

**People Plan Update
3 March 2026**

Report of Organisational Development Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update on the progress of the production of the refreshed People Plan 2026-28.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the People and OD Committee receive a progress update of the refreshed People Plan.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The current People Plan was developed as a three year plan (2023-26) to enable the Council Plan to be delivered through its employees. It set out five key priorities as a set of commitments: we are an employer of choice, we are one team, we are serious about learning and development, we are future focussed; and, we lead with courage and compassion.

The strategy was designed to align with Our Values and was built on a foundation of evidence gathered through staff consultation, organisational data, and external assessment via Investors In People, which result in the achievement of Established Silver.

2.0 The creation of a new People Plan

- 2.1 The People Plan 2023-2026 has delivered significant progress across recruitment, onboarding, wellbeing, inclusion and learning. Notable achievements included:
- Introduction of a Recruitment Strategy, including empowering managers to manage their own recruitment through a new Applicant Tracking System
 - Induction and onboarding overhauled, including the reintroduction of a refreshed corporate induction
 - Introduction of a benefits platform, including staff discount schemes and a car scheme to lease electric and plug-in hybrid cars
 - Exit interviews redesigned
 - Continued commitment to Real Living Wage
 - Wellbeing Strategy, including introduction of an employee assistance programme, counselling, team wellbeing plans, wellbeing passports and Mental Health First Aiders

- Employee Engagement Strategy, including staff survey, manager network, employee voice forum, improved internal communications, annual staff event (Connecting Colleagues)
- Inclusion Strategy to support existing active staff networks
- Introduction of a performance conversation framework, including the Annual Conversation
- Learning and Development Strategy, including protected learning time, elearning review and update, Compliance Training Policy, empowering managers through the creation of service training budgets
- Volunteering Policy introduced
- Enabled manager initiative to create a self service area for managers to access help, guidance and templates for HR issues, including the introduction of an AI 'chatbot'
- Values co-created and launched, along with a supporting behavioural framework
- Investors in People Established Silver award
- HR policy review
- Comprehensive workforce metrics created with supporting reports and analysis for leadership
- Delivery of ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management) qualifications at Levels 3 and 5 for managers
- Lancaster People Manager Essentials programme, including manager workshops, manager network, elearning, coaching offer
- Aspiring managers development: District Council Network programme, Tri-Sector Challenge, Lancaster and Morecambe aspiring manager development programme

2.2 It is now necessary to build upon the achievements and progress made, so that a refreshed and forward-looking strategy is in place over the next two years while Lancaster City Council exists in its current format. Attempts have been made to ensure the strategy:

- Responds directly to what staff have told us through surveys and focus groups
- Reflects the expectations set out in the Investors in People Silver assessment
- Meets organisational pressure around skills, performance and wellbeing.
- Aligns people development with the Council's strategic priorities and future workforce demands.

2.3 The staff survey and focus groups conducted last year clearly highlighted areas where improvements are required, including:

- Skills and career development
- Pay and benefits
- Recognition, inclusion, and clarity on how decisions are made

2.4 Investors In People identified the importance of driving improvements through data analysis, developing our approach to talent and succession pathways and the need to develop skills and knowledge in change management.

2.5 The new People Plan aims to meet the needs and expectations as described above.

3.0 Development of the new People Plan

3.1 The People Plan 2026-2028 therefore draws evidence from:

- People Plan 2023-2026 progress
- Annual staff survey results and focus group insights
- Investors in People Silver Review

- Operational insights from across the council, including HR, OD and Leadership Team
- Further consultation will take place and is described below.

- 3.2 The themes identified for the updated People Plan are
- Theme 1: Thriving Through Change – helping, supporting and equipping our people through upcoming transformation projects (LGR)
 - Theme 2: Belonging, Engagement and Wellbeing – creating a workplace where everyone feels safe, included and supported
 - Theme 3: Growing Our Talent – helping our people to develop the skills, knowledge, and competence to perform and progress
 - Theme 4: Decisions Driven By Insight – using high quality data to evidence and inform strategic people management

These themes reflect what people tell us is needed, and the reality of what is upcoming.

4.0 Engagement to Finalise the Plan

- 4.1 Engagement and consultation to finalise the plan will take place with the following groups:
- Trade Unions
 - People Forum
 - Manager Network
 - Other staff networks
 - Leadership Team

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 The People Plan 2026-2028 has been shaped on the current operational context as well as what colleagues have told us matters most to them: development, wellbeing, and clear leadership. It is an evolution of the current People Plan and aims to provide a realistic and prioritised work plan for Lancaster City Council until 2028, based on the progress already made.

The plan will continue to drive high performance through its people and embeds Our Values.

- 3.2 The Committee is asked to receive the update and are invited to ask questions or provide feedback.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):</p>

<p>n/a</p>

<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>There are no legal implications.</p>

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications to the implementation of the strategy, other than usual spend of the corporate training budget.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:

This is the strategic work plan for the HR and OD team so will involve resource use from across the council.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Draft People Plan 2026-2028

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