HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Recovery Board

Date: 23 November 2020

Report Title: Redesign Board Update – Workforce Planning and Development Project

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides the Recovery Board with an update on the progress of the Workforce Planning and Development Project, with a more detailed report to be presented to the 27 November 2020 Redesign Board.

1.2 The key project objectives of project are:

1. **Review the Council's Workforce Planning Strategy** – to ensure ongoing currency and fitness for purpose
2. **Identification of Workforce Data Required** – assessing what data is already held, what is required to enable managers to effectively manage their teams (right people, right place, right time), identifying the gaps and taking action to rectify
3. **Identification of Management Tools** – assessing what is in place, what managers need, revising and adding to the tools as required

1.3 Led by the Redesign Board, the project is being taken forward by a Project Team with membership drawn from across Council services. Councillor Caddick and Councillor Bremner, Vice Chairs of the Redesign Board, and John Gibson (UNISON) are the Redesign Board representatives on Project Team.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the progress of the Workforce Planning and Development Project.

3. Implications

3.1 **Resource**
A failure to manage workforce planning and change puts at risk the Council's capacity to make most effective use of resources.

3.2 **Legal**
Care is required that large scale and complex workforce change is managed in line with current employment legislation and Highland Council policy.

3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)**
Equalities Impact Assessments will be conducted in relation to Service Workforce Plans.

3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever**
There are no Climate Change / Carbon Clever implications identified.

3.5 **Risk**
Having a sustainable workforce is included as a risk in the Corporate Risk Register. There are also resource challenges associated with delivering against the Project Plan whilst simultaneously addressing the resilience impacts associated with an ongoing pandemic.

3.6 **Gaelic**
There are no Gaelic implications identified.

4. **Background**

4.1 Our most important resource is our staff, and they are at the centre of the services that we provide. Given the changing nature of the organisation we need to make sure we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time to deliver Council priorities and essential front-line services.

4.2 At its simplest, Workforce Planning involves identifying the number of employees and types of staff skills required to meet the Council's strategic objectives, priorities and service delivery requirements.

4.3 An effective Workforce Planning Strategy needs to recognise the wider environment in which the Council operates (e.g. COVID19 and Financial considerations) and should be informed by the right data and management information. Implementation by managers should be supported by the correct management tools and processes.

5. **Review the Workforce Planning Strategy**

5.1 The Council has an existing Workforce Planning Strategy approved in August 2017. A Redesign Board Workshop was held on 7 August 2020. This took the form of a "PESTLE" review of the Workforce Planning Strategy to provide insight into the factors impacting workforce planning and development. PESTLE is a business process / technique to help focus discussions, ideas etc. within perspectives of Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental.

The following summarises some of the key factors from the 7 August 2020 workshop:

- Increased costs and reducing budgets
- Increase in home working, enabled and supported through improved use of Technology

- Reduction in travel – reduction in carbon impact, reduction in cost, reduction in lost time
- Ageing population - emphasis required on initiatives for succession planning and developing staff

5.2   This has been followed up with a survey to capture the views of those who are currently supervising/managing staff. The survey was completed by 253 staff, providing a 37.4% response rate (industry standards on surveys suggest that a good response to an internal survey is between 30-40%)

5.3   Following on from the survey a total of 51 staff attended one of 9 workshop sessions during October. The aim was to explore the key themes of the existing Workforce Planning Strategy and to understand what changes managers considered were needed to undertake effective Workforce Planning and Development (e.g. data, management tools, support). These workshops also explored some of the "lessons learned" during the Covid19 emergency which Managers think are important to consider as part of the Council Recovery process.

5.4   The Project Team is currently considering the outputs of both the survey and the workshops.

6.   **Identification of Workforce Data Required**

6.1   A Workforce Data Project has been established to provide comprehensive, accurate and real-time workforce related data that aids workforce and financial planning, decision making and monitoring at a corporate and service level and performance reporting (local and national), provided through an effective service delivery mechanism.

6.2   The Workforce Data Project is aligned to the Workforce Planning Project. Work is currently progressing to ensure that consideration of data needs and how these can be met are informed by the questionnaire findings and manager workshops referred to above.

7.   **Identification of Management Tools**

7.1   The third objective of the Project is the identification, design and provision of management tools to support Services and managers to undertake Workforce Planning and Development.

7.2   Engagement with managers through the survey and workshops has already provided a lot of valuable information, and the outputs from the workshops, when fully analysed, will provide a better understanding of what existing management tools are being used, their relative fitness for purpose, and importantly where there are improvements and gaps to be addressed.

8.   **Conclusions**

8.1   The key project milestones and dates for the work are as follows, with regular reports being provided to the Redesign Board.

Ref.	Milestone	Timescale/ Period
1.	Review completed of the Workforce Planning Strategy	Sept 20
2.	Changes recommended and made to the Workforce Planning Strategy	Nov 20
3.	Workforce Planning data requirements identified	Dec 20
4.	Workforce Planning data requirements delivered (via Workforce Data Project)	Mar 21
5.	Workforce Planning management tools identified	Dec 20
6.	Workforce Planning management tools delivered	Mar 21
7.	Project close and review/document lessons learned	Apr 21

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance

Date: 12 November 2020

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Background Papers: