

Workforce Plan update 2023/ 24

Our Workforce Plan spans the duration of the Council Plan. This update provides some highlights from work done so far during 2023/24 and provides details of our areas of focus for 2024/25. Our ambition is to ensure that we have a workforce fit for the future of service delivery for Angus Council and our communities.

The nine areas of focus to ensure we achieve this are:



A strategic approach

There is positive progress to note in each area of focus. To deliver a collaborative approach across the organisation we have been developing our strategic approach to workforce planning. We have introduced quarterly workforce planning conversations over the last year where HR professionals meet with Service Leaders and Directors to discuss policy, practice and most importantly our people and what needs to happen to make sure that we are planning ahead to ensure that we have the workforce we need in the future and that our existing employees are able to meet the challenges and opportunities we will face.

Due to the ongoing financial constraints the Council faces it is essential that we are considering the design of our organisation to accommodate a shrinking workforce in the coming years operationally and strategically. The services we deliver and the way we deliver them needs to change in order to reflect the resources we have available. Our Finance and Change Plan and Workforce Plan activities are interconnected in order that we are maintaining an overview on all aspects of organisation design. We continue to review the most effective way to design, develop and implement solutions to our challenges.

Progress to note:	Plan for 24/25:
<p>A trial run of the conversations happened in summer at the end of Q1. Feedback informed development of a slightly different approach.</p> <p>Over Q1 & 2 we focused on ensuring our data is correct. Our HR & OD team worked with services to complete this. Almost all service areas completed this by the end of Q2. The remainder will have completed the work in Q4. This data is the basis of all reporting and is</p>	<p>To continue these focused conversations ensuring that they are concentrated on the needs of each service area whilst remaining connected to the overall strategic ambition of the council.</p> <p>Through these conversations we are clarifying service and corporate needs, identifying areas of focus required in each service. The</p>

<p>therefore critical to the accuracy of our projections and plans for the future. Through these conversations we have identified that we need to improve how we are ensuring the health and wellbeing of our workforce and that we need to rethink our approach to recruitment to ensure services attract and retain the right people with the right skills for our organisation.</p>	<p>professional support provided from our people professionals is adjusted accordingly e.g. support allocated to manage casework, develop strategies to aid recruitment and retention particularly in hard to fill posts.</p>
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As we go through the budget setting process and confirm our service ambitions and needs for 2024/25 and beyond, services will be updating the workforce related elements of their service plans. These will continue to shape the development of our overall workforce plan going forward.

Updates on our nine areas of focus

Highlights of some of our achievements over this last year in relation to our nine areas of focus are listed below in addition to our areas of focus for the year ahead:

Employee health and wellbeing

Our workforce is our greatest resource. We remain committed to putting people first.

Over the last year we have facilitated twelve 'employee voice' sessions tailored to update our people on current council events and enable them to engage directly with senior leaders. We have recorded an increase in participation from 651 people last year to 844 people this year.

We have designed a more focused approach to employee health and wellbeing that is directly tied into our work around leadership and development. We will deliver four concentrated blocks of work through the year that focus on cycles of engagement, learning and action around particular areas of need identified by our workforce and supported by our leaders. These are:

- feeling well at work and managing workloads
- creating a safe space and working safely
- staying connected (understanding self and others)
- coaching conversations and career development

We have replaced the workforce survey we used to run every year with shorter, more focused surveys that will run as part of these blocks of work. Our expectation is that this will encourage greater participation and allow us to agree improvements based on better feedback from employees.

Digital

We are implementing use of a broader range of technology and digital solutions.

We have procured a new learning management system that provides improved functionality making access to learning smoother for our workforce and reporting of participation in learning easier.

We have upgraded our core HR and Payroll system, increasing functionality. This has included the introduction of an application to allow people to see and engage with their personal data more easily and the introduction of leave management in the system. This will not only reduce errors in pay and

be more convenient to users but, in line with our Applications Strategy, it will also reduce system costs as we currently use a separate system to do that.

In 2024/25 we will identify a solution for supply staff and rota management for those who need it. This will reduce the time taken on such tasks allowing people to focus more on delivering services.

We also plan to expand our use of existing digital solutions available to us and encourage people to get creative when thinking about the ways services could be delivered differently.

Developing our young workforce

We continue to support the development of our young workforce. We offer a forum for Modern Apprentices and encourage take up of access to coaching and mentoring.

We actively support a Long Term Unemployed (LTU) programme, supporting people back into employment. This is the first year that the programme has been open to 20–24-year-olds. There are nine young people on the programme. Of these, three have been placed with Angus Council and three with Angus Alive.

Anecdotal feedback from teams supporting people on programmes has been incredibly positive. The contribution these individuals are making to teams is significant in terms of service delivery and changing the culture of teams with their new perspectives.

In November we officially joined the list of organisations that have pledged support to the national Young Person's Guarantee having evidenced that we meet the criteria.

In 2024/25 we will continue to support these programmes. As part of our review of engagement we will be focusing on how we can attract more young people to our workforce.

Retention of our workforce

We are keen to increase the diversity of our workforce. Accreditation for the Disability Confident scheme and Equally Safe at Work have been achieved this year. These schemes are known to help encourage a wider range of people to apply for jobs with organisations by ensuring we have things in place to support people at work.

Our employee benefits package has been re-negotiated with a wide range of benefits available to employees.

In 2024/5 our 'people conversations' will focus on succession planning and design of the workforce we need for the future. Succession planning is a particular concern in some service areas. We have instigated a range of solutions to deal with some of these challenges including Modern and Graduate Apprenticeship options, Trainee posts and have redesigned roles when vacancies occur to attract a wider group of applicants. Continued focus is needed in this area.

Leadership and management development

Over the last year we reviewed, with our leadership cohort, our approach to leadership and management development.

The LEAD 1 programme is incredibly popular with 57 people participating in the programme over the last year. Feedback is positive. We need to do more to capture the impact of the programme.

The format of our leadership forums has been reviewed. Our most recent forums saw the greatest participation levels we have experienced in some years with excellent engagement levels in the sessions where people were contributing their ideas to the future of our council services in the context of increasingly challenging financial times.

We have combined work on wellbeing with leadership development to help ensure that our leaders have a good understanding of the needs of the people in their teams and services. This is in the context of the wider organisational objective to foster a collaborative leadership approach.

In 2024/25 we will implement the leadership and management development work that has been designed in the current year via the programme of engagement planned through the combined wellbeing and leadership blocks of work, through the LEAD programmes and our leadership forums.

Employee and Trade Union engagement

We continue to have positive working relationships with our Trade Unions. We ensure they are kept up to date with our plans and progress through regular meetings between TU leads and our HR professionals and their quarterly attendance at our Corporate Leadership Team. Trade Unions worked with us this year to incorporate the Living Wage into our pay scales and all affected employees received backpay in relation to this in November 2023.

We will continue this collaborative work with Trade Unions in 2024/25.

Developing our workforce

Services continue to identify priority areas of development and support their teams to develop in line with changes in service demand.

Corporately we have focused attention on improving personal resilience development over the last year following feedback that services would benefit from it. 68 people have participated in our 'understanding and developing personal resilience' course. A combination of training, access to resources for self-directed development and access to coaching and mentoring were a focus of our communication and engagement work. Linked to this is our commitment to developing effective working relationships. Relationship issues are more prevalent when people feel under pressure. We have noticed a positive uptake of professional relationship coaching.

We continue to support the development of agile working. 96% of employees have confirmed their workstyle for the future.

In 2024/25 we will be focusing on:

- Developing our programme for trauma informed practice. Our new Workforce Development Officer is working on the development of this.
- Leadership development and increasing managers' confidence in dealing with wellbeing issues are a focus of our corporate activities.
- Identifying opportunities to improve our offer to employees by working in partnership with other organisations.

Workforce profiling and planning

Our equalities mainstreaming report has been produced and informs our overall approach to organisation and people development.

As mentioned in the introduction, a focus of the current year has been to ensure that our people data is accurate. We have identified through our data and conversations some key areas to focus on next

year. One of the more creative solutions we are working on to attract people into our Social Work posts is the creation of a pre-qualified Social Worker post that will allow us to recruit people in their final year of training to work with us as they become qualified. Our expectation is that this will help us fill our qualified post vacancies more easily when they become available.

In 2024/25 we plan to improve our reports and data available to managers and Elected Members through use of our existing systems. We plan to support the delivery of our data strategy through provision of accurate, up to date people data to inform decision making.

Reward and recognition

This year has brought the timely implementation of multiple pay awards across the organisation. As part of this work, we have engaged our Trade Unions and have agreed a reviewed pay and grading structure that will help us accommodate future pay awards.

We reviewed our long service recognition this year to ensure that we continue to recognise employees' length of service.

We encourage celebration of success and recognition where colleagues are making a positive contribution to the work we do. We have replaced the previously popular HIVE platform which allows managers and employees to recognise others with an internally designed process called Bravo! This has saved us some system costs whilst the ease of use built into the design of the product has meant we have maintained our positive engagement in providing recognition to our colleagues.

In 2024/25 we will continue to promote the Bravo! Awards and ensure that we are celebrating our successes with each other and more widely.

We will also be exploring further opportunities for employee benefits.

A review of our workforce data

Our data shows that there are some changes in our workforce.

There is an increase in the use of temporary and supply staff which is reflected in the headcount and full time equivalent (FTE) figures shown. Some of this is due to necessity where more permanent recruitment and retention is a challenge due to either short term funding or availability of the talent we need. Some is a result of services' efforts to be more efficient and recruit on a temporary basis.

Our pay bill has remained largely the same. This reflects the efforts made across the organisation to find more efficient ways to make use of the resources we have available to us.

There is a small but important shift in the age of our workforce with a greater percentage of people in our younger age bandings. We are working hard to make opportunities available for young people to join our workforce and have rewarding careers in local government. Through our succession planning work in the coming year, we aim to increase this percentage further.

Size of workforce (FTE)

	2021/22	2022/23
FTE	3819	4096
Headcount	4573	4809

Pay bill

2021/22	2022/23
£185M	£185.5M

Employment status

	Permanent	Temporary	Supply
21/22	80%	7%	13%
22/23	72%	11%	17%

Workforce age banding

	2021/22	2022/23
16-24	3%	5%
25-34	17%	17%
35-44	25%	27%
45-54	29%	27%
55-64	24%	22%
65+	2%	2%

Gender profile and pay gap

This has remained the same with 24% male and 76% female employees.

Our gender pay gap has changed from -1.85% in 2021/22 to -1.39% in 22/23.

The minus figure means that when we look at the pay of men and women across our workforce women, on average, are earning more than men. Our rates of pay are the same regardless of who takes up a post. The figure reflects that we have a lot more women in our workforce than men and that many of our higher earning posts have women in them. The reduction from 2021/22 means that the gender pay gap is reducing.