

## Report – Corporate Services Committee

### People Strategy 2024 - 2029

*To be presented on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024*

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons  
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

#### SUMMARY

This report seeks approval and adoption of the City Corporation's first ever People Strategy which will cover the period 2024 – 2029. It highlights the process that has been used to develop the strategy, outlining the 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, suggested KPI categories along with a glossary of definitions is contained in Appendix 1, with a summary of engagement in the Annex. 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. The People Strategy was considered at your Corporate Services Committee in January, whereupon several amendments were made, a redrafted Strategy was then submitted to your Policy & Resources Committee in February and was endorsed for onward submission to the Court in March.

#### RECOMMENDATION

The Court of Common Council is **recommended** to approve the adoption of the City Corporation's People Strategy 2024 – 2029 (Appendix 1).

#### MAIN REPORT

##### Background

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 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 your Corporate Services Committee in December 2022. The resulting framework was created based on lessons learned from the Target Operating Model work that had taken place over the previous 18 months, alongside 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 Town Clerk, 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 the City Corporation. Sessions were supplemented with a dedicated joint intranet site, as well as a regular newsletter and email updates from the Town Clerk that led to over 15,000 'hits' in that period.
4. Further engagement with employees occurred in November and December 2023, 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, an informal 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 regularly over the course of the five-year People Strategy to monitor progress, reporting to the relevant Committee(s) at appropriate junctures..
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.

## People Strategy 2024 – 2029

8. The People Strategy 2024 - 29 Appendix 1 features a detailed breakdown of the five themes for 2024-2029:
  - i. My Contribution, My Reward
  - ii. My Wellbeing and Belonging
  - iii. Trustworthy Leadership
  - iv. My Talent and Development
  - v. Building Brilliant Basics
9. 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 and a summary of key activities with a particular focus on years one and two.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. The City Corporation's mission<sup>1</sup>, 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.
13. Establishing new values and behaviours that correlate to those that already exist in our institutions 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

14. 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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."

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

### **Next Steps**

16. Once the People Strategy 2024 - 29 has been endorsed for adoption by the Court of Common Council, officers will continue engagement across all activities and programmes of work with all employees across City Corporation.

17. Planning will be undertaken internally pre-publication and for external launch (intranet site, internet site, 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.

18. As mentioned previously, engagement work to create new values and behaviours which connect with those that exist across our institutions will be undertaken, beginning in spring 2024.

### **Corporate and Strategic Implications**

19. 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 Objective and Key Results (OKR) targets will be agreed and measured and reported on annually.

### **Financial Implications**

20. 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.

### **Legal Implications**

21. 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.

### **Risk Implications**

22. 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.

### **Equalities Implications**

23. 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 has been completed as part of the work leading to the April 2024 People Strategy launch.

### **Climate Implications**

24. 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.

### **Security Implications**

25. 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**

26. The 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: Engagement Summary

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 10<sup>th</sup> day of January 2024.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

**Deputy Alastair Moss**  
Chair, Corporate Services Committee