Workforce of the Future

Workforce Strategy 2030

February 2021

SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Introduction

This strategy outlines our approach to ensuring our workforce best supports the delivery of the council's priority outcomes to 2030.

Covid-19 has accelerated the 'future of work,' irreversibly changing how work is done and what people expect from work and the workplace. We need to make the most of the opportunities (and mitigate the challenges) that this presents to ensure we remain a modern, attractive employer with a workforce able to meet the challenges of the years ahead and deliver the very best for our residents.

We will do this by fundamentally transforming the way we approach work and workforce:

- We will be much more insight led and integrated with wider strategic planning across the organisation.
- We will use technology to enable our people to focus on where they can add most value.
- We will use an outward looking approach and a strong employer brand to inform how we resource work and achieve value for money.
- We will create an employee experience that supports and enables all staff to deliver their best for Surrey.

This strategy sets out a vision and model for how we do this.

Strategic drivers

The workforce we need in the future will be strongly influenced by the economic, social, demographic and technological trends we are seeing emerge (see appendix). The pace of this change and the impact they have on work has accelerated due to the Covid-19 pandemic, so it is critical we respond to them in order to be a modern employer that can attract the best talent and maximise the contributions of its workforce.

Wider trends and experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic are changing people's expectations of work. We need to ensure we understand this and adjust our offer accordingly to enable us to attract the best talent.

As a major employer and commissioner, SCC has an impact on Surrey's local economy. We need to align our approach to workforce with our work around economic development for example, to ensure we have a pipeline of skills, and that we are maximising the social value to be gained from our approach to work, e.g. by prioritising apprenticeship and work ready schemes to those furthest away from the jobs market.

The council's workforce strategy needs a clear line of sight to the Community Vision 2030 and our organisational priorities to ensure that investment in our workforce is having the most impact for our residents.
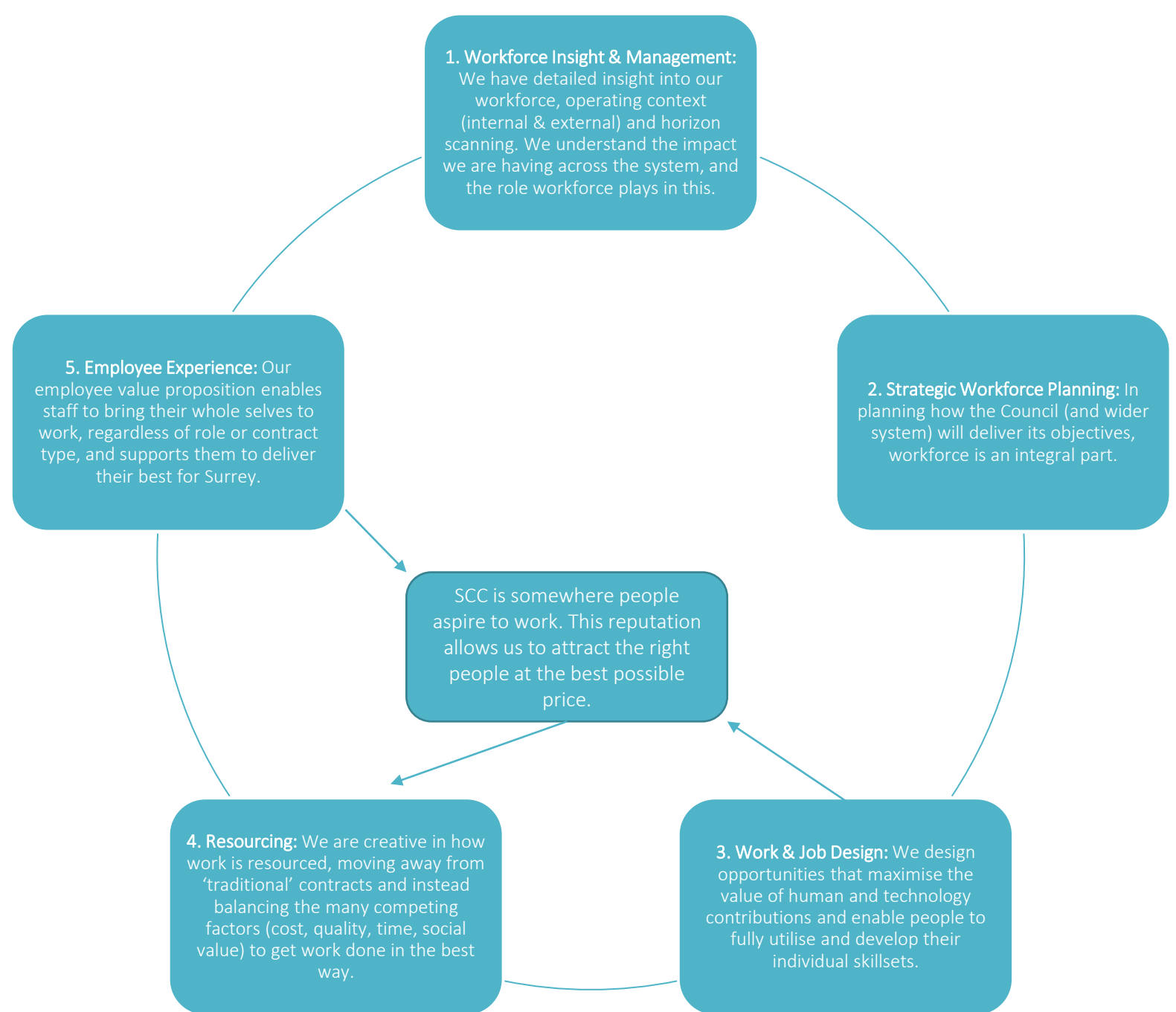
Workforce of the Future

The vision:

We recognise that our workforce is key to delivering the best possible services for Surrey's residents, whether directly or indirectly employed by the council.

We will be representative of the communities we serve; a place where people aspire to work, where everyone feels able to bring their whole self to work and know that they are making a difference every day. We will be at the forefront of innovation and best practice in people management to ensure that we maximise the value of our workforce in a rapidly changing world. We will have high expectations of our staff, and in turn invest in them and offer a compelling employee value proposition.

Workforce of the Future: Model for Workforce Transformation

This model is intended to be used to structure thinking around how we can bring together the strategic drivers to ensure our workforce supports organisational and wider system priorities.

More detail about the ambition behind each of the five stages is included on the next slide.

1. Workforce Insight & Management: We have detailed insight into our workforce, operating context (internal & external) and horizon scanning. We understand the impact we are having across the system, and the role workforce plays in this.

2. Strategic Workforce Planning: In planning how the Council (and wider system) will deliver its objectives, workforce is an integral part.

3. Work & Job Design: We design opportunities that maximise the value of human and technology contributions and enable people to fully utilise and develop their individual skillsets.

4. Resourcing: We are creative in how work is resourced, moving away from 'traditional' contracts and instead balancing the many competing factors (cost, quality, time, social value) to get work done in the best way.

5. Employee Experience: Our employee value proposition enables staff to bring their whole selves to work, regardless of role or contract type, and supports them to deliver their best for Surrey.

SCC is somewhere people aspire to work. This reputation allows us to attract the right people at the best possible price.

7

Workforce of the Future: 5 focus areas

1. Workforce Insight & Management

We will develop our understanding and insight into our internal workforce & external environment, using this to drive the design & ensure the impact of the activity across all the other themes. We will understand best practice and look to apply it where relevant within Surrey County Council.

2. Strategic Workforce Planning

We will integrate and embed evidence based workforce planning within wider strategic and financial planning across the organisation so we are able to anticipate, identify and respond to changes in our operating context in a proactive way. This will start from a whole organisation level and flow down to team workforce planning. Any workforce initiatives will be closely aligned to our strategic objectives, ensuring that our workforce has maximum impact on the council's priority outcomes.

3. Work and Job Design

We will combine thinking about technology and people with organisation and service design approaches to completely rethink how we create value and how work is done. We may move away from traditional job roles to build in flexibility and create a more fluid organisation where 'talent flows to work.' This will ensure we maximise efficiency and value for money whilst focusing people on the most rewarding and value added work.

4. Resourcing

Where a person is needed to do a piece of work, we will take a strategic and creative approach, considering the full array of work engagements (such as employment, gig, freelance, alliances, projects, or other alternative work arrangements) to balance best value for money, quality of service and responsibility for our local economy and population. We will have an outward looking approach, creating a strong employer brand and reflecting market best practice to attract the best talent to work for the council.

5. Employee Experience

Recognising that people's expectations of work are changing, we need to develop and use our insight about employment trends to ensure we are offering the best possible employee experience and in return are maximising the value of human capital. This includes wellbeing, ways of working, ongoing learning & development, EDI, talent programmes, staff networks, leadership, pay & reward, benefits, etc.

Delivery:

The strategy will be delivered through pilot projects to trial new approaches to workforce, in parallel with work to develop the necessary enabling capability and capacity (e.g. skills, policies, processes). Together these will lead to a change in the way we approach work and support achievement of the ambitions set out in this strategy.

This work will be undertaken in parallel to, and closely integrated with, other transformational activity across the council, such as:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Climate Change/Greener Futures
- Digital Programme
- Service Improvement, including in Children's Services
- Health & Social Care integration
- Financial, business & transformation planning

Central to this strategy is a strong future focus, the ongoing monitoring of global, national and local employment trends and integration with wider council strategies and planning activity. As these change we will update the ambition set out within this strategy to ensure it continues to remain relevant and effective.

Appendix

Megatrends & disruptors: what can we expect to see changing by 2030?

Whilst no one can predict the future, these megatrends identify some of the ways in which society will be changing over the next 9 years. We need to be anticipating these and understand the impact they will have on the work we do, how we do it and what people expect from work.

Demographic:

- People are living and working for longer, meaning we will have a more multi-generational workforce.
- As the workforce ages, we will need to think about how we retain people towards the end of their careers and attract the more limited pool of younger employees.
- An ageing population will place additional and different demands on our services.
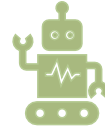
Technology:

- The pace of innovation in tech is increasing exponentially, meaning we need to build in the agility and flexibility to keep up with this.
- Employee expectations are increasing as consumer tech has overtaken corporate tech.
- Tech e.g. AI and automation will change the work we do, replacing some jobs and creating new ones. This will require different skills.
- The rise of tech carries risks we will need to consider e.g. vulnerability to cyber attacks, and innovation outpacing regulation.

Economy:

- Rise in short term contracts and gig economy lead to a more flexible workforce as people no longer want a 'job for life'
- This leads to a shift in the balance of power from employers to employees as freelancers pick and choose which employers they want to work for based on what others say about the employee experience.
- Globalisation leads to a global job market, changing who we are competing with for the best talent.
- Automation could lead to greater inequality in the local economy, so we will need to balance our responsibility to Surrey residents with opportunities presented by a global market.

Environmental & Social:

- Alignment with their own values is something that will increasingly motivate people's choice of employer as people seek meaningful work and the ability to make a difference.
- There is an increasing threat of global emergencies e.g. pandemics or related to climate change
- WHO described stress as the global epidemic of the 21st Century.

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