

# Falkirk Workforce Strategy

2023-2027

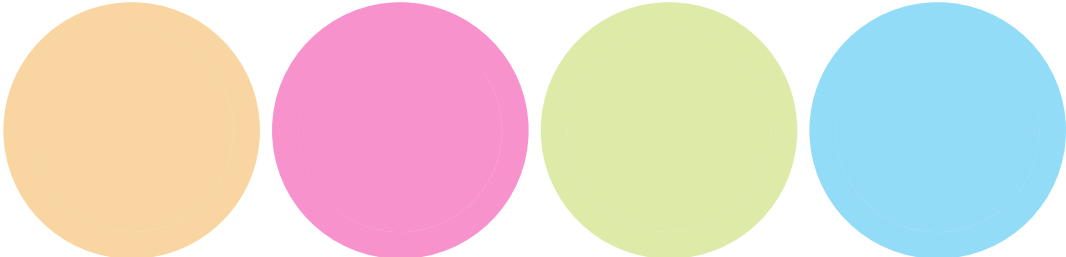


Falkirk Council

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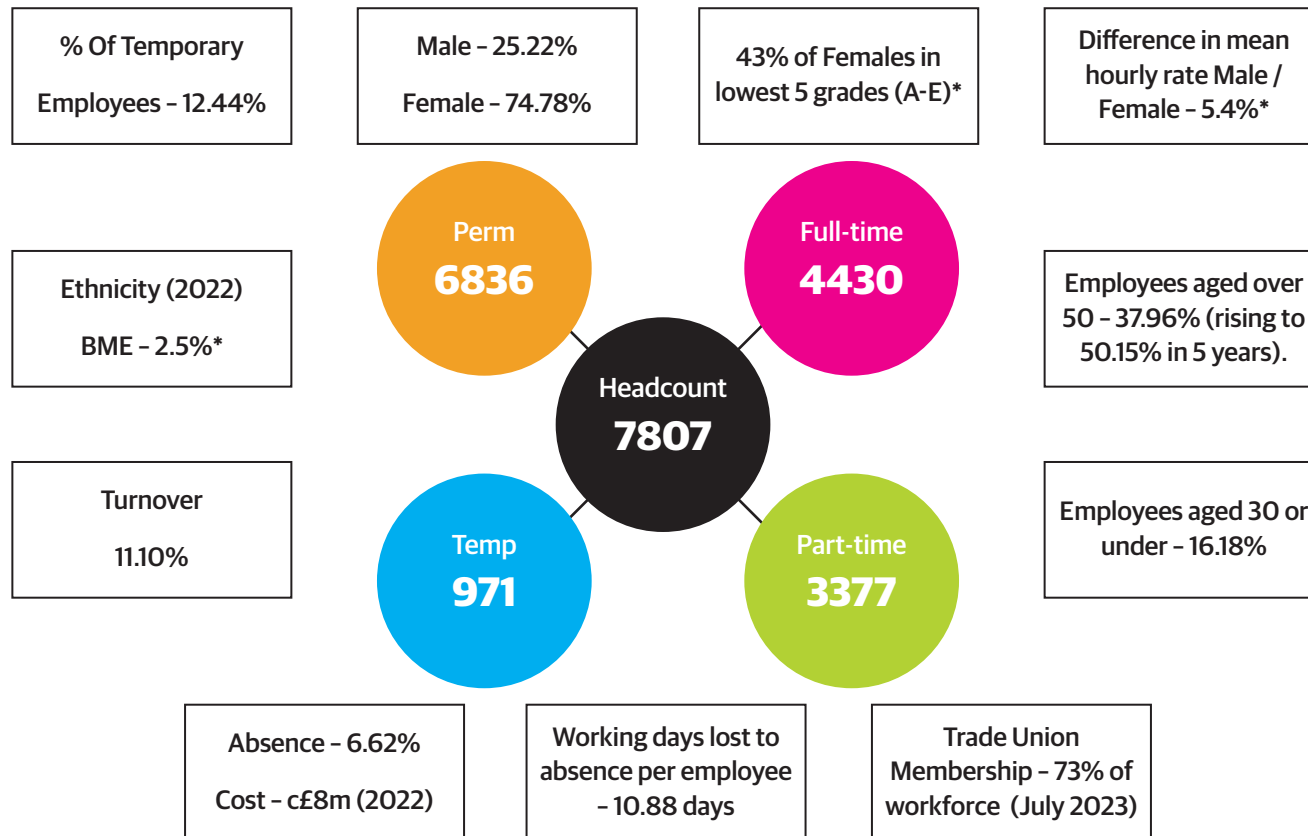
# Introduction

The Council's priorities are set out in our Council Plan together with our vision for the area. Our Financial Strategy links directly to this. Our Workforce Strategy is aligned to both of these, supporting delivery of the Council Plan, within the financial context in which we work. The Corporate and Service workforce plans will flow from the Workforce Strategy, identifying key actions to address and respond to the challenges and changes we make to deliver on our priorities.

We have high ambitions for our employees, as we do for our communities. We recognise that the greatest asset we have to deliver our priorities and services is our employees and the success of the Council in delivering on its priorities is highly dependent on the skills and commitment of its employees. As we move forward, we recognise the workforce will be smaller with resources targeted at our community needs and priorities. A talented and aligned workforce is crucial to deliver on our priorities and as such the Council Plan recognises workforce as a key enabler.

# Our Workforce - Key Facts

Our workforce is key to achieving our priorities. The demographics and make up of our workforce impact on our employees and ultimately how we deliver our services. Demographics can change significantly across service areas. The Workforce Plan and Service Workforce Plans provide more detail and analysis on these key facts. The plans outline challenges and actions to help address inequalities and workforce issues to improve performance within resources available to support those most in need.



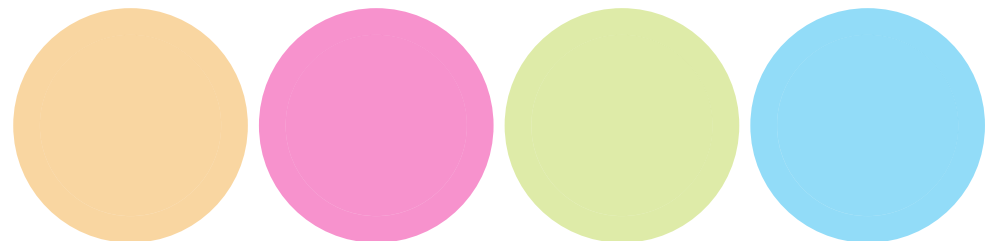
\* From Towards a Fairer and More Equal Falkirk- Falkirk Council Mainstreaming Report Update 2023

# Our Priorities, Vision and Values



The Council will look, feel and be a different organisation over the next few years. We recognise that the coming years will be challenging for our employees as they respond to significant change. Direct people costs make up around 60% of the Council's expenditure and getting our Workforce Strategy right will help deliver significant improvements. The Workforce Strategy identifies what the workforce needs to look like and how it needs to operate to deliver services to our communities. The Strategy makes sure that we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right level and at the right cost. We need to plan to get it right by ensuring that we work towards having a workforce that is aligned to our Target Operating Model (TOM), highly skilled, innovative and engaged in the work that they do. Redeployment and retraining programmes, along with a range of flexible policies will be essential in this journey of change. The Strategy provides a framework for how we are going to achieve the vision set out in the Council Plan and will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

The Strategy outlines the key themes that we need to focus on to ensure our employees are fit for the future. Workforce Plans flow from the strategy, identifying key actions to address and respond to the challenges and changes we make to deliver on our priorities. The Corporate Workforce Plan provides the detail on how this will be implemented. It is a high level document, highlighting the main challenges we face and key actions to ensure we achieve our priorities and address the challenges we face. Each service has a workforce plan that integrates the themes and identifies the priorities for their service.



## Our Vision:

# Strong communities where inequalities are reduced and lives are improved

The Workforce Strategy is designed to offer a clear message about the Council's aspirations and expectations as an employer. Our focus is on ensuring that "we have strong communities where inequalities are reduced and lives are improved".

This requires clear commitment and strong leadership from the council and full involvement and commitment of all Council employees and close working relationships with our Trade Unions. The Council's role is to promote a positive and inclusive culture to support our values and to create an environment that encourages effective engagement and high performance and one where our employee experience is improved.



### **We are Responsive**

By embracing technology and modern working practices we will enhance people's lives and use our own data to create services that meet the needs of our customers 24/7, 365 days a year.

### **We are Innovative**

By celebrating creativity and learning, we will inspire employees and communities to solve shared problems and create unique services that make Falkirk the place to live, learn, work and visit.

### **We are Trusted**

By removing bureaucracy and red tape, we will enable and empower people to develop new skills to live rewarding and happy lives as independently as possible within their own community.

### **We are Ambitious**

By working together, employees and communities will help create sustainable services that positively impact peoples' lives.

It is important that, operating in an ever-changing and often challenging environment, our Workforce Strategy articulates the ambition of how we want to engage and develop our staff, outlining the key priorities and drivers for our workforce. Our Workforce Strategy needs to be flexible and agile to meet changing needs.

# Workforce Strategy: Our Key Themes

The Workforce Strategy is designed to support our delivery of our Council Plan priorities, in line with our values, and ultimately to improve the quality of services to our communities. The Strategy sets out how we will achieve this to ensure we have the workforce to deliver the services of the future.

The strategy has 6 key themes.



We recognise the difference our employees make to the everyday lives of our communities. In turn, our culture has a direct impact on how our employees view the Council as an employer and the impact they can have in the services they deliver. The culture of our organisation is influenced by actions and outcomes across our key themes.

We recognise we are on a journey of change and that we need to better understand our employee experience and better identify our culture. As we move forward, we must continue to bring our managers and employees with us to be one council, one culture and create a brand we are proud of.

Whilst the themes are distinct, all themes are an essential piece of the jigsaw and journey to achieve our desired culture. Ultimately together, they help to maximise the impact of our workforce in terms of growth and transformation in our services and delivery of our Council Plan.

We cannot deliver our priorities independently and appreciate the importance of joint working with our recognised Trade Unions and we will continue to strive to work in partnership with our Trade Unions, developing relationships to improve and influence our culture. We will work closely with our Trade Unions in developing policies, procedures and processes and ensure that we engage at the earliest opportunity in all that we do.

The key themes continue to develop our reputation as an employer of choice and strengthen a workplace culture that recognises employee contribution, accountability and develops and nurtures our diverse and inclusive workforce. The themes recognise the challenges we face as an employer. Success in the future demands new ways of thinking, transforming the way we deliver services, and this Strategy aligns with and compliments our Council Plan by supporting activity that will ensure leadership, maximise employee engagement and embed a culture of high performance, whilst facilitating a proactive wellbeing culture.

## ATTRACTION AND RECRUITMENT

We are acutely aware of local and national recruitment issues and shortages impacting on our workforce. We must continue to be creative to help manage these pressures, using and developing resources and technology to reach and attract the best candidates.

We are very aware of the impact of employer brand and must demonstrate we are an employer of choice and the place to be to attract talent to meet our needs.

We will:

- Have a culture that demonstrates an employer of choice
- Have automated recruitment processes and positive onboarding processes to improve the overall recruitment journey
- Develop new and innovative ways to recruit and retain new talent to support ongoing emerging recruitment challenges

Success measures:

- A more automated streamlined recruitment process
- New recruits receive their statement of particulars in good time
- New recruits think the induction and onboarding process is a positive experience
- Applicants have a positive image of the Council as a good place to work before applying for a job
- We have a reduced number of vacant posts requiring readvertisements

## CAPACITY, PLANNING & PERFORMANCE

The transformation of council services will require changes in workforce numbers and skills. This will require effective planning and more flexible approaches to help our employees to be ready for the future. With a smaller workforce, we must continue to review and improve performance, being more efficient and effective in all that we do. We must be ready to embrace change and create an adaptable and agile workforce that is willing to develop new skills and collaborate with a range of partners to make a positive difference to the way services are delivered to our customers.

We will:

- Have robust workforce planning processes that are fully integrated into service planning, aligned to our workforce strategy and TOM, ensuring we have the right people in the right place at the right time
- Support employees in new ways of working that will make the council more efficient and provide better levels of service for our communities
- Ensure our workforce engagement strategy provides opportunities for staff to contribute new and innovative ideas on improving what we do and making the council more efficient and effective
- Ensure everyone is accountable for their actions and performs at the best possible level to support our communities

Success measures:

- Service and project specific workforce plans are in place
- Successful redeployment and retraining programme for employees
- Employees feel involved in making change happen



## LEADERSHIP, SKILLS AND DEVELOPMENT

Our leaders have a critical role in ensuring we deliver on our priorities, and in supporting the effective transformation of council services. Our leaders have a key role to collaborate effectively to implement our workforce strategy, by promoting our values and empowering our workforce to create a positive and inclusive culture and working environment.

By investing in employee development and training initiatives, we will be better equipped to provide employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their roles, and support their personal and professional development, which will benefit the employee, the council and our communities.

We will:

- Ensure that all leaders and managers have access to appropriate development and training which supports our priorities and delivery of best value
- Implement training and development opportunities across the workforce ensuring new and improved skills to support transformational change
- Develop a coaching culture across all services areas to support and develop our employees

Success measures:

- Our employees feel they have enough opportunities to learn
- Our employees are digitally aware and have the skills to do their jobs effectively
- Employees think our leaders are visible
- 360° feedback process is in place for leaders to identify development and training needs

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

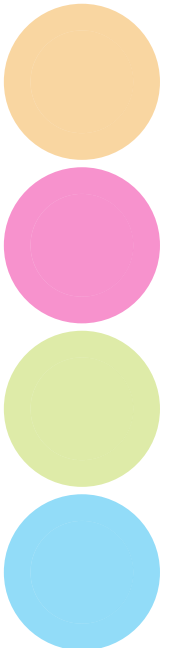
We recognise the benefits of a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace. By implementing equality and diversity initiatives, we will create a fair and equitable workplace which will improve morale, foster innovation and creativity and improve overall employee engagement and satisfaction. Our mainstreaming report and equality outcomes are pivotal in being a diverse and inclusive workplace.

We will:

- Ensure our equality outcomes are focussed on improving equality and diversity across our workforce
- Mainstream equality and diversity across all employment practices to ensure an inclusive workplace for all employees to enable them to be comfortable in all aspects of work.

Success measures:

- Improved quality of employee data across all equality protected characteristics
- Increased representation of minority ethnic groups, disabled people, young people aged 16 - 24 and LGBT people across Falkirk Council workforce
- Reduced job segregation and pay gaps



## ENGAGEMENT, VALUE AND RETENTION

We want our employees to be engaged; they are our most important resource. We trust and value them. Engaged employees are more likely to be highly motivated and more productive. In a large and diverse organisation, we need to have ways to listen to our employees and encourage feedback so that our employees have an effective voice and can help to shape how we work together now, and in the future. Our employees should have a positive and rewarding working environment where employee contribution is recognised and valued.

We will:

- Develop an engagement strategy to meet the needs of employees to ensure they have an effective voice, and to support managers to improve communication across our teams
- Have a partnership working agreement in place to continue to develop positive working relationships with Trade Unions
- Encourage and celebrate individual and team performance
- Implement a rewarding employment package that meets the needs of employees
- Develop and implement creative succession planning initiatives to create career paths to support retention of our most skilled employees

Success Measures:

- Employees feel appreciated for the work they do
- Employees feel well informed
- Teams are communicating well and staying connected
- Employees get the opportunity to provide feedback and feel they are listened to
- Employees have good conversations with line managers

## HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

The health and wellbeing of our workforce is important to us and has a direct impact on the services we deliver to our communities. Increasingly, modern ways of working and changing expectations from a multi-generational workforce, can impact on daily lives and we recognise and encourage our employees to disconnect. The council accepts its responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees whilst at work and we will work to support employees to develop resilience and achieve and maintain healthy working lives.

We will:

- Ensure that the working environment is safe and that any inherent risks are assessed and managed by implementing fully our Health and Safety Strategy and action plan
- Further develop our Wellbeing Strategy to support employees to improve resilience and maintain healthy working lives

Success measures:

- A reducing number of accidents/incidents within the workplace
- Reducing sickness absence levels across the workforce
- Staff feel safe, protected and supported within the workplace
- Managers are accountable for absence management cases and implement early interventions
- All managers have attended mental health training to improve knowledge and understanding within the workplace

# Governance, Responsibilities & Review

The HR & Payroll Manager is the lead officer responsible for ensuring the Workforce Strategy is developed and reviewed at regular intervals. The Senior Leadership Group has a particular remit to support the design, development and review of the Workforce Strategy to ensure it remains fit for purpose and meets the needs of the Council.

Consultation will take place with the Senior Leadership Group, Services and Trade Unions as part of regular reviews, and where necessary the Strategy will be presented to Committee for approval.

Chief Officers and Managers all have a responsibility to implement this Strategy and promote a positive and inclusive culture and to create an environment that encourages effective engagement, open communication and high performance. Employees are equally responsible for taking personal ownership of their own performance, development and improvement as necessary and for communicating any issues that may prevent them from achieving their potential.

The Strategy will be integrated into the Corporate and Service Workforce Plans. Workforce Plans are influenced by Council priorities and new and emerging challenges. Our strategy and key themes will continue to be reviewed and influenced by our Council priorities and emerging and new challenges.

An annual report will be submitted to Corporate Management Team to update on progress and outcomes.



As we move forward, we recognise that the ongoing work on employee culture is key for our future workforce strategy. We are at a key stage in our journey and committed to a significant piece of work to better understand our culture and identify areas for development and priority workforce issues. We recognise that as the Workforce Strategy is embedded and our culture develops, this may result in a future review of the Workforce Strategy themes to respond to our ongoing challenges. This will ensure we continue to be focussed on the right priorities for our workforce.

Our current KPI's will continue to be monitored by CMT:

- Sickness absence - non teaching
- Sickness absence - teaching staff
- Staff turnover rate

As we move forward, and our culture develops and new challenges are identified, we recognise the success measures will evolve and will require ongoing review. This will also be impacted by how we engage with our employees and how we collect and review workforce related data.

Moving forward the Strategy will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure the Strategy remains fit for purpose.



**Falkirk Council**