

# Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2023

## People Strategy 2021-2024 and 2024-2027 Update

Item Number

Executive/routine

Executive

Wards

Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 The Policy and Sustainability Committee is asked to approve the refresh of the People Strategy for 2024-2027 and the proposed consultation and engagement arrangements.

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## **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 The Council has an approved People Strategy for the period 2021-2024. Alongside delivery of this, the Council is also implementing recommendations from the Independent Inquiry and Whistleblowing Culture Review.
- 2.2 The purpose of this paper is to update on progress against the current People Strategy Action Plan and set out consultation and engagement proposals for the review and refresh of the People Strategy for 2024-2027.
- 2.3 The Committee should note that a detailed report on the Inquiry Review Recommendations will be presented, as agreed, to the City of Edinburgh Council in September 2023. This will detail activity against all recommendations. For the purposes of the new People Strategy, it is essential that the lessons learnt, recommendations, and outcomes from the Inquiry are embedded in the refreshed Strategy and support/enhance our ambitions to truly be an employer of choice going forwards.

## **3. Background**

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- 3.1 The People Strategy enables the delivery of the City of Edinburgh Council's Business Plan (Our Future Council, Our Future City) which sets out an ambitious agenda. The People Strategy will be underpinned by a refreshed Workforce Plan which will detail the workforce and people resources the organisation needs to deliver the Strategy now, for the future, and how we will achieve this.
- 3.2 The refreshed People Strategy will be underpinned by Our Behaviours which should be embedded in everything that we do.

## **4. Main report**

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### 4.1 People Strategy 2021-24

- 4.1.1 Appendix One details the progress of the delivery of the People Strategy (2021-2024). There has been a significant amount of activity, and this sets out current achievement, work still underway. It is also important of the refresh of the Strategy that key learning and tasks are carried through and embedded in the new Strategy.

### 4.2 People Strategy 2024-2027

- 4.2.1 Edinburgh has a 2050 City Vision, informed by our citizens saying that they want Edinburgh to be a fair, welcoming, thriving and pioneering city. Taking this forward, the Council's focus is on tackling poverty, delivering a net zero carbon city, and promoting the wellbeing of residents which remains more important than ever.

4.2.2 It is therefore vital that we continue to attract and nurture the most talented and public service focused people, both locally and from around the world. Our People Strategy 2024-2027 sets out how we will achieve this. Our current and future employees are our greatest strength, and this Strategy needs to set out the foundations, framework support and opportunities required to underpin our agreed pillars/themes. It is essential that our people and colleague networks' views, ambitions and feedback are captured in this Strategy through a robust consultation and engagement exercise. In addition, input from wider stakeholders, trade unions, and members will ensure that we develop a Strategy that is reflective of a collective vision, is ambitious, and helps to achieve our ambition to be an employer of choice.

4.2.3 The consultation and engagement process will take a number of accessible approaches that ensures there are ways for all our people to participate and that we gather a wide and diverse range of feedback. Some measures will include:

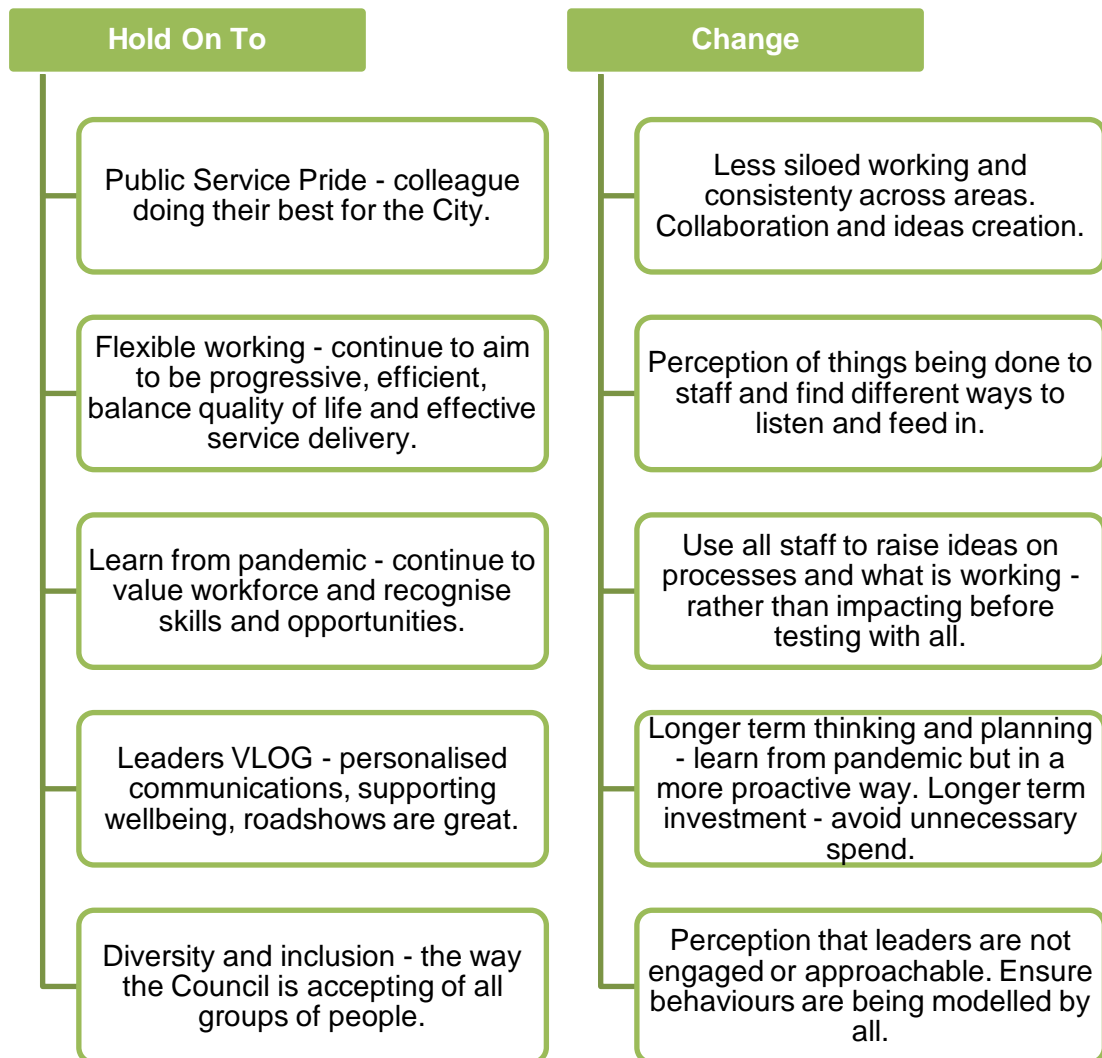
- Review of existing people engagement surveys, findings recommendations and data (Culture Capture 2021, Inquiry Review Recommendations).
- Review of wider engagement feedback underway to consider alignment/input to Strategy.
- Internal Staff Engagement Survey, including Pulse Surveys and Webinars
- Dedicated Engagement Channel on Orb
- Digital and Face to Face Sessions
- Colleague Networks' Focus Groups and External Partners/Stakeholders (Close the Gap and Stonewall etc).
- Engagement with Stakeholders Groups (Champions Board (care experienced), Higher and Further Education, Employability Organisations, Third Sector organisations etc).

4.2.4 Consideration will be given to the key themes/pillars that will shape the refreshed Strategy, and these will then be deliberated as part of the engagement and consultation process.

4.2.5 As part of a culture engagement process in 2021 our people were asked what three words they would use to describe "what is valued at the City of Edinburgh Council". The following is a summary of the top ten common answers:

People				
Equality				
Money				
Fairness				
Reputation				
Honesty	Hardwork	Citizens	Service	Transparency

4.2.6 In addition, colleagues were asked with regards to moving into the future and specifically, “what is great about the culture of the City of Edinburgh Council that you’d want to hold on to” and “what would you like to see changing”. The top five answers included:



4.2.7 As part of the consultation and engagement process we will seek feedback on current views and on proposed themes/pillars which have been derived from previous data as well as current feedback and those areas considered as a priority to achieve our objectives within the Business Plan. We will reinforce Our Behaviours as being a thread that aligns the whole document and all themes/pillars. These include:

Potential Theme/ Pillar	Encompassing
<b>Recruitment and Retention</b>	Succession Framework Recruitment, Talent and Attraction Plan Workforce Plan Career Pathways Skills Development and Enhancement Enhance Learning Develop Skills in Transformation, Resilience and Change
<b>Leadership and Culture</b>	People centred culture. Embed Behaviours (Respect, Integrity and Flexibility) Our Behaviours evident in everything we do Develop inspiring, confident and empowering leaders. Leaders as ambassadors for high quality services as well as Wellbeing, Diversity and Inclusion.
<b>Wellbeing</b>	Innovation and flexible approaches to Wellbeing Employee Voice Pathway (Internal Communication and Engagement Plan) Celebrating Success
<b>Diversity and Inclusion</b>	Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan Strengthen and support Colleague Networks.

4.2.8 These themes/pillars will be reviewed and refined as we start to develop the Strategy itself. It is important that the People Strategy is a live document that is targeted to our future and current people, ensuring that it contains the following key aspects to ensure its success:

- Alignment with business plan.
- Emphasises priorities.
- Focus on diversity and inclusion.
- Prioritises wellbeing.
- Enables regular feedback to colleagues.
- Encourages learning, growth and career development.
- Bridges skills gaps.
- Creates a culture of engagement.
- Is data led.

4.2.9 The current Strategy is due to end on 31 March 2024 and therefore the process to develop the refreshed Strategy will need to commence immediately. The intention is to present the draft Strategy to Policy and Sustainability Committee in March 2024, with updates in October, November 2023 and January 2024.

## 5. Next Steps

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5.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Sustainability Committee approve the development of the refreshed People Strategy and the communication and engagement approach.

5.2 Consultation and engagement will then commence as per 4.2.3.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 All programmes of work proposed within the People Strategy and associated Action Plan will be managed within budgets, both within the Human Resources Division and across Directorates. Consideration will be given to resources required for activity with appropriate business cases developed for consideration aligned to workforce spend.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 An Impact Assessment will be completed alongside the Strategy. Engagement will be undertaken with key stakeholders, colleague networks and trade unions, as well as further and higher education providers and employability establishments.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 Not applicable.

## **9. Appendices**

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Appendix One – Progress Against People Strategy Action Plan 2021-2024

## People Strategy Action Plan 2021-2024

Ref.	Action	Strategic Theme	Aim(s)	Agreed Activity	Outcomes Achieved	For Completion by March 2024.
1	Our Organisational Purpose and Behaviours	Living our behaviours	<p>We have a shared sense of organisational purpose.</p> <p>We all role model our organisational behaviours and hold each other to account when this isn't happening.</p>	<p>We embed our new organisational purpose and behaviours in how we work and provide the support and tools to make this happen.</p> <p>We develop employer commitments and leader and colleague behavioural expectations, so we are all clear on accountabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Behaviours agreed and launched.</li> <li>• Plan developed to incorporate behaviours in people policies and processes – recruitment, onboarding, performance, leadership expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch tools and supporting document for behavioural based recruitment.</li> <li>• Commence programme of embedding behaviours in service areas.</li> </ul>
2	Employment Policies	Living our behaviours	<p>Best in class employee policies, guidance, and support</p> <p>We go beyond our statutory duties where appropriate.</p>	<p>We deliver our annual calendar of policy development.</p> <p>We continue to work in partnership with Trade Unions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme of policy review established for Inquiry and Review recommendations. Completed policies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Domestic Abuse</li> <li>- Disciplinary for LGE</li> <li>- Disciplinary for teaching staff</li> <li>- PAC for Disciplinary</li> <li>- Trade Union Facility Time</li> <li>- Employee Code of Conduct</li> <li>- Alcohol and Drugs Policy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Working Flexibly Guidance developed.</li> <li>• Special Leave Policy updated.</li> <li>• Business Travel Guidance updated.</li> <li>• Working Together Protocol launched.</li> <li>• Streamlined Trade Union (TU) meeting landscape.</li> <li>• TU membership and facility time reporting mechanisms improved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise suite of Inquiry and Review policies including Grievance/ABH, Whistleblowing and Violence at Work.</li> <li>• Review of Family Policies. Review of Special Leave Policy (volunteering and family related).</li> <li>• Review of Our Future Work.</li> <li>• Revised Policy Review Cycle and Register and for 2024-25.</li> <li>• Develop Sexual Harassment Policy (by June 2025).</li> </ul>

Ref.	Action	Strategic Theme	Aim(s)	Agreed Activity	Outcomes Achieved	For Completion by March 2024.
3	Leadership	Living our behaviours	<p>Leaders are visible and approachable.</p> <p>Leaders make a tangible, positive difference to the experiences of our workforce through effective leadership and role modelling our organisational behaviours.</p> <p>Leaders are committed to, and invest in, their ongoing personal development</p>	<p>We fully embed our Leadership framework by threading it through the leadership lifecycle.</p> <p>‘Future, Engage, Deliver’ leadership model in how we work.</p> <p>We continue setting our new leaders up for success and launch the ‘Manager Essentials’ programme.</p> <p>We clearly set out our expectations of our leaders, set them up for success by providing them with the right support and we hold them to account.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New people manager programme developed and launched.</li> <li>• Revised People Leader Essentials module developed.</li> <li>• Conversation spotlight and sickness absence workshop adapted for virtual delivery.</li> <li>• Leadership framework updated and relaunched to reflect behaviours and align with Inquiry Review setting out clearer expectations of our Leaders.</li> <li>• Leadership and Management Orb pages updated.</li> <li>• Leadership goal for all people leaders agreed.</li> <li>• 360 development tools for leaders, based on behaviours and leadership framework procured and roll out commenced starting with Corporate Leadership Team.</li> <li>• Our Leadership Framework - playlists are live on My Learning Hub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider procurement of a facilitation partner to enhance capacity to support team development, coaching, and 360 feedback.</li> <li>• Review Leadership Development Plan.</li> </ul>
4	Diversity & Inclusion	Living our behaviours	<p>Attract and retain a workforce which reflects the diversity of our city.</p> <p>Increased diversity at all levels and comprehensive data on diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Colleagues feel included, respected, and listened to.</p>	<p>We will listen to and learn from colleague insight and experiences.</p> <p>We go beyond legislation to support diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>We support colleagues to influence positive change.</p> <p>We have learning opportunities to support cultural change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular external benchmarking (ENEI). Standardised equalities data set (SPDS). 100% collection rate at application stage (CoSLA).</li> <li>• Developed recruitment videos to help attract a more diverse pool of candidates. Improved data to help inform our thinking around future policies (e.g., 23.5% carer data). Campaign to improve data collection rate (by up to 25%).</li> <li>• Pay gap reporting extended to race and disability.</li> <li>• Establishment and development of six colleague networks.</li> <li>• Annual Inclusion Calendar to promote key diversity and inclusion dates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intersectional analysis of pay gap findings and data modelling to inform target areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Align with Close the Gap work on Equal Pay Statement.</li> <li>• Reverse Mentoring – CLT commitment to action to tackle race inequality at work – anti-racist practice.</li> <li>• Support and clarify role of colleague networks.</li> <li>• Implement qualitative data capture measures (surveys, pulse checks and focus groups).</li> </ul>



Ref.	Action	Strategic Theme	Aim(s)	Agreed Activity	Outcomes Achieved	For Completion by March 2024.
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive programme of learning and development.</li> <li>• Prejudice-based incident reporting/recording. Review and production of policy and guidance. External partnership work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of lived experience learning pathways.</li> <li>• Roll out of Conscious Inclusion Hub programme. Active By-stander for specific Service area need.</li> <li>• Analyse recruitment data to identify trends or areas of potential bias in selection process. Revamp our external 'Working for Us' webpage.</li> <li>• Guidance on positive action measures.</li> <li>• SPDS lead on work to achieve consistent pay gap reporting – aligned to SG plans.</li> <li>• Work with COSLA to produce improved MI reports on recruitment process.</li> <li>• Review Scottish Census outputs and compare with our data.</li> <li>• Overhaul approach to reasonable adjustments (joint Wellbeing/Equality, Diversion and Inclusion project).</li> <li>• Promote accessible and inclusive recruitment as part of our Employee Value Proposition.</li> </ul>

Ref.	Action	Strategic Theme	Aim(s)	Agreed Activity	Outcomes Achieved	For Completion by March 2024.
5	Learning	Maximising our capability and performance	<p>Colleagues have equal access to learning.</p> <p>Close identified skills, experience and capability gaps in our workforce.</p> <p>Learning will include behaviour and impact as well as technical skills and knowledge.</p>	<p>We continue investing in core learning to keep us safe and ensure colleagues are set up for success.</p> <p>We launch our new digital learning experience platform.</p> <p>We identify and close skills and experience - current and anticipated gaps (see Strategic Workforce Plan).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• myLearning Hub launched August 2021.</li> <li>• Learning and Development Contract Framework for high volume core role-specific learning launched April 2023</li> <li>• Design of essential learning digital resources for revised Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Policy, Domestic Abuse, Behaviours &amp; Whistleblowing.</li> <li>• Provision and facilitation of role-specific learning in key areas including Calm, Managing Stress and Distress, Manual Handling, First Aid, Place Specific, Public Protection.</li> <li>• Long arm and digital support for Carbon Literacy learning,</li> <li>• Consultation Hub and Organisational Design learning (areas from the Strategic Workforce Plan).</li> <li>• Facilitation of role-specific learning for people leaders including Absence and Wellbeing Workshops.</li> <li>• New people Leader Event and Conversation Spotlight.</li> <li>• Facilitation of Council Welcome Event for all new colleagues.</li> <li>• Set up of Essential Learning Governance Board.</li> <li>• Lead and coordinate essential qualifications for colleagues who require this for their role.</li> <li>• Set up of wider Learning and Development Group involving colleagues across the Council who have a role for supporting workforce learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement revised Essential Learning for Care programme.</li> <li>• Continue to support engagement of colleagues with myLearning Hub.</li> <li>• Design digital resources to support programme of core essential learning from the recommendations of the Inquiry and Review.</li> <li>• Build pool of mediators to support mediation across the Council (link to Strategic Workforce Plan).</li> <li>• Design and initial roll out of core essential learning for people leaders as recommended in the Inquiry Review.</li> <li>• Consider how to strengthen the learning culture within the Council further to support opportunities for career progression, leadership development and succession planning.</li> <li>• Take opportunities to support the growth of digital confidence by going out to services to help with use of devices and access to myLearning Hub.</li> <li>• Continue to implement increased functionality of myLearning Hub.</li> </ul>

Ref.	Action	Strategic Theme	Aim(s)	Agreed Activity	Outcomes Achieved	For Completion by March 2024.
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to design refresher essential learning on key areas as directed by the Essential Learning Governance Board.</li> <li>• Continue to provide role-specific learning for all colleagues and people leaders.</li> <li>• Continue to facilitate colleague completion of essential qualifications for their role.</li> <li>• Design modern digital resources which offer colleagues a great learner experience, help us to meet our essential and professional development learning requirements and to support the delivery of other Council priorities e.g., Wellbeing, Policy.</li> <li>• Development and Carbon Literacy.</li> </ul>

Ref.	Action	Strategic Theme	Aim(s)	Agreed Activity	Outcomes Achieved	For Completion by March 2024.
6	Resourcing and Talent	Maximising our capability and performance	<p>We recruit people who are committed to role modelling our behaviours and delivering our priorities.</p> <p>Colleagues feel welcome from day one.</p> <p>Support our talented colleagues with their development and career progression.</p>	<p>We will diversify how and where we recruit.</p> <p>We will offer flexibility for roles we're recruiting.</p> <p>We will identify, develop and grow our own talent - through further talent programmes and succession planning.</p> <p>We will use Workforce Plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered new Recruitment &amp; Selection Policy.</li> <li>Created and implemented new e-learning modules for recruitment and selection.</li> <li>Initial Talent programme delivered.</li> <li>Supported EU colleagues during Brexit.</li> <li>Diverse shortlists/panels in place.</li> <li>Tie break at Recruitment stage in operation.</li> <li>Working for us pages reviewed and updated to ensure more inclusivity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of our employee value proposition to support broader attraction strategy</li> </ul>
7	Performance	Maximising our capability and performance	<p>Everyone is clear about what's expected of them, their contribution and impact.</p> <p>Our colleagues know we treat them fairly, but we have the difficult conversations with each other when we need to.</p>	<p>We have regular 1:1's, Looking Back and Looking Forward conversations.</p> <p>We all feel supported to give and receive feedback.</p> <p>We embed behaviours in performance expectations and goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Framework in place for all LGE colleagues.</li> <li>People Leader Goal introduced for all people managers including measures of success.</li> <li>Values replaced by new behaviours into the Performance Framework and published.</li> <li>Permanent removal of the link to pay in annual review discussions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing provision of Conversation Spotlight workshop.</li> <li>360 development tools introduced for senior leaders.</li> <li>Supporting and measuring performance management discussions.</li> </ul>
8	Workforce Planning	Maximising our capability and performance	<p>Take informed decisions about our workforce.</p> <p>We recognise our economic footprint in the city as one of the largest employers.</p>	<p>We deliver and use our Strategic Workforce Plan 2021-2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic Workforce plan published.</li> <li>Service workforce plans have been developed for HR, Customer, Facilities Management, Waste and Cleansing, Culture and the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Strategic Workforce Plan alongside development of refreshed Workforce Strategy.</li> </ul>

Ref.	Action	Strategic Theme	Aim(s)	Agreed Activity	Outcomes Achieved	For Completion by March 2024.
9	Organisational Change	Enhancing our colleague experience	<p>Colleagues are engaged and feel supported through change.</p> <p>Modern reward framework and benefits platform.</p> <p>Develop and embed a compelling approach to 'Smart Working' which reflects learning from the pandemic, and which further modernises our practices.</p>	<p>We deliver and use our Strategic Workforce Plan 2021-2024.</p> <p>We all feel supported through change.</p> <p>We embed Organisational Design principles to support 'Our Future Council'.</p> <p>We consolidate the Scottish Local Government Living Wage (SLGLW).</p> <p>We continue to engage Trade Unions and colleagues on wider reform.</p> <p>We embed Smart Working.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager's forum established to regularly engage managers in future change. First session focused on support for leaders and their role in supporting their teams.</li> <li>• Scottish Living Wage consolidated into pay in April 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agile Working pilot on organisational design within the Inclusion service.</li> <li>• Updates to Managing Change Guidelines post pilot and creation of new Managing Change Toolkit to enhance our guidance to people leaders who deal with 'change'.</li> <li>• Creation of guidance related to organisational design and potential incorporation of the Scottish approach to Service Design in the public sector.</li> </ul>
10	Wellbeing	Enhancing our colleague experience	<p>Culture where colleagues are supported to manage their wellbeing.</p> <p>Offer flexibility to support positive work-life balance.</p> <p>Colleagues are clear about the benefits of working for us.</p>	<p>We increase provision of wellbeing support.</p> <p>We develop and embed Smart Working options.</p> <p>We launch new benefits platform, consolidate Scottish Living Wage and further reform of pay and terms.</p> <p>We tailor support in response to insights and feedback.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant increase in provision of wellbeing support provided.</li> <li>• Achieved CIPD Award for Best Wellbeing Initiative in the public sector 2021.</li> <li>• Hybrid Working principles developed and team led.</li> <li>• Vivup Benefits platform launched. Tailored approach to wellbeing provision based on service/team need.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with Trade Unions improve suicide awareness and prevention through provision of learning and improving our processes/support.</li> <li>• Collaborate with Poverty Prevention and Trauma Informed to develop future approach and make it easy for colleagues to access the support they need.</li> <li>• Review of Our Future Work.</li> </ul>

Ref.	Action	Strategic Theme	Aim(s)	Agreed Activity	Outcomes Achieved	For Completion by March 2024.
11	Engagement and Enablement	Enhancing our colleague experience	<p>Colleagues have the tools, and can access systems and information, they need to do their roles effectively and to feel engaged with the organisation.</p> <p>Colleagues feel they have a voice which is heard.</p>	<p>We provide equal access to information and opportunities.</p> <p>We develop/embed Smart Working options.</p> <p>Employee engagement tools are used e.g., surveys, pulse checks, Corporate and Directorate communication plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Case prepared and accepted for move to Oracle Cloud enabling frontline colleague access.</li> <li>• Part of Implementation team responsible for implementation of new Teacher Booker system which controls Edinburgh Council's Supply List.</li> <li>• Intranet Gateway (implemented June 2023). Allows secure access to the Orb for all frontline colleagues.</li> <li>• New replacement Customer Records Management system, Halo, procured and delivered. Allows deep dive on HR and employee requests.</li> <li>• Halo access given to all signed-up frontline colleagues (implemented June 2023).</li> <li>• Talentlink to Halo integration of conditions form information – supports the new start Onboarding process (delivered July 2023).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Phase 1 of Oracle Fusion (HR and Payroll system) by April 2024.</li> </ul>