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To: Personnel Committee **Date:** 23 September 2025

Subject: People Strategy 2022/27 - Evaluation

Classification: **Restricted**

Summary: This paper introduces the third-year assessment of Kent County Council's People Strategy, with an indication of activity that has been undertaken within each of the core themes.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The People Strategy has been designed to provide an overarching strategic statement of intent and aspiration for KCC as an employer. At its heart is the aim to enable the best possible performance from all our workforce. It is also fundamental in providing a platform for KCC to meet the challenges and requirements of the future of work, the changing nature of the workforce and the development of the way services are delivered. The People Strategy provides a solid but adaptable platform to pivot where the organisation needs to and to continue to build on the development and performance of its workforce to deliver for the residents of Kent
- 1.2 The strategy document is divided into three clear sections: our vision, aspiration, and the roles we all play. Within that there are the four core themes to the Strategy:
- Maximising organisational capacity, capability, and development
 - Creating an environment for people to thrive
 - Supporting our people as individuals
 - Attracting, retaining, and maximising our talent

Each theme has an indication of what it means and “how we will get there”.

- 1.3 The strategy is designed to set a framework for the leadership, management and development of the Council's workforce and provide a single, concise narrative for KCC as an employer for staff and managers. The successful delivery of the strategy requires a partnership between the Authority's managers, HR&OD and our employees. Alongside the Strategy HR&OD ensures that the organisation has the policies, procedures, development programmes, advice and required to facilitate managers and employees in developing a performance culture. There will be corporate elements, such as pay, that influence people's experience of working in the organisation but, ultimately, how people engage and perform will be as a result of the culture created by managers in their teams and the Directorates as a whole, through the senior leaders.

2. Measurement

2.1. In consideration of the length of the timescale for the strategy it was always intended to have a degree of flexibility in how assessment could be undertaken, recognising the likelihood of changes in priorities and external factors over the 5 years. In this context, therefore, it is integral to the understanding of the continued evaluation of the strategy that the path to 2027 is not linear. Naturally, though, there is an expectation that an overall improvement in the organisation's key performance indicators is seen and that these improvements influence how the organisation operates and prepares for the future. As such, there will always be small fluctuations in the strongly performing indicators as the Council consolidates the improvements that the previous strategy delivered and builds to the future. In order to follow progress the strategy contained an initial thirteen key performance indicators that provide a benchmark and insight into whether KCC as an employer is achieving its ambitions. This has subsequently reduced to 12 indicators following the removal of KPI4, as total contribution pay assessments and ratings have been superseded by Kent County Council's new grading structure – and the manner of progressing through those grades.

2.2. These twelve along with the position as of 31st March 2025 (and the movement since 2024 in brackets) are:

- KPI1 % of employees who believe KCC cares about the wellbeing of its staff 62.9% (-0.2 percentage points)
- KPI2 Average days lost to sickness 8.18 days per fte. (-0.06)
- KPI3 % of employees who rate their engagement with KCC positively 61.4% (-0.9pp)
- KPI4 % of higher TCP ratings N/A
- KPI5 % of internal movement 10.3% (-0.4pp)
- KPI6 voluntary turnover 11.7% (+1.2pp)
- KPI7 % of employees who are satisfied with the total employment offer 57% (+1.3pp)
- KPI8 % of employees who rated their manager positively 73.6% (+0.2pp)
- KPI9 % of employees who feel they are able to access the right learning & development opportunities to support their role 73.5% (-1.9pp)
- KPI10 % of employees who rate the culture of KCC positively 70.7% (+0.2pp)
- KPI11 % of employees that see our values demonstrated in the way we operate 72.5% (+0.6pp)
- KPI12 % of employees who rate inclusion and fair treatment in KCC positively 82.1% (0.0pp)
- KPI13 KCC workforce representation compared to Kent working population.

	KCC Profile	Difference from 2024	Kent County
Gender: Female	79.4%	-0.4%	49.0%
Ethnicity: Black, and Minority Ethnic	11.6%	+2.0%	11.4%
Disability: Disabled	6.1%%	+0.5%	7.7%\$
Religion: Faith	45.8%	-0.1%	49.1%
Gender Reassignment: Transgender	0.4%	0.0%	0.5%*
Age: 16 to 25 year olds	7.4%	-0.7%	9.5%\$
Sexuality: LGBTQ+	4.0%	+0.4%	2.9%*

Notes:

\$ - economically active population in Kent

* - 16+ population

2.3 The summary position for the performance of the People Strategy in 2024/5 is that in most of the indicators there continues to be a strong performance. Where there has been movement this has not been statistically significant. What the maintenance of the organisation's position points to are successes in continuing to deliver through challenging circumstances. Some of the indicators are aggregates of a range of sub indicators which allows the organisation to identify and focus on those areas that require more attention in order to drive improvements.

3. Achievements

3.1 There have been several achievements and developments in the year, including the following:

- development and implementation of a new grading structure for the Council to aid recruitment and retention as part of the positioning of our overall employment deal
- focused activity on sickness absence, especially targeted at mental health and musculoskeletal absences
- Refocus of opportunities for professional development for managers and the wider workforce with a comprehensive offer to support skills for the future, change and its impact on work and wellbeing
- Impact of managers and how they are seen by their staff continued to be positive which has been supported by our continued investment in developing leadership & management, including launch of Managing into the Future.
- Inclusive culture work with managers and teams is continuing to build on last year's positive results
- Continued focus on the development of pathways into careers in KCC for people aged between 16 and 25 years.

- Further work on KCC's recruitment branding and applicant channels to improve KCC's reach in attracting candidates from as broad a talent pool as possible, enhancing the effectiveness of our recruitment activity.

3.2 Attached as an Appendix to this summary report is the full and detailed analysis of the third year of the People Strategy

3.3 The Appendix presents a comprehensive look at the activity undertaken to drive the organisation forward to meet the challenges presented as the expectations of employees and the landscape of work changes. The delivery of the People Strategy continues to focus on:

- skill development alongside role design (not only the jobs that need doing but the jobs people want to do),
- developing a broad employment offer that doesn't only focus on pay but continues to ensure the Authority has a strong position in the varied employment markets in which it operates
- building organisational resilience – not only in terms of helping people meet changes in the way the Council continues to operate but also ensuring it has capable and resilient leaders and managers – both through developing those we have and finding the right type of people to take on those roles
- continuing to focus on building an inclusive environment to create a culture where people feel supported to work, perform, innovate and challenge.

3.4 The final two years of this strategy will be about continuing to build on the strong foundations to improve individual performance and resilience. Effective leadership and developing a culture where people can thrive and perform are paramount in ensuring that the Council can meet future transformation and change, while continuing to deliver services to the residents of Kent.

4. Recommendation

4.1 Personnel Committee are asked to note the progress of the People Strategy in its third year and the detailed analysis

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Background documents: The People Strategy Evaluation Report to Personnel Committee 15th June 2023 and the People Strategy 2022-27 document