

Agenda Item	<b>9</b>
Report No	<b>HSW/04/23</b>

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Health, Social Care and Wellbeing

**Date:** 9 February 2023

**Report Title:** Health and Social Care Workforce Plan 2022-2025

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report sets out a summary of the Health and Social Care Workforce Plan for the period 2022 – 2025.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the Health and Social Care Service Workforce Plan 2022 – 2025.

### 3. Implications

3.1 **Resource** – no other than those highlighted in the report.

3.2 **Legal** – no legal implications

3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – no implications

3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – no implications other than the New Ways of Working approach: better use of technology can reduce the need for travel.

3.5 **Risk** – this report mitigates the risk of insufficient current and future workforce.

3.6 **Gaelic** – there are no Gaelic implications

## 4. Background

- 4.1 Workforce planning is the process that organisations use to make sure they have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. To manage their workforce effectively, organisations need to have up to date information on:
- The number of people they employ to carry out different tasks
  - What skills the workforce has and where there are gaps
  - What skills and staff will be needed to deliver future services and priorities
- 4.2 Effective workforce planning will support the Health and Social Care Service to:
- Deliver improved service
  - Review how many employees are needed and recruitment
  - Manage staffing budgets effectively
  - Ensure sufficient and appropriate training is provided
  - Cope with variations in supply of and demand for various skills.
- 4.3 Service specific workforce planning has been taken forward in line with the agreed Workforce Planning & Development Action Plan that was approved at the Redesign Board on 23 March 2021.
- 4.4 The Highland Council's People Strategy approved at Committee on 27 October 2022 outlines the direction and framework for the organisation over a 5 year period relating to our workforce. The Strategy provides an overview and our approach covering eight key staff elements: staff engagement; health, safety and wellbeing; reward and conditions (including job design); talent management; people development; people data and processes; workforce planning; equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 4.5 The Health and Social Care Service Workforce plan has been prepared using the Highland Council six step model. The plan covers a period of four years (2022 – 2025) and is being monitored and reviewed annually by the Service directorate, supported by the HR Business Partner. This is the first Health and Social Care Workforce plan, previous workforce analysis were done as part of the Care and Learning Service.
- 4.6 The six-step model:
1. Environmental and context analysis
  2. Future Workforce profile
  3. Current Workforce profile
  4. Workforce implications/Gap analysis
  5. Action plan
  6. Review and evaluation
- Please refer to appendix 1 for further details.
- 4.7 As part of the workforce planning exercise, the Health and Social Care Service Extended Senior Management Team undertook focused workshops facilitated by HR Business Partners to analyse the context and environment, the current and required workforce profile and actions needed to ensure that the workforce can meet future demands.

4.8 Following the recommendation from the Workforce Planning Strategy review board to take a broader approach to Service Workforce Planning, the sessions were joined by the Service Business Partners for Finance, Corporate Improvement, Digital Transformation and the Talent Manager and the HR Business Partner for New Ways of Working.

## **5. Context and Drivers**

- 5.1 The context and environment analysis recognises the political and economical challenges The Highland Council and therefore the Health and Social Care service faces.
- 5.2 Recruitment is a significant problem for the Service, enhanced by the high average age of the workforce, resulting in higher retirement figures in the nearby future.
- 5.3 Operating in a large area with an aging population, deprivation and funding pressures presents the Service with significant challenges. The Service will have to find a way to increase the quality agenda and service delivery with reduced budgets and a reduced workforce.
- 5.4 The cost-of-living crises affects vulnerable young people and families disproportionately, leading to increased demands on the Service whilst the Service is dealing with backlogs in Health, Social Care and Justice Court cases due to the pandemic.
- 5.5 The joint Children's Inspection has highlighted strengths but also weaknesses of the Children's Service and the development and implementation of an improvement plan is priority.
- 5.6 The Highland Council's Digital Strategy and implementation plan was released in Autumn 2022. The strategy takes an informed approach to laying the foundations for a digital council and sets out achievable objectives for becoming a digital council.
- 'Leading', 'Thinking' and 'Being' Digital are the three key themes of the Strategy which in turn forms part of the Councils wider agenda for its organisational development: growing the workforce for the future and ensuring no one is left behind. Self-serve learning materials will be available, plus accessible support from the Digital Champions Community, clear frameworks, and career pathways for digital, data and technology professions, for both recruiting talent and growing internal expertise.
- 5.7 Performance management is a critical component to workforce planning. The process not only allows managers and staff to communicate expectations and outcomes, but more importantly, it provides information to management allowing them to make informed decisions regarding service delivery. Through an effective use of data, leaders can analyse the current situation, identify trends and gaps in workforce, and plan for the future by taking proactive and corrective actions through processes such as recruitment, training and development. Performance management, including self-evaluation initiatives, can also help managers recognise areas for improvement and increase staff engagement.
- 5.8 Customer requirements are changing. The diversity of the Highland population is increasing, with more different nationalities/cultures in our area. Staff will have to be

prepared for this as it will impact on the needs of our service users. Initiatives to support Ukrainian and unaccompanied young refugees are very recent examples of these changes.

- 5.9 The Service strategy over the next four years will focus on Early Intervention and Prevention. It is evident that early intervention and the Family First approach will help prevent the need for crisis intervention and result in better outcomes for young people and families.
- 5.10 The Services recognises the need to build on partnership working with Trade Unions, other Highland Council Services, NHS Highland and third sector organisations.

## **6. Current Workforce Profile**

- 6.1 The Health and Social Care Service has a total of approximate of 1000 employees and 814 FTE. Children's Services is the largest part of the Service, followed by Child Health, Justice Service and Mental Health Officers Service.
- 6.2 87% of Health and Social Care staff is female, 13% is male.
- 6.3 Age profile: Almost 50% of the Health and Social Care workforce is 51 year or older and only 110 members of staff are younger than 31.
- 6.4 The average days lost due to sickness absence within the Service is 1.6 per employee, 0.2% under the Highland Council average. However, this still amounts to 1600 days lost per year which equates to 6.2 FTE per year for the Service.
- 6.5 Different from most other Services, the Health and Social care hardly appoint on fixed term basis, only a hand full of staff have a fixed term contract due to temporary funding.
- 6.6 The turnover rate for the Service is 14.7%. Difficulty to recruit is resulting in a significant cost spent on agency staff.
- 6.7 Employee engagement: the 2022 employee survey shows that 97% of Health and Social Care staff is interested in the work they do, and 91% feel that they are trusted to do their work effectively.

## **7. Future Workforce Profile**

- 7.1 When considering its Future Workforce Profile, the Health and Social Care senior management team acknowledged the impact that budget outcomes could have on their current staffing resource. Saving targets on staffing costs will have an impact on Service delivery.
- 7.2 Family First approach and Early Intervention and Prevention requires different roles in the Service, and this should in the long term lead to a more affordable service delivery.
- 7.3 There are many different job roles in the Service, which make effective management of service delivery more difficult. The Service will review the different job descriptions and reduce the number of - specifically the - support roles and develop more generic job descriptions.

- 7.4 The separation of Care and Learning in two different Services (Health & Social Care and Education & Learning) has resulted in the need to review the senior management structure. A lot of work has been done and it is expected that the senior structure will be completed in the first half of 2023.
- 7.5 As mentioned previously in this report, recruitment is one of the main workforce issues for the Service. As a result, the Service spends on average £1M on agency staff annually. A significant cost plus it is hard to deliver a consistent service with agency staff, regardless their skills. The development of an effective recruitment strategy is therefore paramount, building on the Talent Strategy developed by the Corporate Talent manager. The Service has developed a successful trainee programme for Social Workers and Mental Health Officers as part of a grow-our own-approach which can be build on.
- 7.6 The Council aims to engage a strategic approach to Talent Management that ensures a strong focus on attraction and retention to secure a workforce that is robust, dynamic, flexible and thriving. Taking in consideration the staff budget saving targets, going forward the Health and Social Care Service need to identify talent and generate opportunities for staff to develop multi skills that meet organisational needs, particularly in areas of identified skills shortages. The Council has a genuine commitment to employee wellbeing that is reflected in the Health and Social Care Service staff motivation, reflected in a high retention rate.
- 7.7 Learning and Development
- Whilst there is an obvious focus on obtaining and maintaining statutory and mandatory qualifications and skills, a further strand of training will concentrate on preparing for the future: succession planning and development of robust management and leadership skills, with particular emphasis being given to leading in an integrated context.
- 7.8 Supporting the change of employee skills and attitudes that will be required to accommodate the changing needs of our service users and legislative changes will be a further focal point and will include the continued development of emotional literacy, specialist knowledge in a number of professional areas and partnership working. One way of achieving this will be an improved induction programme which is currently developed.
- 7.9 The Family First approach and refocus on Early Intervention and Preventions requires not only new skills but also a culture change. It is recognised that staff need to be supported through these changes with a training programme.
- 7.10 There is a rising trend in work stress related absence. The pandemic has had an impact on workload pressures but there is evidence that the pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health of our population in general. Including our employees and service users. On top of that, we have to deal with the cost-of-living crises which has a significant impact too. Supporting our employees' mental health and wellbeing should therefore be a priority.
- 7.11 Hybrid working was an area already being explored within the Council, however the Coronavirus pandemic brought to the fore the opportunity to take forward at speed new ways of working for staff and customers, as well as new ways of service delivery.

Structures and roles that enable collaborative working whilst building agile teams are a key consideration in workforce planning.

Whilst increasing the effectiveness of activities and meeting aspirations of staff for an improved work-life balance, hybrid working is also intrinsically linked with asset rationalisation, climate change and digital transformation.

## **8. Workforce Actions**

8.1 The Health and Social Care Service will aim to ensure they have the appropriate workforce going forward.

This will be achieved through the following actions:

- continue with the development of an affordable and sustainable workforce;
- identify synergies both within the Service and between Services;
- continue to utilise trainee programmes to support succession planning;
- develop an effective structure
- explore mature digital approaches to service delivery/identify business e-processes to be developed/reviewed
- develop an effective recruitment and retention strategy;
- establish training action plan

8.2 Several actions identified through the workforce plan will be linked to work streams covered in the Corporate Workforce Strategy, such as improvement of management data and business processes.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care

Date: 11 January 2023

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Background Papers:

