

Item: 21

Policy and Resources Committee: 17 June 2025.

People Plan – Progress Update.

Report by Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

1. Overview

- 1.1. On 21 June 2022, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended approval of the People Plan 2022-26. It was also agreed that progress monitoring reports on the Delivery Plan would be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee, in line with the usual six-monthly performance reporting cycle:
- 1.2. The previous progress update report was submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee in November 2024.
- 1.3. Actions that were previously reported as complete in the November 2024 progress report have been removed from the detailed progress updates provided in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.4. The overall position in respect of agreed actions, accurate as of 30 April 2025, is as follows:
 - i. 16 Actions were agreed for year 2022-23. Out of these 14 are complete with 2 still in Progress.
 - ii. 21 Actions were agreed for year 2023-24. Out of these 13 are complete with 8 still in progress.
 - iii. 14 Actions were agreed for year 2024-25. Out of these 2 actions have been completed, 1 action should have been included for the 2025-26 list of actions, and the remaining 11 are in progress or under review.
- 1.5. Detailed updates on each priority action not previously reported as complete are contained within Appendix 1 to this report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Note progress against the Delivery Plan priorities of the People Plan 2022-26, as outlined in Appendix 1 to this report.

- ii. Note the update on progress with review of the People Plan, as set out in section 3 of this report.

3. Update on review of the People Plan

- 3.1. As previously reported in November 2024, the People Plan is due to be reviewed and presented to the Policy and Resources Committee by November 2025.
- 3.2. Work is ongoing with engagement sessions currently being undertaken with employees to help inform its direction.
- 3.3. A draft will be considered by the Corporate Leadership Team by the end of summer 2025 with consultation being undertaken with Trade Unions thereafter.
- 3.4. One of the significant areas of review has been the provision and strategic direction of Learning and Development. The Corporate Leadership Team has considered and agreed the principles around the future direction, including management and leadership development.
- 3.5. This has been noted in some of the detailed updates within Appendix 1 to this report and will be further expanded upon with the new strategic plan.

For Further Information please contact:

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Implications of Report

- 1. Financial** – There are no significant financial implications arising directly from this report.
- 2. Legal** – There are no significant legal implications arising directly from this report.
- 3. Corporate Governance** – Progress reports on the priorities within the People Plan 2022-26 are presented to Elected Members every six months, in line with performance reporting.
- 4. Human Resources** – The People Plan 2022-26 is the Council's overarching strategic Workforce Strategy. The specific Human Resources implications are contained within Appendix 1.
- 5. Equalities** – Not Applicable.
- 6. Island Communities Impact** – Not applicable.
- 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.
- ☐ Improving Population Health.

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 2022-26 and Delivery Plan.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Progress against Delivery Plan priorities.

CREATING A SHARED LEADERSHIP CULTURE THAT UNDERPINS OUR AGENDA FOR CHANGE AND ORGANISATIONAL GROWTH

ACTION	YEAR	STATUS	PREVIOUS UPDATE November 2024	CURRENT UPDATE June 2025
Develop comprehensive leadership offer: ○ New Leaders & Managers ○ Aspiring Leaders ○ Senior/Executive Leaders	2023-24	In progress	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.	The programme of management and leadership development has been reviewed and presented to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and is being further refined in consultation with Extended CLT.
Develop a toolkit for People Managers	2023-24	In progress	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.	This has also been reviewed as part of the wider Learning and Development review with the key areas of content being consulted upon and agreed through Extended CLT.
Introduce Personal Development Programme (PDP) for Elected Members	2023-24	In progress	Further engagement with Elected Members is planned to develop the future programme.	The future direction on PDP for Elected Members will be considered as part of the People Plan review and the Council Plan mid-term review. Current likely proposal is that there is a considerable amount of knowledge and skills development work

APPENDIX 1 – PROGRESS AGAINST DELIVERY PLAN PRIORITIES

ACTION	YEAR	STATUS	PREVIOUS UPDATE November 2024	CURRENT UPDATE June 2025
				undertaken by Elected Members locally and this in itself forms a coherent package without the need to be formally tied to a national framework.
Measure emerging outcomes/impact of new leadership arrangements and refine as appropriate-	2024-25	Complete	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.	A report was presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in April proposing changes to the organisational and senior management structure, which was subsequently approved by Council. Implementation of the agreed changes will be completed in 2025-26.

BUILDING A TALENTED, CONFIDENT & RESILIENT WORKFORCE WITH THE CAPABILITIES TO ADAPT TO OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

ACTION	YEAR	STATUS	PREVIOUS UPDATE November 2024	CURRENT UPDATE June 2025
Implementation of 3rd edition Job Evaluation (JE) scheme	2022-23	Partially complete – awaiting final stages of national work	Scottish Joint Committee (SJC) agreement has been reached however the amendments to the Gauge JE software are still work in progress at national level.	Final implementation remains on hold due to awaiting the updates to the Gauge JE software at national level by the software provider.

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Future proof Occupational Health provision	2022-23	In progress	A tender for provision of Occupational Health Services is currently live. Discussions with NHS Orkney on local solutions also remains ongoing and there is also exploration of national solutions being taken forward, although this is at an early stage. Interim provision arrangements for OH services are in place.	A tender award for Occupational Health Services has been made to the same provider that has been providing the interim service. Pre-contract discussions are ongoing with a likely formal start date of the contract to be end of June 2025.
New pay and grading model	2023-24	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 People Plan is currently being reviewed and revised priorities will be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in November 2025. This will tie in with further consideration of the budget strategy and a recommendation formed on whether there is scope for further work on pay and grading.
Redesign recruitment approaches to optimise impact and personalisation	2023-24	Complete	A recruitment seminar for members was undertaken in March 2024 along with a report to CLT 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'	The work around recruitment branding has been completed and the new policy on Recruitment and Selection was presented to the Human Resources Sub-committee in March 2025. This was accompanied by new policies on Relocation and Market Supplement.

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			(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 enhancing employee experience	2023-24	Complete	System and process improvements have been made to the Recruitment process, the induction and onboarding process and the Employee Review and Development (ERD) 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.	The areas previously identified and progress updated on have been completed, however employee experience remains a key focus in terms of recruitment and retention and therefore the review of the People Plan currently being undertaken is likely to identify new priorities under this theme for future action in 2025-28.
Redesign the approach to casual/relief staffing.	2023-24	In progress	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 the relief staffing cohort in Orkney Health and Care (OHAC). OHAC and Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR and OD) have	A review of the Council's position and staffing establishment in terms of temporary and relief staffing has been undertaken. A report on this together with recommended actions is due to be considered by CLT in June 2025 and then consulted upon with Trade Unions.

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			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.	
Redesign key employee interactions/transactions based on Employee Experience framework	2023-24	Complete	System and process improvements have been made to the Recruitment process, the induction and onboarding process and the ERD 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.	The recruitment re-branding work is complete and is now being implemented. Employee experience remains a key focus in terms of recruitment and retention and therefore the review of the People Plan currently being undertaken is likely to identify new priorities under this theme for future action in 2025-28.

ESTABLISHING A NEW PEOPLE & LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE TO DRIVE TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE & ENABLE GROWTH IN KEY AREAS

ACTIONS	YEAR	STATUS	PREVIOUS UPDATE November 2024	CURRENT UPDATE June 2025
<p>Develop learning platform and curate content</p> <p>Deliver Technology access for all</p> <p>Digital skills programme for all staff</p> <p>Design career pathways</p> <p>Design and deliver Young Employees Conference (1)</p> <p>Establish knowledge partnerships with at least 2 academic institutions.</p> <p>Launch Pop Up events</p>	2024-25	These actions will be incorporated within the Learning and Development review	<p>Work around some of these actions for 2024-25 has been undertaken, such as developing content for the 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 the learning and development provision need to be re-examined, now that a settled team is in place in the Organisational Development (OD) service to take this forward. This is to ensure what the organisation needs now and for the future is in place and is obtaining best value from its approach to Learning and Development.</p>	<p>Some of these actions agreed in 2022 are no longer felt to be a priority and/or deliverable.</p> <p>As per comment on some of the earlier actions in respect of management and leadership development, the review of Learning and Development and identified actions have been presented and agreed with CLT. These will be further incorporated within the new People Plan to be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in November 2025.</p>

VALUING EVERYONE'S CONTRIBUTION THROUGH CREATING MODERN, FLEXIBLE EMPLOYMENT PACKAGES

ACTIONS	YEAR	STATUS	PREVIOUS UPDATE November 2024	CURRENT UPDATE June 2025
Enhance employee benefits scheme further	2024-25	In progress	Further salary sacrifice benefits are to be added to the benefits/wellbeing Hub by the end of 2024. Implementation of this is currently being worked on by HR and OD and Payroll. The Council's benefits provider is coming to Orkney in November 2024 to deliver roadshow sessions.	A new cyclescheme was added to the benefits platform to replace the existing one and investigation of a number of other areas of potential salary sacrifice have been investigated with a report being considered by CLT in May or June 2025. Steadily increasing numbers of employees are creating accounts and using the Wellbeing Hub.
Investors in People (IIP) Review	2024-25	N/A	This action was incorrectly identified in the initial Plan as for 2024-25. The review only takes place after three years from initial assessment so this will occur in late 2025 through to early 2026 and be moved in the Delivery Plan accordingly.	As per previous update, this action cannot yet be undertaken. Whether to continue with Investors in People will be a matter under consideration within the People Plan review.
Second annual recognition event	2024-25	In progress	June has been set as the time for the annual staff awards and recognition event so the second event will take place in June 2025.	The annual recognition event is scheduled for 20 June 2025. Award winners will be decided by end of May 2025.

APPENDIX 1 – PROGRESS AGAINST DELIVERY PLAN PRIORITIES

ACTIONS	YEAR	STATUS	PREVIOUS UPDATE November 2024	CURRENT UPDATE June 2025
Explore options to modernise Terms and Conditions	2024-25	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.	This remains an area of focus particularly within OHAC, working within the board framework we already have on terms and conditions. This is an area under consideration within the People Plan review and what is realistically achievable within financial constraints.