

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Director of Communities and Transformation  
to Service and Partnership Performance Panel  
of 16 April 2024**

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

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide further updates requested by the Panel on October 2023.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Panel scrutinises the contents of the report.**

**3. Background**

3.1 The Council's current 3-year workforce plan was considered by the Panel on 25 October 2022 and approved by the Cabinet on 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 throughout 2022-2025.

3.3 Actions with an implementation date up to December 2023 were presented to the Panel in October 2023 as part of the Workforce Plan annual update.

3.4 The Panel requested the following updates to be presented in April 2024:

- Progress on those actions which required an extension and revision beyond their implementation date of December 2023.
- Further clarity on proposed workforce planning governance and oversight and associated preparation for the 2024 Best Value thematic audit.

3.5 Audit Scotland undertook a thematic audit on 'workforce innovation' during January 2024, with a focus on:

- How effectively Councils' workforce plans are integrated with its strategic plans and priorities.
- How effectively digital technology has been used to support workforce productivity and improve service quality and outcomes.

- How effectively the Council is using hybrid and remote working and other innovative working practice such as a four-day week to achieve service and staff benefits.
- What innovative practice the Council is using to develop its future workforce capacity and skills needs and manage staff reductions in line with its priorities.
- What progress the Council has made with sharing roles or functions across its services and/ or with other Councils and partners.
- How effectively the Council is measuring the impact of its workforce planning approach.

3.6 A range of support services assisted with the audit, including Organisational Development, Human Resources, Strategic Change, and ICT. The auditors met directly with a Trade Union representative.

3.7 Audit Scotland completed their audit in February and will report their findings in full directly to the Audit and Governance Panel on 20 March 2024.

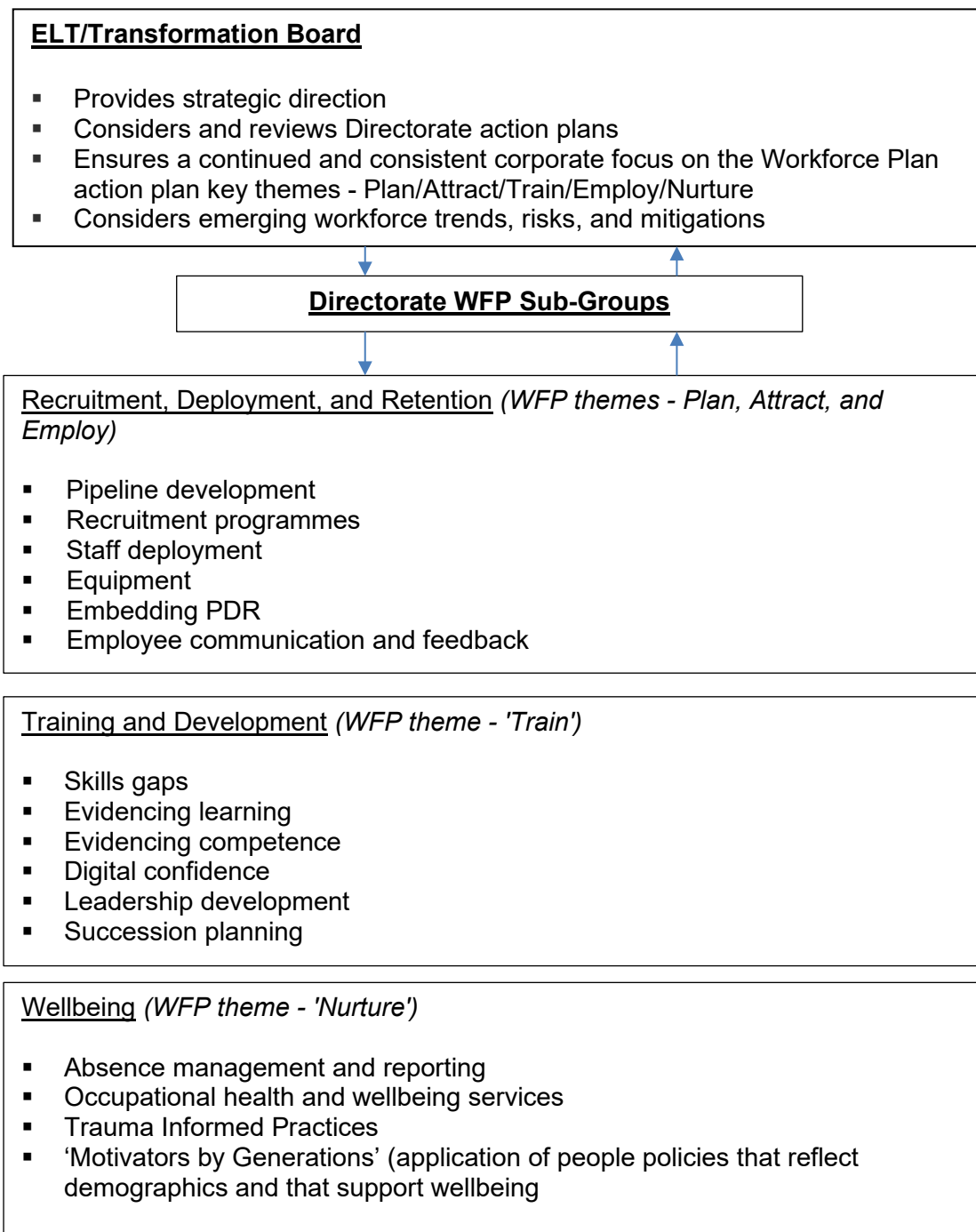
3.8 Audit Scotland have advised that they consider their report positive, and have made the following recommendations:

- The Council should develop performance measures and targets to monitor the impact of its workforce planning approach with data on future skills and capacity projections or any plans for various scenarios detailed. Additionally, workforce data such as the number of casual staff, age profile of staff and staff turnover should also be reported regularly to members.
- The Council should measure and report on the impact that digital technology has on its service delivery and outcomes, including how this can shape its workforce of the future.
- The Council should prioritise the development of workforce planning reporting tools in Oracle Fusion to aid managers in decision-making.

#### **4. Proposals**

4.1 The Panel is requested to note the progress of the relevant actions within [Appendix 1](#).

4.2 The Panel is also requested to note the creation of Directorate workforce planning sub-groups shown on the next page (each led by an Assistant Director). The groups will consider a range of workforce planning activities and actions within their Directorate, and report to the newly created Transformation Board which was presented to Council on 6 March 2024. (The HSCP already has a similar oversight process in place to support its distinct workforce plan.)



4.3 Members are requested to note that both the Directorate sub-groups and the Transformation Board will progress the recommendations contained within the Audit Scotland report.

4.4 The Panel will receive a further annual update in October 2024 on those activities with the workforce plan action plan 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.

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## **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.

## **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:

- (i) Failure to meet the recommendations related to workforce planning contained within the 2021 Best Value Audit, and the 2024 Workforce Thematic Audit.
- (ii) 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 Commitment 1 of the Council Plan: Effective Leadership that Promotes Fairness

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### **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)

**[South Ayrshire HSCP Workforce Plan 2022-25](#)** (Action Plan – Section 7)

**Report to South Ayrshire Council of 6 March 2024 - [Shaping Our Future Council](#)**

**Report to Audit and Governance Panel of 20 March 2024 - [Audit Scotland: Workforce Innovation – How Councils are Responding to Workforce Challenges](#)**

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**Date: 5 April 2024**

Number	Action	Original Due Date	Revised Due Date approved at Oct Panel	Owner	Previous Update	Current Update and Status
WOR05	Align future Workforce Monitoring equality reports with workforce planning reports and updates.	December 2023	March 2024	Policy, Performance and Community Planning	<i>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.</i>	<p><b>Update - The Equalities Senior Policy Planning Officer took up post in December 2023. Future workforce plans and employee equality outcomes and mainstreaming reports will consider corporate workforce planning themes to ensure alignment. Policy and Performance and Organisational Development will input into the Oracle Fusion reporting development group.</b></p> <p><b>Status – complete</b></p>
WOR08	Review and re-launch of the exit and starter surveys.	December 2023	Was marked as on target at the time	Organisational Development	<i>Revised surveys developed and short pilot proposed and will be placed on a new platform with assistance from ICT.</i>	<p><b>Update – both surveys went live in December 2023. The exit survey will be further embedded into the Oracle employee resignation process during 2024. Data from both surveys will be presented at the workforce plan annual update in November 2024.</b></p> <p><b>Status – complete.</b></p>
WOR10	Consider and progress recommendations within the Digital Maturity Assessment (DMA).	December 2023	Was marked as on target at the time	ICT	<i>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.</i>	<p><b>Update – The Council’s Digital and ICT Strategy was approved by Council on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023.</b></p> <p><b>Status - complete</b></p>

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WOR 19	Consideration of notice period requirements to ensure the Council is consistent with other employers.	June 2023	December 2023	Human Resources	<i>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</i>	<p><b>Changes to notice periods has now been discussed at CLT and a survey has now gone out to all Service Leads to gauge their feedback and comment on the proposal. The Chief HR Advisor will present results at CTL and discuss at next TU Liaison meeting prior to a final decision being made.</b></p> <p><b>Status - complete</b></p>
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.	June 2023	December 2023	Human Resources	<i>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.</i>	<p><b>ELT approved a corporate international recruitment sponsorship license in December 2023. HR are currently applying to the Home Office and the license is expected to be in place by the end of April 2024. This will widen the available talent pool for a range of vacancies.</b></p> <p><b>The HSCP will make a final decision on the International Health and Social Care Visa (which requires an international recruitment agency), considering recent changes to the visa scheme by the Home Office.</b></p> <p><b>Status - complete</b></p>
WOR 22	Development of a corporate Leadership Development Programme.	December 2023	Was marked as on target at the time	Organisational Development	<i>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.</i>	<p><b>Leadership Development programme launched to managers, with a Leadership Engagement Event taking place in February 2024, and a further event scheduled for May. Details on the programme, which has 3 key strands, are contained in the brochure at this <a href="#">link</a>.</b></p> <p><b>Status – complete</b></p>

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WOR 24	Completion of a digital skills competency framework, gap analysis and associated action plan.	December 2023	Was marked as on target at the time	Organisational Development	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.	<b>The Framework was launched in December 2023 alongside a range of drop-in sessions for managers and a resource site with video overview and templates. Organisational Development will work with services to undertake the framework on an ongoing basis.</b>  <b>Status – complete</b>
WOR27	Further promotion and embedding of a corporate employee Yammer channel.	December 2023	Was marked as on target at the time	Public Affairs	<i>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.</i>	<b>Viva Engage (Yammer) data shows an increase of 29.3% in average post engagement from a snapshot taken in December 2023 in comparison to the same period in November 2023.</b>  <b>Status - complete</b>



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WOR 28	Development and implementation of a corporate Employee Opinion Survey.	December 2023	March 2024	Organisational Development	<i>To align with the new Chief Executive in November, development of the survey extended to allow Chief Executive input. Proposed extension to March 2024.</i>	<p>The Employee Engagement Survey was launched in January 2024 and closed in March. The survey questions aligned with the corporate workforce planning themes of Plan, Train, Employ and Nurture. Results will be shared with Directorates, and a high-level summary placed on the Core for employees. Organisational Development will undertake a range of engagement/focus sessions with services focusing on development areas. Data from the survey will also be presented at the workforce plan annual update in November 2024.</p> <p>Status - complete</p>
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	Was marked as on target at the time	Service Leads	<i>PDR reports provided to services alongside awareness sessions delivered by Organisational Development to support the use of Managers Scorecard to record completion.</i>	<p>Organisational Development has delivered a range of COAST awareness sessions during 2023 and 2024 which have confirmed the PDR recording process.</p> <p>Recorded PDR completion has not increased and remains static at approximately 20%.</p> <p>Status – Not complete. A Pentana action has now been created to prompt Service Leads to promote PDR completion across their services on COAST. PDR completion will be a focus for the proposed Directorate sub-groups.</p>

Number	Action	Original Due Date	Revised Due Date approved at Oct Panel	Owner	Previous Update	Current Update and Status
WOR35	Consideration on ageing workforce over the next 10 years when reviewing personnel policies.	December 2023	March 2024	Human Resources	<i>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.</i>	<p>HR are meeting with Voluntary Action South Ayrshire to explore how the Council can become an Age Friendly Employer.</p> <p>HR have reviewed the following existing policies to ensure viability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Early retirement</li> <li>- Ill health retiral</li> <li>- Redeployment policy for either ill health or capability</li> <li>- Flexible retirement (if criteria are met)</li> <li>- Flexible Working – allows employee to work part-time prior to retirement</li> <li>- Remote Working – can support employees who require a change in workstyle (where the job allows it) so that mobility issues aren't affecting work performance</li> </ul> <p>Status - complete</p>
WOR32	Further consideration of support specific to psychological, musculoskeletal and long-covid abs 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	March 2024	Human Resources	<i>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.</i>	<p>The Trauma Informed Practice Officer (Policy, Performance and Community Planning) is now leading the development of the corporate wellbeing strategy., with the Chief Executive as the project sponsor. Initial mapping and research commenced in November 2023, with a range of development activities occurring throughout 2024 with an implementation date of May 2025.</p> <p>On that basis actions WOR 32/37/38 will now be closed and encompassed within Strategic Change Programme SCP12.</p>

Number	Action	Original Due Date	Revised Due Date approved at Oct Panel	Owner	Previous Update	Current Update and Status
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	March 2024	Risk, Safety and Resilience	<p><i>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.</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of current progress include –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>A new staff wellbeing fund which was launched in January 2024 where teams can apply for a small grant to undertake a wellbeing activity for the team.</b></li> <li>- <b>A comprehensive mapping has been completed on all employee wellbeing activities available within the organisation and across South Ayrshire. A wellbeing directory has been developed and is available for staff to access to either support their own wellbeing, or of those they support.</b></li> <li>- <b>Development of the in-house mental health first aid network to act as an early intervention aid to support staff concerns reaching crisis point.</b></li> </ul>
WOR38	Review of health and financial employee well-being activities, which will inform an aligned approach which has an additional focus on Trauma Informed Practice (safety, choice, collaboration, trust and empowerment).	December 2023	March 2024	Policy, Performance and Community Planning	<p><i>No update provided.</i></p>	