

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Director of Strategic Change and Communities  
to Service and Partnerships Performance Panel  
of 24 October 2023**

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**Subject: 2022-25 Council Workforce Plan Annual Update**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the Council 2022-2025 Workforce Plan and associated Action Plan.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:**

**2.1.1 notes the contents of this report;**

**2.1.2 agrees amendments and extension to related activities within [Appendix 1](#);**

**2.1.3 requests an interim report in April 2024 that provides:**

- an update on workforce planning governance and oversight;
- preparation for the 2024 Best Value thematic audit;
- progress on actions in [Appendix 1](#) that require an extension up to March 2024; and

**2.1.4 requests a further report to a future meeting of the Panel providing an annual update on the Workforce Plan and Action Plan during the period 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2024.**

**3. Background**

3.1 The Council's current 3-year workforce plan was approved by the Service and Performance Panel on 25 October 2022 and the Cabinet on the 29 November 2022.

3.2 Section 9 of the workforce plan contains an Action Plan which sets out a broad range of activities that will progress during the next 3 years.

3.3 The majority of activities are led, with input from Service Leads, by support services including Organisational Development, Human Resources, Thriving Communities and Performance, Policy and Community Planning. These services are part of the workforce planning implementation group which meets regularly to review progress.

- 3.4 Each activity has a specified lead officer and progress is monitored via Pentana.
- 3.5 Workforce Planning was embedded for the first time within the 2023 Service Planning process, with a range of actions specified that require Service Lead input and consideration during the life of the plan. These included completion of workforce and succession planning templates, reviewing casual staff requirements and increasing PDR response rates.
- 3.6 The Health and Social Care Partnership's workforce plan also runs from 2022-25, and Organisational Development continues to provide workforce planning support to the Partnership, ensuring close alignment between both plans and associated action plans.
- 3.7 The Audit Scotland's recent Best Value thematic review recognised:
- The Council's 2022-25 Workforce Plan as comprehensive in detail with an action plan that details ownership and timescales across a range of workforce themes.
  - Work is still ongoing to align workforce needs at a service level. This is being progressed through the service plans.
- 3.8 There has been limited national workforce planning activity during 2022/23. From a COSLA perspective, the key working group that Councils input into is the Society Personnel Development Scotland (SPDS) workforce planning portfolio. The SPDS plans to develop and issue an updated survey on workforce planning activity and related resources across Councils. The survey will assist COSLA and SOLACE in understanding the national workforce planning landscape. From a Health and Social Care perspective, the Scottish Government workforce planning unit is revising reporting requirements for Partnerships, and Organisational Development has requested that it is included in any short-life working group (as it has been previously).
- 3.9 The Accounts Commission has indicated that workforce planning will be the focus of Best Value thematic work in 2024 and will be covered in all council annual audit reports (initial timescale is Autumn 2024), followed by a national thematic report.
- 3.10 Workforce data has historically been provided by a suite of Oracle reports with further analysis by Organisational Development. As the implementation of Fusion has initially focused on the transactional and operational requirements for HR and Finance, no replacement reporting suite is available. At this stage, Organisational Development is therefore unable to provide wider workforce data and analysis. A Fusion Board Strategic Board has now been formed (chaired by the Head of Finance, ICT and Procurement) and will consider future development proposals for Fusion which will include corporate/ workforce reporting.
- 3.11 Services completed workforce and succession planning templates during Q1 and Q2 of 2023. These templates require services to consider a range of workforce and succession planning criteria and risks developed by the Local Government Association (LGA). Analysis of the information corporately and per directorate is currently being undertaken by Organisational Development and will be submitted to ELT by November 2023.

- 3.12 ELT will also be asked to consider a governance and oversight process to workforce planning recently adopted by the Partnership. That process reinforces the requirement for a strategic executive oversight group which has ownership of workforce strategies and the workforce plan, with Directorate sub-groups (each led by a Chief Officer) aligned to the key workforce themes of Plan, Attract, Train, Employ and Nurture.
- 3.13 Many of the activities within the Action Plan have commencement and implementation dates throughout 2022-25 which reflect their complexity, scale and priority. Therefore the focus for this annual update is on those activities that have completion dates up to December 2023.

#### **4. Proposals**

4.1 The Panel is requested to:

- 4.1.1 note the progress of the relevant activities within [Appendix 1](#);
- 4.1.2 approve the amendments to WOR 05, 19, 20, 28, 32, 35, 37 and 38;
- 4.1.3 request an update in April 2024 on the following activities:
- The development and implementation of the proposed workforce planning governance and oversight process;
  - Further clarity (dependent on Audit Scotland time-scales) on preparation for the 2024 Best Value thematic audit on Council workforce planning;
  - Actions within [Appendix 1](#) that have been extended until March 2024; and
- 4.1.4 request a further annual update in October 2024 on actions with a completion date of December 2024.

#### **5. Legal and Procurement Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 No immediate implications applicable as the workforce plan is a strategic document. However, where any activity within the Action Plan requires further consideration from a financial perspective, this will be brought back to Panel and via existing governance mechanisms related to staffing and establishment changes. Examples of potential implications may include centralising elements of training budgets; however, it is only as the activities develop and are explored further will implications be known.

## **7. Human Resources Implications**

7.1 Not applicable, however the delivery of the workforce plan is based upon Lead and Support services identified as owners in the Action Plan having sufficient resource to undertake their specific actions.

## **8. Risk**

### **8.1 *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

### **8.2 *Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations***

8.2.1 The risks associated with rejecting the recommendations are:

- Failure to meet the recommendations related to workforce planning contained with the 2021 Best Value report, and indicative requirements for the 2024 thematic Best Value; and
- Failure to meet the actions contained within the Health and Social Care workforce plan approved by the Scottish Government and the Integrated Joint Board.

## **9. Equalities**

9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA), (including the Fairer Scotland Duty in respect of any Strategic decision), was completed as part of the development of the 2022-25 workforce plan.

## **10. Sustainable Development Implications**

10.1 ***Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*** - The Scottish Government Gateway has been contacted regarding this plan, policy, programme or strategy, and it has been determined that an SEA will not be pursued.

## **11. Options Appraisal**

11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

## **12. Link to Council Plan**

12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority 4 of the Council Plan: Efficient and effective enabling services.

## **13. Results of Consultation**

13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

13.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Ian Davis, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Human Resources and ICT and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

13.3 Consultation has taken place with Trade Unions and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

**Background Papers**     **Report to Service and Performance Panel of 25 October 2022 – [2022-25 Council Workforce Plan](#) (Action Plan – Section 9)**

**[Health and Social Care Partnership Workforce Plan 2022-25](#)  
(Action Plan – Section 7)**

**Report to Cabinet of 29 August 2023 - [Best Value Thematic Work in South Ayrshire 2022/23](#)**

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**Date:** 13 October 2023

**Appendix 1**

<b>PLAN - Supporting evidence and outcome- based workforce planning</b>					
No.	Action	Timescale	Progress	Status	Lead
WOR01	Incorporate workforce planning into the service planning process.	December 2023	Workforce Planning is now embedded within the corporate service planning process. All new Service Plans contain a section on workforce planning with services required to complete a workforce planning template and succession planning template.	Complete	Policy, Performance and Community Planning
WOR05	Align future Workforce Monitoring equality reports with workforce planning reports and updates.		The Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report was published in April 2023 which included workforce monitoring data. However there has been limited access to workforce reporting data since Fusion went live, and the Community Planning and Equalities Officer role has not been filled. On that basis an extension of March 2024 is requested to meet this action fully.	Not complete	
WOR02	Incorporate workforce planning into the Transformation Programme.	December 2023	All projects on the programme are now assessed in terms of workforce planning impact. This forms the basis of collaboration between OD and Strategic Change to align activity between Strategic Change, Organisational Development and Workforce Planning.	Complete	Strategic Change Programme Office
WOR03	Revise workforce planning and succession planning manager toolkits.	June 2023	Templates completed all services bar two (Corporate Finance and Risk and Safety still to undertake), providing a summary of workforce considerations, risk evaluation and scoring. Information from the templates will form part of a wider workforce report for Directors to help facilitate strategic workforce planning.	Complete	Organisational Development
WOR04	Workforce planning training for CLT and Service Leads.	December 2022	Local Government Association sessions delivered to CLT and Service Leads (including NHSAA Service Managers to strengthen workforce planning within the HSCP) with additional sessions delivered by OD to Service Leads and Coordinators.	Complete	
WOR07	Provision and analysis of workforce profiles until Oracle Fusion reports available.	December 2023	Profiles issued to all services. Content included FTE by team and grade, age profile, sickness data, turnover, casual staff usage, recruitment timescales, and PDR completion.	Complete	
WOR08	Review and re-launch of the exit and starter surveys.		Revised surveys developed and short pilot proposed, and will be placed on a new platform with assistance from ICT.	On target	
WOR10	Consider and progress recommendations within the Digital Maturity Assessment (DMA).	December 2023	Development of the next iteration of the corporate Digital Strategy incorporates recommendations from the DMA, and the Council will take part in the revised Digital Office maturity process during 2024 and 2025.	On target	CLT

ATTRACT - Effective recruitment to attract the best staff into the Council.					
No.	Action	Timescale	Progress	Status	Lead
WOR11	Regular school and further education recruitment engagement programmes.	August 2023	Our Employer Engagement team have attended 5 school career events and 2 college career events since January 2023. These events promote career pathways and opportunities available within various sectors across South Ayrshire. We will continue to support education with these engagement events as a priority to raise awareness and encourage networking opportunities.	Ongoing programme	Thriving Communities
WOR12	Progression of employability opportunities and national funding programmes.		Thriving Communities are fully committed to improving training and employment opportunities for young people and adults. In line with the Scottish Government's No One Left Behind and UK Governments Shared Prosperity priorities we ensure we are delivering programmes that are meaningful and offer work experience and training opportunities for people across South Ayrshire to help them achieve their employment goals.	Ongoing programme	
WOR13	Further development of employability programmes to meet identified workforce and succession planning needs.		Thriving Communities provides a range of support to council departments in relation to service delivery and workforce planning. The team supports work placements through our Modern Apprenticeship programme and Employability pipeline provision. Thriving Communities chairs the Local Employability Partnership which identifies gaps in the current labour market and will commission specific training courses to support recruitment in occupational areas that may otherwise have skills gaps and recruitment and retention issues.	Ongoing programme	
WOR15	Participation in a range of national workforce planning activities and groups.	October 2023	The OD Coordinator represents the Council on the Society of Personnel Development Scotland workforce planning portfolio group and the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Workforce Planning Unit short-life working groups, and liaises with the Improvement Service on a range of workforce planning activities.	Ongoing programme	Organisational Development
WOR17	Explore enhancement available on MJS recruitment portal and implement when possible.	June 2023	Enhancements with MJS have been explored; however, it has been established by the portal provider that the Council is using all functionalities within the system. South Ayrshire is one of four Councils selected for a pilot with Indeed (one of the largest UK online job browsers) which will improve visibility for roles where there are recruitment challenges. The pilot has now commenced.	Complete	Human Resources
WOR19	Consideration of notice period requirements to ensure the Council is consistent with other employers.		Some initial benchmarking carried out however this piece of work was put on hold due Oracle Fusion. HR will now resume with a proposed revised timescale of December 2023	Not complete	

WOR20	A short life working group (multi-agency), in conjunction with the HSCP, exploring the international Health and Social Care Visa and refugee talent pool.		Group created and aligned to the HSCP workforce plan. Recommendations and options to be presented to the HSCP Staff Governance Group in October 2023 date. Proposed revised time-scale December 2023.	Not complete	
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TRAIN- Supporting staff through education and training to equip them with the skills to undertake their role effectively.					
No.	Action	Timescale	Progress	Status	Lead
WOR22	Development of a corporate Leadership Development Programme.	December 2023	Over 50% of modules developed and ready for delivery. Module content still to be received from a range of subject matter experts to allow for completion of development phases in December 2023.	On target	Organisational Development
WOR23	Application and facilitation of the annual Workforce Development Fund.	October 2023	Full allocation of the fund has been spent and will include courses on Excel (Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced), Excel Pivot Tables, Microsoft Dashboards, Customer Services and Effective Meetings. A total of 9 courses will be delivered, with 10 spaces in each, with the final course to be delivered on 28 September 2023.	Complete	
WOR24	Completion of a digital skills competency framework, gap analysis and associated action plan.	December 2023	Framework developed with input from the Digital office and currently being piloted. Corporate digital skills survey completed with 1300 responses and summaries provided to all Service Leads. Outcomes linked to the revised Digital Strategy.	On target	
WOR25	Development of a digital champions network.		Surveys issued to existing champions to identify improvement areas which will be progressed. Organisational Development will help guide corporate and service-specific champion networks using best practice frameworks recommended by the Digital Office (linked to the revised Digital Strategy).	Complete	
WOR26	Refresh of the corporate succession planning toolkit, focusing on future leadership and statutory posts, and gaps in service critical roles.	June 2023	SharePoint toolkit developed and available to managers. OD assisted services in adopting maturity matrixes and age analysis with a focus on succession planning (as part of WOR03).	Complete	



**EMPLOY - Making SAC and “employer of choice” by ensuring staff are, and feel, valued and rewarded.**

No.	Action	Timescale	Progress	Status	Lead
WOR27	Further promotion and embedding of a corporate employee Yammer channel.	December 2023	Communications continue to issue regular, engaging, audience appropriate content on Viva Engage (Yammer). They are also encouraging managers and staff to engage with posts that relate to their service area, by liking and commenting on posts and answering any queries as appropriate, to help further embed the platform throughout services.	On target	Public Affairs
WOR30	Further recognition for innovation and ‘best practice’ through award schemes including COSLA, APSE, SAC Outstanding People Awards.	Ongoing	Organisational Development has facilitated – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9 submissions to APSE, with 2 successful nominations being shortlisted under the “Best Workforce Initiative” and “Best Efficiency and Transformation Initiative” categories.</li> <li>- 9 submissions to the CoSLA Excellence Awards.</li> <li>- The Scottish Public Service Awards (SPSA) nominations process is currently open, with an internal deadline of Tuesday 3 October. OD will co-ordinate nominations for SPSA accordingly.</li> </ul>	Ongoing programme	Organisational Development
WOR28	Development and implementation of a corporate Employee Opinion Survey.	March 2024	To align with the new Chief Executive in November, development of the survey extended to allow Chief Executive input. Proposed extension to March 2024.	Not complete	
WOR29	Increased undertaking of PDR across all services, and positioning that PDR is the key tool to capture and review corporate and personal objectives.	December 2023	PDR reports provided to services alongside awareness sessions delivered by Organisational Development to support the use of Managers Scorecard to record completion.	On target	Service Leads

NURTURE - Creating a workforce and leadership culture focusing on the health and wellbeing of all staff.					
No.	Action	Timescale	Progress	Status	Lead
WOR32	Further consideration of support specific to psychological, musculoskeletal and long-covid absences.	December 2023	The development of a corporate well-being strategy (see WOR 38 which has a proposed date of March 2024) will now encompass this action in full.	Not complete	Human Resources
WOR33	Menopause – Devolution of a separate policy and related activities such forums or workshops.	June 2023	Menopause workshop programme agreed and delivered by our Occupational Health provider (Optima). First round of workshops is coming to an end and feedback has been very positive.	Complete	
WOR36	Further input into national wellbeing groups (such as the SPDS Wellbeing Group), benchmarking, and exploration/adoption of national wellbeing tools and solutions.	December 2023	HR Policies and Operations Coordinator has now joined the SPDS Wellbeing Group. This will give the Council the option to benchmark with the other Scottish local authorities and give visibility of any tools and proposals at national level which could be implemented in South Ayrshire.	Complete	
WOR35	Consideration on ageing workforce over the next 10 years when reviewing personnel policies.		Considerations are ongoing however this piece of work was put on hold due to Oracle Fusion. HR will now resume with a proposed revised timescale of March 2024.	Not complete	
WOR37	Consideration of the proposed changes to the Healthy Working Lives scheme which aims to support workplace health and improve staff health and wellbeing in Scotland.	December 2023	The development of a corporate well-being strategy (see WOR 38 which has a proposed date of March 2024) will now encompass this action in full. Lifestyle Screening (mini health-checks) have continued, albeit only to 40 employees due to budget considerations. Future/immediate Lifestyle Screening may require to be funded by services directly, and this will be explored further by Risk and Safety.	Not complete	
WOR38	Review of health and financial employee well-being activities, which will inform an aligned approach which has an	December 2023	The staff wellbeing survey remains open until October 31 <sup>st</sup> 2023. The Trauma Informed Officer (TIO) has developed a mental health first aid network that is available for staff to access when facing challenges, either personal or professional. The TIO also delivered wellbeing sessions (Vicarious Trauma training, Heal the Healers etc.) to staff and leaders. A mapping exercise is currently underway of all wellbeing activities by the Council and partners which will help inform future wellbeing	Not complete	Policy, Performance and Community Planning

**NURTURE - Creating a workforce and leadership culture focusing on the health and wellbeing of all staff.**

No.	Action	Timescale	Progress	Status	Lead
	additional focus on Trauma Informed Practice (safety, choice, collaboration, trust and empowerment).		opportunities. A short life working group was established and funding was successfully obtained to support ongoing work in relation to staff wellbeing, including the recruitment of a wellbeing officer. The TIO will have oversight of this project which will include research and development that will inform a wider staff wellbeing strategy; increased opportunities for wellbeing activities throughout the organisation; and increased peer support, both formal and informal. As the wellbeing officer post will shortly be advertised, and to fully align wellbeing activities, this action has a proposed extended date of March 2024.		
WOR34	Review light duties process and other related opportunities across services to enable employees to begin the return-to work process sooner.	December 2023	Services and directorates consider all opportunities that facilitate an employees' return to work. Routine conversations with HR are helping define requirements.	On target	Service Leads