

our
people
matter



Fife Council's

PEOPLE PLAN AND WORKFORCE STRATEGY

2025-2028

CONTENTS



●	Our People Matter	04
●	Our Current Workforce	05
●	Our Future Workforce	09
●	Our People Planning	13
●	Our Workforce Strategy	18

WELCOME TO

OUR PLAN AND STRATEGY

“Our workforce is key to our success. Our people plan and workforce strategy considers our current and future workforce needs, identifies key areas of people planning and sets out how we will work to meet our ambitions. The next three years will see challenges of increasing demand on services, increasing pressures on capacity and reducing budgets. The reform work planned will require us to change our organisational systems and work in different ways. I am proud of Team Fife, and I am confident that our collective efforts will create a strong and capable workforce, ready to embrace change, take on new opportunities and make a real difference.”



KEN GOURLAY

Chief Executive, Fife Council



Our People Matter

We recognise that the skills, knowledge, enthusiasm and dedication of our workforce are what enable us to deliver our services. Our people planning and workforce strategy considers our current and future workforce needs, identifies key areas of people planning and sets out how we will work to meet our ambitions.

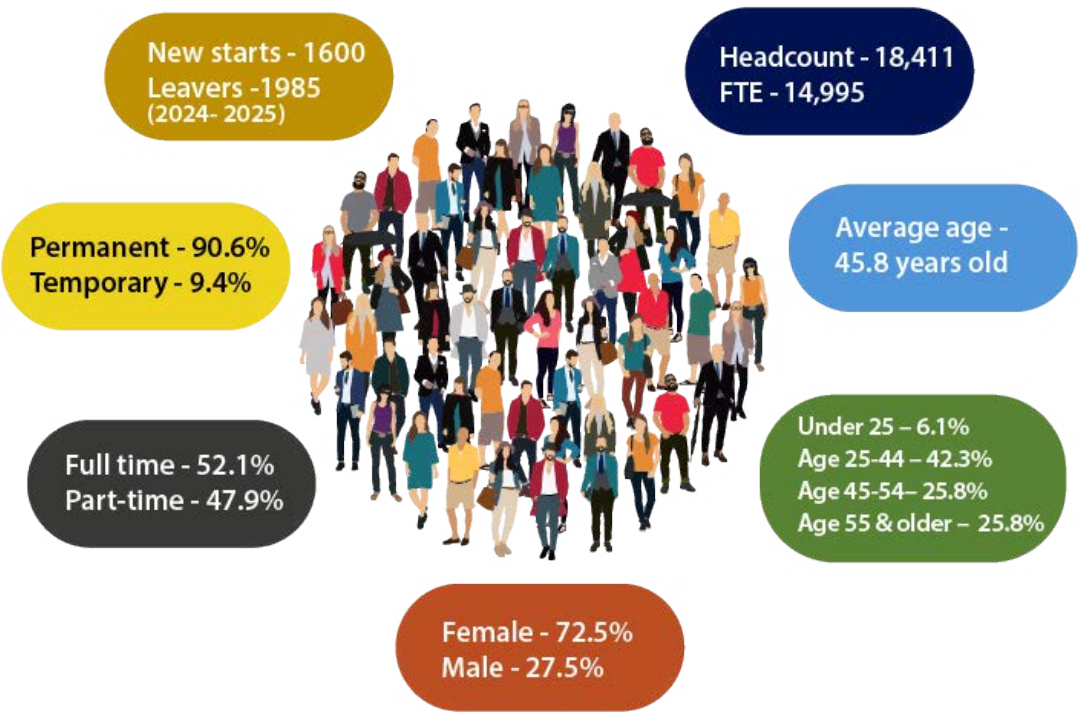
We are ambitious for Fife, both for our communities and our workforce. Our people have pride in their work, the council and the communities of Fife. We are focussed on reducing inequalities and increasing opportunities within an environment of decreasing resources. Our vision is for a **confident, successful and fairer Fife and this is a shared purpose for our workforce**. An engaged and empowered workforce who embrace new ways of working and are committed to making a difference, will help to achieve this vision.

The Council is responsible for delivering a diverse range of services to the communities of Fife and we aim through our workforce planning activities to create a workforce with the knowledge, skills, confidence and capacity to deliver sustainable services and the Plan for Fife. Our People Matter (OPM) sets out our People Plan and Workforce Strategy for the period 2025 - 2028.

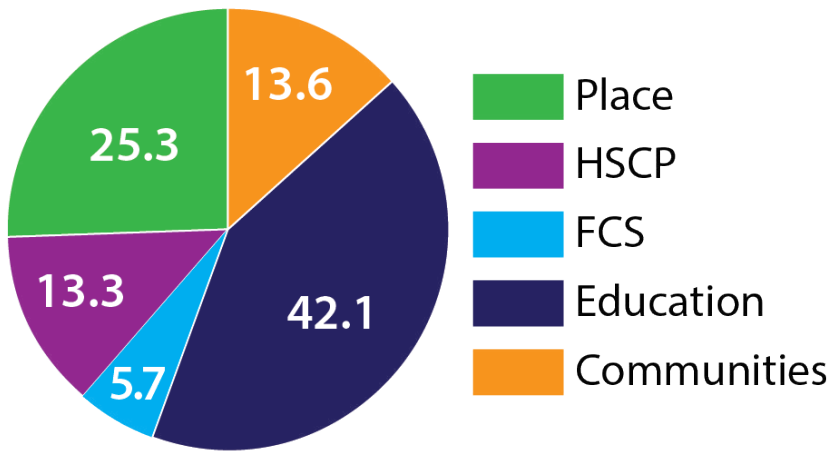


Our Current Workforce

Figures as at 1 April 2025



Percentage of employees (headcount)



Our Current Workforce

Our Workstyles

We all work in different patterns, environments and to various schedules as we support our customers and communities. All Fife Council jobs are assigned to one of 5 workstyles:



Customer Contact and Telephony



Face to Face Customer Contact or Facility Based



Direct Service



Case and Fieldwork



Support Roles

Blended working is a formal flexible working option which is available to some employees whose jobs aren't tied to specific locations and times, predominantly those within E – Support Roles.

Change will happen at different rates across council services and groups of staff as we continue to adapt to changes in our communities and the world at large. A package of tools and support relevant to our differing roles continue to be developed - exploring what's possible and fair for everyone in terms of flexibility, choice and access to technology.



Our Current Workforce

Workforce Challenges

All Councils in Scotland are facing significant challenges in maintaining and developing workforce capacity caused by a range of factors including financial pressures; an ageing workforce; increased service demand; recruitment difficulties; absence management; differing population changes across the country; skills gaps and pay competition from other sectors. Despite these challenges we are fully committed to continue building a strong future workforce to support the delivery of services to our communities who need them most.

Workforce data provides insight to help direct our workforce activities. This ensures we have a workforce with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time to deliver on our ambitions and sustainable services for the people of Fife:

A skilled workforce

Our employees demonstrate a hugely varied range of skills across a broad range of roles. We continue to build on existing skills and to create new ones through mandatory and developmental learning. Along with other local authorities, however, there are certain skills currently scarce in the labour market and certain high-volume roles we struggle to fill. We must ensure a pipeline of suitably skilled and qualified individuals to deliver our services and address barriers to recruitment.



Our Current Workforce

A flexible working workforce

We all work in different patterns, environments and to various schedules as we support our customers and communities. This is reflected in our workstyles and employees' access to flexible working - such as blended working, part-time, compressed hours, and term-time working - wherever possible.

A supported workforce

Practical supports are available to all staff to support physical, mental, financial and social wellbeing. However, reducing high absence rates remains an ongoing challenge. Significant ongoing focus must remain in this area to have an increasingly positive impact for individuals and services.

A workforce that is heard

Our employee voice is strong through the feedback we receive from a range of surveys, both all-council and those with specific focus. We will continue to develop ways to maximise the reach of our surveys and continue to maintain our positive relationship with the recognised trade unions through direct engagement and being clear in how we use feedback to strengthen continuous improvement.



Our Future Workforce

Within an environment of reducing budgets, we need to direct our people resources to those areas which will have the greatest positive, long-term impact for the residents of Fife - creating a workforce supportive of, and supported by, the transformation agenda.

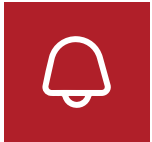


Our ageing workforce represents a clear challenge to recruit and retain increasing numbers of younger people through direct recruitment, entry level schemes and supported entry such as apprenticeships. We continue to work in partnership with local schools and further education partners across Fife to find innovative approaches to development, involvement and marketing.

Working with our employability partners we support those further from the job market to secure job experience and/or employment whilst helping to meet our workforce resource challenges. We will continue to be creative and diversify our recruitment approaches to secure skills in short supply and high demand, working with other local authorities and professional bodies wherever it is appropriate to do so.



Continuous learning is integral to our approach to employee development. Our skills programme will continue to deliver development in 3 key areas:



Mandatory

core for all including data protection, health & safety and security.



Professional

to meet requirements of specific professions, roles & skills gaps.

Developmental

from apprenticeship opportunities to on-the-job learning.



Key aspects identified for the future workforce development are:

	Leadership Self aware, confident and collaborative leadership	Adaptability Agile, creative and ready for change
	Digital and Data 6 capability areas (including using technology, handling data), digital leadership	Relationships Building trust, person centred and coaching style



Over the next three years the Council is facing significant transformation, and our workforce is key to ensuring successful and sustainable change. To enable transformational change a cultural shift is required that fosters adaptability, collaboration, and community focussed service delivery. The key cultural shifts that will drive our success are:

- **Empowering Employees** – Enabling autonomy, decision-making and accountability at all levels to improve responsiveness and innovation.
- **Community focussed Approach** – Shifting the focus from bureaucratic processes to delivering services that are preventative and meet community needs effectively.
- **Agile and Adaptive Mindset** – Embracing flexibility and continuous improvement to respond to evolving challenges.
- **Collaborative Leadership** – Moving away from hierarchical structures to a more inclusive leadership style that values input from staff and stakeholders and is focussed on the importance of relationships.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making** – Embedding a culture of using evidence and analytics to inform policies and service improvements.
- **Resilience and Change Management** – Supporting employees through change with clear communication, training, engagement and support.





To manage change in the most effective way, we will adopt a people centred approach to change which will focus on engagement, transparent communications, skills development, leadership support and employee well-being. This approach provides a supportive environment which will build trust and confidence, increase engagement and foster a sense of ownership and where employees feel supported and heard. This approach will also support the attraction and retention of talent in the organisation.

Digital and data are fundamental in both leading and enabling the continuing transformation of the organisation. As technologies, infrastructures and systems are developed to underpin service design and transformations, digital, data and digital leadership skills will be crucial to our success. Going forward, jobs will change as a result of technology, existing roles will be enriched and new roles will also be created. There will be a focus on upskilling to ensure our workforce has the required digital capabilities and reskilling in respect of new roles.

We will continue to modernise our organisation and create an environment where employees understand their roles and how they connect to our purpose. Employees will be empowered to deliver what is needed for our communities and have the skills and confidence to work effectively. This will be achieved by increasing accountability, empowerment, and improving leadership and management capability, supported by modern employment policies and a focus on employee wellbeing. We will explore the updated 21st Century Public Servant research and the characteristics required for public servants to thrive in a changing environment.

Together we have pride in our place, and in supporting the people of Fife in theirs.

Together we have pride in our place, and in supporting the people of Fife in theirs.



Our People Planning

At its simplest people, or workforce, planning is identifying the number of employees and types of employee skill sets required to best deliver our services. We do this by identifying the workforce needed now and in the future; identifying any gaps; and planning what actions we will take to address them. Our people planning approach is influenced by a range of factors:



Workforce Planning Priorities

Our internal and external drivers, together with analysis of our current workforce, have informed the development of council wide workforce planning priorities.



These priorities direct corporate actions to ensure our workforce has the capacity and capability to meet the organisation's current and evolving needs. The themes are:

Succession planning	Identifying, resourcing and growing to fill leadership and business-critical positions in the future
Recruitment & retention	Ensuring we have the right number of the right people in the right places at the right time
Leadership / manager development	Creating confident and resilient leaders and managers equipped to lead, empower and support the workforce
Employee learning & development	Enabling employees with the right skills and opportunities - now and for the future
Managing change	Implementing strategies for effecting and managing change and helping employees adapt
Absence management	Prioritising resources to reduce workforce absence through intervention strategies, policies and health & wellbeing supports
Workload, manager capacity, & workforce flexibility	Maximising manager capacity, monitoring workloads and creating flexible work opportunities wherever practicable



Our People Planning Approach

The following table sets out what we need to do and how we will do it, against each of our workforce planning themes:

- **What do we need to address?**
- **What will we do?**
- **What will this look like?**

Work to deliver these aims will be undertaken at the appropriate level – corporate or Directorate. Specific actions to support these are set out within the workforce strategy actions.

Priority	What do we need to address?	What will we do?	What will this look like?
Corporate Overview of People Planning Approach	The breadth and maturity of our workforce planning at corporate, Directorate and Service levels.	• Increase the maturity of our workforce planning approach with the support of a new Talent Management Team. • Continue to work with representative bodies such as SOLACE, the SPDS and with other councils to address issues collectively.	• Undertaking workforce and market analysis. • Scenario planning of future models of service delivery and demands.
Succession planning	Our ageing workforce. The need to ensure employee availability for critical roles and with hard-to-source skills.	• Deploy succession planning and consider different talent management approaches to enable Services to grow talent and meet future skills needs. • Resource and recruit with the future in mind and try innovative approaches when jobs are hard to fill. • Set, action and review Service People Plans which ensure future workforce needs are met.	• Profiling and monitoring of the age of the workforce, identifying critical positions, conducting skills analysis. • Creating career pathways, implementing shadowing and mentoring programs. • Increasing workforce representation of young people (age 16–24).



Priority	What do we need to address?	What will we do?	What will this look like?
Recruitment & retention	The continual challenges in ensuring we have the right number of the right people in the right places at the right time.	• Work to attract a broad range of applicants • Recruit, resource and promote those who enable us to achieve our vision and deliver on our goals. • Try innovative approaches when jobs are hard to fill.	• Visible 'Fife Council Jobs' branding through traditional media, online and social media, and in person events. • Continuing and expanding "grow your own" schemes, offering apprenticeships and traineeships, implement alternative recruitment approaches e.g. Life Chances • Seeking and reviewing data, including with our partners, to assess impact of activities and inform future direction. • Reducing employee turnover for those Services where it is highest.
Leadership / manager development	The need for resilient leaders and managers who empower and support the workforce and role-model positive behaviours.	• Provide appropriate leadership learning and development opportunities which help build the skills and confidence of managers • Support effective performance management • Enable positive relationship skills with a focus on having effective conversations.	• Upskilling current line managers e.g. First Line Manager Programme. • Delivering leadership and wellbeing support for managers. • Developing coaching skills among leaders.
Employee learning & development	How we ensure all employees have the knowledge, skills and confidence to fulfil their role, and have opportunities to develop.	• Support a learning culture - where learning and development is actively encouraged, and learning is accessible. • Increase opportunities for employees to take part in learning. • Support all employees to complete mandatory learning	• Conducting skills analysis to identify learning gaps and development needs • Suitable development activities identified to meet needs and facilitate access within working time wherever appropriate • Enabling of ongoing digital upskilling

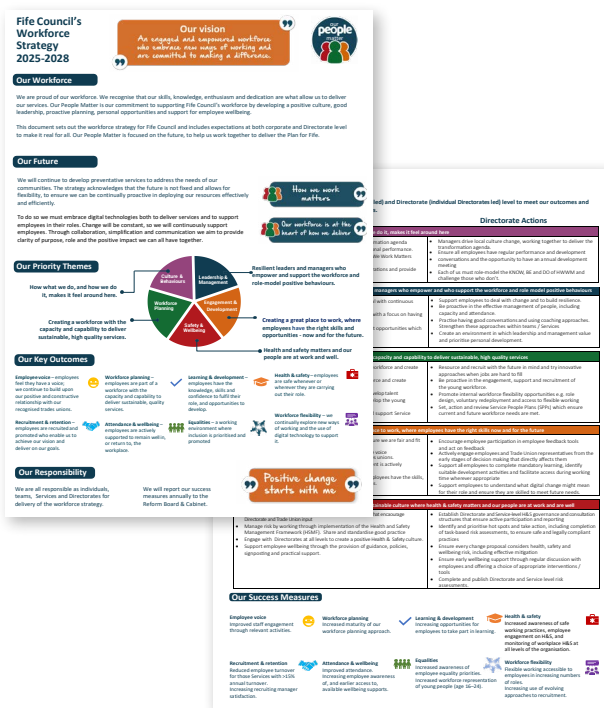


Priority	What do we need to address?	What will we do?	What will this look like?
Managing change	The constant need to change and adapt, and to best support our employees through change.	• Undertake workforce planning activity in support of the transformation agenda. • Support service change planning and ensure alignment with workforce planning. • Work effectively with employee representatives and implement change procedures so the workforce is informed all stages of change processes which affect them, and we minimise the impact, where possible.	• Efforts focused on supporting services with change plans and adaptations to workforce needs or business delivery methods. • Continued work with Services to develop the maturity of their People Plans. Using this insight as part of our review of People Planning and Workforce Strategy. • A people-centred approach to change – working effectively with our recognised trade unions. Applying our Managing Change Procedure where there is proposed reductions, structural change or changes to terms and conditions of employment.
Absence management	High absence levels and the resulting impact on individuals, budget and resourcing which adversely affects our ability to deliver effective services.	• Improve attendance. • Provide dedicated resources to tackle increased absence levels. • Work to ensure employees are actively supported to remain well in, or return to, the workplace.	• A dedicated team providing targeted support to Services to help increase attendance. • Identifying trends and hot spots, ensuring consistent policy application, providing manager training and support, and promoting early intervention strategies • Increasing employee awareness of, and earlier access to, available wellbeing supports.
Workload, manager capacity, & workforce flexibility	Issues of increasing workload and reduced manager capacity highlighted within employee surveys. The need to create workforce flexibility wherever practicable to best support how, where and when we deliver services.	• Explore how we work, new ways of working and implement technology which creates capacity. • Support organisational understanding of a flexible workforce and create conditions which support it. • Promotion of internal workforce flexibility opportunities e.g. role design, voluntary redeployment and access to flexible working.	• New ways of working in place with the use of technology being maximised. • Communications around ‘a flexible workforce’. • Facilitating redeployment and flexibility across services and supporting employees on different work arrangements. • Flexible working accessible to employees in increasing numbers of roles.



Our Workforce Strategy

Our people planning and our workforce strategy are two key workforce tools. They work together to ensure we have the right people in the right place at the right time to deliver the Plan for Fife, sustainable services and agreed priorities. They work together to help us deliver our workforce vision.



The Workforce Strategy describes our strategic workforce agenda and sets out the framework for how we recruit, manage, develop and support our workforce. It sets out actions to be delivered at both corporate and Directorate level.

Our Workforce Strategy is a three-year strategy which does not set defined delivery dates for individual actions. With this flexible approach, Directorates are encouraged to prioritise their actions allowing focus on key areas, whilst ensuring full delivery within the overall timescale.

Focus on delivery is supported by a maturity self-assessment process. The Directorate maturity model aids understanding of what good looks like and ensures all areas are self-assessing progress on the same basis annually. A similar self-assessment process and maturity model is in place for the corporate actions. Corporate self-assessment is undertaken by HR and the actions and associated next steps are also delivered by HR.

Within the Strategy, we have set out success measures to help assess progress against our key outcomes. The strategy in full is set out over the coming pages.



Fife Council's Workforce Strategy 2025-2028

Our vision

An engaged and empowered workforce who embrace new ways of working and are committed to making a difference.



Our Workforce

We are proud of our workforce. We recognise that our skills, knowledge, enthusiasm and dedication are what allow us to deliver our services. Our People Matter is our commitment to supporting Fife Council's workforce by developing a positive culture, good leadership, proactive planning, personal opportunities and support for employee wellbeing.

This document sets out the workforce strategy for Fife Council and includes expectations at both corporate and Directorate level to make it real for all. Our People Matter is focused on the future, to help us work together to deliver the Plan for Fife

Our Future

We will continue to develop preventative services to address the needs of our communities. The strategy acknowledges that the future is not fixed and allows for flexibility, to ensure we can be continually proactive in deploying our resources effectively and efficiently.

To do so we must embrace digital technologies both to deliver services and to support employees in their roles. Change will be constant, so we will continuously support employees. Through collaboration, simplification and communication we aim to provide clarity of purpose, role and the positive impact we can all have together.

How we work
matters



Our workforce is at the
heart of how we deliver



Our Priority Themes

How what we do, and how we do it, makes it feel around here.

Creating a workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver sustainable, high quality services.



Resilient leaders and managers who empower and support the workforce and role-model positive behaviours.

Creating a great place to work, where employees have the right skills and opportunities - now and for the future.

Health and safety matters and our people are at work and well.

Our Key Outcomes

Employee voice – employees feel they have a voice; we continue to build upon our positive and constructive relationship with our recognised trades unions.



Workforce planning – employees are part of a workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver sustainable, quality services.



Learning & development – employees have the knowledge, skills and confidence to fulfil their role, and opportunities to develop.



Health & safety – employees are safe whenever or wherever they are carrying out their role.



Recruitment & retention – employees are recruited and promoted who enable us to achieve our vision and deliver on our goals



Attendance & wellbeing – employees are actively supported to remain well in, or return to, the workplace



Equalities – a working environment where inclusion is prioritised and promoted



Workforce flexibility – we continually explore new ways of working and the use of digital technology to support it.



Our Responsibility

We are all responsible as individuals, teams, Services and Directorates for delivery of the workforce strategy. We will report our success measures annually to Reform Board and Cabinet Committee.



Our Actions Matter

Actions must be undertaken at both a Corporate (HR led) and Directorate (individual Directorates led) level to meet our outcomes and deliver for our workforce across the 5 priority themes.

Corporate Actions

Directorate Actions

Culture & Behaviours How what we do, and how we do it, makes it feel around here

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support culture change to enable delivery of the transformation agenda• Utilise workforce data and insights to improve organisational performance.• Promote implementation and understanding of the How We Work Matters (HWWM) framework.• Put in place people policies aligned with our cultural aspirations and provide managers with practical guidance to support their use. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managers drive local culture change, working together to deliver the transformation agenda.• Ensure all employees have regular performance and development conversations and the opportunity to have an annual development meeting.• Each of us must role-model the KNOW, BE and DO of HWWM and challenge those who don't. |
|---|--|



Leadership & Management Resilient Leaders and managers who empower and who support the workforce and role model positive behaviours

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support leaders and managers to build resilience and deal with continuous change. • Provide opportunities to build positive relationship skills with a focus on having effective conversations. • Provide appropriate leadership learning and development opportunities which help build the skills and confidence of managers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support employees to deal with change and to build resilience. • Be proactive in the effective management of people, including capacity and attendance. • Practise having good conversations and using coaching approaches. Strengthen these approaches within teams / Services • Create an environment in which leadership and management value and prioritise personal development. |
|---|--|

Workforce Planning Creating a workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver sustainable, high quality services

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract a broad range of applicants to help diversify our workforce and create an organisation that prioritises and promotes inclusion • Support organisational understanding of a flexible workforce and create conditions which support it. • Provide tools and support for succession planning and develop talent management approaches- to grow and retain talent, develop the young workforce and meet future skills needs. • Increase the maturity of strategic workforce planning and support Service People Plans to be more mature. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource and recruit with the future in mind and try innovative approaches when jobs are hard to fill • Be proactive in the engagement, support and recruitment of the young workforce. • Promote internal workforce flexibility opportunities e.g. role design, voluntary redeployment and access to flexible working • Set, action and review Service People Plans (SPPs) which ensure current and future workforce needs are met. |
|---|---|

Engagement & Development Creating a great place to work, where employees have the right skills now and for the future

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly review policy, pay & conditions strategies to ensure we are fair and fit for the future • Deploy employee feedback tools to capture the employee voice • Maintain a positive relationship with our recognised trades unions. • Create a learning culture- where learning and development is actively encouraged and learning is accessible. • Facilitate digital upskilling in the workplace to ensure employees have the skills, knowledge, and confidence to meet our digital aspirations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage employee participation in employee feedback tools and act on feedback • Actively engage employees and Trade Union representatives from the early stages of decision making that directly affects them • Support all employees to complete mandatory learning, identify suitable development activities and facilitate access during working time wherever appropriate • Support employees to understand what digital change might mean for their role and ensure they are skilled to meet future needs. |
|--|--|



Safety & Wellbeing Working together to build a sustainable culture where health & safety matters and our people are at work and are well

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Health & Safety (H&S) governance structures that encourage Directorate and Trade Union input • Manage risk by working through implementation of the Health and Safety Management Framework (HSMF). Share and standardise good practice • Engage with Directorates at all levels to create a positive Health & Safety culture. • Support employee wellbeing through the provision of guidance, policies, signposting and practical support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Directorate and Service-level H&S governance and consultation structures that ensure active participation and reporting • Identify and prioritise hot spots and take action, including completion of task-based risk assessments, to ensure safe and legally compliant practices • Ensure every change proposal considers health, safety and wellbeing risk, including effective mitigation • Ensure early wellbeing support through regular discussion with employees and offering a choice of appropriate interventions / tools • Complete and publish Directorate and Service level risk assessments. |
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Our Success Measures

Employee voice

Improved staff engagement through relevant activities.



Workforce planning

Increased maturity of our workforce planning approach.



Learning & development

Increasing opportunities for employees to take part in learning.



Health & safety

Increased awareness of safe working practices, employee engagement on H&S, and monitoring of workplace H&S at all levels of the organisation.



Recruitment & retention

Reduced employee turnover for those Services with >15% annual turnover.
Increasing recruiting manager satisfaction.



Attendance & wellbeing

Improved attendance.
Increasing employee awareness of, and earlier access to, available wellbeing supports.



Equalities

Increased awareness of employee equality priorities.
Increased workforce representation of young people (age 16–24).



Workforce flexibility

Flexible working accessible to employees in increasing numbers of roles.
Increasing use of evolving approaches to recruitment.



Find out more and access the support materials on the
Our People Matter pages on the intranet or at: www.fife.gov.uk

our
people
matter

