Watford Borough Council Organisational Development Strategy

Progress Update

Theme 1 – Workforce Health and Wellbeing

Key Achievements over this period

- Pilot on-line wellbeing questionnaire (Wellbeing with Cari) trialled with Environmental health department and followed up with 1:1 personal coaching sessions.
- Wellbeing with Cari rolled out to all employees as a method of reviewing wellbeing.
- Regular communication with staff on Wellbeing initiatives.
- Agreement that all people managers will attend a training event to give them information about spotting signs of Mental Health issues amongst employees.
- Access given to all staff to a video library containing short films of how to improve your health in the workplace.
- Meetings to discuss common issues have taken place with Mental Health First Aiders.
- Additional Mental Health first Aiders are being recruited and trained.

Theme BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	0
	On track	11
	Planning underway	1
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	1
Total		**13**

COMMITMENT Focus on tackling stigma associated with mental health		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Take steps to improve the number of managers who feel confident to spot the early warning signs of mental health and have the skills to manage those conversations	All managers to be trained in how to spot signs of mental health issues with Remploy providing relevant training course which will consist of 2 x 2hr on-line face to face group training.	By 21 March 2021	On track	7 dates now arranged in Nov and Dec 2020. Notification has been sent to managers for them to book an appropriate date.
Mental health first aid training for colleagues, enabling them to spot the signs and offer support.	Mental Health First Aiders to be accessible.	By 1 March 2021	On track	On-line e-learning courses available to all staff together with an online consulting tool - CARI Wellbeing is an on-line wellbeing assessment that personalises feedback and points to the correct intervention.
Tackle stigma around mental health issues or declaring a disability by encouraging open conversations	Increase awareness of policies and use of on-line material to ensure staff have knowledge to recognise when help is required.	By 1 December 2020	Planning underway	We will liaise with Mental Health Champions and First Aiders to recognise the individual needs of employees who may be reluctant to share concerns. Draft communications for staff as part of an awareness programme.

COMMITMENT Support personal and professional growth in health subjects		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Continue to grow and develop "Watford Health and You" resources.	Intranet pages to be updated with information on a regular basis.	By 1 September 2022	On track	The intranet information is reviewed on a monthly basis and updates added for staff.
Create and publicise a range of opportunities to learn and build good habits on health and wellbeing topics so our people can access e-learning and interactive, habit changing sessions. - Factors affecting wellbeing at work (control and autonomy) - Food, sleep and exercise - Financial health	Identify e-learning opportunities and ensure they are advertised and accessible via the i-Learn platform.	By 1 September 2021	On track	New resources are constantly being identified and added to our library accessible through the intranet. Communications sent out to staff regarding the new material available.
Use focus groups to develop a health and wellbeing programme – with access to a number of health and improvement areas.	Design and Launch a programme with feedback from group. Ensure there is resilience and a feeling of wellbeing amongst staff, as measured by Wellbeing Survey. Increased staff satisfaction and motivation as measured by staff survey.	By 1 Sept 2021	On track	Mental Health First Aiders and Champions group established and meeting on a monthly basis to discuss wellbeing issues and help identify trends which are then reviewed by the Leadership Board.

COMMITMENT Ensure our occupational health and employee assistance offering is high quality and accessible to all		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Continued promotion of the benefits of the Employee Assistance Programme and Occupational Health services.	Regular ongoing communication to take place to ensure all staff are aware of external support that is available.	By 1 April 2023	On track	Intranet resources are regularly updated and communication for staff pointing to these resources.
COMMITMENT Craft great roles where our people feel in control over the best way to deliver their work and feel well supported to do so		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Ensure that all of our people have access to "job crafting" training, so that they can develop skills to enhance flow, productivity, engagement and wellbeing.	Develop a process whereby employees have an opportunity to review the effectiveness of their role so that they can learn how to identify improvements and any new skills required.	By 1 April 2021	Delivery re-profiled	Work to be fully scoped so that it also links in with Values and Behaviours project.
Ensure our leadership programmes emphasise the importance of engaging and co-designing work so all of our people feel able to contribute new ideas and instigate new and better ways of doing things.	Key competencies to be identified and incorporated into updated Leadership Programme.	By 1 April 2021	On track	Input required from Values and Behaviours project to ensure a joined up approach.
Support teams to regularly pause and reflect on their work. Discussions should be around how to optimise team effectiveness and create a psychologically safe workspace.	Develop a pro-forma to be used in team discussion to identify team successes and process improvement opportunities.	By 1 April 2021	On track	Focus groups using managers and staff ambassadors to be created to input into the pro forma and contribute other ideas and suggestions for the delivery of this objective.

COMMITMENT Champion physical health		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Adopt Public Health England workplace health standards and refresh our HR policies.	Review policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with standards Ensure managers are confident in the support they can give their teams Benchmark or standards against other organisations.	By 1 April 2022	On track	Policies regularly reviewed and interim policies, to reflect the covid-19 situation are introduced, for example interim Smarter Working policy. Policies will also be compared to PHE standards to identify gaps and improvements required.
Evaluation of pilot health check programme (environmental health).	Gain feedback from provider on common issues that need to be addressed.	By 1 April 2021	On track	Pilot took place in June 2020 with approx. 50% take up by staff. Benefits to be re-evaluated after 6 months (Dec 2020).
Rollout of health check programme across the wider council	Collate and analyse anonymised data from system to identify any trends.	By 1 April 2021	On track	'Wellbeing with CARI' rolled out to all staff in July 2020. Quarterly review due. Links to assessment have been added to all Mental Health and Wellbeing newsletters.

Theme 2 – An Organisation Driven by Values and Behaviours

This part of the plan was deferred during summer 2020 whilst there was ongoing debate regarding the potentially imminent implementation of Local Government Reform in Hertfordshire.   Deferral was necessary so to ensure resources could be deployed to support any future change programme associated with structural reform.

At the point of deferral the position of the MHCLG was that in September 2020 the government would be publishing the Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper, which would redefine the way in which local government serves by establishing the unitisations of councils as the first step for negotiating devolution deals. The White Paper has not been published, and the local government secretary Robert Jenrick has now stated an intention to invite unitary proposals from a small number of areas, which do not include Hertfordshire. In parallel the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council has indicated his intention to focus on the existing Growth Board model to secure devolution for Hertfordshire. As it is now unlikely that we will see any changes within the short/medium term to local government structures in Hertfordshire, this part of the Delivery plan is being re-profiled in Quarter 3 and new delivery dates will be agreed.

Theme BRAG Analysis – re -profiled during Quarter 3

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	
	On track	
	Planning underway	
	Delayed / Unknown	
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	
Total		

Theme 3 – Become an Agile Organisation

Key Achievements over this period

- A scoping document has been produced and additional resources have recently been allocated to this project

Theme BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	0
	On track	11
	Planning underway	0
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	6
Total		**17**

COMMITMENT Optimise choice over when and where our people work		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Team based review of processes, learning and ways of working pre-, during and post-crisis.	Each team agrees how they will work going forward, with a formal date for reflection and review.	This area of work forms part of the Town Hall Cultural Quarter project and, therefore, future milestones will reflect the overall programme for this project.	Delivery re-profiled	The current COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the majority of staff working remotely for an indefinite period. Further work on this commitment will form part of the change programme, which is part of the Town Hall Cultural Quarter project.

Deliberate decisions and actions are taken to retain and embed ways of working that support agility	Each team participates in a simple team reflection session. A focus on what to stop, drop, continue, and re-invigorate, post COVID-19.	This area of work forms part of the Town Hall Cultural Quarter project and, therefore, future milestones will reflect the overall programme for this project.	Delivery re-profiled	Flexible working is in place with staff working at home to suit their own personal situations. Managers are checking in with staff and ensuring key activities continue. Longer term plans will align with the Town Hall Cultural Quarter project.
Teams and the wider organisation agree what agile working is, and could be, so there is clarity (for example, in future, will 100% homeworking be acceptable for some roles?)	Clarity as to what agile working is, and recognition that "one size does not fit all" in each service – tested through the staff survey. "Challenge sessions" in LB where leaders can challenge each other, with a view to optimising an agile mind-set (at least every quarter).	This area of work forms part of the Town Hall Cultural Quarter project and, therefore, future milestones will reflect the overall programme for this project	Delivery re-profiled	Project underway to identify how we will define an Agile environment and the activities required to get there. This is part of the wider Town Hall Cultural Quarter project and will, therefore, engage with this project as it is taken forward, reflecting key milestones.
Creation of agile champions. Teams, leaders and staff who can share their experiences (this becomes a recognised badge of honour).	Publication of case studies (at least every quarter). Reward and recognition of best practice.	This area of work forms part of the Town Hall Cultural Quarter project and, therefore, future milestones will reflect the overall programme for this project	Delivery re-profiled	Delivery dates to be reviewed as project start-up has been delayed due to covid. This is part of the wider Town Hall Cultural Quarter project and will, therefore, engage with this project as it is taken forward, reflecting key milestones.
Development of organisational case studies in agility to demonstrate the art of the possible in different types of teams.	Agile can be developed in different ways across different teams, the measurement is in team members feeling that they have some control and autonomy of when, where and how they work, in the context of their department, as measured the staff survey	This area of work forms part of the Town Hall Cultural Quarter project and, therefore, future milestones will reflect the overall programme for this project	Delivery re-profiled	Delivery dates to be reviewed as project start-up has been delayed due to covid. This is part of the wider Town Hall Cultural Quarter project and will, therefore, engage with this project

				as it is taken forward, reflecting key milestones.
COMMITMENT Design ways of working that challenge and further develop an agile mind-set		**Key Milestones**	**'RAG' Rating**	**Update**
People policies (particularly health and safety and flexible working) are reviewed to optimise agile working	Policies reviewed, signed off and publicised. Flexibility and responsiveness that was demonstrated during crisis is replicated and embedded post-crisis and reflected in our policies.	By 31 March 2021	On track	Interim Smarter Working (Agile) policy introduced. Other policies have already been reviewed updated and published. Remaining policies that need to be reviewed have been identified and an action plan for review in place.
Align our annual review (appraisal) process with our succession planning and staff development approach	Incorporate our staff's interests in deepening their understanding of other parts of the council and from this: • Develop a register of interests of individuals who wish to gain exposure or experience in another area • Be considered for a secondment or temporary promotion opportunity	By 31 March 2021	On track	Line managers to discuss and record as part of their regular catch up sessions. HR to build a database of individuals' interest and to contact relevant managers with opportunities required and available
Re-design and delivery of project teams, where staff are chosen because of their functional role or experience. Instead, there will be a deliberate move to encourage people to work on projects because of their interest and potential.	Establish a direct link to a new Leadership Development programme. This will result in a record take-up of project roles in different areas of the business.	By 31 March 2021	On track	i-perform launched 1 October as new check-in (1:1 meetings) and annual review platform. This will incorporate development discussions and a section for recording skills to kick start the central database of staff skills and abilities.

Creation of opportunities to pilot new approaches to agile working service models and solutions, with clear evaluation criteria	There will be a swift response to new demand. We will initially test on small scale, engaging users, gathering insight and learning what will work on a larger scale e.g. possible focus on digital solutions	By 31 March 2021	On track	Bi-monthly Team reflection exercises to identify and test opportunities to change processes that increase productivity
COMMITMENT Supporting the development of digital		**Key Milestones**	**'RAG' Rating**	**Update**
Support colleagues to improve their digital skills using a blend of face to face and online channels	Assessment of our workforce digital learning requirements as we roll out digital solutions for our communities.	By 1 August 2021 Scoping has commenced and key milestones are being finalised for Quarter 3	On track	Develop a programme of courses that will increase awareness and use of digital technologies
Creation of a digital mentor programme which buddies up "technophobes with techno geeks" promoting digital and potentially intergenerational learning	Number of successful buddying relationships established.	By 31 March 2021 Scoping has commenced and key milestones are being finalised for Quarter 3	On track	Through i-Perform process identify experts in their field and encourage them to become mentors for those developing in their roles.
Creation of "digital champions" clustered around our most popular digital hard and software (such as 8x8). Champions will be available to share their knowledge and learning, informally with colleagues across the Council.	Digital champions established and regularly publicised and supported to help and coach others.	By 31 March 2021 Scoping has commenced and key milestones are being finalised for Quarter 3	On track	Identify champions in their specialist areas and publicise their availability to help those in need of increasing their knowledge and confidence.

COMMITMENT Break down silos across teams		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Creation of an annual service roadshow – an opportunity for our staff to show case to each other the work they are doing, and learn more about different parts of the Council	Roadshow takes place, is vibrant, well attended and evaluates well	By 30 June 2021	Delivery re-profiled	The Roadshow concept (which is usually face to face) needs to be reviewed to take into account the current restrictions placed upon us by the Covid-19 pandemic.
Review and re-design of corporate and local induction to reduce silo working and set expectations from the outset, to include:	Time spent in the CSC, as the face of the Council will be mandatory for all new starters. Each new starter will spend a minimum of two days working directly with at least two teams that their new role will require them to interface with, in the first 12 weeks of their employment.	By 31 March 2021	On track	Agreement in principle from CSC to host new starters but Covid-19 rules resulting in home working may restrict some activities.
A commitment that all staff, irrespective of their role or level in the organisation, can spend up to five days per year, working in, or shadowing in another department, to improve their understanding and make important links.	Take up of developmental opportunity to work in another department or team. An opportunity to blog and share their learning and experience, to encourage take up.	1 April 2021	On track	Pro-forma being designed and distributed to all department managers to identify work shadowing opportunities in their direct area. Details of all opportunities to be shared on intranet so that managers can arrange.
Creation of "partnership timeouts" where different parts of the Council who are internal customers to each other, can come together, review ways of working and reflect on how the customer transfers seamlessly between teams.	Creation of tool which can be used by teams who often interface to identify process improvements. Participants will gain a greater understanding of the work of different teams and departments and have greater insight and awareness of the impact of their work on other teams.	By 1 September 2021 Scoping has commenced and key milestones are being finalised for Quarter 3	On track	Tool to be developed at start of new year to reflect the working arrangements in force at the time.

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| In recognition that silos take place in hierarchy, as well as across teams, take steps to empower front line teams and individuals to take action and make changes to practices, for the benefit of their customers. | Creation and delivery of OD tools to support leaders to encourage the whole team, irrespective of role or grade to lead innovation and service change (measured by the staff survey?). Staff should contribute ideas and suggestions for change and take decisions for the benefit of their customers. | By 1 September 2021

Scoping has commenced and key milestones are being finalised for Quarter 3 | On track | Tool to be developed at start of new year to reflect the working arrangements in force at the time. |

Theme 4 – Performance and Staff Development

Key Achievements over this period

- Roll out of i-Perform to all staff which will help with the staff performance review

Theme BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	0
	On track	12
	Planning underway	0
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	2
Total		**14**

COMMITMENT We will create a strong development process		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Design and implementation of development programmes linked to succession planning and building organisational resilience	Proactive management of individuals to ensure stretch, personal development and improve likelihood of retention Identification of business critical roles, vacancy risk and pipeline prospects for short, medium and long-term Staff Ambassador group and management forums to discuss, benchmark and review current data	By 31 December 2020	Delivery re-profiled	The new Leadership programme will also have links to the values and behaviours expected. As this is still in progress (see Theme 2) the will be a slight knock on effect with some sections of the programme.

Revise and refresh our development offering for all staff to facilitate good quality performance management, set clear objectives linked with our Council Plan and reflect how our organisational values are being demonstrated. Need to focus on the WHAT and HOW part of the role	Roll out of refreshed development approach 100% of staff and managers have completed their annual reviews with clear objectives set and a personal development plan in place	By 1 April 2021	On track	Launch of new i-Perform system will support the identification of development areas for staff and support the introduction of clear objectives, regularly reviewed within the i-perform platform. The HOW part will also link with the development of new values and behaviours – how we expect staff to behave.
Support the recruitment and retention of apprentices to the council.	Increase the number of council apprentices.	By 1 April 2021	On track	There is agreement to recruit 6 apprentices across the council and this is on-going; however the current restrictions on office working due to covid will need to be considered when reviewing the management and supervision of new apprentices. Given Covid-19 this may need to be re-profiled.
Make full use of the apprenticeship levy to support learning and development and career progression.	All funds used. Demonstrable impact of learning for the individual and the organisation.	Review by 1 April 2021	On track	Subject to the above we are on-target to make full use of the Levy

Develop a comprehensive approach to succession planning which incorporates planning for roles which are:
    Hard to Fill
    Business Critical (i.e. a potential single point of failure)
    Have an ageing workforce profile
	Identification of all "single points of failure" roles will be a starting point to prioritise development needs. HR to create a central list so that risks can be identified.	By 1 April 2021	On track	Pro-forma developed that will enable HR Business Partners to collect information from relevant line managers.

HRBP's to hold information of who can step into each role at short notice.	Ensure there are no "Single Points of Failure" within the workforce.	By 30 March 2021	Delivery re-profiled	In response to the ongoing Covid-19 situation a bank of staff who could be redeployed to support the pandemic management strategy have been identified. This work has been underpinned by a new policy. Further work will be undertaken during Quarters 3 and 4 regarding the risk associated with single points of failure.
We will work with partners to explore opportunities to create a comprehensive graduate and / or degree placement programmes, designed to attract and retain high calibre graduates	Successful programme in place with strong feedback from graduates.	By 1 September 2021	On track	Partner with LGA to join their 2021 NGDP (national graduate development programme). Initial expression of interest to be submitted and final decision on inclusion required before 31st March 2021.
COMMITMENT Prioritise the development of all of our people		**Key Milestones**	**'RAG' Rating**	**Update**
Build in the concept of "everyone is a leader at Watford" into our recruitment and on-boarding programmes, as well as our work with colleagues at all levels of the organisation	Currently, 32% of staff survey respondents feel that they cannot contribute to ideas for improvement / ways to do things differently (and another 3% didn't know). Success to be measured by a statistically significant improvement in staff survey results.

Support in first line leadership, middle leadership and senior leadership programmes, emphasising the benefits and risks of leadership styles that lead to constant improvement. | By 1 August 2022 | On track | Scoping commenced for consideration in Quarters 3 and 4. When launched the new Leadership programme will contain a module on Continuous Process Improvement to highlight that everyone can contribute to improvements. (See commitment above to develop a strong development process). Induction programme being updated to include session on looking into process and service improvements. |

Review training and promotion data by workforce profile, so that we can assure ourselves that under-represented groups are both accessing the development required and successfully achieving promotions, in our organisation.	Assurance that under-represented groups access the same level of development and achieve promotion at the same rate as all staff.	By 1 August 2022	On track	Scoping commenced for consideration in Quarters 3. New HR system (that will become live by April 2021) will contain updated information on the characteristics of the workforce. This will enable detailed analysis of where to highlight development opportunities to individuals.
Launch and integrate our new performance review system, i-Perform for regular 1:1 check –ins and annual reviews (appraisal) so that all staff feel it's a worthwhile exercise: - Incorporation of interests and passion, as well as career development discussions. - Use the annual review as an opportunity to nurture all talent, irrespective of grade or role - Carefully link the role back to the objectives of the organisation so that everyone understands how they make a difference	Currently, 18% of our staff feel that the annual review is not of value to them (and a further 8% did not know!). We want our people to look forward and see the value of an annual review. The success will be an improved rating of the quality of the conversation (measured by the staff survey).	By 1 October 2021	On track	New i-Perform system launched 1 October 2020 and is available to all staff. Regular reviews will take place to determine its effectiveness. Information on interests will be collected to link in with the development of agile mind-sets (see 2nd commitment in theme 3). The new i-Perform process specifically links personal objectives to that of the organisation. We will be reviewing outputs every quarter to ensure the collected information is relevant.

COMMITMENT We will encourage and actively develop our aspiring leaders		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Our new 'Watford Leads' development programme will build management skills and confidence amongst all team managers and leaders (3rd tier managers).	All 3rd tier managers will complete the course over time. Participants will deliver a specific business improvement project in the workplace. All events to have a cross section of departments represented. Positive feedback from participants. Colleagues feel supported by their manager – measured by the staff survey (baseline to be set following next survey)	By 1 December 2021	On track	While the planning of programme is underway and ideas for holding remotely are considered, the impact of covid must be taken into account. Will be reviewed in early/mid 2021 to determine if face to face courses will be possible.
Introduce a 'first steps to leadership' programme to cover the main principles of leadership and Watford's Council policies and processes.	Course designed. Selection and evaluation approach agreed. Aspiring leaders feel supported to develop their career – measured by course evaluation (baseline to be set). Positive feedback from participants. Improved compliance with corporate policies.	By 1 April 2021	On track	Leadership development has taken place, mainly remotely, with follow up sessions planned. To be reviewed for Heads of Service in early 2021 together with output from Theme 2 - Values and Behaviours project.
COMMITMENT We will create an enviable programme of leadership development		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Pilot and roll -out a new leadership competency framework, that is linked to the annual review process	Managers use feedback to create their personal development plan – measured through performance review scores. Managers visibly demonstrate the qualities set out in the Framework, measured via regular 1; 1 check-in meetings and annual review process.	By 1 April 2021	On track	Pilot complete and roll-out commenced.

	Increased opportunities for secondments and career progression for aspiring leaders – measured by staff survey (baseline to be set)			
Support leaders to link workforce and succession planning – forecasting the type and number of roles and skills needed for the future and create learning and development plans to support their team development.	All leaders received appropriate training tools and support to complete their workforce plans. All services have a workforce plan in place, aligned to the annual business planning cycle.	By 1 April 2021	On track	Review workforce plan with leaders to ensure appropriate individual development plans are in place to satisfy future needs.