SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: **Councillor Tracey Ann Carter and Chief Executive**

To: **South Holland District Council Wednesday, 29 July 2020**

(Author: **Claire Burton HR Manager (Spalding))**

Subject **Workforce Strategy 2019-2023 (revised following CV19)**

Purpose: **To approve changes to the Workforce Strategy (2019-2023)**

Recommendation(s):

1) That the Workforce Strategy 2019 -2023 (revised following CV19) be approved.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 In 2019 we published the current Workforce Strategy. Changes have been made to this document following the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.2 Our established People Plan addresses the behaviours, values and culture that we want to achieve as an organisation. The Workforce Strategy takes into account the aims of the People Plan and links to and supports the Council's strategic priorities as part of the Corporate Plan. It details how our workforce needs to be shaped to deliver the outcomes we have agreed and makes sure we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right role and performing the right tasks to support those priorities.

2.0 REASONS FOR THE CHANGES

2.1 There are a number of factors which have influenced why we need to review the Strategy:

2.2 External influences are unavoidable and the world of work has evolved over the last decade, and especially over the last 4 months with a rapid shift to working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important staff wellbeing is protected and we promote a positive working environment and people who are motivated, valued and have a good work/life balance.

2.3 We want to continue to support, develop and grow our workforce to be fit for purpose and for future growth and change. Our workforce strategy aims to meet the needs of all our staff and looks at a variety of ways in which we support and develop our people, so they are the best they can be to deliver for our community.

2.4 We want to be a competitive and attractive local employer and clear about the skills and behaviours that we want to attract.

2.5 We want to maximise our investments in technology, grasp the opportunity of modern ways of working and have the people skilled in this way of working as appropriate.

2.6   Finally, we want to be an employer that welcomes diversity, offering flexibility and opportunities and working arrangements to attract the best talent regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

3.0   CHANGES TO THE WORKFORCE STRATEGY

3.1   The next few paragraphs detail the changes which have been made;

3.2   The opening sections of the Strategy have been extended to include the factors described earlier in the report about the type of employer we want to be and why we need to change.

3.3   Rather than limit our thinking to just the 'Generation of our Workforce' this part of the Strategy has been expanded to consider how we manage a 'Diverse Workforce'. Previously we talked about the different generation split in our organisation, and while that is still important and relevant, continuing to work in an agile manner opens up new opportunities for us to attract a more diverse workforce. By offering flexibility means we can accommodate a range of opportunities and working arrangements to attract the best talent and can open up new opportunities for our current and potential workforce. For example, having the option to work remotely for someone with a disability makes employment more possible if they do not need to attend the office 5 days a week. We also need to consider how we engage better with our 'manual' workforce acknowledging we have very different types of workforce at South Holland.

3.4   The next section looks at 'What our workforce needs to look like in the future' whereby we need to create a culture where we trust and empower our staff and make sure they are performance focussed and we manage them based on outcomes regardless of when and where they work. The Strategy describes how we need to be innovative in the way we utilise our staff and put our communities first while still making sure our workforce are connected and motivated.

3.5   Finally, the Action Plan gives the detail of what we need to do to achieve what we have set out in earlier parts of the Strategy. The actions are in addition to the ones we already committed to in the original Strategy that was published in 2019. A summary of some of the new actions include:

3.5.1   Development of programmes to support managers and individuals in agile working, resilience, staying digitally connected, being outcome focused in their delivery and to correctly balance the need for face to face collaboration and agile working. The pattern of working in an agile manner and face to face will very much depend on the job role, for example, currently those carrying out food inspections carry out their first inspection directly from home once a business has opened meaning a slightly later start time but allowing them to fit further inspections in later into the evening after core hours providing an enhanced service to the business.

3.5.2   How we will work with Members and provide some further Member Development. There are some great tools we can share so that Members can really enhance the way they engage digitally with their residents and members of staff.

3.5.3   A 'promise' or 'Charter' to be developed to set out how officers will work with Members while agile working.

3.5.4 Making sure we respond to customer need and enhance the customer experience by ensuring our staff continue to be more digital to deliver services whilst also maintaining face to face support where that is most appropriate.

3.5.5 Promoting a culture whereby work is something you do rather than a place you go and this is considered for each role and individual. You go places to network and collaborate.

3.5.6 Review how we best engage with all staff and bring them along in our journey – this must be for both manual and non-manual staff to feel well informed on our strategic aims and they understand what it means for them, their role and their objectives.

3.5.7 Services to complete a 'CV-19 Lessons learned' exercise - review the new ways of working, what processes need to be kept or changed and how this can enhance the customer experience to include:

- building on cross service working/collaborations
- new skills of team members obtained
- where are our skills gaps/pinch points for our new ways of working
- what great practices can we replicate
- be 'digital by design' to avoid any duplication of work or unnecessary manual tasks so staff are focusing on value added work

4.0 OPTIONS

4.1 Do nothing

4.2 Approve the changes to the Workforce Strategy

5.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

5.1 The world of work has particularly evolved over the last 4 months with a rapid shift to working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important we trust and empower our staff and make sure they are performance focussed and we manage them based on outcomes regardless of when and where they work.

5.2 We must respond to changing customer needs and enhance the customer experience by ensuring our staff continue to be more digital to deliver services whilst also maintaining face to face support where that is most appropriate.

6.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

6.1 To become an employer of choice, attract diverse candidates and have an open and inclusive culture where everyone is accepted.

6.2 A culture change to enable greater organisational agility and innovation.

6.3 Retain current staff ensuring they are motivated, healthy and productive

6.4   Enhance the customer experience delivering services in a way that fits with their changing needs.

6.5   Monetary savings due to increased efficiencies as a result of agile working.

7.0   IMPLICATIONS

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

7.1   **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**
7.1.1   Working in a more digital and agile fashion would reduce commutable and business travel, reducing overall carbon footprint.

7.2   **Corporate Priorities**
7.2.1   The Workforce Strategy details how our workforce needs to be shaped to deliver the outcomes we have agreed as part of the Corporate Priorities.

7.3   **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**
7.3.1   The changes to the Strategy allows us to become a more diverse and inclusive employer.

7.4   **Financial**
7.4.1   There is no financial impact however working in an agile fashion will instead create cost savings.

7.5   **Health & Wellbeing**
7.5.1   The changes to the Strategy allow employees the opportunity to lead balanced and healthy lives.

7.6   **Reputation**
7.6.1   Becoming an employer of choice and enhancing how we provide services to our community in turn enhances our reputation as a Council.

7.7   **Staffing**
7.7.1   Employees have more choice about where and when they work, subject to business considerations. Employees are able to maintain a healthy work-life-balance where their work delivery is focussed on results.

8.0   **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

8.1   All wards/communities affected

9.0 **ACRONYMS**

9.1   None used.

Background papers:-   None

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Key Decision: N

Exempt Decision: N

Appendices attached to this report:
Appendix A   Workforce Strategy 2019 - 2023
Appendix B   Workforce Strategy 2019 - 2023 (revised following CV-19)