

# Watford Borough Council Organisational Development Strategy Progress Update

#### Theme 1 – Workforce Health and Wellbeing

### **Key Achievements over last 3 months**

- The Watford Health and You programme has been shortlisted for an award from the (RSPH) Royal Society for Public Health.
- We have successfully bid for a government grant, Via Herts County Council, of £18,000, to help prevent Workplace Burnout.

### **Theme BRAG Analysis**

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	8
	On track	2
	Planning underway	0
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery reprofiled as a	3
	result of external influences	
Total		13

COMMITMENT Focus on tackling stigma associated with menta	al 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 online face to face group training.	By 21 March 2021	Completed	7 dates were arranged in November / December 2020 with the majority of managers having attended specialist training by January 2021. Since then further



				sessions have been held and future sessions will be arranged subject to demand and sufficient numbers attending.
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	Completed but as new MHFAs appointed additional training will be given	On-line e-learning courses available to all staff together with an online consulting tool. Additional volunteers for MHFA have been identified, signed up and received training. Further support for staff is available through Remploy and the staff intranet updated with details.
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	Completed and Ongoing	We will liaise with Mental Health Champions and First Aiders to recognise the individual needs of employees who may be reluctant to share concerns. Regular and ongoing communication relating to mental health issued and planned. Intranet contains a wealth of information which is regularly updated. Additional funding received from government and our Mental Health Champions



				are in the process of reviewing different options.
COMMITMENT Support personal and professional growth in he	ealth 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.	1	Completed and Ongoing	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 elearning 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	Completed and Ongoing	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 and Ongoing	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. The group continue to meet regularly and provide feedback on initiatives. Grant received via Government to spend on preventing burnout activities. Additional



				activities to be discussed at next meeting.
COMMITMENT Ensure our occupational health and employee accessible to all	assistance offering is high quality and	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	Completed and Ongoing	Intranet resources are regularly updated and communication for staff pointing to these resources.
COMMITMENT  Craft great roles where our people feel in contra and feel well supported to do so	ol over the best way to deliver their work	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 July 2021 (To be reprofiled to March 2022 to align with Values and Behaviours sub-section)	Delivery Reprofiled	Work to be fully scoped so that it also links in with Values and Behaviours project which is due to commence in October 2021, with completion scheduled for April 2022.
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 October 2021 (To be reprofiled to March 2022 to align with the above)	Delivery Reprofiled	Input required from Values and Behaviours project to ensure a joined up approach. The programme content has now been approved with the tender process due to commence in October with delivery of first



				workshop scheduled for the beginning of 2022
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. 8/1/21 Ambassador Group to review in first instance	By 1 July 2021 (To be reprofiled to March 2022 to align with the above)	Delivery reprofiled	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. The delivery has been reviewed to align with the Values and Behaviours work which will commence in October 2021.
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 our standards against other organisations	By 1 April 2022 and on going	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	Now by 1 July 2021 (previous date By 1 April 2021)	Completed	Pilot took place in June 2020 with approx. 50% take up by staff. The benefits have now been reviewed and decision



				taken not to go ahead with this initiative.
Rollout of health check programme across the wider council	Collate and analyse anonymised data from system to identify any trends.	By 1 April 2021	Completed	'Wellbeing with CARI' rolled out to all staff in July 2020. Links to assessment have been added to all Mental Health and Wellbeing newsletters. A review of Cari was carried out in March 2021 which indicated that only 20% of staff completed questionnaire so data supplied insufficient for analysis. Decision taken not to progress with this initiative.

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#### Theme 2 – An Organisation Driven by Values and Behaviours

This part of the plan was put on hold whilst there were ongoing discussions regarding the imminent implementation of Local Government Reform to Hertfordshire last year. Values and Behaviours work due to commence in October 2021 with a completion date of April 2022.

This work will be linked to the Leadership Team development work and the overall Council Plan and associated deliverables to ensure that it supports the successfully delivery of our commitments. The Staff Ambassadors Group, Management Group and other staff representatives will feed into the work.

Milestones and detailed progress update will be available as part of the next quarterly report to Cabinet.



#### Theme 3 – Become an Agile Organisation

#### **Key Achievements over last 3 months**

Note - This theme is interlinked with the Reimagining Watford project which is underway. Once the key outputs from that project are known they may also link in with the actions required within this theme.

- Pathfinder group now set up who will work with teams to agree Agile Charter for each team. Initial training for Pathfinders to be arranged for September 2021
- The office environment is being re-designed and it is anticipated that employees will be returning to this in late Spring 2022.

#### **Theme BRAG Analysis**

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	1
	On track	7
	Planning underway	1
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery reprofiled as a result of external influences	8
Total		17

COMMITMENT Optimise choice over when and where	e 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.	By 31 July 2020 Reprofiled to Nov 2021 subject to government guidance	Delivery reprofiled	The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the majority of staff working remotely rather than be office based. However, planning is now underway for a return to the office, in a different way of working and this objective will link closely to the



				work underway regarding agile working.
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	By 1 October 2020 Reprofiled for completion by 31 Dec 2021	Delivery reprofiled	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. Agile working plans are well underway and this objective will have close links to that project and Reimagining Watford.
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).	By 1 December 2020 Reprofiled for completion by Nov 2021	Delivery reprofiled	Project underway to identify how we will define an Agile environment and the activities required to get there. Agile charters being worked on and plans for further input with teams to commence in October 2021.
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.	By 31 January 2021 Reprofiled for completion by Nov 2021	Delivery reprofiled	Delivery dates to be reviewed as project start-up has been delayed due to Covid. However, our Agile Pathfinders are now in place and facilitation training is scheduled for September 2021.
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	By 31 January 2021 Reprofiled for completion by 31 January 2022	Delivery reprofiled	Delivery dates to be reviewed as project start-up has been delayed due to Covid. However, we are in the process of reviewing case studies from other organisations to help inform our hybrid working approach.



COMMITMENT  Design ways of working that challenge	e 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	Completed	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 Full reporting to be in place by 1 Oct 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 i-Perform is now live and usage is increasing. Section 6 of this is devoted to Career Aspirations and reports taken from the system will give a snapshot of interest. The annual appraisal cycle is still underway but the first reports are expected in October 2021.
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 Full implementation reprofiled to March 2022	Delivery reprofiled	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. Agile charters to be started in Sept 2021 followed by Values and Behaviours. This will link to new data from PDR system so it is expected to be complete and in place by April 2022
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 Full implementation reprofiled to <b>Q3 2021</b>	Delivery Reprofiled	Bi-monthly Team reflection exercises to identify and test opportunities to change processes that increase productivity. The delivery dates for this work have been reviewed to align with the Reimagining Watford project.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Supporting the development of digita		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
			Nating	
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	On track	Develop a programme of courses that will increase awareness and use of digital technologies Digital training has been and is available for all staff. Further developments in the training to be reviewed following completion of annual appraisals and identification of training needs.



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 but reprofiled to 31 December 2021	Planning underway	Identify champions in their specialist areas and publicise their availability to help those in need of increasing their knowledge and confidence. Each area has an IT Champion (not Digital Champion). A review is taking place to clarify roles.
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 31 December 2021 But reprofiled to <b>31</b> <b>March 2022</b>	Delivery reprofiled	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 Covid19 pandemic. This will be reviewed when we return to an office environment
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 2022	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.	31 March 2022	On track	Pro-forma to be 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. Covid restrictions have stopped office working so this will be put on hold until the new year.
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.	31 March 2022	On track	Tool to be developed at start of new year to reflect the working arrangements in force at the time. This will be linked to the Values and Behaviours to ensure everyone has a mindset to look at continuous evolution of the customer journey.
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.	31 March 2022	On track	Tool to be developed at start of new year to reflect the working arrangements in force at the time. Draft of leadership programme approved and going out to tender. This is linked to work on Agile Charters and will be embedded in team meetings and management programmes.



## Theme 4 – Performance and Staff Development

### **Key Achievements over last 3 months**

- Roll out of i-Perform completed and being used for all Annual Reviews.
- Delays in the completion of reviews by managers has limited the data available but recent chase up mean that more data will be available at the end of August.
- Proposed content of Management and Leadership Development programme agreed by senior team.

## **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	2
Total		14

COMMITMENT We will create a strong development	t 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	Target date reprofiled to 31 March 2022	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. Recruitment of Executive/Group Head Assistant (GHA) has completed with two people taking up their roles in Nov 2020 and the



				remaining two at the start of the 2021 financial year. Draft of new leadership programme approved and going out to tender. This is also linked to work on Agile Charters. New target date for launch of programme by March 2022
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	1 October 2021	On track	New i-Perform system launched in April 2021 and 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.	1 October 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. Whilst the pandemic has delayed the launch of new positions, we still intend to offer apprenticeships to school/college leavers. Applications for Kickstart positions have not been as successful as intended; however we have been able to recruit 2 Kick Start apprentices and continue to seek more.



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. Work has commenced and completion has been reprofiled to 1 October 2021	On track	Pro-forma developed that will enable HR Business Partners to collect information from relevant line managers. This initiative has re-started and data is being collected by HR.
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.	As above	On Track	Work has commenced on this area and areas where staff will be required to be redeployed is underway. Data still being collected and issues being identified. A report will be issued in September 2021.
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 2022	On track	Sign up process for new National Graduate Development Programme to commence by end of 2021 calendar year.
COMMITMENT Prioritise the development of all of o	ur 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.	By 1 August 2022	On track	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



	Support in first line leadership, middle leadership and senior leadership programmes, emphasising the benefits and risks of leadership styles that lead to constant improvement.			process). Induction programme being updated to include session on looking into process and service improvements. Content of new Management / Leadership programmes agreed and new supplier being sought. Induction programme to be updated for next cohort. Also undertaking a review of Mandatory e-learning requirements
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	Additional request sent to all staff for them to add personal characteristic information to their profile. HR system also being configured with current and historical development information and this will enable analysis of workforce strengths.
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. New i-Trent HR system also being configured with current and historical



				development information and this will enable analysis of workforce strengths.
COMMITMENT		Key Milestones	'RAG'	Update
We will encourage and actively deve	lop our aspiring leaders		Rating	
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 a programme is underway and ideas for holding remotely are considered, the impact of Covid must be taken into account. Content of new Management / Leadership programmes agreed and new supplier being sought.
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 with full implementation reprofiled for completion by 1 October 2021	On track	Leadership development has taken place, mainly remotely, with follow up sessions planned. The programme will have close links with output from Theme 2 - Values and Behaviours project. Content of new Management / Leadership programme outline agreed and new supplier being sought. Intention is to launch the programme in Q4 2021/22
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	Managers use feedback to create their personal development plan – measured through performance review scores.	By 1 April 2021 but reprofiled to <b>April</b> <b>2022</b>	Delivery Reprofiled	Pilot complete and roll-out commenced. Re-profiled to April 2022 that will link in



linked to the annual	Managers visibly demonstrate the qualities set			with new Leadership Development
review process	out in the Framework, measured via regular 1;			Programme Launch
	1 check-in meetings and annual review			
	process.			
	Increased opportunities for secondments and			
	career progression for aspiring leaders –			
	measured by staff survey (baseline to be set)			
Support leaders to link workforce	All leaders received appropriate training tools	1 October 2021	On track	Review workforce plan with leaders to
and succession planning –	and support to complete their workforce			ensure appropriate individual
forecasting the type and number of	plans.			development plans are in place to satisfy
roles and skills needed for the	All services have a workforce plan in place,			future needs.
future and create learning and	aligned to the annual business planning cycle.			Re-profiled to 1 October 2021 that will
development plans to support their				link to Theme 2 Outputs. Linked to
team development.				critical worker exercise (single point of
				risk). Data still being collected and report
				expected in September 2021