

Gloucestershire County Council

Workforce Strategy

2024-2027



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

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1.0 Introduction

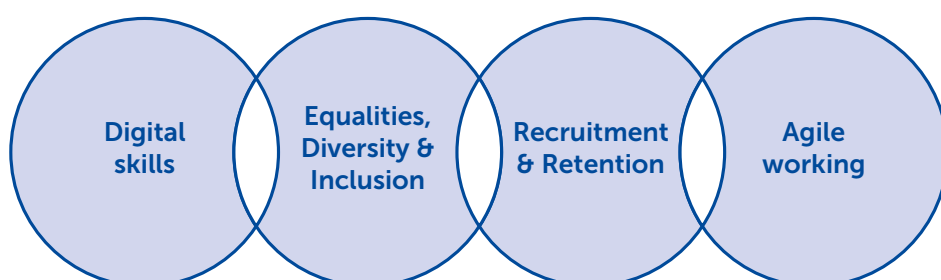
The Council Strategy for 2022 – 2026 ‘Building Back Better in Gloucestershire’, details the County Council’s vision and strategic objectives. This Workforce Strategy has been designed to support the delivery of Gloucestershire’s County Council’s Strategy. Collectively these documents describe the ambition we have for the county, setting out how we will approach this challenge over the next three years to ensure a workforce best equipped to effectively deliver on our strategic priorities and services.

The Council is a major stakeholder and influencer on behalf of the people of Gloucestershire and we play a core role amongst a wide range of agencies and partners in delivering public services including across care, health, education and police. For some partners, including within the care sector, the relationship also includes a financial element where the council commissions services. In this way our influence across the county workforce is significant and our role in driving change and stimulating joined up strategy and practice is critical.

Like most local authorities, Gloucestershire County Council faces unprecedented challenges in delivering its strategy and vision for the county’s future against a backdrop of sustained financial cost cutting and increasing demand for services. The County Council’s services are overwhelmingly delivered through people, directly or indirectly, and so the effectiveness of those services will be chiefly influenced by how well our workforce is enabled, with the appropriate workplace culture, capacity, and capability to carry out their roles.

To achieve delivery of our statutory responsibilities and to continually improve the quality of services we must innovate, adapt, and ensure that we are motivated and skilled to work creatively, flexibly, and efficiently, with our Council core values; accountability, integrity, empowerment, respect, and excellence, at the centre of what we do. We are committed to getting our house in order and ‘Building Back Better.’

The key areas of focus in our Council Strategy for our workforce are:



These areas of focus run through the three ‘pillars’ which form the core of this workforce strategy under three themes: **Capacity, Culture and Capability**.

1.1 Purpose of the Workforce Strategy

The purpose of the Workforce Strategy is to identify how the council will meet current and future workforce needs to ensure it has skilled people to deliver high quality services. At its core, its purpose is to grow the capability of our people to deliver our strategy.

It is through our Workforce Strategy, that we aim to attract, retain, and develop the best possible workforce and working environment to ensure we are considered an 'employer of choice' 'by our people and our communities'.

1.2 Scope & Timeframe

The scope of the Workforce Strategy includes all employees and all locations. The strategic timeframe is three years.

2.0 Our county

Gloucestershire is a relatively prosperous county with a growing population. Most local people enjoy a high standard of living, and our levels of health and wellbeing are comfortably above the average for the country. Generally, local people are well-educated, (and unemployment is low, 2.8% compared to a regional rate (southwest) of 3.2% and a national level (UK) of 4.3%.

Gloucestershire's economy is strong and resilient, and the local environment is diverse and attractive. However, that population is ageing and a key challenge for Gloucestershire employers is to retain and attract a younger demographic to make Gloucestershire their home. The County's participation in the Gloucestershire Vision 2050 begins to address that challenge.

Post Covid, all sectors of the UK economy are seeing seismic shifts in the workforce which are forecast to accelerate further in the next decade. New digital technology, changes in society and demographics, reforms of education and qualifications, and alternative employment models are just some of the forces at play which are creating new expectations between employers and employees, and vice versa.

The financial outlook remains challenging, and as an authority we must continue to ensure we are an organisation fit for the future to enable us to deliver on our commitments.

The rapidly changing employment landscape means that we must build on our current strengths as a good employer and seek new opportunities to attract, recruit and develop our workforce. The development of our new Workforce Strategy will enable us to do this.

Gloucestershire County Council Vision for Gloucestershire is:

'To make the most of all that Gloucestershire has to offer, help improve the quality of life for every community, support businesses to be successful and make sure the county is a place where people want to live, work and visit.'

Our ambition for Gloucestershire is to be:

A Magnet County

A growing working age population, with more 18–40-year-olds with high level qualifications choosing to live and work in the county.

An Innovative County

More businesses starting up, growing, and investing in research and innovation.

A Skilled County

More people with high-level skills and jobs in skilled occupations.

A Prosperous County

Rising productivity and household incomes offering higher living standards.

An Inclusive County

The economic and social benefits of growth to be felt by all communities, including rural, urban and our areas of highest deprivation.

A Healthy County

People to have a good work/life balance and improved health and wellbeing.

A Connected County

Improved transport and internet connections so that people and businesses can connect with each other more easily.

A Sustainable County

More efficient use of resources and more use of sustainable energy.

A Resilient County

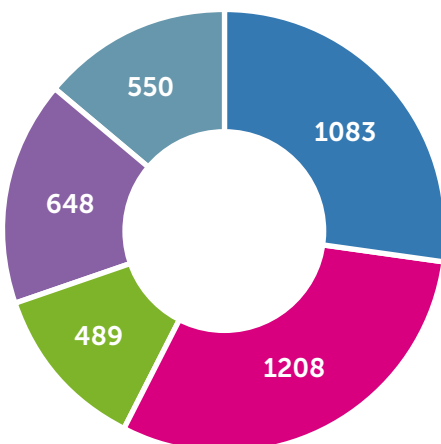
Active, resilient local communities that keep people safe, provide them with support and help them to make a positive contribution.

3.0 Our council and workforce

Understanding the profile of our workforce helps us to plan for the future. The Council is committed to fairness and promoting equality of opportunity for all, in a culture that really values difference. As an employer, we want to ensure that our workforce is representative of the community we serve and that we attract and retain talented employees from a wide range of backgrounds who bring diverse skills and experience.

Headcount

The Council employs around 3,978 people, not including staff in our locally managed schools and staff engaged on casual/temporary contracts. It continues to be a relatively older workforce, which is reflective of the County's population, with over 25% of the workforce in the 56+ age range, and 29% in the 46-55 range.



Employee headcount

- Adult Services
- Children's Services
- Community Safety & GFRS
- Corporate Resources
- Economy, Environment & Infrastructure

5.38%

of the workforce have declared a disability, which is low when compared to the working population of the county which is 16.71%



189

staff members are currently studying towards the completion of various apprenticeships, ranging from level 2 to level 7, whilst also supporting over 100 members of staff within our maintained schools



Similar to other county councils much of the workforce is female

70%



83%



Most employees have declared their ethnicity

6.78%

of the council's workforce are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BME) background.

In comparison the estimated BME population in Gloucestershire is

4.70%



We have low representation from minority groups amongst our senior leaders and are keen to see greater diversity

££

As of 31st March 2022, Gloucestershire County Council mean gender pay gap is **3.9%** and a median gender pay gap of **3.2%**



a reduction since March 2022, which is significantly lower figures than the national picture for public sector



Sickness absence averages **8.93** working days lost per employee



an increase on previous years. This is in line with average absence patterns for local authorities

Our annual staff voluntary turnover rate is

11.5%



a slight increase on previous years but remains lower than the average labour turnover.

Our average length of service is 10 years

4.0 Our workforce vision and mission

Reflecting the ambition within the council's vision for Gloucestershire, our workforce vision for the next three years is to make our Council:

"A GREAT place to work for EVERYONE"

4.1 Our mission:

To be recognised by our people and our communities as an 'employer of choice' by promoting an inclusive, high-performance culture which identifies and nurtures talent.

The key principles underlying this are that:

- We, the workforce, are at the heart of everything that the Council achieves
- Our values and behaviours are clear about how we will work with each other and with the public of Gloucestershire
- We will invest in our leaders and managers to be the best and to inspire and empower our employees
- We will ensure that every employee is treated well and equitably regardless of their role and where they work
- We have high expectations and are committed to developing and supporting both the achievements and the wellbeing of ourselves and our colleagues
- This strategy will be a journey aimed at delivering a culture of continuous service improvement, innovation, respect, and professionalism across the whole workforce, whatever our role.



5.0 Our strategic pillars

Our workforce strategy has three key themes:

1. **Capacity:** Being recognised as a modern, attractive employer who can recruit and retain highly capable employees.

We will:

- recruit the right number of people with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time, to deliver our business objectives through the adoption of County wide workforce planning
- build a strong internal talent pipeline underpinned by a 'grow our own ethos'
- improve our availability and use of workforce data across the employee lifecycle
- develop a diverse and inclusive workforce employing a blend of different perspectives and life experiences
- reduce our reliance and expenditure on agency and consultancy workers where it is appropriate to do so
- review our pay and reward structures to ensure we remain an attractive employer.

2. **Culture:** Engaging our people and developing a positive diverse & inclusive culture.

We will:

- create an environment where employees feel they belong and one where difference is valued
- ensure that our organisational vision, values, and behaviours are embedded across the workforce, not as aspirations but as a central part of everything we do
- embed new methods for two-way communication to engage with our workforce
- embed cultural change within the delivery of our overall approach to employee engagement to improve the employee experience
- have a highly connected workforce – connected internally across organisational structures and connected externally with partners, residents, customers, and businesses to help create seamless services and ensure the 'county is a place where people want to live, work and visit'
- proactively support the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our colleagues
- revise workforce policies, conditions, and guidance to underpin a changed agile workplace culture enabling a flexible attractive employment offer.

3. **Capability:** Developing our people to enjoy rewarding & varied careers.

We will:

- adopt a workforce development strategy that systematically delivers improvements in our people's capability and growth, (ERP)
- continue to embed 70/20/10 model of workforce learning where most of the learning comes through experience, around 20% comes from social learning with colleagues and 10% comes from more formal learning
- maximise the use of the apprenticeship levy to develop our existing employees and attract our employees of the future
- generate high levels of productivity through:
 - having skilled and confident leaders at all levels, able to provide the transformational, compassionate leadership that we need
 - efficient and effective working practices and business processes
 - having a technologically confident and skilled workforce
 - high levels of engagement, commitment, and trust across the workforce
 - develop our people so they enjoy interesting and varied careers, reaching their full potential
 - providing excellent training and career development opportunities.

6.0 Our achievements so far

The achievements from the last council's Workforce Strategy (2018-2022) provides a great platform for us to build on. Our success in this part of our journey is demonstrated by the following achievements.

Capacity

Recognised as a modern, attractive employer who can recruit and retain highly capable employees.

- Revision of core recruitment processes and implementation of a new system delivering an improved candidate and manager experience
- Revision of pay & grading structures
- Refreshed employee benefits
- Increased apprenticeship opportunities for new & existing staff, (589 across 77 different apprenticeship standards, utilising levels 2-7 programmes)
- Utilised apprenticeships to 'grow our own' in hard to fill roles
- Generated income from our traded services with enhancement in the quality of the service provision.

Culture

Engaging our people and developing a positive diverse & inclusive culture.

- Delivered a new employee values & behaviours programme
- Modernised HR family friendly policies, including new agile ways of working and embedding our values & behaviours into HR policies and appraisal process
- Launched Speak Up if it's Not Right Whistleblowing policy & training
- Developed employee staff networks to help eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities
- Achieved Stonewall Accreditation
- Implemented new staff survey & employee voice engagement events
- Established an organisation wide Health and Wellbeing Stakeholder group.

Capability

Developing our people to enjoy rewarding & varied careers.

- Defined and developed a management behaviour framework
- Launched a H&WB staff hub with latest information, guidance, and support service information in one centralised place
- Launched Growing Great Managers new development programme
- Created new flexible ways for staff to attend training and expanded the corporate training offer with multimedia resources
- Almost £603,000 provided to external employers supporting our ambition to be a skilled county.

7.0 Our measures of success and governance

The Workforce Strategy will be underpinned by a detailed implementation plan that will set be aligned to our strategic pillars. It will set out clear actions, timescales, and measures for success.

The Workforce Strategy is designed to grow and evolve along with the needs of the Council and our people. We will continually measure the success of our Workforce Strategy, making adjustments and improvements along the way.

Our success will be measured though a framework of key measures aligned under our strategic pillars:

Capacity	Culture	Capability
<p>Employer of Choice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from staff joining and leaving GCC Attendance & Wellbeing <p>Recruitment & Retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee turnover Internal mobility Recruiting manager satisfaction levels Vacancy fill rates (hard to fill roles) 	<p>Employee Voice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from staff through surveys and employee voice groups Employee engagement index <p>Equalities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved employee diversity Increased workforce representation of younger people 	<p>Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive, effective, values based, and visible leadership Overall leadership index <p>Personal Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees understand whats expected of them Employees have access to development and career opportunities PDR completion rates

8.0 Our responsibilities

All colleagues have a key role to play in delivering our Workforce Strategy with managers being responsible for ensuring that their teams understand how their work contributes to this delivery.

The Director of People and Digital will have overall responsibility for the successful delivery of this strategy in conjunction with the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

CLT will receive reports on key workforce projects and influence the direction of travel during the three-year period. They will provide guidance, feedback, and ensure that key risks are reviewed and resolved. Benefits realisation will be monitored and reported to CLT meetings on a regular basis.

Our senior managers will lead by example to drive performance, living our values and empowering staff to deliver for our county.

Progress and monitoring oversight of the strategy will be provided by the Corporate Change Delivery Group as well as Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Workforce Strategy will be subject to formal review every three years, although it may be adjusted to reflect dynamic situations more regularly.