Dacorum Borough Council

People Strategy (2022 – 2025)

Our Goals

Our People Strategy has four clear goals to help ensure our workforce are best placed to deliver our strategic objectives.

➢ Identify the key workforce challenges that DBC face in light of our strategic/ transformational objectives and the national issues;

➢ Set out in detail our workforce ambitions: those things we need our workforce to be in order to achieve our strategic and transformational objectives;

➢ Deliver a linked programme plan of activity to deliver the strategy;

➢ Assess whether our current enabling functions and processes are optimally designed to enable the above outputs and, if not, propose an alternative delivery model and approach.

Our Strategic Objectives

We are clearly focussed on our Corporate Plan priorities, our transformation programme and our commercial ambitions.

Corporate Plan 2020-25

Our Priorities
2020 - 2025

Our previous plans focussed on getting the building blocks in place to develop a borough that prospers and thrives, whilst funding regeneration to attract inward investors.

This plan builds on these foundations. In addition, the Council has committed to addressing climate change and adopting all reasonable steps, which cuts across the delivery of each of the Council's priorities which focus on the issues that matter most for residents:

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
- Building strong and vibrant communities
- Climate and ecological emergency
- Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
- Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery

'Future Dacorum' Transformation Programme

- Customer focussed: Putting residents at the heart of what we do
- Evidence led: Our policy and decisions guided by "timely and accurate" data, driving continuous improvement
- Efficient & sustainable: Developing efficient, effective and sustainable approaches to service delivery, reducing costly processes and providing structures that are agile and fit for purpose
- The right culture: Developing a workforce that is high performing, highly motivated and with the skills and resources to deliver the best possible outcomes for our residents.

Place Programme

- Hemel Garden Communities: a green network; integrated neighbourhoods; a self-sustaining economy; engaged communities.

- Hemel Place – where life is greener: where connections matter; a vibrant destination for enterprise; enhancing your wellbeing in Hemel.

Commercialisation

- We will continually identify and develop opportunities to commercialise existing and new services;

- Our partnerships (private and public) will be efficient and deliver best value;

- We will have a strategic commissioning and procurement approach that derives the maximum value from every pound spent;

- We will adopt the most effective delivery models to deliver best value services;

- When we need to charge for our services, we will price commercially, ensuring that this covers the cost of the service unless we have made a conscious and evidenced decision to subsidise;

- We will be commercially astute – we will understand the market for our services, and know how to make it work for us;

Strategic Challenges

There are significant workforce related challenges being felt by all public sector bodies. They are having a very real impact in Dacorum and the fact they are being felt everywhere does not diminish our resolve to tackle them**.**

➢ **Move to hybrid working** - we have successfully implemented and supported a move to hybrid working. However we recognise that these ways of working can present very specific challenges for individual members of staff and can exacerbate feeling of detachment. It can also have a fluctuating impact on organisational productivity.

➢ **Recruitment and Retention difficulties** – we have seen a challenging market develop, particularly in 'expert' professions.

➢ **Mental health impact of Covid** – we have seen sickness rates rise particularly around mental health and recognise that staff are 'running on empty' after their pandemic endeavours.

➢ An over reliance on **agency staff** – As the direct employment market becomes more challenging, agency workers are being used more who can demand higher hourly rates.

➢ **Cost of living crisis** – Impact on physical and mental health for staff and residents

➢ **Reduction in Central Government funding** - increases in Inflation and rising costs resulting in a deeper look at service efficiencies and income generation opportunities.

What does our data tell us?

Our sickness rates…

- **44.8% increase of sickness days** from 2020/2021 to 2021/2022 excluding COVID
- **Environmental Services** has the **most** lost days lost due to sickness in 2021/2022 - approx. 50% of DBC lost days
- **Mental Health and Musculoskeletal** are typically the highest reason for absence.

Agency Worker Spend

- Year on year this is increasing
- **High spend on staff vacancies**
- High spend on Covid-19 support/recovery

Recruitment and Retention

- **High number of vacancies** open
- Increased number of **failed advertising campaigns**
- **National recruitment problem**, especially in professional roles
- Overall staff turnover is comparable to other years, remains healthy according to industry standard (10%-15%). However some **pockets of higher turnover**.

Age Demographic

Approximately 70% of our staff are aged over 40 years old, highlighting an **ageing workforce**.

Age	Percentage
Under 21:	0.7% (5)
21 – 30:	11.7% (89)
31 – 40:	20% (152)
41 – 50:	25% (190)
51 – 60:	29.5% (224)
61 – 70:	12.2% (93)
71 plus:	0.9% (7)

Our People Strategy Vision: *The right staff, in the right place, at the right time, working in the right way*

Our vision is to have a workforce that is high performing, highly motivated and with the skills and resources to deliver the best possible outcomes for our residents. In return we want people who feel supported, engaged and have real opportunities to develop and learn. To enable this we need our leaders and managers to be fully equipped to support/grow our workforce along with creating a positive working culture where staff feel valued and have a sense of pride to be working for the Council. That's why we are committed to having a workforce that is:

Agile & Responsive

Able to adjust accordingly and adapt to change

Inclusive
Engaging views of all to shape the future; provide equal opportunities; eliminate discrimination, have a workforce who represents the diversity in our local communities

People focussed

Managers are able to work with their teams and hold people management as the heart of their role. Providing staff with trust and respect to undertake their roles

Commercial & Digitised

Decisions and approaches are made through a commercial and efficient lens, focussed on service user satisfaction.

Accountable and brave

High levels of accountability are present in order to transform the council into a high-performance organisation. Willing to be bold and brave

Customer and Evidence led

Pragmatic, driven by the needs of our residents/businesses with decisions driven by the evidence available

Committed & Positive

Committed to public service, the goals of organisation and the associated values, behaviours and standards of the Council.

Grounded in our values

The culture of the organisation is fundamental to everything we do and our five key values set out how we want staff to communicate and relate to each other as well as with residents, Members and external partners.
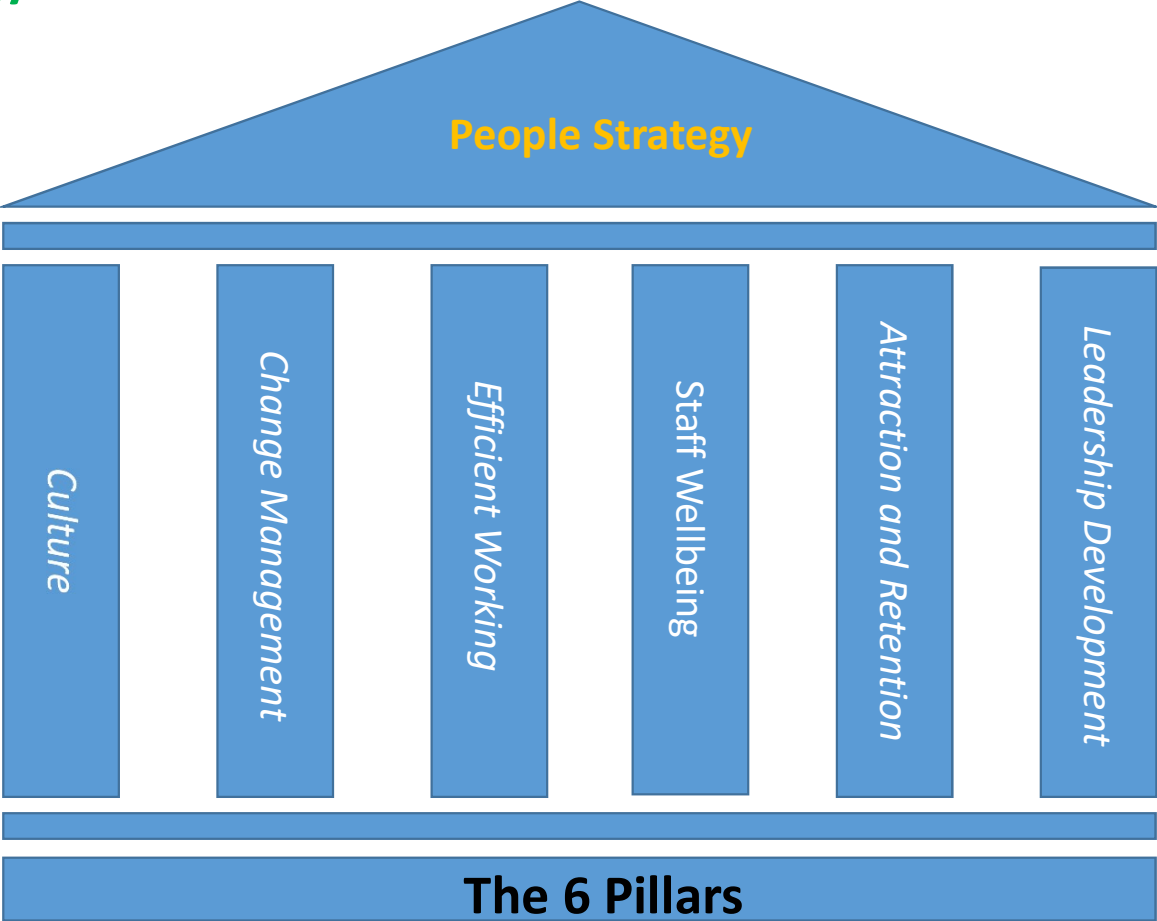
Our expectations of each other at Dacorum

We will be honest and act with integrity

We will support each other and work together

We will nurture and celebrate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in everything we do

We will be accountable to each other to get things done

We will be ambitious for our places and our people

Our agreed leadership expectations:

- Champion and drive through workforce change and provide opportunities for staff to be engaged on a range of corporate issues and to actively promote a culture of employee wellbeing, respect and support.
- Ensure that services are at the forefront in terms of innovation, delivery, quality, best practice, equality and inclusion.
- Break down service boundaries, to offer a seamless internal and external service to customers.
- Work collaboratively as part of the Council's leadership team to drive forward a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring that effective budget, performance, risk management, project management, and learning from complaints/compliments becomes embedded as part of the Council's approach.
- Work collaboratively to ensure the development of a flexible and corporate organisation able to undertake, respond to, embrace, and absorb change. This includes creating an environment where teams can learn, thrive and perform.
- Promote an open and supportive culture which maximises the potential of employees.
- Provide leadership, support, challenge, and contribution to the Council's community leadership role.
- To be positive and challenge inappropriate behaviours and act within our policies on equality and diversity, financial issues and customer care.

People Strategy Pillars

People Strategy

Culture

Change Management

Efficient Working

Staff Wellbeing

Attraction and Retention

Leadership Development

The 6 Pillars

The 6 People Strategy Pillars

- **Culture –** Promotion, embedding and development of values based culture. Bringing clarity around the associated behaviours, standards and support to the organisation as it holds itself accountable.

- **Change Management** – Ensuring our service delivery and transformation objectives are met through effective change manage support and enabling our staff to drive, embrace and adapt to change. This will focus on employee engagement, expert advice and exceptional process design.

- **Attraction and Retention** – Developing the Dacorum offer so we are doing our utmost to recruit, develop and retain the right people.

- **Leadership Development** - Developing leadership capability to support the overall culture and transformational change with particular focus on the development of managers.

- **Efficient working** – Ensuring that bureaucracy is minimised and where it exists, is proportionate to the risk. Where possible, processes are digitised and automated.

- **Staff wellbeing** – Providing staff with a culture that supports physical and mental wellbeing, so that staff feel safe, engaged and motivated to continue to provide excellent services to our residents.

Pillar 1: Culture

Culture – promotion, embedding and development of values based culture. Bringing clarity around the associated behaviours and standards and support to the organisation as it holds itself accountable;

We will:

- Re-enforce our values across the organisation;

- Work with services to develop a framework of meaningful behaviours and standards

- Embed these formally in our ways of working and our processes;

- Role-model them these assiduously, praising when they are achieved, calling out and developing when we fall short;

- Be clear with our residents, businesses and partners as to the standards they should expect from us

Pillar 2: Change management

Change Management – Ensuring our service delivery and transformation objectives are met through effective change manage support. This will ensure the objective and route is optimal and our staff are enabled to drive, embrace and adapt to change. This will focus on employee engagement, expert advice and exceptional process design

We will:

- Develop an organisational development (OD) capability to deliver our transformation objectives;

- Actively support managers and staff to lead and be part of the change journey

- Ensure that managers are fully equipped and have the right skills sets to effectively manage change

- Ensure processes and procedures are in line with good practice and are adhered to throughout the change process.

- Ensure staff are fully informed and understand the purpose of the change.

Pillar 3: Attraction & Retention

Attraction and Retention – Developing the 'Dacorum offer' so we are doing our utmost to recruit, develop and retain the right people.

We will:

- Better understand the reasons for recruitment and retention challenges, accepting these may be different in different role types;

- Develop a strategy based on that evidence;

- Develop and communicate our Dacorum offer;

- Ensure agency staff are used in appropriate circumstances and process used is good value for money/effective.

- Work with services to ensure succession planning and talent identification is alive and embedded.

- Be alive to our aging workforce and how we can attract younger applicants to join us.

Pillar 4: Leadership & Development

Leadership Development - Developing leadership capability to support the overall culture and transformational change with particular focus on the development of managers.

We will:

- Ensure that our senior leaders are supported to drive the level of change and service performance that the Council is aiming for;

- Support managers to be real people leaders, and hold managing people as the key element of their role;

- Developing leadership capability to support the overall culture and transformational change;

- Ensure managers have a clear definition and expectation of the role of the manager at Dacorum.

- Ensure that new recruits are competent in leading teams the Dacorum way.

Pillar 5: Efficient working

Efficient working – ensuring that bureaucracy is minimised and where it exists, is proportionate to the risk. Where possible, processes are digitised and automated and sit with the most suitable person.

We will:

- Review HR risk appetite, ensuring our investment is proportionate to the risk and/ or opportunity;

- Drive down on low-value processes, automating where we can and acting as a role-model of efficiency for the rest of the organisation;

- Empower and support our managers to be people leaders, reducing the need for multiple teams involvement in standard processes;

- Ensure that processes are delivered at the optimal grade and place within the organisation;

- Ensure that staff policies and procedures are aligned to council need, good practice and employment legislation.

Pillar 6: Staff Wellbeing

Staff wellbeing - Providing staff with a culture that supports physical and mental wellbeing, so that staff feel safe, engaged and motivated to be at work and to continue to provide excellent services to our residents.

We will:

- Develop specific initiatives to support mental and physical health across the Council;

- Ensure the absent management policies and procedures are effective and in line with good practice, as well as being consistently applied;

- We listen to staff feedback to ensure our practices and initiatives are having the desired impact on staff wellbeing.

- To create workplaces that are safe and engaging.

- To create a culture that staff wellbeing matters and managers are fully equipped to support their staff in this challenging area.