

Report to Stronger Council Select Committee

Date of meeting: 18 April 2023

Portfolio: Internal Resources - Councillor Sam Kane

Subject: Launch of the new People Strategy 2023-2027

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Democratic Services Officer: A Hendry



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

To consider the refreshed Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) People Strategy for 2023-2027.

Report:

1. Introduction

The landscape of local government is rapidly evolving, with new challenges and opportunities arising daily. To effectively navigate this environment, forward-thinking authorities must develop a fresh and modern People Strategy that aligns with their ambitious corporate objectives and the ever-changing external environment.

This People Strategy has been updated to reflect the revised Corporate Plan and aligns with the corporate objectives which take effect in April 2023.

Our 2023-27 People Strategy focuses on three main pillars:

- **Maximising organisational capacity and capability**
- **Effective and inspirational leadership, values, and culture**
- **Enhancing employee experience and engagement.**

2. Maximising organisational capacity and capability

Attracting and retaining talent: Our local authority aims to attract diverse, top-tier talent that shares our passion for revolutionising local government. By leveraging digital recruitment methods and establishing a strong employer brand, we can showcase our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and community development.

To retain our exceptional workforce, we will provide competitive employee benefits, flexible and hybrid working arrangements, and clear career progression pathways, ensuring employees feel valued and motivated to stay with us.

Supporting employees through comprehensive workforce plans: Supporting employees through our comprehensive workforce plan, we will offer internships, apprenticeships, and mentorship programs, facilitating ongoing skill development and knowledge sharing. We will foster a culture of continuous learning and development by providing access to training programs, workshops, and online resources that cater to diverse learning styles and preferences. Employees will be encouraged to pursue further education, gain new certifications, and participate in professional development events to stay at the forefront of industry trends and best practices.

3. Effective and inspirational leadership, values, and culture

Developing skills, values, and behaviours:

Our local authority will prioritise our teams' skill development, values, and behaviours by setting clear expectations and encouraging our managers and leaders to provide consistent feedback. We will nurture a culture of visionary leadership that inspires employees to think creatively, take calculated risks, and embrace change. To achieve this, we will continue to invest in our leadership development program, create opportunities for cross-functional collaboration, and celebrate success stories that exemplify our core values.

Creating a sustainable and innovative future:

By fostering visionary leadership and culture, we will propel our local authority toward a sustainable future embracing new ideas and innovation. We will actively seek input from employees at all levels and foster open communication channels to ensure that everyone's voice is heard. By empowering employees to contribute their unique perspectives and ideas, we can drive continuous improvement and enhance our ability to address the challenges facing our communities.

4. Enhancing employee experience and engagement

Building an inclusive environment:

We will focus on building an inclusive environment that fosters diversity and embraces the unique strengths and perspectives that each employee brings to the table. Our local authority will establish diversity and inclusion initiatives to promote awareness, understanding, and acceptance of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. We will also provide employees with the resources and support they need to succeed in their roles, regardless of their individual circumstances.

Cultivating a people-centric culture:

Our local authority will cultivate a people-centric culture that emphasises well-being and keeps employees healthy, engaged, and motivated to make a difference in our communities. We will implement employee wellness programs, provide access to mental health resources, and encourage a healthy work-life balance. By prioritising well-being, we can boost employee morale, increase productivity, and reduce absenteeism, contributing to our overall success.

5. How you can help as our Modern-Day Councillors and Leaders

As local government Councillors and Leaders, you can engage, support, and adopt the new People Strategy by:

- Embracing and promoting the strategy. Foster a sense of ownership and collaboration among your councillor colleagues by embracing and promoting the Strategy's themes and values within your role.
- Be an advocate for employee skill development, well-being, inclusion, and lead by example, demonstrating your commitment to the Strategy in your everyday actions and decisions.
- Actively encouraging your peers to support and participate in initiatives that nurture a stronger and more creative local authority.
- Participate in workshops, seminars, and team-building events that foster a positive and supportive work environment, enabling employees and councillors to build strong relationships.
- Promote and support cross-functional collaboration and breaking down departmental silos. Encourage employees to work together, share ideas, and learn from one another.

- Celebrate success and recognise employee contribution. Acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of individuals and teams.
- Foster a culture of accountability and ownership. Help support us to instil a culture of accountability and ownership among employees by setting clear expectations and providing feedback.

6. Conclusion

By integrating these themes and actions into everyone's responsibilities, we will all contribute to a stronger, more innovative, and sustainable Council for all.

Together, we can achieve our strategic priorities and create an environment where everyone thrives and contributes to our collective success.

Through the implementation of our 2023-27 People Strategy, we will lay the foundation for a progressive local government model that empowers employees, embraces change, and delivers exceptional services to our communities.

We will be known as an 'Employer of Choice.'

Reason for decision:

One of the functions of the Stronger Council Select Committee is to focus on the development of policy and strategy. The new People Strategy for the Council has been updated to reflect the revised Corporate Plan and aligns with the corporate objectives which take effect in April 2023. The Committee is asked to consider the Strategy.

Options considered and rejected:

All around us is fast changing as is local government, with new challenges and opportunities arising daily. For our leaders and employee to work in this environment, we require a People Strategy. Therefore, no other options were considered.

Consultation undertaken:

Consultation with Executive, Senior Leadership and Leadership teams and the Portfolio Holder was completed in March 2023.

Resource implications:

No increase in budget required to adopt the Strategy. Individual projects within the Strategy will be scoped and if funding is required will be subject to agreement through the Council's budget process.

Legal and Governance Implications: N/A

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications: N/A

Background Papers: N/A

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management:

Risks will be identified through the project management processes and subject to the Council's risk methodology.

Equality:

Equality impacts will be identified at the inception of projects and managed accordingly.