

Committee(s): Corporate Services Committee (CSC) Policy and Resources Committee – For Decision	Dated: 10 January 2024 22 February 202
Subject: People Strategy 2024–2029	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	8: We have access to the skills and talent we need.
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Alison Littlewood, Interim Chief People Officer	For decision
Report author: Cindy Vallance, People and Human Resources	

Summary

This paper highlights the process that has been used to develop City Corporation’s first ever People Strategy which will cover the period 2024 - 2029. It outlines engagement with employees and Members to date and summarises corporate and strategic implications for the creation of a People Strategy. The People Strategy itself, outlining key ambitions, priorities and suggested KPI categories is contained in Appendix 1, with definitions in Annex 1, and a summary of engagement in Annex 2. It will continue to be iterated and finalised for launch in April 2024. The People Strategy has been created to enable the realisation of the Corporate Plan and will be implemented alongside the pillars of the Digital Strategy and Transformation work.

To achieve the Committee deadline for Court of Common Council in March 2024, Members are asked to agree delegation of approval for finalisation of the City Corporation People Strategy to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive (TCCX) and the People Strategy Member Reference Group for its April 2024 launch. The People Strategy will also be circulated to the Policy and Resources Committee and to the Court of Common Council for adoption.

Recommendation

Members of Corporate Services Committee are asked to:

1. Approve the following for the draft People Strategy 2024 - 29 in Appendix 1. Specifically:
 - a. Agree the five themes; and
 - b. Agree the direction of travel contained within the summary of high-level annual Activities and Key Performance Measures
2. Authorise the Town Clerk and Chief Executive to finalise and agree any further changes to the content of the draft People Strategy 2024 - 2029, in consultation with the Member Reference Group; noting that the final wording and design will be finalised in consultation with the TCCX and Chair, Member Reference Group

Members of Policy and Resources Committee are asked to:

3. Agree to adopt the People Strategy 2024 – 2029; and
4. Recommend to the Court of Common Council thereon to adopt the People Strategy 2024 - 2029.

Main Report

Background and current position

1. The People Strategy for 2024 - 2029 provides a framework to guide the City of London Corporation's thinking and decision-making over the next fantastic five years in realising the overarching outcomes of the Corporate Plan that covers the same period. Alongside a new Digital Strategy and Transformation work, the People Strategy will enable employees within the City of London Corporation to achieve the organisation's ambition to be world-class.
2. An initial People Strategy framework made up of eight themes was approved by Members in December 2022. The framework was created based on lessons learned from the Total Operating Model work that had taken place over the previous 18 months as well as the 2022 all staff survey results and action plans. Employee engagement with the People Strategy framework, including discussions with trade unions, took place across the City Corporation in early spring 2023 with over 200 employees taking part.
3. Following a brief pause due to a change of HR leadership, additional engagement was initiated between July - October 2023 in close partnership with parallel discussions leading to the development of a new 2024 - 2029 Corporate Plan. This dual engagement was led directly by the TCCX, the new interim Chief People Officer and the Chief Strategy Officer. The engagement included brief presentations and open question and answers at each session. This work resulted in a refinement from eight to five themes, the opportunity to report on actions already underway, and a confirmation of the details and the priority ordering of the five themes. Over 1,200 Face-to-face (F2F) / live and virtual interactions occurred in sessions held across the sites of City Corporation. Sessions were supplemented with a dedicated joint intranet site, as well as a regular newsletter and email updates from the TCCX that led to over 15,000 'hits' in that period.
4. Further engagement with employees has occurred in November and December, resulting in an additional focused reach to over 300 employees through a core group of HR colleagues undertaking F2F and virtual listening sessions at senior team and all team meetings, as well as connecting back with the Trade Unions, EDI networks, and the Strategy Forum. This deeper engagement and listening work have supported the creation of key priorities, with a particular emphasis on activity during the first two years.
5. In addition to fore fronting employee engagement, a People Strategy Member Reference Group was launched in November 2023 to enlist the engagement of the Member community. Chaired by the Chair of the Corporate Services Committee, the group is made up of 11 Members and the Interim Chief People

Officer, supported by other Officers as appropriate. The group will meet quarterly over the course of the five-year People Strategy. It reviewed work to date along with the draft terms of reference at its first meeting and will finalise these at its next meeting which is in the process of being scheduled for February 2024.

6. The following assumptions and aims framed the work to date:
 - a. The overarching purpose of the People Strategy framework is not to detail everything related to Human Resources and people-focused work, but instead to define the key activities we want to undertake in the next five years to help create a culture of exceptional performance and inclusion.
 - b. The People Strategy, in tandem with the Corporate Plan and other collaborative partnerships and Strategies and wider transformational change, will provide a catalyst for culture change.
 - c. The People Strategy will be a living document that is reviewed and refreshed over the five-year period. An annual progress report will be produced and linked to performance metrics.
7. The People and Human Resources team will also be working closely with the Executive Director of Corporate Communications and External Affairs and members of her team as part of next steps to finalise the draft People Strategy to ensure it reflects the wider narrative and sets the context around the work of City Corporation, and that the content is clearly articulated in as simple a way as possible.

People Strategy 2024 – 2029

8. The People Strategy 2024 - 29 Appendix 1 consists of the following elements:
 - Forewords (to be finalised after approval of the Strategy) by:
 - a. The Chair of Corporate Services Committee
 - b. The TCCX
 - c. The Chief People Officer
 - Sections outlining:
 - d. Strategic Context
 - e. Purpose and Outcomes
 - f. Underpinning Principles and Values
 - g. Scope
 - h. Engagement in the Development of the People Strategy
 - i. Measuring and Reporting Progress
 - j. Our Current Workforce Profile
 - k. An Overview of our People Strategy Framework and Coding Key with a detailed breakdown of each of the five themes for 2024 – 2029. These are:
 - i. My Contribution, My Reward
 - ii. My Wellbeing and Belonging
 - iii. Trustworthy Leadership
 - iv. My Talent and Development
 - v. Modernising our City Corporation
- The breakdown for each theme includes ambitions, a vision of what is needed, a rationale about what is important, a description of what success will look like, a summary of key activities with a particular focus on years

one and two, and impact progress measures baseline and target timelines included.

- l. Annex 1 contains a start of a glossary of People Strategy Definitions.
 - m. Annex 2 contains a Summary of Engagement by Employees and Members, including Member Reference Group composition.
9. The five themes are currently presented in an order that has been strongly endorsed by employees. In the final form of the People Strategy, these themes will be presented in a way that ensures that Trustworthy Leadership of all activity (theme three) is placed at the core given its importance in achieving all other outcomes. Design work will be undertaken to consider the placement and representation of all five themes within the final publication.
 10. The design and layout of the People Strategy will ensure it is easy for our communities to read, both in physical and digital copies. The tone will reflect a desire to be brilliant at the basics and to be world class, recognising that different areas of City Corporation are at various stages of maturity.
 11. The City Corporation's mission¹, legal, statutory, regulatory obligations and commitments remain unchanged. And our ambition to be world class is critical to how employees work together within a values-driven organisation, striving for equity in addition to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
 12. Establishing new values and behaviours will be critical to the success of the People Strategy and will require a period of active engagement across City Corporation with employees and with Members. This work will begin in spring 2024 and the values and behaviours that are created will then inform all elements of the People Strategy as it unfolds.

Monitoring Progress

13. As already mentioned, the People Strategy 2024 - 29 will be a living document that will adapt during its five-year span. Some of the proposed content will also last beyond 2029. It will be reviewed and refreshed annually to ensure we continue to meet our stated outcomes and ambitions (supplementing these as required) and will be reported on annually, along with key performance indicators.
14. The People Strategy 2024 - 29 is the first time we are bringing together data sets into the organisation on our people in this way to be able to analyse performance, and we are aware there are many gaps. Given the maturity of elements of City Corporation's data infrastructure and capabilities, our capacity to collect, manage and monitor data is limited and will be improved through the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, which itself is one of the major programmes of work within the Strategy. The People Strategy 2024 - 29 will be used to identify opportunities to improve the data we collect and how we collect

¹ Note our mission: "City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile and is dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London within a globally successful UK."

this data. Data maturity will continue to grow over the lifetime of the Strategy and as this develops, so will the measures.

Next Steps

15. Once the People Strategy 2024 - 29 has been approved by Members of this Committee, Policy and Resources Committee, and by the Court of Common Council, we will continue our engagement across all activities and programmes of work with all employees across City Corporation.
16. Planning will be undertaken internally pre-publication and for external launch (intranet site, internet site, press releases, posters, hard and soft copy versions of the People Strategy). Some of this work will extend beyond the launch date to enable and facilitate continued iteration.
17. As mentioned previously, engagement work to create new values and behaviours will be undertaken, beginning in spring 2024.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

18. Strategic implications – Peter Drucker is credited with saying, “Culture eats strategy for breakfast” which is true in the sense that how people do what they do all day — culture — determines whether the strategy will succeed or fail. Likewise, leaders embed cultural values into an organisation’s people-based strategies and operational plans. Culture determines how humans spend their days, how decisions are made, who people surround themselves with, who has a seat at the table, who is respected and how respect is shown. That is the operating system of an organisation, and at its foundation demonstrates what is most valued. The City Corporation’s first ever People Strategy must be a live document that is iterated at least annually to meet and execute activities that respond to changing needs and context. As mentioned, KPIs and targets will be agreed and measured and reported on annually.
19. Financial and Resource implications – The People Strategy has been created to guide thinking on prioritised thinking on employee initiatives over the next five years. The cost of design and publication will be taken from existing budgets. For any new activity occurring in FY 2024/25, the existing People and HR budgets will need to be amended and increased to accommodate all the work as outlined in the People Strategy (Appendix 1). As specific programmes of work are agreed in greater detail, funding sources will need to be identified and, where applicable, Member agreement sought.
20. Legal implications – The People Strategy must be proactive to anticipate and address all regulatory and legal changes and issues impacting employees that arise over the course of the period covered by the People Strategy.
21. Risk implications – Risks inherent to the People Strategy relate to the importance of recruiting, supporting, developing, and retaining an engaged and highly performing workforce and a positive organisational culture that forefronts inclusion, belonging and wellbeing as well as world-class performance and impact for its communities. Additionally, efficient, effective systems and processes that

provide data for decision-making are necessary to facilitate the work of people, and the quality and timely delivery of all system-based elements of the People Strategy will also be critical.

22. Equalities implications – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are critical to the successful implementation of the People Strategy. Wide engagement with employees over the course of the development and implementation of the People Strategy and all its activities, along with close interaction with EDI colleagues to connect EDI and People related activities will ensure that equality impacts will be considered carefully across all projects. A full Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed as part of the work leading to the April 2024 People Strategy launch.
23. Climate implications – There are no specific climate implications although communications about and employee engagement in sustainability and climate justice activity will be important to realise the ambitions and aspirations of City Corporation’s workforce since employees are keen to support the realisation of societal action and positive role modelling of behaviours in this critical area.
24. Security implications – There are no direct security implications. The People Strategy emphasises the importance of enabling a safe and secure environment for all employees.

Conclusion

25. City Corporation’s first ever People Strategy will drive employee engagement, retention, professional development, and performance in alignment with the Corporate Plan. It will be based on data and insights, and will set the stage for attracting, developing, and retaining talented employees in a unique, complex yet inclusive and equitable 21st Century workplace that has strong roots in history and tradition. It will help to identify and fill workforce gaps; provide a framework for people management; and will be adaptable and responsive to change through an annual review and update process and through regular reporting on key performance indicators to track momentum and success.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft People Strategy, including:

Annex 1: Definitions of Key Concepts

Annex 2: Engagement Summary

Background Papers

None

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People Strategy Adjustments Table (as of 7 February 2024).

Following discussion at the Corporate Services Committee (CSC) on 10 January 2024, minor changes contained in the table below have been made to the draft People Strategy to reflect Member input. The People Strategy has been provided for endorsement to Policy and Resources Committee on 22 February 2024.

CSC Member Feedback	Action
Draft forewords and executive summary prior to Policy & Resources Committee	Added and adjusted draft forewords and executive summary, adjusting language as requested. Exact wording will be further considered as part of the professional editing review prior to April 2024 launch to ensure appropriate alignment with Corporate Plan forewords and executive summary
Two typographical errors noted	These have been corrected
Purpose and Outcomes	Adjust bullets to ensure that excellent performance is emphasised at a higher level as a key success element
Ensure Health & Safety and EDI are seen as key golden threads	Will be foundational elements of all initiatives undertaken as part of the People Strategy
Consider EDI categories of reporting (eg. for sex, religion and belief)	EDI questions in use reflect the data available within the current data collection systems. Further review will continue as a priority activity for 2024/25 as part of Theme 5 to Modernise our City Corporation, ensuring categories and references reflect contemporary thinking and full alignment with benchmarking data sources. A communications campaign to increase reporting will also be undertaken as a high priority in 2024/25
Annual reporting to CSC seen as too infrequent for the People Strategy; consider consistency	People Strategy update reporting will be bi-annual to CSC; significant programmes of work such as Ambition 25 will be reported on more frequently as agreed with CSC
Consider the importance of trust between officers and members as critical to Theme 3: Trustworthy Leadership	Creating and sustaining deeper values-based work relationships and reviewing and revising codes of conduct for employees and Members in partnership with the Governance team has been included as a priority activity for 2024/25. This work will take place following agreement of values and behaviours work that will begin in spring 2024

<p>Ensure engagement measures are defined</p>	<p>The Staff survey overall engagement measure consisting of five combined questions used in 2022 will be used as a measure again in the 2024 staff survey and in each annual staff survey over the course of the People Strategy to enable benchmarking. The combined questions result in an overall engagement score:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The purpose of City Corporation makes me feel good about my work. 2. I have confidence my career aspirations can be met at City Corporation. 3. I feel valued and recognised for the work I do. 4. I feel appropriately supported through change. 5. City Corporation has a culture of openness, transparency, and inclusion.
<p>Additional Note</p>	
<p>Baseline and target KPI measures for the 2024-2029 People Strategy will be confirmed for 2024/25 following financial year-end March 2024.</p>	<p>The KPI sections for each of the five themes within the People Strategy have been summarised within Appendix 2 and will be populated with baseline measures and targets agreed by the Member Reference Group following the 2023/24 financial year end.</p> <p>2024/25 progress against KPIs will be reported to CSC as part of bi-annual People Strategy reporting.</p> <p>Additional KPIs over the course of the five-year People Strategy will be added as additional data becomes available through continuing system enhancements and the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning system.</p>