
To: Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

On: 31 March 2021

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: People Strategy: 'Our People Our Future 2021-2026'

1. Summary

- 1.1 In 2020 a review of our current approaches to organisational development and workforce planning was commenced with services and trade unions, which highlighted potential areas for improvements to be considered.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from members to implement the council's new draft People Strategy attached at **Appendix 1**, following our review.
- 1.3 The strategy will replace the council's Organisational Development Strategy 2016-2019 and Workforce Plan 2017-2020 and will integrate our people vision and workforce planning activity into a single people strategy called 'Our People Our Future'.
- 1.4 The strategy is a 5-year framework, with 3 clear strategic outcomes, supported by range of organisational development and workforce planning activities which will be delivered over the lifecycle of the strategy. **However, our immediate priorities over the next 1-2 years will focus primarily on supporting the workforce in the response to and recovery from COVID19 as detailed at section 5 of this report.**
- 1.5 Longer-term this strategy will support the continuation of the council's transformation plans, ensuring we can adapt our ways of working to meet the challenges of the future.

It aims to improve the workplace culture and staff experience by creating the right condition for change, to deliver future modernised and sustainable services. It commits to the development of our workforce, where they know what is expected of them, what support is available and have the right value-adding skills to reach their full potential in delivering the council's vision for Renfrewshire.

- 1.6 Progress will be reviewed annually, allowing our priorities to adapt as necessary. In line with the approach being adopted across the suite of strategic plans operated by the Council, it is intended that once we are beyond the immediate priorities that will emerge from the COVID19 recovery and renewal phase, the People Strategy will be re-aligned strategically as appropriate with the new Council Plan in 2022/23.
- 1.7 This strategy was developed in consultation with our trade unions and internal stakeholders and we will continue to engage with both as we move through our implementation phases.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members:
 - Approve the new People Strategy as appended; and
 - Note that an annual progress report will be presented to members.

3. Background

- 3.1 The council has been implementing organisational development and workforce planning strategies successfully for over a decade, supporting our workforce to adapt and transform in response to pressures in public sector funding and the changing needs and expectations of the public.
- 3.2 In 2020, a review of our current approaches to organisational development and workforce planning was commenced, which highlighted potential areas where improvements could be made. The review highlighted our current strategies applied a "one size fits all" generic approach to workforce priorities, which did not take account of diverse service needs or where they were in their change journey. Nor did it take account of the unexpected development of the current COVID19 pandemic.
- 3.3 Our strategies have always focused front and centre on investing in and supporting our people to be the best they can be and reach their full potential. Over the last 12 months the dedication and commitment of all our staff was particularly clear to see which enabled the council to play its part in successfully responding to COVID19, whatever the challenge, and in doing so with care, passion, and pride.

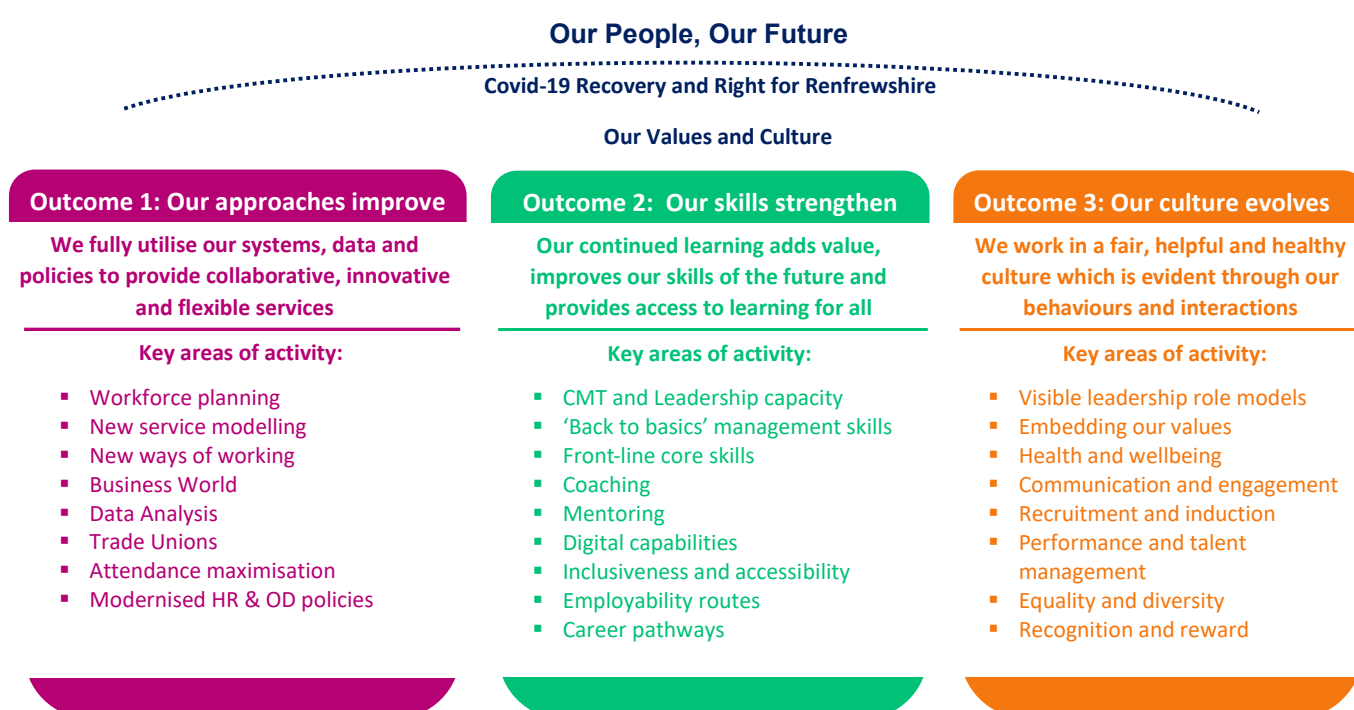
- 3.4 Our staff have been supported all through COVID19 with employment guidance, communications and health and well-being advice from both the council and trade unions and have demonstrated their skills, resilience, and our new values, showing compassion where the needs of others, especially our most vulnerable, come first - every time. They have shown public service at its very best, at a time of considerable challenge, risk, and uncertainty.
- 3.5 These challenges are expected to continue in the coming years and therefore our new strategy will help strengthen workforce resilience in areas such as:
- Supporting the ongoing health, safety and well-being of our staff living and working under COVID19 restrictions, particularly focusing on physical and mental health.
 - Developing our people to work in different ways post COVID19 and adapt to delivering leaner and more efficient services, using digital technology where appropriate, in response to the changing needs and expectations of the public.
 - Improving our approach to workforce planning by deploying our workforce in times of need to where they will make the biggest impact, where all staff have opportunities to develop new skills, reach their full potential and feel motivated and positive about being part of the council.
 - Ensuring staff feel better supported to do their jobs and are more empowered to be innovative, find solutions and are more involved in local decision making in their service.
 - Improving collaborative working to better achieve common goals for Renfrewshire.

4 Our new People Strategy: 'Our People Our Future 2021-2026'

- 4.1 This new strategy integrates our organisational development vision and workforce planning activities into a single people strategy, with a different approach to ownership and governance of progress over the strategy lifecycle. It demonstrates the council's ongoing commitment to strategic organisational development and future focused workforce planning across all services and provides a clear link in supporting the Council Plan, Right for Renfrewshire Programme, Service Improvement Plans, Best Value Audit criteria and embedding the council values in the decisions we take day-to-day.
- 4.2 A revised approach to the implementation of this strategy shifts the focus from the previous action-centred "one size fits all" approach, driven corporately, to a more flexible approach, owned by and embedded within services and fully aligned with their needs.

- 4.3 The strategy will be driven using a strategic outcomes framework (**figure 1 below**) with suggested activity which will be delivered over the lifecycle of this strategy, providing services with the flexibility to decide what is the priority for them and what will have the biggest impact in line with their needs and council priorities.
- 4.4 Outcomes, activities, and associated risks will be supported by a project management approach and integrated and delivered through Service Improvement Plans. HR & OD will maintain overall corporate responsibility for delivery of this strategy, maintain oversight of progress and work with services to provide regular updates to the Corporate Management Team and Members.

Figure 1 – Strategic Outcomes Framework (to be delivered over the lifecycle of the strategy)



- 4.5 By delivering activities under each of these outcomes over the lifecycle of this strategy, we will know we are making a difference when:

Outcome 1 - Our people are deployed to deliver efficient, modernised services with the right skills to utilise systems, technology, and policies in the most effective way. Managers and staff will regularly access data to benefit improved service delivery and inform workforce decisions

Outcome 2 - Our people have access to a flexible suite of learning and development programmes aligned to the demands identified in services, which enable staff to develop the right value-adding skills that will support service change and transformation.

Outcome 3 - Our people are empowered, inspired, and encouraged through recognition and our shared values to find new ways of working that improve service user and staff experiences. Staff suggestions and feedback are actioned, and staff feel valued in a safe, inclusive, and healthy working environment.

5 2021/22 immediate priorities in response to COVID19

5.1 It is recognised that as the council remains in a state of ongoing response to COVID19, the initial phase of this strategy's implementation will focus solely on supporting staff in the "here and now" responding to and recovering from the pandemic. This will be the minimum to be achieved over the course of the next 2 years. Where possible and as capacity allows, progress will continue to be made on wider longer-term objectives.

5.2 3 key priority areas have been identified to support staff living and working during and post the pandemic. Work has already started on these priorities and specific activities to be progressed under each of these priorities are detailed on pages 6-8 of the strategy.

1. The health and well-being of our staff. The health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce remains the top priority for the council, supporting staff living and working under COVID19 restrictions. The major focus over the last 12 months has been on protecting our staff and communities by ensuring safe working practices were in place to prevent the spread of the virus. Over the next 12 months, we will place a much wider focus on health, wellbeing, and attendance levels of staff beyond COVID19 measures, by progressing activities to support and improve the physical and mental health of our workforce.

2. Exploring new ways of working post COVID19. As COVID19 restrictions are removed, the ways in which we work are unlikely to return to how we worked before the pandemic. New ways of working were implemented urgently in response to the lockdown restrictions and have worked well over a prolonged period and therefore staff expectations on how, when and where they work are likely to have changed. The future ways in which we work will form part of a much wider programme of work for the council, commencing in the summer of 2021, and will consider as an immediate priority supporting the transition as restrictions are eased and moving forward beyond the initial return opportunities to think differently about how the Council will operate longer term, including how we use workplaces, office spaces, equipment, technology and the benefits for our workforce.

3. Building on our staff communication and engagement. The council has invested significantly in providing weekly, clear and accessible communications to staff throughout the COVID19 pandemic. Staff have welcomed these updates and we will continue to build on this success and explore new ways of fostering a culture that empowers a well-informed and engaged workforce.

Positive relationships and engagement with our Trade Unions has been essential in maintaining a safe and health working environment.

6. The approach to successful implementation

- 6.1 The success of the overall strategy is dependent and will be measured against the achievement of its 3 strategic outcomes. Delivery of the outcomes will be reliant on strong leadership, robust governance, utilising appropriate resources and risk mitigation.
- 6.2 With support from HR&OD, the flexibility of the approach to implementation will allow services to monitor and review progress and adjust focus as necessary to address any organisational priorities which arise. This will increase council resilience by ensuring services are able to quickly respond to change and emerging challenges.
- 6.3 Services will be supported to take ownership of the implementation of activities under each outcome and will:
- Be ambassadors for this strategy across their service and champion our people vision.
 - Own activities that are integrated into Service Improvement Plans and provided updates to CMT and Council Board as part of the agreed reporting cycle.
 - Incorporate the 3 outcomes into their service risk management plans and arrange for regular internal audit/health checks over the lifecycle of this strategy.
 - Ensure adequate resources are allocated to deliver outcome activities.
- 6.4 HR & OD will take overall corporate responsibility for the delivery of this strategy, focussing immediately on the 3 priority areas as detailed in section 5.2 of this report. The team will have corporate oversight of progress, working with services to provide regular updates to the council's corporate management team, members, and trade unions.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - The Council's ongoing financial sustainability is dependent on the ability of the Council to transform and modernise services.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - As outlined in the report.
3. **Community Planning** – None.
4. **Legal** – None

- 5. **Property/Assets** – None
- 6. **Information Technology** – As outlined in the report.

7. **Equality & Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

- 8. **Health & Safety** - As outlined in the report.
- 9. **Procurement** – None.
- 10. **Risk** – None.
- 11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
- 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – None.
- 13. **Climate Risk** – None.

List of Background Papers

None

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Our People Our Future

2021-2026

Rethinking, reshaping and
investing in our workforce of
tomorrow

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Message from our Chief Executive

Our workforce is at the heart of everything we do and I am immensely proud of the dedication and commitment they have shown by continuing to deliver essential council services in response to the COVID19 pandemic, and in an environment where change has been constant over the last decade, due to significant financial challenges.

We will continue to face these challenges in the coming years, with some difficult decisions to be made, but now, even more than ever, this strategy will help us to respond and embrace new opportunities that arise. I recognise that the needs and expectations of our staff and communities continue to change, that's why I believe it's so important that we continue to invest in the wellbeing and development of every member of staff to respond to future challenges. **'Our People, Our Future'** is the council's 5-year people strategy, which builds on the successes of previous people and workforce plans. It's will be reviewed annually, allowing our ambitious change journey and priorities to adapt as necessary in the coming years and will be strategically aligned with the new Council Plan in 2022/23.

Our immediate 1 to 2-year focus will be on supporting staff in the response to and recovery from COVID19. Longer-term, it will support the continuation of the council's transformation plans by involving our staff in adapting the ways we work to improve workplace experience and in the delivery of more efficient, effective and modernised services. Strategic workforce planning, supported by a project management approach, will ensure we have the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place to do this. The approach to this strategy was developed in consultation with our Trade Unions and internal stakeholders and we will continue to engage with our workforce during implementation to identify development opportunities on the bespoke skills and resources that our staff need across diverse services.

I'm fully committed to investing in the development of every member of staff to ensure they have a good experience at work day-to-day, know what is expected of them, and the right value-adding skills to deliver the council's vision for Renfrewshire.

Sandra Black, Chief Executive



Supporting our council vision

Our last 12 months

2020 was a uniquely challenging year and our staff helped protect and guide the council and our communities through this public health crisis, which unfortunately, may continue for some time yet. Trade Unions and management teams have also worked tirelessly together to create a safe and healthy working environment for all.

Over the last 12 months the commitment of our staff, particularly on the front line, was clear to see and enabled the council to play its part in fighting this virus, whatever the challenge, and in doing so with care, passion and pride. Our staff demonstrated our values, showing compassion where the needs of others - especially the most vulnerable - come first - every time. They have shown public service at its very best, at a time of considerable challenge, risk and uncertainty.

The council is very aware of the toll this pandemic is having on the many aspects of staff lives - both work and personal. So many colleagues are going the extra mile - have volunteered for new roles; helped design and deliver new services; and sacrificed personal time to work extended hours - day and night. It is the dedication of our staff that has provided a lifeline to so many - keeping people safe, supporting children and young people at school, and making sure people are able to work and earn a living.

When we emerge from this time and return to some degree of normality, hopefully all our staff and communities can reclaim the aspects of everyday life that mean so much to them, such as, spending time with family and friends. In the meantime, the council is committed to supporting and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of its most important asset, its staff, so the first priority of this strategy will be to continue to focus on this in 2021/22.

Our Council Plan

This strategy supports the vision for Renfrewshire, set out in the Council Plan 2017-2022 "[Thriving People, Connected Communities](#)" a call to action for staff, local people, business and communities to work together in achieving 5 key strategic outcomes.

The existing Council Plan was developed before COVID19, and therefore, our approach and vision must continue to adapt in response to the pandemic. The council is actively developing financial, economic and social renewal recovery plans, which will refocus our activities on recovery from the virus before a new Council Plan is launched in 2022/23. In turn, a similar approach will be adopted to the initial phase of this strategy's implementation - by focusing on **supporting staff in the "here and now" – still living and working in the midst of the pandemic.**

Our immediate priorities

Our first 1-2 years of this 5-year strategy will focus on supporting staff and services in **3 priority areas** (see pages 6-8 for details):

- ❖ **Health & wellbeing:** **we will** ensure staff wellbeing remains our number one priority in our response to COVID19, with a renewed focus on supporting staff attendance levels, particularly physical and mental health supports.
- ❖ **New ways of working:** **we will** consider new operating models and emerging technology to help deliver services in new ways post pandemic, which meet both public and staff expectations.
- ❖ **Staff communication and engagement:** **we will** build on the successful staff communication and engagement methods employed during the pandemic, fostering a culture that supports and empowers staff resulting in a well-informed and motivated workforce.

Our workforce response to COVID19

The skills, performance, commitment and values of our workforce have never been more evident than in the response to COVID19.

An emergency response

In March 2020, our staff quickly adapted and responded to the challenge that COVID19 presented. Essential services adapted and continued throughout lockdown with an incredible compassionate response from staff demonstrating a true commitment to our communities.

Approximately **75%** of our workforce are on the frontline and have continued to provide essential services daily including: home care, waste, facilities management, teaching and early years – these are only some to mention; with **25%** of staff working from home.

A team was quickly set up to take calls from staff and managers reporting symptoms of COVID19 and guidance issued for staff on being compliant with safe practices, both in the workplace, and when out and about in their communities.

There was an immediate need to focus efforts on supporting staff to work in different ways - using new equipment, processes and new technology. Importantly, we provided staff with the most up to date government information on restrictions, preventing transmission of this virus by keeping our workplaces, services and communities safe.

New ways of working – during COVID19

As restrictions on home and working life were implemented throughout the pandemic – relaxed and re-introduced - we have entered a prolonged phase of staff living and working in new ways and responding to COVID19 positively in a collective effort to minimise transmission of the virus through their actions.

Frontline services have adapted the ways in which they work, with council workplaces and schools subject to careful risk assessments and robust health and safety measures in place to allow vital services to continue. With staff working at home remaining the case for the

foreseeable future, staff and managers have been supported to help colleagues struggling with the lack of face to face contact – which for some is very challenging. Our focus to date has been to support staff, no matter where they are working, or what they do.

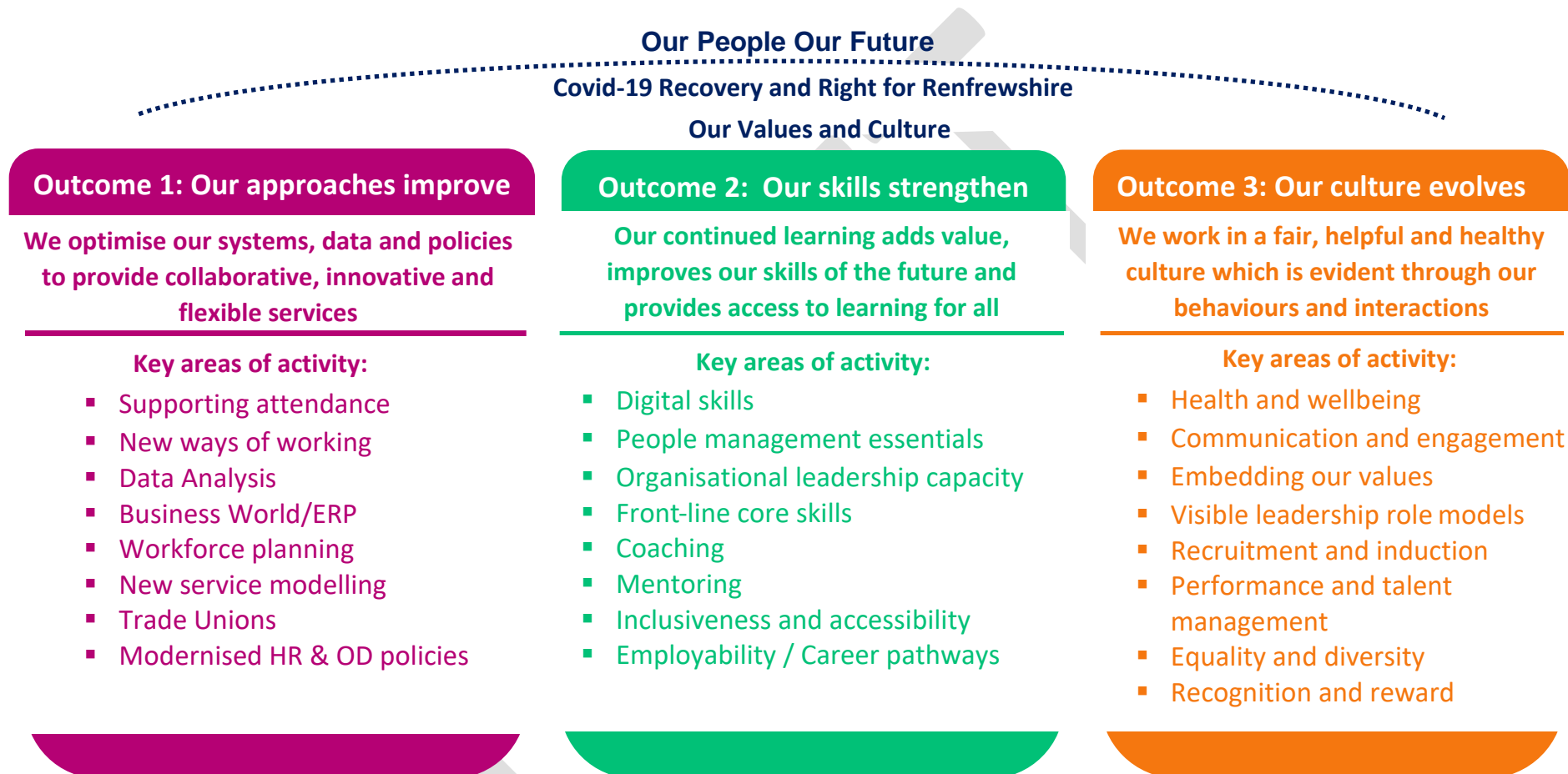
Supporting our workforce

Our priority has been, and will always be, the wellbeing of our staff which also has the knock-on effect of protecting local people and communities. Supports provided in response to COVID19 include:

- ❖ **Trade Unions:** commitment and support in engaging with management and staff to create safe and healthy workplaces.
- ❖ **Risk assessments and guidance:** detailed risk assessments are in place for all our services and safe working guides to support staff, no matter what their role or work location.
- ❖ **COVID19 data and monitoring:** analysis of data, cases and clusters of COVID19 in our workforce, with careful monitoring and early intervention when required.
- ❖ **Supporting attendance:** protecting the clinically vulnerable in our workforce and allowing staff to work where possible in adapted or redeployed roles.
- ❖ **Staff communication and engagement:** encouraging staff to take time to look out for people and their own health and wellbeing e.g. taking annual leave, getting exercise, taking time to keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues.
- ❖ **Mental health:** access to professional supports, guidance developed and signposting for managers and staff to recognise signs of mental health supports needs for colleagues.
- ❖ **Guidance and training:** on working in and managing virtual/remote teams - using video conferencing effectively and adapting existing training to a virtual format – making it accessible.
- ❖ **Access to equipment:** staff working at home have access to office equipment and ICT kit to improve their experience at home, with DSE assessments to ensure their home environment is safe.

Our strategic framework

‘Our People Our Future’ is different to previous strategies as it integrates our organisational development vision and our workforce planning activities into 3 strategic outcomes, **which will be delivered over the lifecycle of this strategy.** **Appendix 1** provides details of each area of activity in the framework below.



We remain in a state of “emergency response” to COVID19 and therefore the initial phase of this strategy’s implementation will focus on supporting staff in the “here and now” responding to and recovering from the pandemic.

Our immediate 3 priority areas in 2021/22 are detailed below.

Our immediate focus in 2021/22

Health and wellbeing

The health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce remains the top priority for the council, supporting staff living and working under COVID19 restrictions. The major focus over the last 12 months has been on protecting our staff and communities by ensuring safe working practices were in place to prevent the spread of the virus. Over the next 12 months, we will place a much wider focus on health, wellbeing and attendance levels of staff beyond COVID19 measures, by progressing activities to support and improve the physical and mental health of our workforce.

Immediate areas of activity:

- ❖ **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-22:** we will review the impact of the current strategy against the pandemic response to inform the development of a new strategy in 2022.
- ❖ **Review of Occupational Health and Employee Assistance provision:** we will immediately ensure that the services provided by these contracts support staff in the “**here and now**” exploring new accessible methods of support using our learning through the pandemic.
- ❖ **Organisational wellness:** we will carry out an organisational health check that will assess the wellbeing of our workforce, both frontline and homeworking on mental health, physical health and lifestyle including, nutrition, exercise, quality sleep, self-checks/actions, alcohol consumption, loneliness and isolation supports. We will appoint a new dedicated Wellbeing Officer to build on the health check results and lead an intensified drive of wellbeing activities across all services.
- ❖ **Increased psychological & musculoskeletal support:** we will target known hotspots areas within services and provide more bespoke support where it is needed most, focusing on frontline and homeworkers.
- ❖ **Mental health – promoting self-care:** we will launch new training and awareness across all staff groups, covering topics including: the causes and impact of stress and self-care “in the moment” and longer-term personal resilience techniques. We will introduce a staff Mental Health Forum and promote the work of Mental Health First Aiders to improve opportunities for staff to talk freely and openly about mental health and seek support.
- ❖ **Improving attendance:** we will evaluate our supporting attendance end-to-end processes to support improvements in attendance levels. We will review how we use and analyse data to ensure targeted interventions improve attendance by robust scrutiny. We will review and implement a change in our policy and training, using learning from the past to strengthen expectations, accountability and champion new ways of thinking, where everyone understands the impact their attendance has on the council’s performance to create a positive shift in culture.

Our immediate focus in 2021/22

New ways of working - post pandemic

As COVID19 restrictions are removed, the ways in which we work are unlikely to return to how we worked before the pandemic. New ways of working were implemented urgently in response to the lockdown restrictions and have worked well over a prolonged period and therefore staff expectations on how, when and where they work are likely to have changed. The future ways in which we work will form part of a much wider programme of work for the council, commencing in the summer of 2021, and will consider as an immediate priority supporting the transition as restrictions are eased and moving forward beyond the initial return opportunities to think differently about how the Council will operate longer term, including how we use workplaces, office spaces, equipment, technology and the benefits for our workforce.

Immediate areas of activity:

- ❖ **Digital Strategy:** we will implement the priorities agreed in the council's Digital Strategy to equip staff to work smarter, understanding where to invest in skills and training, reducing digital barriers/exclusion. We will promote digital leaders as role models to lead by example and change the appetite for digital working. We will introduce Digital Champions to provide peer support and build digital confidence across the workforce.
- ❖ **Our future working models:** we will engage with services, staff and Trade Unions to explore the opportunities new ways of working post-pandemic including the benefits hybrid working may bring, learning from our experiences so far. We will consider supporting technology, estates and facilities costs, employee work-life balance, inclusion and employment contracts.
- ❖ **Working culture:** we will support managers and staff with training on embedding a new working culture - how to adapt, work and manage differently in a post pandemic workplace.
- ❖ **Employee lifecycle:** we will review each stage of the employee lifecycle starting with recruitment and induction to exiting the council, ensuring necessary changes in policy and practice are made to accommodate new ways of working.
- ❖ **Employability:** we will work closely with economic development colleagues to promote the council's social and economic priorities by embedding employability programmes into service workforce plans, our policies and processes supporting routes into employment creating a more inclusive workforce.

Our immediate focus in 2021/22

Staff communication and engagement

The council has invested significantly in providing weekly, clear and accessible communications to staff throughout the COVID19 pandemic. Staff have welcomed these updates and we will continue to build on this success and explore new ways of fostering a culture that empowers a well-informed and engaged workforce. Positive relationships and engagement with our Trade Unions has been essential in maintaining a safe and health working environment.

Immediate areas of activity:

- ❖ **Embedding Our Values:** we will continue to acknowledge the commitment and values staff have shown throughout the pandemic and build on this journey of creating a positive and healthy workplace culture. We will train our leaders in role modelling our values and bringing these to life for staff in their services; and train staff on our values, what is expected of all staff and to challenge behaviour that is out of step with our values. We will embed our values across our employee lifecycle with Recruitment and Induction processes being a priority.
- ❖ **Staff communications:** we will build on positively received staff communications by continuing to provide up-to-date information on Covid-19, safety, wellbeing and new working conditions as they are agreed. We will review current approaches and explore new technologies to improve our communications with staff, so that managers are supported with the right tools to communicate council messages differently and effectively to frontline and remote teams.
- ❖ **Staff engagement:** we will review our current approaches to staff engagement and explore opportunities for forums to be established, that improve staff voice, where staff can discuss and feedback their views and ideas on the priorities of this strategy and how they think they should be implemented.
- ❖ **Manager training:** we will provide managers with training and guidance to support and empower them in providing clear, accessible and appropriate communications to their teams, adapting messages to suit different staff groups, whilst being aware of staff with numeracy or literacy support needs.
- ❖ **Organisational health check:** we will carry out a staff health check by summer 2021 to build on last year's survey results, to assess how the workforce are feeling now a year into COVID19 and to inform any further necessary supports required.

Our workforce strategies supporting recovery from COVID19

Delivering the priorities of this strategy alongside other key council strategies and programmes will support recovery from COVID19 and longer-term transformation plans.

New ways of working and transformation

As COVID19 restrictions are removed and we move into a recovery phase, our operating models will be different to how we operated before the pandemic. We will engage staff, Trade Unions and services in considering how we will work, learning from recent experiences and using digital technology to support the delivery of improved services and staff experience at work. Models will not only consider where staff work, but when they work, and a flexible and innovative approach to this will be fostered and promoted.

“**Right for Renfrewshire**” will continue to be implemented, the council’s long-term transformational change programme, which will provide leaner, modernised and sustainable services in response to the changing needs and expectations of communities. Right for Renfrewshire, however, will not impact every part of every service, other transformation programmes in services will also ensure we respond pro-actively to new opportunities that will modernise services. Our staff will be critical in the delivery of sustainable services and we will empower staff and use their existing knowledge in service design.

Workforce planning

As Right for Renfrewshire and the transformation of services continues to progress, a renewed approach to workforce planning will be future focused on the necessary change in the shape and size of the workforce. Managers will be trained in workforce planning skills and tools to ensure it is embedded during service reviews and service planning day-to-day, aligned to financial savings and integrated into service improvement plans.

Our workforce planning outcomes and what we will do over the 5-year lifecycle of this strategy are detailed at **Appendix 2**.

Digital Strategy

The council’s [Digital Strategy](#), is closely aligned with this people strategy, and will build digital confidence across our workforce by transforming the skills, knowledge and capabilities of our staff in using technology effectively.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy

Our [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-22](#) will be reviewed in 2021/22 to transform our approach in protecting and supporting the health and wellbeing of staff – with key learning from the pandemic response and recovery periods. There will be a deeper dive into the reasons for absence and much more focused activity in supporting physical and mental health, to prevent absence and improve attendance levels.

Communications and Engagement Strategy

‘Our People, Our Future’, will align closely with council’s the **Internal Communications and Engagement Strategy** objectives to encourage staff to embrace our values and vision for the workforce by working together within a supportive and positive environment. We will engage with managers and staff on improving communication skills, methods and strengthen employee voice.

Our Values

We are **fair**...We are **helpful**...We are great **collaborators**...We value **learning**.

[Our Values](#) were developed through staff engagement in summer 2019 by asking staff what is important to them. Specific feedback included, improving how we manage and deploy resources; giving more staff empowerment; simplifying processes; improving access to systems and technology; and better communication with staff. This informed our vision and outcomes for our workforce, which are integrated throughout in this strategy. Embedding Our Values day-to-day in decisions and interactions will create a positive and healthy organisational culture.

Measuring our success

We will deliver the priorities of this strategy and measure our success using strong leadership, robust governance, appropriate resources and risk mitigation. Our flexible approach will strengthen resilience by allowing services to adjust focus as necessary and monitor and review progress, addressing any emerging organisational priorities which arise.

Leadership / Governance

- This strategy will be established as a key workstream in the next phase of Right for Renfrewshire.
- **Senior management teams will:**
 - Be ambassadors for this strategy across their service and champion our people vision.
 - Own activities that are integrated into Service Delivery Plans and updates will be provided to CMT and Council Board as part of the agreed reporting cycle.
 - Incorporate the outcomes into their service risk management plans and arrange for regular internal audit/health checks over the lifecycle of this strategy.
 - Ensure adequate resources are allocated to deliver outcome priorities.
 - HR & OD will take a strategic overview progress report to CMT and Council Board.
 - HR & OD will engage regularly with Trade Unions to provide progress updates on implementation.

Resources

- **Services will:**
 - Allocate sufficient resources to deliver their service and corporate priorities under the 3 strategic outcomes of this strategy.
 - Develop a local action plan in line with the priorities – **pages 6-8**.
- **HR & OD will:**
 - Take corporate responsibility for the delivery of this strategy and overall corporate oversight of progress, working with services to provide regular updates to CMT/Council.
 - Reconfigure its current resources to provide specialist advice in developing local plans, solutions and bespoke activities that support corporate and service priorities.
 - Support services to explore opportunities for potential funding streams or shared resources.
 - Engage regularly with Trade Unions to provide progress updates on implementation.

Risk

- Risks associated with the delivery of corporate and service priorities will be detailed in service registers. Risks will also be detailed in the corporate risk register.
- **Senior management teams will ensure:**
 - Risks are clearly understood and reviewed on an annual basis.
 - They fully support and promote risk management within their areas of responsibility.
 - Staff are equipped and supported to manage risk well and those involved in the delivery of this strategy should have basic risk management training.
 - Risks are managed by taking account of budget planning processes and service improvement plans through to risk registers.

3 strategic outcomes and activity

The 3 outcomes below provide a strategic framework of suggested activity, under which, services have the flexibility to decide which is most important and will have the biggest impact in line with their specific needs and council priorities. HR & OD, working relevant partners, will support services to identify and progress **both corporate and local actions** in line with the framework below. HR & OD will drive and take overall responsibility for corporate activities.



What we will do

Supporting attendance

A range of supporting attendance at work initiatives will be implemented, along with a new policy approach, maximising staff availability whilst reducing absence costs through early intervention and clinical support.

New ways of working

Over the life cycle of this strategy, the ways in which we work will change significantly and future operating models will be designed to deliver services that meet public and staff expectations. Workforce operating models will consider the current council estate portfolio and recognise blended home/work base models, roles where it is essential that staff attend their workplace and the mental health benefits of interaction will colleagues. Models will not only consider where staff work, but when they work, and a flexible and innovative approach to this will be fostered and promoted.

Data Analysis and Business World

There will be a focus on making better use of data and enhancing the self-service capabilities of staff and managers. This will allow managers to

use Business World/ERP to its full capability and utilise the data at their disposal to improve service delivery. Workforce data analysis will inform resource deployment decision making. Staff across the council will have access through multiple channels to their own information through self-service, where processes are fast and streamlined.

Workforce planning

As services transform, a renewed approach to workforce planning will focus on the future shape, size and the deployment of workforce skills in line with service and council demands. Managers will be trained in workforce planning skills and tools to ensure it is embedded during service reviews and day-to-day service planning, aligned to financial savings and integrated into service improvement plans.

HR & OD will provide professional advice during specific phases of service design and modelling, including, job evaluation, job outlines VR/VER and redeployment in consultation with trade unions.

As services are so diverse, their needs will be different. Therefore HR & OD will work with services and partners to provide bespoke solutions to service

workforce challenges and staff development needs including recruitment campaigns, succession planning, career pathways, access to skills development, contracts and new ways of working.

Trade Unions

We will continue to work closely with our Trade Unions to ensure the ideas, views, knowledge and experience of our workforce are listened to, considered and valued in our decision making.

Modernised HR & OD policies

New and revised HR & OD policies will create the right supportive foundations to ensure they adequately empower and support the level of organisational and cultural change required. This will include incorporating our values and a focus on flexibility, health, wellbeing, diversity and inclusiveness.

We will know we are making a difference when:

Our people are deployed to deliver efficient, modernised services with the right skills to optimise systems, technology and policies in the most effective way. Managers and staff regularly access data to benefit improved service delivery and inform workforce decisions.

What we will do:

Digital skills

Digital confidence will be built across the whole workforce by equipping staff with new knowledge and skills to use technology effectively - aligned to the 5 digital pillars in the council's [Digital Strategy](#). We will work with services and partners to identify and close current and future digital skills gaps.

People management essentials

There will be a key focus on strengthening the base skills that every manager needs to do their job effectively. A suite of flexible **learning** resources called "people management essentials" will be available to anyone with line management responsibility.

Organisational leadership capacity

Flexible and innovative leadership programmes will equip senior leaders (including CMT) and managers with new skills to lead and deliver transformation programmes successfully, making a real impact on how they inspire their teams to embed change in their services. Bespoke needs-based training will be delivered in **collaboration** with both internal and external partners.

Front-line core skills

Work will continue with services in **collaboration** with Trade Unions and staff to develop a range of bespoke, flexible and accessible **learning** resources, particularly aimed at **helping** to enhance the skills and interactions of our frontline staff.

Coaching

Managers are increasingly focused on delivering projects which often require them to work and think differently when reacting to emerging challenges. A coaching service will **help** leaders and managers to develop appropriate responses to current real-life issues, whilst strengthening self-awareness and leadership capacity.

Mentoring

Building on the successes of our previous award winning and cross organisational mentoring programmes, we will use our **learning** and launch another cohort of this in-demand programme, with a range of internal and external partners. We will also use the wealth of experience held by previous mentors and mentees to launch an internal programme to

enhance **learning** and grow our own talent to support succession planning.

Accessibility

Barriers to skills development will be reduced by working with services, trade unions, underrepresented groups and staff to provide **fair** and inclusive access to **learning** at flexible times and by using multiple methods of delivery.

Employability and Career Pathways

We will build on existing strong **collaborations** in place, improving routes into employment for disadvantaged groups, such as, DFN Project SEARCH. Internships, work placements, foundation, modern and graduate apprenticeships will support the growth of career pathways and **learning** opportunities, making career progression routes clearer.

We will know we are making a difference when:

Our people have access to a flexible suite of learning and development programmes aligned to demands identified in services, which enable staff to develop the right value-adding skills that will support services and the Right for Renfrewshire transformation programme.

What we will do:

Health and wellbeing

Health and wellbeing activities aligned to national campaigns will continue to be our single most important focus in **collaboration** with our Occupational Health, Employee Assistance providers and third sector partners. A particular focus on supporting attendance, staff physical and mental wellbeing will aligned with the council's [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-22](#).

Communication and engagement

We will focus on supporting managers with communication and engagement approaches with their teams. This will help to strengthen employee voice in decision making, increase motivation levels and make all messaging more clear, concise and accessible, aligned to the [Internal Communication and Engagement Strategy](#).

Embedding our values

“Living the Values” **learning** and resources will be available in a variety of methods and be accessible across all service areas. A suite of bespoke training and resources will bring our values to life for staff in their service. The training will start the cultural change journey.

Visible leadership role models

Successful delivery of our recovery and transformation programmes will depend on inspirational leadership driving positive and healthy cultural change. Our leaders will be visible, demonstrate the values through their own behaviours and interactions and **help** staff to identify with these.

Recruitment and induction

Innovative methods and applications will be used in attracting and onboarding talent which promotes our brand, values and behaviours. Targeted **fair** and inclusive campaigns and methods will be used to recruit future talent from a diverse candidate pool.

Performance and talent

Performance and behaviours of staff will be managed through the council's appraisal process and professional registration requirements. These set out the expected standards required and supports available, ensuring all staff can reach their full potential. Talent will be identified and managed strategically to deploy skills to where they are required the most.

Equality and diversity

Equality, diversity and **fairness** will be embedded through the lifecycle of the employment journey. Networking opportunities will be supported, and campaigns promoted, across the workforce for underrepresented groups. Equality information will be used to better understand underrepresentation, including progressing our ongoing actions to reduce the gender pay gap.

Recognition and reward

Recognising and rewarding the excellent work our staff do every day will be paramount in fostering a positive staff experience at work. We will implement a new benefits package to attract and retain staff and to improve wellbeing and engagement. The Living Wage will be embedded in our pay and grading structure, removing the erosion of pay scales.

We will know we are making a difference when:

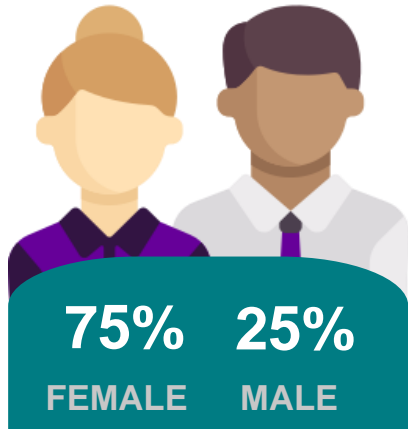
Our people are empowered, inspired and encouraged through recognition and our shared values to find new ways of working that improve service user and staff experiences. Staff suggestions and feedback are actioned, and staff feel valued in a safe, inclusive and healthy working environment.

Our available workforce

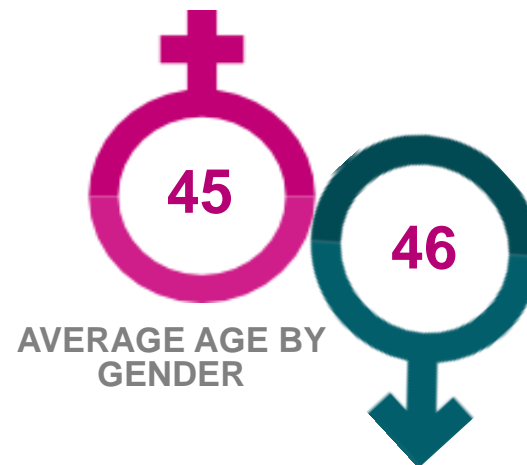
8461
HEAD COUNT

7,029
(FTE)

● COUNCIL DECEMBER 2020

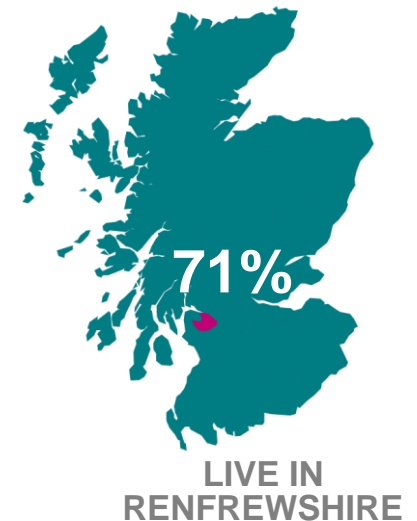


GRD
11%
GRADE ACCOUNTING
FOR THE LARGEST
NUMBER OF STAFF

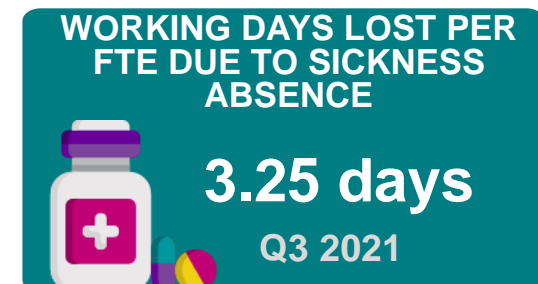
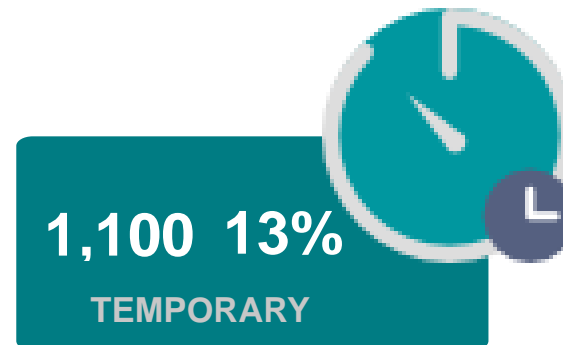
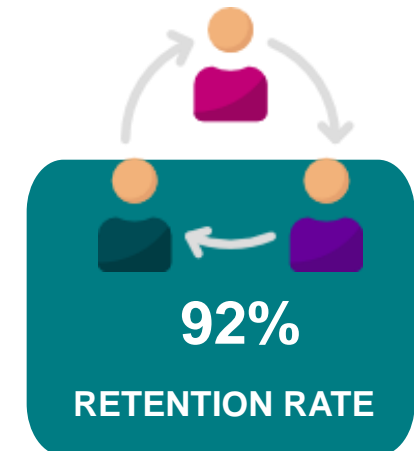
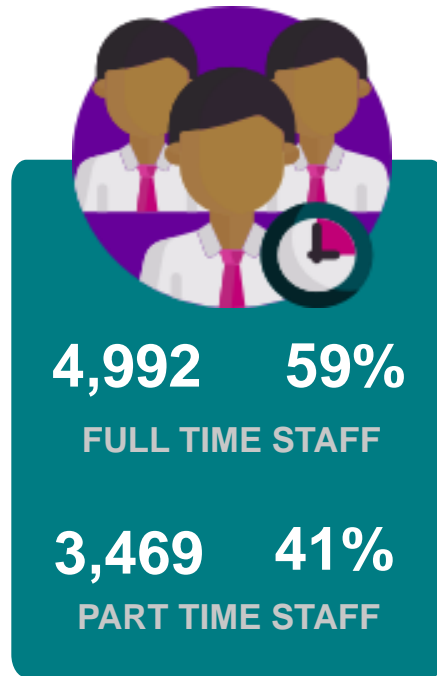


£ **25,370**
AVERAGE SALARY

£ **GENDER PAY GAP**
£0.72 per hour in
favour of males



COUNCIL DECEMBER 2020



What our workforce data tells us

Our current workforce data on pages 5-6, highlight some future workforce planning risks, which are detailed below, and the steps the council will take to address these using this strategy.

Headcount

As at December 2020, the council employs a headcount of **8,461** staff **7,029** full time equivalent (FTE). This is an increase of **c.836 (377 FTE)** staff over the last 5 years, primarily due to funded Statutory Government initiatives, such as the introduction of 1140 hours free childcare, Health and Social Care Partnership Integration, Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Fund, Glasgow and Clyde Valley City Deal and more recently, the council's response to COVID-19.

Age

Our average age is broadly reflective of the Renfrewshire population and Scotland's average as a whole, with **48%** of Renfrewshire's population aged 45 years and over. The council's age profile has important implications in relation to workforce planning. The following table details the current % of staff in each age category as at 2020 versus the projected age profile of the same staff in 2025. The data clearly shows that more than **51% of the council's workforce will be aged 51**

or over by 2025, mainly within areas of Children's Services and Environment and infrastructure. *Figures exclude turnover

Age Banding	Dec 2020 % age	Dec 2025 % age
16-20	0.69%	0.00%
21-30	14.17%	5.40%
31-40	22.89%	20.25%
41-50	24.17%	23.14%
51-60	30.00%	28.89%
61+	8.08%	22.33%
Grand Total	100%	100%

An ageing workforce may pose a risk to service delivery in the future, particularly in areas with specialist knowledge or niche skills, if staff in these age groups leave the council or retire early. In some service areas, voluntary severance may also present opportunities in the context of change and transformation projects to facilitate a managed reduction in the workforce. Recruitment and succession planning solutions will be explored to retain key skills, whilst implementing approaches to attract young talent into the council by using targeted recruitment campaigns and via a range of employability routes.

Gender

The gender profile is predominantly female at just over 75% and 25% male. We will

implement targeted recruitment campaigns encouraging females and males into typically gender dominated roles. We will support females in lower graded posts with opportunities to progress along career pathways, a key action in our continuing plan to reduce the council's gender pay gap.

Absence levels

With staff absence at a concerning level, to which the council have never experienced before - we will undertake a full systems review of the absence reasons, costs interventions and supporting mechanisms in place, with a view to taking urgent steps to improve attendance.

Equality Monitoring

With high levels of staff choosing not to disclose equality information. We will undertake an exercise to encourage staff to update their equality information through Business World/ERP by explaining to staff why we hold this information and what we use it for. Our equality monitoring information collected from staff will change in April 2021 in alignment with the 2021 National Census questions.

Detailed information on the council's workforce equality data can be found [here](#). **This is due to be reported in April 2021 in line with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).**

Workforce planning overview: our focus during the lifecycle of this strategy

Effective workforce planning is critical to how we evolve as a council. It will enable us to design and deliver modernised and sustainable services that meet changing public expectations and allow us to deploy staff and skills to where they are needed most.

COVID-19 accelerated new approaches to the way we work by utilising available technology and adapting service delivery through the deployment of staff to where their transferable skills were needed most. The council will build on this experience to ensure that our future workforce is more agile, adaptive and can respond to changing priorities at short notice when required. Future strategic workforce planning will explore the most effective - ways of working, processes and technology in the delivery of modernised services, that meet public and staff expectations.

The key drivers we will focus on to help shape our future workforce are:

Financial drivers

The last decade has seen the council respond to pressures in public sector funding, which has reduced the overall level of budget available to the council. We expect this to continue for the foreseeable future as the situation has

been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic and our response to this. The council will therefore continue to deliver its transformation programme and will require to take even more decisive and challenging decisions than previously, in order to fully commit to the delivery of significant financial savings, and scale of change and transformation required. Financial stability and sustainability are key organisational objectives that will provide the foundations to support the council to deliver on its strategic priorities.

Right for Renfrewshire

Our transformation programme will ensure we respond pro-actively to new opportunities that will modernise services. Managers will be trained in workforce planning best practice and this learning used in service design, ensuring service models are financially viable and sustainable. Accelerating development in digital technology and the potential it has to influence how the council operates and delivers future services will be a key consideration. Fostering new and existing relationships with our partners and especially the community empowerment agenda, will also be critical to how we evolve as a council. Right for Renfrewshire will help us meet changing public expectations and it will also allow us to meet the shifting expectations of staff by improve experiences of interacting with or

working for the council. Our staff will be critical in the design and delivery of modernised and sustainable services.

Leadership

Delivering significant transformational change will require our leaders to fundamentally rethink what we do and how we do it, in the context of public expectations, political landscapes and financial constraints. It is likely that the shape, size and skills of our future workforce will need to adapt quickly. Leadership will need to be strong, visible, visionary and not afraid of trying bold and innovative approaches. We will invest in the skills of all leaders, using a collaborative approach with a range of specialist expert partners both internally and externally.

Health and wellbeing

The health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce and improving the quality of life for all staff is, and will remain, a primary focus, including the safety, physical and mental wellbeing of all staff. We will create an awareness and understanding of effective processes and positive behaviours by our leaders, staff, contractors and visitors. Our [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-22](#) will be reviewed with a primary focus on initiatives and improving attendance at work.

Workforce planning overview: our focus during the lifecycle of this strategy

People development

Our approach to training delivery will significantly change and adapt as we engage with services, staff and trade unions to ensure it is bespoke and accessible and inclusive for all staff. We will provide training and resources in a variety of formats and channels to allow staff to access training at flexible times and in line with service needs and their own personal learning journey. It will include a blended offering using new digital technologies where appropriate and applications to make training more accessible and interactive.

Frontline workforce

There will be a renewed focus in the coming years on developing and reaching our frontline staff to ensure they are equipped with the skills needed to deliver the services of the future and can access development in the most effective ways. We will engage with frontline staff, managers and our trade unions to provide a flexible, accessible suite of training designed to the bespoke needs of services to ensure it will have the maximum impact on service delivery and the personal development needs of frontline colleagues.

Digital skills

The council's experience during the COVID-19 lockdown, showed more than ever, the increasing importance of being digitally connected in how we work, provide services and engage with our communities and staff. Our [Digital Strategy](#) will embed digital skills across all that we do to ensure that we work collaboratively and maximise the opportunities from our current systems e.g. Business World and any new emerging digital technologies, to support new ways of working and how we do business. Our digital strategy will allow us to optimise all available resources and expertise and deploy talent to where it will have the greatest impact. The digital vision is to have a digitally connected workforce with the right knowledge and skills, using technology effectively to improve our infrastructure and working culture.

Communication and Engagement

Communication by our leaders and managers, if done effectively, can be incredibly inspirational, and given the current workforce challenges we face, it will be key to delivering successful transformational change. Being a role model in demonstrating our values and engaging with staff in new ways to increase employee voice in decision making is essential. We will invest in development for our leaders at all levels to ensure they can

provide clear, accessible and appropriate communications to their teams, adapting the message to suit different staff groups. All activity will be aligned with the council's [Internal Communication and Engagement Strategy](#).

Equality and Diversity:

Equality and diversity is currently mainstreamed through council decisions and HR policies. This will continue by engagement with staff to improve the quality of our data, explore and implement opportunities to engage with underrepresented groups and identify areas for further development. Staff network groups related to disability, sexual orientation, caring, menopause and domestic abuse will be key forums for engagement with our staff. We will also continue to focus on ensuring our workforce is reflective of the communities we serve.

Trade Unions

Our Trade Unions involvement in our people plans are crucial to the overall longer-term success of this strategy. We will continue to foster a culture of openness and trust by working together to create an environment where the ideas, views, knowledge and experience of our workforce are critical in our decision making.