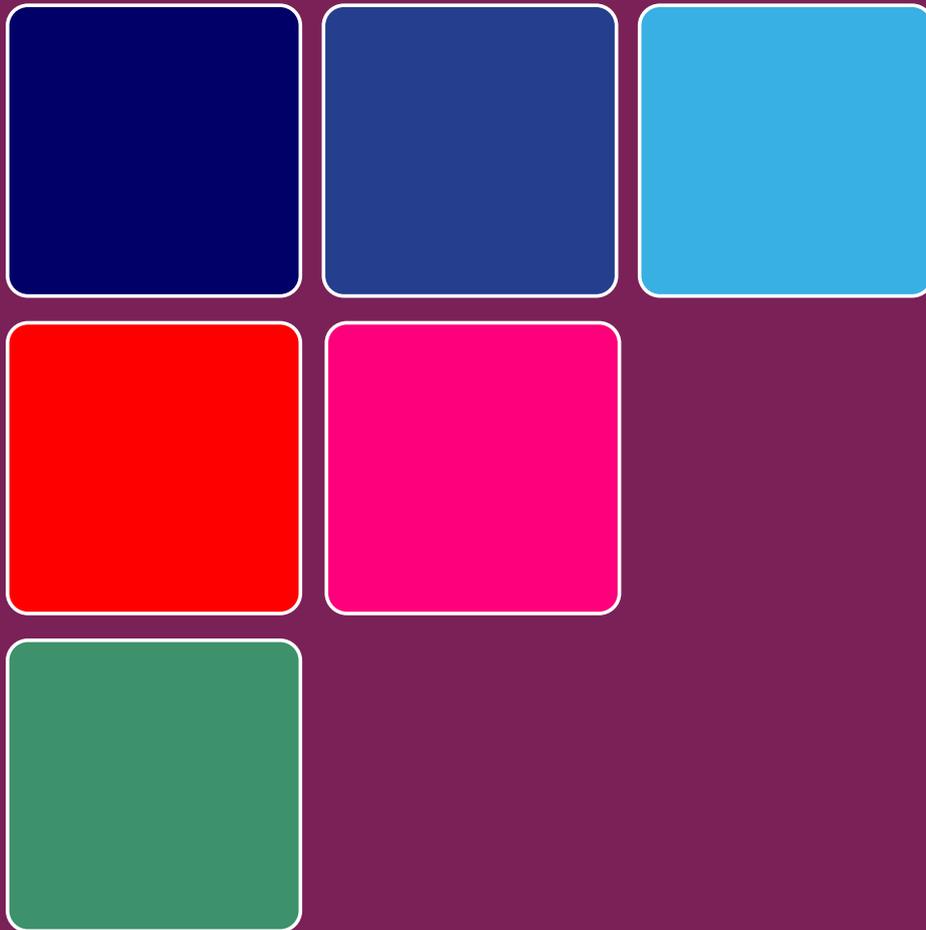
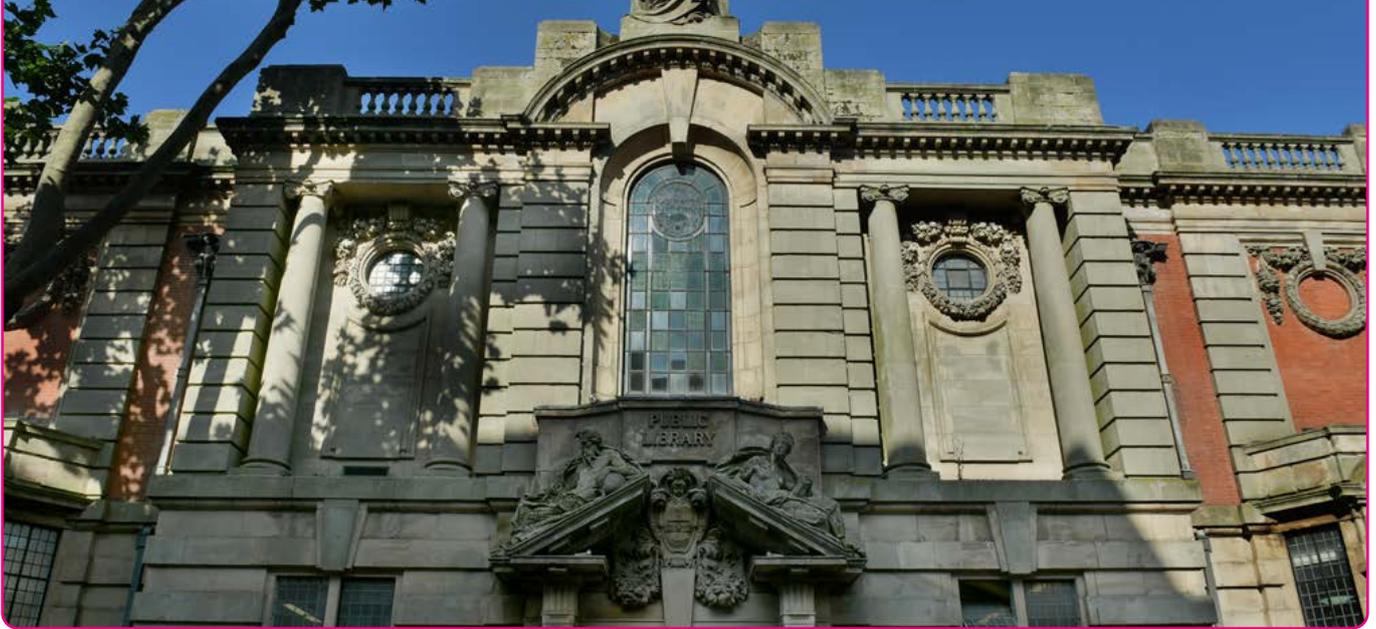


Dudley Council

# People Strategy

2022-2025





## Foreword from the Chief Executive

At Dudley, our ambition is for the Council to be the employer of choice, where people choose to work here because they feel they are valued, able to be their authentic selves and can access the support and development required to enable them to perform at their best.

Our focus is on developing a culture, systems, processes and ways of working that will ensure our workforce is fantastically placed to deliver our Council priorities and realise our ambitions.

The People Strategy supports the delivery of our Council's priorities by identifying how we will equip our workforce with the skills and abilities necessary to meet the changing demands of delivering public services, as well as the ever-changing world of work.



**Kevin O'Keefe - Chief Executive of Dudley Council**

## Introduction

Dudley's People Strategy sets out our ambition to create a positive, inclusive and healthy working environment where our workforce feels valued, supported and able to fulfil their potential in delivering the Council's ambitions and priorities.

It provides the strategic direction for our people for the next three years and outlines how we intend to develop our workforce's capacity and capability. It also recognises that when our workforce feel engaged, invested in and involved this leads to improved performance and results in better public service delivery to our diverse communities.

The successful delivery of the four priorities identified within our Council Plan relies on us having the right people in the right roles with the required skills to deliver the right outcomes, at the right time. Equally important is the way in which our people work in partnership with others to deliver the Dudley borough vision "forging a future for all."

Developing the capacity and capability needed to future-proof our organisation lies at the heart of our People Strategy. To achieve this level of development will require a significant change in our organisational culture, with the need for the behaviours of all our people to reflect the Council's core values. Crucial changes are also needed in our ways of working, our people processes and policies. Whilst our People Strategy will focus primarily on the delivery of change within the People theme of the Future Council programme, there will also be a number of cross cutting priorities across the Digital, Place and Process themes.



Human resources isn't a thing we do. It's the thing that runs our business.

**Steve Wynn**





With the Council facing a rapidly increasing number of hard to fill roles as a result of national and regional shortages of a number of professionals across the Local Government sector, combined with the fact that these labour market challenges are expected to continue for the foreseeable future, our people are our greatest priority. Thus, a key focus of our People Strategy is making the Council the best place to work.

We want to ensure that we are appropriately measuring the experience our people have working with us, and will use a blend of indicators, including qualitative and quantitative data and insight to evaluate the success of our actions. We will continue, critically, to listen to and respond to the voice of our people through surveys and other engagement activities. We will use a range of analytics to monitor and measure performance levels.

The Human Resources, Organisational Development & Inclusion team will be a strategic enabler working with our Council directorates to deliver the People Strategy. A one-year delivery plan which sets out our actions, time-scales and deliverables reviewed annually through our Strategic Executive Board and the following years objectives agreed. Progress against the People Strategy and the delivery plan will be monitored through the HR, OD & Inclusion leadership team, Senior Executive Board and the Future Council Scrutiny Committee.

# Our Workforce (excluding school-based staff)

**4723**  
Headcount



as at 31/03/2022

Average Age

**48**

Sexual orientation

**1.5%**

Gay/Lesbian or Bisexual

We have sexual orientation data for 61% of staff

Gender diversity:

**Female 3062**  
**Male 1661**



Baby Boomers - 1937 – 1966: Female = 934. Male = 547  
Generation X - 1967 – 1980: Female = 1327. Male = 607  
Millennials and Generation Y - Post 1980: Female = 801. Male = 507

Disability:

**7%** of employees have declared a disability

We have disability data for 60% of staff (1883 employees have a blank field for disability in PIMS – and this is not including casuals)

Starters & Leavers 2021-22:

New Starters **349** Leavers **456**



Length of Service:

Less than 2 years **554 (12%)**  
Between 2 - 5 years **895 (19%)**  
more than 5 years **3274 (69%)**  
the average length of service **14 years**

Sickness 2021-22

Days lost per FTE: **13.94**

Top 3 Reasons:

Mental Health/Anxiety/Depression

& Stress Related Sickness **27%**

Musculoskeletal **15%**

Covid Related (this includes Diagnosed Covid,

Covid Symptoms, Long Covid and

Reaction to Vaccination) **15%**



Gender Pay Gap

(as at March 2021 - reported in March 2022):

**3062** - 65% of employees are female

**1661** - 35% of employees are male

Council Median GPG = **20%**

UK Median GPG = **15.4%**



Religion:

Religion % of Headcount

Agnostic **0.02%**

Atheism **0.1%**

Buddhist **0.2%**

Catholic **0.1%**

Christian **42.9%**

Hindu **0.8%**

Jewish **0.02%**

Muslim **2.1%**

No Religion **23.7%**

Other **2.1%**

Sikh **2.0%**

Prefer not to disclose

**6.4%**

Undisclosed **19.6%**



We have religion data for 80% of staff (including where they have selected 'prefer not to disclose')

Ethnicity:

Ethnicity % of Headcount

Arab **0.1%**

Asian or Asian British

Bangladeshi **0.2%**

Asian or Asian British Chinese

**0.1%**

Asian or Asian British Indian

**3.7%**

Asian or Asian British Other

Asian **0.4%**

Asian or Asian British

Pakistani **1.7%**

Black or Black British African

**0.5%**

Black or Black British

Caribbean **2.8%**

Black or Black British Other

Black **0.3%**

Mixed Other Mixed **0.2%**

Mixed White and Asian **0.4%**

Mixed White and Black

African **0.1%**

Mixed White and Black

Caribbean **1.2%**

Other Ethnic Group **0.1%**

White English/Welsh/Scottish/

Northern Irish/British **79.7%**

White Irish **0.4%**

White Other White **2.5%**

Prefer not to Say **3.2%**

Undisclosed **2.6%**

# Developing our strategy

Our ambition for our workforce is shaped in response to a range of drivers which will create change within the Council. They reflect external factors and trends, themes within our key strategic plans, and internal challenges we face. We provide an overview of each area and highlight why they are critical to our People Strategy.

## Digital Agenda

We must embrace new ways of working to become a digitally mature organisation, where our people can thrive in the digital age with the values, skills and knowledge necessary to do so. All our strategies need to work in partnership to ensure we support a digitally 'savvy' workforce.

## Diversity, Equality & Inclusion

It's important that we are able to recruit from a diverse talent pool to attract the best and help us meet our future challenges. Valuing equality and inclusion will have a substantial impact on our ability to be creative and foster innovation, and a diverse workforce with recognised protected characteristics, will help us understand and respond to our residents' needs.

## Skills

Up-skilling is a priority in a world where the speed of change is fast and pathways ahead uncertain. Focusing on building a range of skills which equips us with a workforce fit for the future and then ensuring they are effectively used to deliver our services is vital to enabling us to evolve.

## Connectivity

Feeling connected and engaged results in people who are healthier, happier, more fulfilled, motivated and better deliverers. We know having people who feel more connected to the Council, and ensuring all our work is better aligned, will ensure we can make more joined-up decisions and provide more co-ordinated services for our residents.

## Leadership

As we head towards 2030, we need to recruit and develop skilled leaders who are confident, decisive, authentic, strategic and forward thinkers who can lead and inspire others to lead with emotional intelligence, empathy and enthusiasm. We need more of our leaders to exhibit these skills and develop a leadership culture which enables these behaviours to become the norm.

## Health and Wellbeing

Promoting and supporting our people's wellness is critical to our ambitions to be an employer of choice. It can lead to increase resilience, reduced sickness and improved performance. We need to embed it as a priority through our culture, leadership and people management.

## Organisational Change

Change is a constant and, for many organisations, effects structures, processes and behaviours. How well we are able to respond and embed change will be driven by how quickly and effectively our people can positively adapt, so we must have a whole workforce who can embrace, shape and navigate organisational change.

## Agile Workforce

An agile workforce is a critical component of the agile Council that we strive to be. A Council that is dynamic, flexible and responsive to the changing world around us, enabling us to meet the needs of the community that we serve, whilst taking care of our people through an improved employment offer, experience and work-life balance.

## People Plan Priorities and how we will deliver them

Our People Strategy has been developed using feedback from employee engagement via a number of employee surveys, reviews and focus groups.

It has been informed by evidence from directorate workforce planning, the Strategic Review of HR & Organisational Development, Local Government Association (LGA) peer review, workforce data and the learning derived from the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

It reflects our elected members ambitions to expand our investment in "growing our own" and to be the employer of choice. The feedback, evidence and the drivers outlined above have translated into five inter-related priorities with aims which are future-focused, and desired outcomes which will ensure we have a capable and talented workforce empowered to deliver.





## Attract, recognise and retain talent

We want to modernise the way we recruit, ensuring all candidates receive a high-quality experience and our leaders can bring the best people into their teams, at the right time, with the right skills.

We want a clear employer brand and to ensure all people joining and leaving our workforce receive a great first and last impression of the Council and provide development and career pathway opportunities enabling us to optimise all our workforce talent to achieve our Council plans.

### Aim

Modernise the way we recruit – ensuring candidates receive a high-quality experience and our leaders can bring the best people into their teams at the right time with the right skills

Becoming an Employer of Choice

Provide development and career pathway opportunities

### How we will achieve this

Invest in developing recruiting managers  
Reviewing recruitment policies and processes  
Enabling access to employment opportunities for all  
Delivering targeted & streamlined recruitment practices

Building our offer as an employer of choice (USP)  
Creating an Employee Value Proposition (EVP)  
Review our pay offer  
Building a culture of recognition within the workforce  
Flexible working to attract and retain staff  
Upskilling the workforce and recognising potential

Invest and develop front line digital access and skills  
Promoting pathways into work  
Clear and attractive Career pathways  
Engagement with experienced staff to understand future work and career preferences  
Identifying individuals for career development and progression.

### Outcomes

People who share our values will be keen to join our workforce, recognising us as an employer of choice. They will remain working with us, feeling valued for their contributions and empowered to build successful and rewarding careers with us.



## Develop a high performing workforce

We know that people perform best when they feel connected to their work, their manager and the organisation they work for.

We want all our people to understand what's expected of them, how their work fits into the bigger picture, and to be able to achieve their goals. We value every employee and we want to ensure they are motivated and equipped with the necessary skills, support and effective line management to enable them to perform at their best.

### Aim

Our people will understand what is expected from them, how their work fits into the bigger picture and to be able to achieve their goals.

We will ensure that they are motivated and equipped with the necessary skills and support.

Effective line management to enable them to perform at their best.

### How we will achieve this

Providing people practices and frameworks that support the organisation to deliver effective outcomes

Understanding the future needs of the organisation and using workforce planning to address these needs.

Using workforce intelligence to inform and shape delivery and to identify areas for improvement.

Redesigning the My Annual review process

Upskilling our managers to be confident as people leaders and able to motivate their teams.

Bite size training will be offered to all to upskill individuals across all service areas

Embed a culture of coaching and mentoring which supports and improves personal performance and performance management.

Developing strong people managers that enable and equip their teams to deliver good outcomes

Creating the conditions where employees are accountable for their actions

Introduction of toolkits and training for people managers in effective use of people management policies

### Outcomes

Our workforce consistently demonstrates high levels of energy and commitment and delivers outstanding performance enabling our Council vision to be fully realised.



## Deliver inspirational and effective leadership

Leadership is critical to our success in achieving our Council vision. We recognise that leaders exist at all levels across the Council and we want to equip our leaders with the critical skills needed to steer their teams to deliver the Council's priorities.

As well as providing opportunities for our aspiring leaders to grow into our future leaders.

### Aim

Equip our leaders with critical skills needed to steer their teams to deliver the Council priorities.

Provide opportunities for individuals to become future leaders.

Recognition that leaders exist at all levels across the Council.

### How we will achieve this

Implement leadership development programmes that support all our leaders: first line managers; "middle" leaders and senior leaders

Ensuring understanding of inclusivity and "impact"

Introducing behavioural competencies that embed the leadership accountabilities in all that we do.

Enhance the leadership forum to enable leaders to actively learn from others.

Supporting leaders to develop and embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion capability including "cultural competence"

Seeking out and developing future leaders

Equipping aspiring leaders with knowledge and skills that will be required for more senior management roles.

Targeted and inclusive talent management and succession planning in place for key roles

Developing strong people managers that enable and equip their teams to deliver good outcomes

Creating an environment where employees are accountable for their actions

### Outcomes

All leaders will reflect our leadership accountabilities as they carry out their daily work. They will be capable and influential in building an open, trusting and supportive environment.

Our leaders will drive the delivery of the Council Plan, increase our workforce's ability to embrace and navigate change and positively impact on how we attract, recognise and retain our talent.



## Build a diverse, engaged, inclusive and healthy workforce

We recognise that our vision and plans will be achieved through our people who feel they are listened to, considered, involved, appreciated and supported. We want our people to feel able to be their authentic selves.

We want to promote a positive, inclusive and healthy working environment with values, behaviours and practices that enable our people to thrive.

### Aim

We want our people to be their authentic self.

Promote a positive, inclusive and healthy working environment with values, behaviours and practices that enables our people to thrive.

We want our people to feel they are listened to, considered, involved, appreciated and supported.

### How we will achieve this

Creating an environment where our practice is recognised as meeting equality, Diversity & inclusion external standards and charter marks

Use of lived experience to inform awareness and promote change

Raising aspirations & opportunities to level up

Implement the action plan from the racial inequality review

Embed a culture that values diversity and actively promotes inclusion

Address “gaps” and tackle areas of disproportionate impact related to protected characteristics

Creating a climate of trust, openness and transparency to allow employees to raise their health and wellbeing needs

Develop people solutions to support new ways of working and new workstyles in partnership with Health & Safety

Monitor workforce data and use it intelligently to inform and shape initiatives

Improve channels of communication across service areas to ensure key messages are consistently delivered

Give employees the opportunity to have a voice

Engage and enhance our range of Staff Network Groups.

Embed policies and processes that allow employees to speak up and have their opinions heard.

### Outcomes

All our people feel able to participate and achieve their potential with the Council. We have fair for all people practices and overall a more celebrated and engaged workforce resulting in reduced levels of absenteeism and disputes.

Trusted and meaningful working relationships are in place across the Council and our workforce better reflects and represents the diversity of our local Dudley residents.



## Foster a thriving learning culture which embraces change

We want to ensure we fully deliver on the Council's commitment to grow our own through embedding a learning culture.

We recognise a learning culture is a mark of a good employer of choice that is agile, progressive, innovative and resilient through embracing change.

### Aim

We want to ensure we fully deliver on the Council's commitment to grow our own workforce.

We recognise a learning culture is a mark of a good employer of choice that is agile, progressive, innovative, and resilient through embracing change.

We want to embed a learning culture in Dudley with workforce access to great learning opportunities.

### How we will achieve this

Encouraging learning opportunities through job shadowing, cross project working, secondments, etc.

Maximising opportunities for growth through our Apprenticeship levy

Implementing a range of pathways to grow our own talent

Using workforce intelligence to shape our talent and development offer

To actively appoint and develop individuals who demonstrate the Council's values and embrace a change mindset

Develop a coaching strategy to compliment leadership development and the Future Council Programme

Invest and develop workforce digital capability

Develop an approach to people-led change

Develop a change toolkit to support cultural change

Introduce a new learning and development offer

Improve learner engagement

Development of an Organisational Learning and Development Framework

Enabling our people to have the time to develop

Developing a trust culture where learning is promoted

### Outcomes

The Council continues to transform with individuals whose attributes include curiosity, agility and creativity who are actively sought and bought into our workforce and developed to stretch their knowledge, expertise and experiences.

Teams celebrate growth mindsets and the whole Council is able to collectively adapt and use learning as a tool for change.