

# Finance and Resources Committee

10.00am, Thursday 16 January 2025

## People Strategy – Theme Deep Dive Updates

Executive/routine  
Wards

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 Committee are asked to note the People Strategy Deep Dive Report for the themes:
- Attract the Best People
  - Develop Exceptional Leaders

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# Report

## People Strategy – Theme Deep Dive Updates

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This is the next in our series of themed Deep Dive reports as part of the assurance reporting framework on the implementation of Our People Strategy 2024-2027. It is focused on our themes to Attract the Best People and Develop Exceptional Leaders.
- 2.2 These report highlights activity undertaken throughout the first year of the People Strategy implementation and introduces activity for the year ahead.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 As part of the new reporting arrangements for the People Strategy 2024 to 2027 this report fulfils our commitment to providing a detailed up-date on the People Strategy themes.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 The deep dives *Attract the Best People* and *Develop Exceptional Leaders* sets out key activity and achievements during this first year of implementation. It also summarises future activity and ambitions and is intended to provide members with further insight to some of the more detailed work underway.

### 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 The People Strategy, Workforce Plan and associated Action Plans will continue to be implemented and monitored through a suite of key performance indicators.

### 6. Financial impact

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- 6.1 We will work within our defined budgets to deliver the actions outlined.

### 7. Equality and Poverty Impact

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- 7.1 These reports align with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

## **8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications**

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8.1 None

## **9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact.**

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9.1 N/A

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

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10.1 None

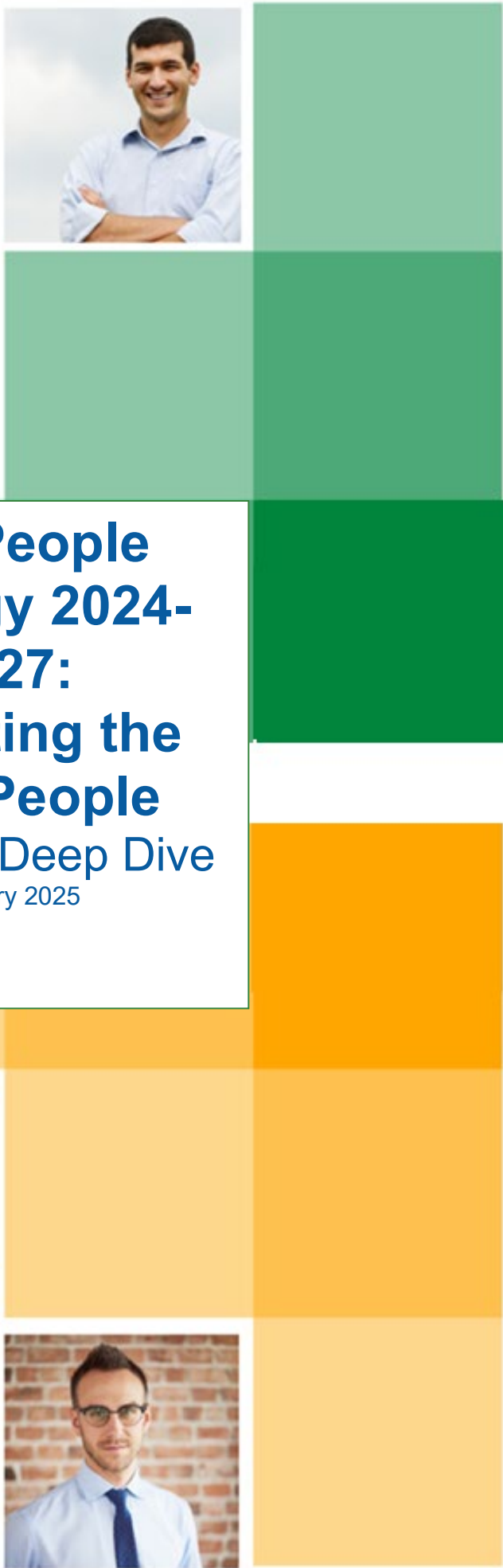
## **11. Appendices**

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Appendix One - People Strategy 2024 to 2027 Theme Deep Dive - Attract the Best People and Develop Exceptional Leaders



**Our People  
Strategy 2024-  
2027:  
Attracting the  
Best People**  
Thematic Deep Dive  
January 2025



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## Introduction

This is the second of our themed Deep Dive reports as part of the reporting framework on the implementation of Our People Strategy 2024-2027. It is focused on our theme to:

### Attract the Best People

This report highlights ongoing activity, with the aim of improving the ways in which the City of Edinburgh Council attracts a skilled and diverse workforce.

## How our work is influenced

The City of Edinburgh Council's future depends upon attracting people with the capabilities needed to deliver and enable first-class services for our citizens. Our recruitment practices will leverage what the city has to offer, so we attract the best people in a competitive jobs market. Without skilled people we simply cannot deliver the right outcomes for the public. Our priority is to attract people in service areas identified as having current or likely future skills gaps. We seek to attract people with potential and relevant experience from a range of sectors and all walks of life. This requires us to review not just how we bring people into the Council, but also where and how we source people and how we induct new joiners into our culture.

Within this theme, the actions outlined within Year 1 of Our People Strategy Delivery Plan include:

- Development of Recruitment and Attraction Plan
- Implementation of new Recruitment Platform on Oracle Fusion
- Development of Strategic Workforce Plan for 2024-2027

## Looking back

### Recruitment and Attraction Plan

On reflection:

- We have developed an Attraction Plan to consider our recruitment practices in what is a competitive jobs market and considered our wider organisational identity and why this matters, to potential candidates and existing colleagues.



- We implemented phase 2 of Our Behaviours project, this included transitioning from competency-based interviews to behavioural interviews. We developed comprehensive manager guidance on behavioural interviews and planning of interviews. We further created question banks to help managers shape and structure their interviews and developed scoring guidance and templates for managers.



Our Behavioural Framework

- Extended our Disability Confident (Guaranteed Interview scheme) to include all applicants who are, or have been care experienced, and who meet the essential criteria for the post. This extends our current arrangements that guarantee an interview to applicants who meet the criteria for the post and who declare a disability.
- Produced guidance and Frequently Asked Questions about Skilled Worker Visas and the Council's role as a sponsorship organisation. The information covers anyone seeking employment with the Council who would like us to support an application for a Skilled Worker Visa, current colleagues who are sponsored by the Council or looking to switch to a Skilled Worker Visa from a different visa. This also includes line managers who already manage an employee with a Skilled Worker Visa, or intend to recruit an individual who requires sponsorship, and minimum salary requirements for skilled workers.
- Successfully secured our Disability Confident Employers status until 2027.



This is to certify that

City of Edinburgh Council

DCS004042

is a Disability Confident Employer

## Attracting and retaining a diverse workforce

We have:

- Gathered insight on barriers for applying for roles in the Council from under-represented communities.
- Identified specialist diverse job boards to promote our vacancies and showcase our commitments to be an inclusive employer.
- Trialed advertising roles with Stonewall and Race Equality Matters.
- Updated our [Work for Us](#) pages to include video testimonials from several of our services and added content with a greater emphasis on inclusion and wellbeing.
- Launched a candidate survey to support our data insight into barriers to recruitment at all stages of the process.
- Introduced “Happy to Talk Flexible” strapline in job adverts.
- Engaged with Scottish Government on national guidelines to support inclusive and positive recruitment experiences in local authorities.
- Launched reasonable adjustments toolkits and workshops.
- Extended our guaranteed interview scheme to include Care-Experienced candidates.
- Piloting software to increase inclusive and accessible language in our job adverts and person specifications.
- Reviewed the Scottish Government Minority Ethnic recruitment toolkit.
- Committed to supporting more part-time and flexible working positions through the organisation and piloting approaches.

## Recruitment Platform on MyHR

On reflection:

- We have successfully implemented (October 2024) a new Oracle HR and Payroll system. The new system is known internally as ‘MyHR’. Phase 2 includes the rollout of the new ‘Recruiting’ module, which will be in place by 31 March 2025. The new system should assist hiring teams to attract more talent and fill job vacancies fast. We will be able to grow talent pools, drive internal mobility, and streamline the hiring process through AI and automation.
- Phase 2 of MyHR will also allow individual workforce lifecycles to be captured on one system, allowing streamlined processes and reporting. We will continue to advertise on MyJob Scotland however recruitment practices will be further reviewed following implementation in March 2025, alongside the Attraction Plan to consider the most effective methods. It is intended that the service will become more pro-active in respect of campaigns, opens days, career fairs, as well as internal succession and development.
- As part of business as usual, candidates currently apply for advertised vacancies via a recruitment system known as ‘TalentLink’. The system tracks each stage of the recruitment process, with the capability to provide management information reporting to track the application status for all advertised posts.



## Strategic Workforce Plan



Starting in January 2024, work took place to research and develop Our Strategic Workforce Plan 2024-2027, with the policy being approved by Committee in August 2024.

The work to produce the Plan included:

- Defining purpose and scope
- Developing an implementation plan
- External research of the labour market
- Collaboration with other workforce planning professionals
- Internal collaboration with stakeholders
- Identification of available talent pipelines
- Business Intelligence gathering from service areas
- Engagement with colleague Diversity Networks
- Engagement with recognised Trade Unions
- Analysis and presentation of workforce data
- Engagement of frontline colleagues
- Briefing of senior leaders

To start to embed the strategic plan, and align it with operational service delivery, the following work was undertaken:

- The Strategic Workforce Planning Forum (SWPF) was enacted, for Heads of Service. The Forum allows peer to peer support and is a place to share knowledge and best practice approaches of 'what works'.
- The 6 stages of workforce planning have been split into collaborative workshops for Heads of Service, to assist them in leading the development of a live Operational Workforce Plan (12 months) for their respective service areas.
- In addition, an informative Step-by-Step Guide to creating an operational workforce plan was created to assist leaders in developing a Plan.
- Weekly workforce planning drop-in sessions have taken place to allow Heads of Service to engage with each other, to discuss workforce challenges, and identify solutions they can take forward.
- An Orb (intranet) page was created as a 'one stop shop' for all workforce planning related toolkits, templates and information.
- Toolkits have been developed that align to the 6 steps of the workforce planning process.

- A template was created to ensure a consistent approach to identifying critical roles, to help better manage workforce risks at service area, and city-wide levels.
- An Operational Workforce Plan template was developed, to allow for clear alignment with our strategic people priorities, as outlined within Our People Strategy and Our Strategic Workforce Plan. This approach will also foster a city-wide consistent approach to planning for our future workforce.
- At a national level, membership of the Local Government Association Workforce Planning Network, and Society of Personnel and Development Scotland Workforce Planning Forum has enabled knowledge and best practice to be cascaded to service areas.

## Looking forward to 2025

### Recruitment and Attraction

Looking forward:

We have identified steps to improve the way we attract talented individuals to the Council. We also want to improve our recruitment process, with the aim of improving the candidate experience. We are pleased to report that work is already underway, as highlighted below:

- Re-evaluate and re-launch the unique value we offer.
- Redefine Our Purpose in our recruitment adverts.
- Embed Our Behaviours, and our culture throughout the recruitment process.
- Adopt a trauma informed approach to our recruitment and interview process.
- Utilise the workforce data from Our Strategic Workforce Plan to attract future talent
- Use the Scottish census data to attract a workforce that reflects the city & target under-represented groups, with the aim of enhancing a diverse workforce.
- Develop an authentic message through our existing colleagues.
- Build an engaging careers website to improve our employer brand.
- Consider the candidate experience at every stage during the recruitment process.
- Review our end-to-end recruitment process.
- Update our content to promote colleague wellbeing initiatives.
- Proactively engage more on social media platforms.
- Grow our own talent pools and attract more Generation Z candidates (those born between 1997 to 2012) into local government.
- Improve the onboarding and induction for all new colleagues.

Further improvements will be realised, following the implementation of Oracle Recruiting, our new recruitment platform, in the first half of 2025.

In conclusion:

The City of Edinburgh Council's employer brand is the perception that potential candidates have of the organisation, as well as the perception of internal colleagues.

For some of our colleagues who have worked for the organisation for some time, these perceptions will have changed, in line with wider societal changes. It is of prime importance, to be able to attract candidates within a highly competitive labour market, within Scotland's capital city. With over 19,000 colleagues, we are a major employer in Edinburgh, and Scotland.

Therefore, a review, and reinvigoration of our employee value proposition is needed. We aim to review existing arrangements, in line with the current labour market outlook, and listen to colleagues and citizens. In addition, we will engage with our leaders to help support creative and innovative approaches to better attract the best people.

## **Recruitment Platform**

Looking forward:

- After successfully launching MyHR on 1 October 2024, work on phase 2 of the project, which includes a new recruitment module, will be completed by 31 March 2025.
- Benefits of the new recruitment module will include a bespoke recruitment website, improved candidate experience, and as the recruitment module is integrated with the new HR system, less duplication of work for recruiting managers and colleagues working within Human Resources.
- Recruitment Procedures, processes and guidance will be reviewed, with support and learning made available to recruiting managers, to enable them to make best use of the new platform.

## **Strategic Workforce Plan**

Looking forward:

- We will finalise local Service Operational Plans and consolidate action plans from these, ensuring a clear approach to workforce resource, recruitment and skills for each service area. This will focus on all workforce supply and ways in which we recruit and employ.
- We will continue to improve and develop the available workforce planning toolkits, and templates, considering feedback, and lessons learned. The aim will be to continually improve the available products.
- As part of the MyHR implementation, we will continue to work collaboratively within Human Resources and other departments to ensure our workforce data is as accurate as possible (considering that having credible data relies on individuals and managers notifying HR of workforce changes).

- We will work to ensure that workforce information is available to managers in MyHR, via the manager dashboard, to assist local resource planning and deployment decision.
- Following MyHR system implementation, the Workforce Dashboard will be produced and made available to leaders to assist strategic workforce planning decision making.
- We will continue to offer advice and guidance with Operational Workforce Plans through our HR Leads, to further assist Heads of Service in maturing local resource planning at service area level.
- It is envisaged to enact an additional 'Workforce Planning Forum' to engage leaders and managers, with leading local resources planning within their respective service areas/reporting units. This will build on and be in addition to the existing offer for Heads of Service.

In conclusion:

To Attract the Retain the Best People, embedding local resource planning at service area level will be an ongoing cycle, to enable us to reduce workforce gaps, and proactively plan for our future workforce.

◆ EDINBURGH ◆  
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



**Our People  
Strategy 2024-  
2027:  
Developing  
Exceptional Leaders  
Thematic Deep Dive**  
January 2025



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# Introduction

This is the third of our themed Deep Dive reports as part of the reporting framework on the implementation of Our People Strategy 2024-2027. It is focused on our theme:

## Developing Exceptional Leaders

This report highlights ongoing activity, with the aim of improving the ways in which the City of Edinburgh Council achieves this.

## How our work is influenced

We need to develop impactful, strategic leaders as well as strengthen line management capability across the City of Edinburgh Council. We need to ensure line managers have the time to fulfil their role in developing their teams and are skilled in doing so. We wish to be recognised for the way our leaders lead, living and role modelling Our Behaviours and leading effectively through change. We will develop an inclusive approach to leadership which will allow us to identify and grow our leaders at all levels to drive leadership excellence and capability.

Our plan of activity is and will continue to be informed by the following:



Within this theme, the actions outlined within Year 1 of Our People Strategy Delivery Plan include:

- Embed Our Behaviours.
- Review Manager roles and capabilities.
- Review Leader and frontline manager development programmes

# Looking Back

## Embed Our Behaviours

In summary we have continued our work on steps to enhance and build our leadership culture. This includes:

- Rolled out Quarterly Executive Director led sessions for all people leaders themed on current strategic priorities.
- Undertook a culture check survey during 2024, with action plans developed across services.
- Worked with Leaders across services to help them embed Our Behaviours in ways of working, including the rollout of pilot projects across Waste and Cleansing, Transport Hub and Catering.
- Ongoing promotion and implementation of Our Behaviours, embedding them in our people policies and processes including recruitment, onboarding, performance and leadership expectations.

## Review Manager roles and capabilities

- Rolled out a 360-assessment tool for the Senior Leadership Team to support individual development plans and to consider collective areas for focus and training needs. Collective themes included, courageous conversations and trust, peer support, wellbeing and building coaching for leaders
- Engagement with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to focus on people priorities, resources and support for the year ahead. Programme of activity for SLT to support in their role developed aligning with collective themes identified.
- Delivered a suite of learning and development available for all people leaders to support them in their roles.



## Review leader and frontline manager development programmes

### Inspiring Managers' Hub

The screenshot shows the 'Inspiring Managers' Hub' website. It has a header with 'Inspiring you' and 'To do this month'. Below the header are two columns of text and icons. The left column says 'Welcome to the new Inspiring Managers' Hub - a place to be inspired and inspire others.' and 'Explore these pages for lots of information, guidance and sparks of genius to inspire you in your role as a people leader and manager.' The right column says 'Find out what you need to be doing this November including:' followed by three bullet points: 'take our new Level 1 trauma learning', 'approve pay claims by 14 November', and 'sign up to an Islamophobia Awareness Month event'. Below the text is a grid of buttons: 'Case studies', 'Policies and processes', 'Events', 'Managers' News', 'People leaders' sessions', 'Leadership', and 'Quick guides and toolkits'. To the right of the grid is a green banner that says 'myHR has changed' and 'New myHR system. The new myHR system is live. Have a look at the tasks you need to complete. Find out what to do.'

- We launched our inspiring managers hub – a space for inspiration, inspiration and connection, as well as general advice, support and guidance for people managers. A place to connect, and also see corporate actions and activity.
- A range of learning events is available to people leaders and aligns to our Leadership Framework. The content is also informed by feedback provided by people leaders. It is important to highlight that other learning is also offered to leaders to support the wider aspects of their role. This includes finance, commerciality, health and safety, systems and educational leadership.

A summary of leadership and people manager training rolled out from January – October 2024 is outlined below:

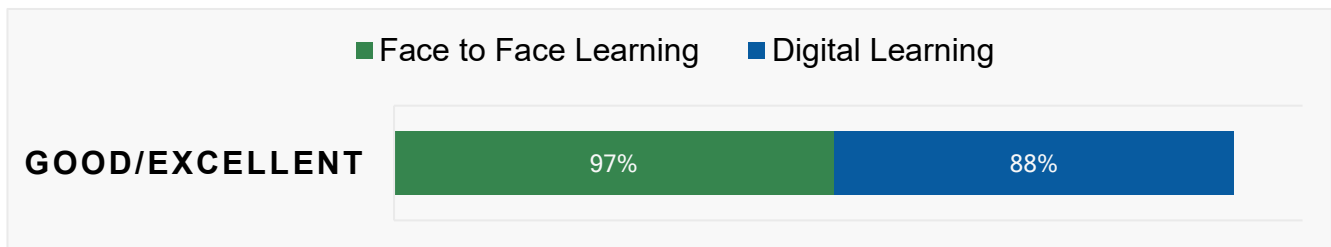
Learning Area	Workshops	No. Attended
Bite Size Leadership	Compassionate Leadership Self-Compassion in the Workplace	113
Policy Into Practice	Disciplinary Early Resolution Grievance Reasonable Adjustments - Sickness, Absence and Wellbeing	850
Relationship and Culture	Building Relationships with Respect, Integrity and Flexibility Conversations Spotlight New People Leaders	779
Bespoke Service Requests / Internal Consultancy	Tailored versions of our existing learning events plus team and leadership development and support.	306

In addition to the above there is Coaching and Mentoring and Mediation provision as well as an internal bank of trained coaches and mediators.

Learning and development support is evaluated in a variety of ways including post event online surveys, optional call back sessions to discuss longer term impact of the learning and ongoing assessment of confidence levels. Follow-up discussions with participants three months after they attended the specific learning session, Building Relationships with Respect, Integrity and Flexibility have highlighted the following key impacts:

- Increased confidence, self-awareness and understanding of others.
- More frank and honest conversations carried out with respect and integrity.
- More aware of how to manage challenges.
- Networking and learning with other leaders, sharing common ground.
- Recommend this learning to colleagues.

In terms of satisfaction rates and general feedback:



Discussing change to policy and working through case studies helps to think about how to deal with situations and hear other people's views. Having a case consultant in the room is great to hear their views.

Yes, it was reassuring to discuss support and advice available from HR team and PAM assist and Able Futures. Good signposting to apps and to further training on sickness absence policy.

A few new tools I hadn't come across previously such as the Saboteurs and Johari were interesting, but the honest "deep" conversations, and role plays based on real live examples, felt more "rubber hits the road" useful than other training sessions.

Valued looking at the opportunity for early interventions - "how do we fix this or turn things around", being clearer in discussions re expectations - cards on the table discussions.

# Looking ahead to 2025

Our planned work under this theme is aligned and will be tracked under one of the three organisation wide transformation value streams “Helping colleagues improve performance by giving them tools they need to get the job done”. One of the initial priorities to support people leader accountability and drive performance is an increased focus on workforce governance arrangements including service workforce plans being finalised, refreshed workforce dashboards for all our services and workforce governance action plans and assurance. The ongoing and planned year one activity under this theme includes:

## **Embed Our Behaviours**

- Continue to embed our behaviours and evolve this approach to align more with delivering and responding for our customers
- Offer 360 leadership development assessment tool, which is based on our behaviours and our leadership framework, to a wider pool of people leaders
- Undertake a full colleague satisfaction and culture survey in 2025. Consideration will be given to lessons learned from the initial culture survey to drive up response rates to ensure a wide and reflective picture.

## **Review Manager roles and capabilities**

- Set role expectations and skills for each level of people leader/manager: senior, middle and frontline, building on our existing leadership framework
- With a future focus include skills for leaders to support with the Council’s ambitions under the transformation programme including confidence around leading change, flexibility in ways of thinking and delivering and continuous improvement.
- We will also align this work with the people leader commitments (year one) in our Workforce Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024/2027 to support people leaders to deliver on this agenda.
- Building on service area workforce plans, agree an appropriate approach and undertake a skills audit for people leaders and develop an action plan to address skills gaps identified.

## **Review leader and frontline manager development programmes**

- Continue the development of the Inspiring Managers Hub providing all people leaders with agile access to key information for their role including signposting of the range of people leader learning and resources available
- Work with services, taking insight from service workforce plans, skills audit for people leaders and service area succession plans, to align and target people leader learning and development activity to meet learning needs identified. This will also include consideration of the core essential learning for all people leaders.
- New courses focused on Thriving in Your Leadership Role, The Role of The People Leader and Wellbeing. The aim of these to help set leaders up for success in their role focusing on leading self, others and service and the relevant tools required to do that.
- Ongoing delivery of active bystander workshops is one of the key resources under our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion learning framework.
- Commence delivery of programme of activity for SLT with first session planned in early 2025