning is currently underway within Human Resources and Organisational Development with a report to the Corporate Leadership Team being formed on the approach. Leadership Forum 9 in early 2024 will be focussing on this as a key priority and linking to the best value thematic work outlined by the Accounts Commission.	Transformation portfolio approach has been agreed through the Corporate Leadership Team in terms of dealing with budget challenges, service re-design and workforce planning. Financial planning and budget savings have necessarily been prioritised so far but we intend to do further workforce planning work as part of this integrated approach.
Build “Orkney Opportunities” brand & products.	In progress.	A number of the actions being progressed potentially fit under this overarching offer to staff, however branding and presentation needs to be reviewed.	A review of learning and development activity has been proposed which will incorporate this action.
Launch Growth Groups.	In progress.	As part of the Leadership Development Programme, cross service learning groups are planned to provide opportunities for peer support and putting learning into practice. Other key themes for wider groups are being reviewed.	A number of cross council network groups have been or are being formed where it is felt this is the best way to move certain workstreams forward and provide development opportunities. Examples include on Health and Wellbeing, Equality and Diversity, and Recruitment and Retention. The name ‘Growth Groups’ is

2023-24 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
			no longer felt to best fit with the outcomes of this action.
Develop the design principles for integrated learning & innovation network.	Not started.	It is likely this work will need to be rolled forward into 2024-25.	This action will fit under the wider review of learning and development.
Redesign and launch new Employee Review and Development framework aligned to values.	Complete.	A new Employee Review and Development process titled 'Good Conversations' has been trialled and is being presented to HR Sub-Committee in November 2023 for approval.	The revised Good Conversations process was agreed and launched. A review of this new approach will be undertaken.
Design approach to technology access for all.	In progress.	A survey of staff has been undertaken and the Organisational Development team are reviewing the results and will map out requirements.	This action will fit under the wider review of learning and development.

Valuing everyone's contribution through creating modern, flexible employment packages.

2023-24 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
First annual recognition event.	Complete.	The first annual staff awards and recognition event is scheduled for June 2024.	The first staff awards event was successfully delivered and evaluation of the event is being undertaken to inform future approach and events.
Develop flexible working frameworks.	In progress.	Review of the Council's suite of policies around flexible working is underway.	A staff survey has been undertaken to help inform the policy development on hybrid and remote working and first draft reviews of flexible working policies have been

2023-24 Actions	Status	Previous update November 2023	Current update November 2024
			undertaken. Following stakeholder consultation, it is expected that the policies will be presented to committee for approval in early 2025.
Launch employee benefits scheme.	Complete.	An employee benefits package incorporating provision of an Employee Assistance Programme is currently out to tender.	The OIC Wellbeing Hub was launched in July 2024 incorporating access to the Employee Assistance Programme and employee benefits. It is intended that the benefits offer will be further expanded by the end of 2024-25.

Appendix 3 – Progress against 2024-25 Actions

Creating a shared leadership culture that underpins our agenda for change and organisational growth.

2024-25 Actions	Status	Current update November 2024
Measure emerging outcomes/impact of new leadership arrangements and refine as appropriate.	In progress.	The Chief Executive will be reviewing the structure and leadership arrangements approved in 2021-22 and will bring forward a report during 2024-25 to advise Members of the outcomes and seek approval of any changes if this is required.

Building a talented, confident and resilient workforce with the capabilities to adapt to our changing environment.

2024-25 Actions	Status	Current update November 2024
Develop partnerships with business to further grow opportunities for young people and mature adults.	Business as usual.	The CLD team lead on employability issues for the wider economy in Orkney and have recently launched a new hub. The Council works with business and other public sector stakeholders on a range of employability issues as business as usual including through the Developing the Young Workforce Board.
Redesign key employee interactions/transactions based on Employee Experience framework.	In progress.	System and process improvements have been made to the Recruitment process, the induction and onboarding process and the Employee Review and Development process – these were identified as the top 3 priorities for attention in terms of employee experience. There remains further work to do in completing the work around recruitment and onboarding, thereafter officers will review whether there are any other areas under this action that require further work.

Establishing a new people & learning infrastructure to drive transformational change & enable growth in key areas.

2024-25 Actions	Status	Current update November 2024
Develop learning platform and curate content.	To be incorporated into the L&D review.	<p>Work around some of these actions for 2024-25 has been undertaken, such as developing content for our e-learning platform and delivering different digital skills training.</p> <p>As per commentary in the covering report, it is felt that a review of the fundamentals of our learning and development provision need to be re-examined, now that we have a settled team in place in the Organisational Development service that can take this forward. This is to ensure we have in place what the organisation needs now and for the future and is obtaining best value from its approach to learning and development.</p>
Deliver technology access for all.	To be incorporated into the L&D review. To be incorporated into the L&D review.	Please see comment above.
Digital skills programme for all staff.	To be incorporated into the L&D review. To be incorporated into the L&D review.	Please see comment above.
Design career pathways.	To be incorporated into the L&D review.	Please see comment above.

2024-25 Actions	Status	Current update November 2024
Design and deliver Young Employees Conference.	To be incorporated into the L&D review.	Please see comment above.
Establish knowledge partnerships with at least 2 academic institutions.	To be incorporated into the L&D review.	Please see comment above.
Launch pop up events.	To be incorporated into the L&D review.	Please see comment above.

Valuing everyone's contribution through creating modern, flexible employment packages.

2024-25 Actions	Status	Current update November 2024
Enhance employee benefits scheme further.	In progress.	Further salary sacrifice benefits are to be added to the Wellbeing Hub by the end of 2024. Implementation of this is currently being worked on by Human Resources & Organisational Development and Payroll. Our benefits provider is coming to Orkney to deliver roadshow sessions in November 2024.
IIP Review.	Not started.	This action was incorrectly identified in the initial Plan as for 2024-25. The Investors in People review only takes place after 3 years from initial assessment so this will occur in late 2025 through to early 2026 and be moved in the Delivery Plan accordingly.
Second annual recognition event.	In progress.	We have set June as the time for the annual staff awards and recognition event so the second event will take place in June 2025.
Explore options to modernise Terms & Conditions.	In progress.	Work is currently being taken with OHAC on some specific work that impacts their service to ensure these are fit for purpose and align with the recruitment and retention challenges.

2024-25 Actions	Status	Current update November 2024
Redesign job roles where practicable to enhance adaptability & flexibility.	In progress.	The use of career graded structures for roles is expanding across the Council to assist with recruitment and retention and job descriptions are reviewed routinely with a growing focus on flexibility of approach. Particular areas of work over the past year have included Business Support, Marine Services and Social Care.