

By: Shellina Prendergast – Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement and People
Amanda Beer – Corporate Director People & Communications

To: Personnel Committee

Date: 12 November 2019

Subject: People Strategy 2017 to 2022

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: This paper provides the second annual update on the 5-year People Strategy.

1. Background

1.1. The People Strategy was originally agreed by Personnel Committee on 3 July 2017 with a commitment to track its progress to ensure it is delivering its intended purpose.

1.2. The People Strategy sets out over a 5-year period how we will recruit, retain, develop and manage people performance, where this fits with other relevant strategies and what our 'guiding employment principles' are.

1.3. It provides a single, concise narrative for KCC as an employer for staff and managers with the 'valued and engaged employee' at the heart of the strategy.

2. Progress in the first 2 years

2.1 There are 4 core components:

- Organisational Development (OD)
- Resourcing
- Workforce Health and Wellbeing
- Employment Offer

2.2 Attached in Appendix 1 is an illustration of how we are delivering against these four elements along with our diversity and inclusion objectives that underpins all of the People Strategy.

2.3 Highlights of the **OD** progress include the significant investment made in our Leadership & Management. Clear leadership capabilities have been agreed and are now routinely used as the basis for leadership development. 790 Managers participated in and received feedback on a 360-degree questionnaire. An emerging leaders programme was launched and two action learning sets made up of 12 future senior leaders were successfully facilitated and received very positive feedback from participants.

2.4 There has also been considerable progress in the development of a commissioning competency framework. In the last year we have created and launched the 'Kent Academy' for Children's and Adults' workforce. This was seen as an important development by the service Directorates and has afforded us the opportunity to pull together all the activity available to develop and retain the social care workforce and provide a flagship Academy which will help position KCC as an employer of choice in this critical profession. The work has required close working between the HR/OD team and senior leaders in CYPE and ASCH to achieve a product which meets the aspirations of all involved.

2.5 In terms of **Resourcing** our recruitment costs have reduced along with the number of agency staff in the organisation. Overall staffing numbers continue to decrease though in the last year with much fewer redundancies.

2.6 Our revised approach to performance management and enhanced employee engagement saw its first full year completed in March 2019. Early indications are that along with improved assessment levels there is a wide adoption of our 'better conversation' model for managers and staff.

2.7 On our **Employment offer** we have rationalised and enhanced annual leave for many lower graded staff, introduced a minimum salary of £9 per hour, matching the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage.

2.8 **Health & Wellbeing** – Absence management remains a particular focus of both managers and the HR & OD function. Average days lost has slightly increased although the number of staff with absences reduced. One area of increase nationally and in our own experience has been mental health absences. This has contributed to the development of a significant plan as part of the Time to Change pledge. This is an area of work being undertaken in partnership with both managers and our recognised trades unions.

3. Conclusion

3.1 The People Strategy has given the organisation a single narrative and coordinating framework for all HR & OD Policy and development activity. It also provides a strong guide for future related work given the explicit clarity of the aims and principles. This second year has seen an increasing amount of activity in each of the 4 core elements with scope and sense of direction for continued investment.

3.2 Ultimately the success of the People Strategy will be dependent upon managers performance in effectively managing people.

4. Recommendation

4.1 Personnel Committee are invited to note the progress made in delivering People Strategy.

Paul Royel
Head of HR & OD
416631

Background documents: Personnel Committee 13 November 2018
Personnel Committee 3 July 2017