

# East Sussex County Council People Strategy 2014 – 2017

Developing Our Workforce



## Our Strategic Priorities for 2017

### Delivering better outcomes for local people

#### Our Priorities

The Council Plan sets out our ambitions and what we plan to achieve by 2017. It is centred on four strategic priority outcomes which will enable us to make the greatest difference for residents each day. These areas are the focus of our investment for the long-term success of East Sussex. The **priority outcomes** are:

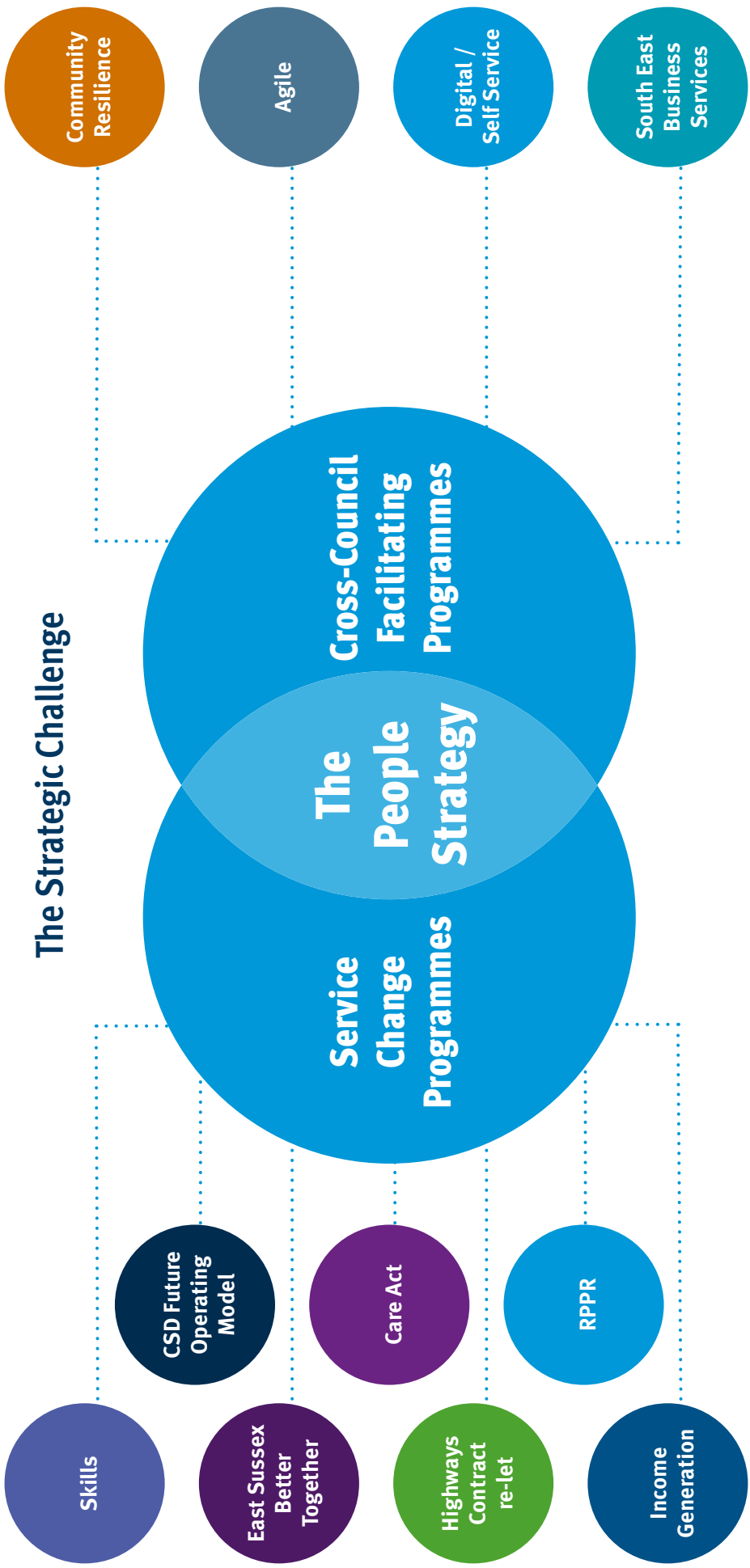
- 1. Driving economic growth** – creating the conditions for growth and enterprise to help local business thrive and ensure local people have the skills they need to succeed.
- 2. Keeping vulnerable people safe** – intervening early to help vulnerable adults and children, finding permanent solutions for children who cannot stay with their families and reduce road casualties.
- 3. Helping people help themselves** – enhancing what individuals, families and communities can do for themselves thereby reducing demand for services and breaking dependency.
- 4. Making best use of our resources** – maximising the value from public finance, maximising operational efficiency and effectiveness, deliver services that meet the needs of local communities and maximise resources focused on front line services.

These four priority outcomes are underpinned by three **operating principles** which set out how these objectives will be achieved:

- **Use of Strategic commissioning** – to direct our efforts to where they are needed most ensuring we deliver good outcomes in the most cost effective way.
- **One Council** – focusing on what works best for our customers, driving out ineffective processes or barriers to delivering good services or value for money.
- **Strong Partnerships** – with those who share our ambitions so that together we can make the greatest positive impact.

### How does the East Sussex People Strategy Support other Strategies?

The Council Plan outlines the priority outcomes for the Council. Each Department then sets priorities which support and enable the achievement of the Council's priorities.



# The People Strategy

## Introduction

This Strategy has been developed to help achieve the people changes needed over the next 3-5 years. Set against the future savings requirements and the business improvements needed, the emphasis of the People Strategy is on supporting and developing our managers and staff – who are key to our success - to enable them to respond to the changing environment. For example, Agile working, greater use of commissioning, working in partnership, greater use of technology – all of these will radically change and alter the role, and therefore the skills, of a successful manager. An appropriate OD programme is essential in order to ensure that our managers are in the best position to be able to make these changes.

## Developing our workforce to meet our strategic priorities

The People Strategy identifies the interventions available and required to support the development of the future workforce to deliver these priorities.

The Strategic Workforce Plan provides for the proactive, long term planning of the Council's staffing resources – it identifies the type of workforce that will be required for the future and provides a framework for identifying current gaps as well as development needs.

The People Strategy has been developed to support the workforce plan in the context of future operating models in the Council, and to equip us in responding to these challenges. The People Strategy identifies four key themes that will help us to shape our workforce over the next three years (see diagram opposite, top).

In order to deliver high quality, cost efficient services to our local residents, we must continue to seek out new ways of operating. We will:

- Seek opportunities to improve the way things are done and be responsible and flexible to change. This will require our workforce to be open to working in ways

that are smarter and more efficient;

- Deliver quality services taking into account the diverse needs to our local communities and their specific requirements, with a clear focus on delivering improved outcomes;
- Enhancing professional excellence, ensuring all staff have up to date expertise and the skills needed to undertake their duties to the highest professional level; and
- Add value, by doing our job well everyday and following the Council's processes, practices, procedures and systems. For managers, this is also about effectively leading and managing their teams.
- Exploit new technology to deliver more efficient and cost-effective ways of doing things.

Our workforce is the key to our success and it is essential therefore that we support our staff appropriately to enable them to meet the challenges ahead. Rather than a 'top down' approach, we will work collaboratively with our staff to understand the challenges they face on a day to day basis and provide them with the opportunity to shape and develop the support we provide.

# The People Strategy

## The four key themes



### The East Sussex Way

How we do things is just as important as what we do. In support of this we have developed, in conjunction with staff, the 5 key behaviours that apply to all staff. This is known as the ‘East Sussex Way’.

### How will we measure progress?

This strategy will be successful when we have delivered against the four key themes as set out in the People Strategy Action Plan.

For each key theme we have identified what

the deliverables are, which will be measured to determine how successful we have been. The measures used will vary from theme to theme and may change as difference elements of the work are delivered or started.

### Monitoring & Progress Reporting

Every six months we will review this strategy to ensure continued alignment to the corporate priorities. As part of this review we will look at the four key themes and assess the impact of what has been delivered at that point.

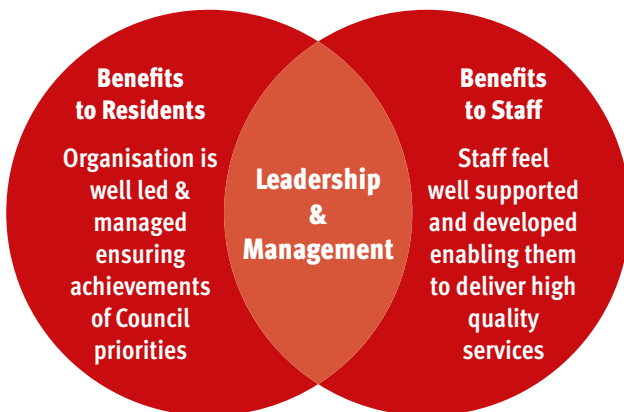
## The ‘East Sussex Way’



# Leadership and Management

## Context

The current and future challenges facing the Council mean that we will need different things from our leaders and managers in order to help drive the required business transformation. In order to be as effective and efficient as possible across all service areas we require empowered, strategic leaders, confident to work in new ways, as One Council to achieve the best outcomes with the resources available. We also need managers who are able to engage with their teams and manage performance of individuals in a fair and consistent manner. A key aspect of this is the development of our managers to enable them to confidently operate with greater self-sufficiency to enable resources to be released and directed to where they are needed most.



## Our Aim for 2017

Is to develop a consistent set of Management and Leadership standards linked to the East Sussex Way behaviours to enable managers to have a greater understanding of what is expected of them.

## Next Steps

We have a number of activities planned over the next 3 years. We will:

- Determine what a 'good' leader / manager looks like by developing a set of expected management and leadership standards in support of the Council's strategic priorities and operating principles. These will facilitate the

collation of objective evidence based feedback on performance and behaviour which will help define development conversations.

- Review our current leadership and development offering against the priority outcomes and key operating principles and use this as a basis to design and develop a Managers Curriculum. There will be a shift in emphasis from a general package of training and development to more focused and individual based support.
- Embed a coaching culture within the Council, developing managers to use coaching as part of their everyday approach to promote a supported, motivated workforce; maximise staff potential; build team skills and cultivate creativity. As coaches managers can create the space to work more strategically themselves, providing strong strategic leadership.

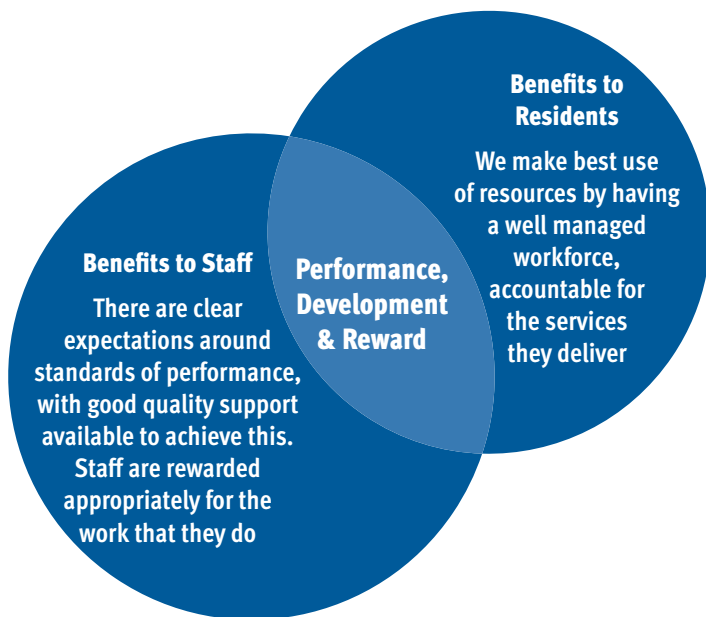
## How will we know we are performing well?

- ✓ Managers and leaders will be able to clearly articulate what is expected of them.
- ✓ The appraisal process will enable us to identify high performing managers to inform succession planning and will identify those managers where further development is required. Data collected via the appraisal process will be used to inform the ongoing review and development of the managers curriculum ensuring it remains fit for purpose.
- ✓ Feedback from staff will tell us that managers and leaders are engaging with their teams and there will be an increase in the number of managers addressing performance related concerns within their teams.
- ✓ Managers will tell us that they feel equipped to operate more self-sufficiently and have received the required development to do this confidently.

# Performance, Development and Reward

## Context

People are key to the success of the Council and in order to deliver high quality services to our residents we need to manage the performance of our staff, their attendance, and their development whilst also ensuring they are appropriately rewarded for what they do.



## Our Aim for 2017

To have embedded a clear and consistent performance management culture whereby staff and managers are clear about the standards expected of them and know how to access development support where it is required. We want managers to have the skills, and feel confident, in managing staff performance and attendance.

## Next Steps

We have a number of activities planned for the next 3 years. We will:

- Develop a culture of self-managed and ongoing learning for every employee.
- Implement a Learning Management System (LMS) to support self-sufficiency of managers and staff in respect of their learning and development and to facilitate the shift in focus from classroom learning to self-managed and

ongoing blended learning.

- Launch a revised appraisal process (linked to the LMS) aligned to the Council's priority outcomes and operating principles, promoting clear target setting and monitoring and improved systems for measuring and recording performance. When assessing performance we will ensure appropriate consideration is given to both how we do things as well as what has been achieved.
- Ensure, via the Managers Curriculum, that Managers and Leaders have the skills and feel confident addressing and dealing with performance and attendance related issues.
- Launch a Council wide strategy for managing, nurturing and retaining talent in recognition that in order to meet the challenges ahead we will need to recruit and retain the best people.
- Improve career development pathways for all employees.
- Refresh existing learning and development programmes to support the shift in focus away from classroom based training.
- Review our existing pay and reward arrangements.

## How will we know we are performing well?

- ✓ There is a clear training and development offer for all of our staff which supports and enables self-managed learning.
- ✓ An LMS has been implemented and is providing the anticipated benefits.
- ✓ Appraisal completion data and analysis is obtained from the LMS with Appraisal completion rates at over 90%.
- ✓ Managers tell us they feel confident and able to deal with staff performance and attendance issues.
- ✓ Reduction in staff turnover and managers and leaders report that they are retaining the people they want keep.

# Employee Engagement and Recognition

## Context

To achieve the Council's ambitions and positively address the challenges ahead, we will need to engage employees through encouraging active participation and constructive contribution in decision making. This will be underpinned by open and honest feedback so that individuals understand the rationale for changes; how their own work contributes to the Council's priority outcomes and operating principles and what these mean for our local communities.



## Our Aim for 2017

To have an engaged workforce who feel valued and are taking personal responsibility for finding better ways of doing things.

## Next Steps

We have a number of activities planned for the next 3 years. We will:

- Seek regular and timely feedback from employees in a variety of ways, including the use of Q12 questionnaires to measure staff engagement.
- Develop a joint Employee Forum to encourage and facilitate collaboration which will be via a combination of virtual and organised meetings.
- Consult with our employees to gain their views on which benefits they value and use this feedback to inform a review of the staff benefits package
- Recognise and reward our high performers and those who are exemplars of our operating principles in a more formal manner through the reinvigoration of employee awards.

## How will we know we are performing well?

- ✓ Our employees can articulate how they personally contribute to the delivery of the strategic priorities of the Council.
- ✓ Our employees tell us that they feel engaged and valued and that where work is well done they receive recognition of this.
- ✓ Our employees tell us that their feedback is sought and that their views and ideas are listened to.
- ✓ Our employees feel that they can help shape the future direction of the Council.



# Employee Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion

## Context

We recognise the importance of having a healthy and diverse workforce, which understands the needs of our residents, enabling them to provide the best service that they can. In addition encouraging our workforce to ‘give something back’ to their local community through volunteering can promote local understanding and compliment the Council’s service provision.



## Our Aim for 2017

To ensure we create and maintain a healthy working environment for all our employees and that this supports their wellbeing at work.

To engender a culture that values the diversity of our employees and residents.

## Next Steps

We have a number of activities planned for the next 3 years. We will:

- Continue to monitor absence rates and set improvement targets.

- Develop an improved approach to Stress Management through the adoption of more timely interventions, training for managers and the introduction of ESCC’s Wellbeing Summit
- The revision of the Attendance Policy to ensure a simplified, more robust approach to managing absence.
- Ensure all employees receive a return to work interview when they return following a period of sickness absence.
- Improve access to established wellbeing initiatives, including the workplace mediation scheme, through improved communication and promotion.
- Develop policies, processes and systems to support the Agile Working Programme and flexible working practices.
- Develop closer working relationships with Public Health colleagues.
- Encourage and develop volunteering schemes in partnership with charities and a range of other organisations, both internal and external.
- Continue to monitor our workforce to understand its profile to inform future courses of action.

## How will we know we are performing well?

- ✓ There will be a reduction in the number of days lost due to sickness absence, leading to efficiencies through improved attendance.
- ✓ We have a workforce that reflects the needs and interests of our local community.
- ✓ We will have a workforce that is drawn from all sectors of our community.

# East Sussex County Council People Strategy Action Plan 2014 – 2017

East Sussex People Strategy Theme	Link to the Council Plan	What are our key activities	How will we know we are performing well?
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Keeping vulnerable people safe</li> <li>✓ Making best use of resources</li> <li>✓ Use of strategic commissioning</li> <li>✓ One council</li> <li>✓ Strong partnerships</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of Management and Leadership Standards</li> <li>2. Development of a Managers' Curriculum</li> <li>3. Embedding a coaching culture</li> </ol>	<p>Managers will be confident about the role they are undertaking. Their development will be supported appropriately and there will be greater self-sufficiency.</p>
<b>Performance, Development and Reward</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Driving economic growth</li> <li>✓ Making best use of resources</li> <li>✓ Once council</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementation of a Learning Management System (LMS)</li> <li>2. Launch a revised appraisal process</li> <li>3. Launch a Council wide strategy for talent recognition</li> <li>4. Move away from classroom based learning</li> <li>5. Review our Existing Pay and Reward Arrangements</li> </ol>	<p>Staff and managers are clear about the standards expected of them; performance and attendance issues are well managed by our managers.</p>
<b>Employee Engagement and Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Making best use of resources</li> <li>✓ One council</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek regular feedback from our staff</li> <li>2. Develop a joint Employee Forum</li> <li>3. Review the Staff Benefits package</li> <li>4. Reinvigorate our employee award arrangements</li> </ol>	<p>Our staff tell us that they feel valued and engaged, with their views being listened to and they take personal responsibility for the work they are doing.</p>
<b>Employee Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Helping people help themselves</li> <li>✓ Making best use of resources</li> <li>✓ One council</li> <li>✓ Strong partnerships</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor absence rates and set improvement targets</li> <li>2. Ensure all employees receive a 'return to work' interview and improve access to wellbeing initiatives</li> <li>3. Develop policies to support the Agile Working Programme</li> <li>4. Develop volunteering schemes to support our work our local community</li> <li>5. Monitor the profile of our workforce</li> </ol>	<p>Our staff will tell us that they have a healthy workplace in which their wellbeing is supported.</p> <p>The diversity and cultural background of our workforce is respected.</p>