

# Our People Strategy

2019 - 2024



# Introduction

In April 2019, Dorset Council was formed, bringing six councils together, into one. Our draft vision is for Dorset to be a great place to live, work and visit. Our employees can contribute towards delivering this vision, as we seek to create a modern, efficient, twenty first century council.

We want to strive for excellence now, and in the future, and we can only do this with the right people on this journey with us. That is why we set out to create our People Strategy.

The way we lead, manage and behave is fundamental to how people view Dorset Council. It has a direct impact on the services we provide, both to our external customers and to ourselves as internal customers. The People Strategy sets out our commitments to enable our values as a council.

## Our Draft Values

- we are an advocate for Dorset on a local, national and global stage
- we work together with our communities and our partners to make things happen
- we put people first and design services around their needs now and in the future
- we are open, accessible and accountable
- we use time and money wisely
- we value people and build on their strengths

Our People Strategy sets out our ambition to be an employer of choice, where we can do our jobs well and make a difference to the people of Dorset. We

have worked with employees to understand what an employer of choice means to us, and this is what we have heard:

### We want the council to be a place where we:

- recognise that our colleagues are the organisation's greatest asset
- find our work rewarding and can see the difference we make to the lives of Dorset residents
- are supported to develop ourselves, enhance our skills and increase our knowledge
- value diverse backgrounds, skills and personalities
- treat each other as equals with respect
- develop a positive working culture that is flexible, responsive and enhances the health and wellbeing of our employees
- have access to the resources and support we need to do our work effectively
- take responsibility for our work and the outcomes we deliver
- listen to others' views and we recognise their contribution
- work as one team to achieve our shared goals



# Our core behaviours

We have worked with our employees to develop our core behaviours. Our values are **why** we are here and our core behaviours give us a shared language to define **how** we work together

## Responsibility

We act with integrity. We are honest and we don't attribute blame when something goes wrong. We are all part of the solution.

## Respect

We are aware of our impact on others. We treat people fairly and have high expectations of ourselves and others, and value differences in approaches and opinions. We instigate and lead through positive behaviour.

## Recognition

We appreciate and value the contribution of individuals and teams for work well done. We lead by taking time to provide feedback and share lessons learned and achievements to support the organisation's development. We celebrate commitment and success.

## Collaboration

We work with colleagues, residents and partners to achieve the best possible outcomes. We feel confident to share ideas, we listen and respect other points of view and set this example to each other. We value the power in combining our personal qualities, skills and experience to achieve a shared goal.



Responsibility • Respect • Recognition • Collaboration

# Having a people strategy

What do we want to achieve by having a people strategy?

A [2019 Glassdoor study](#) revealed that 77% of people consider a company's culture before applying, and 56% say that culture is more important than salary when it comes to job satisfaction.

Having a people strategy helps us to set out our ambitions as an employer about how we can create a positive workplace culture, and become an employer of choice. We want our employees to feel valued, and to feel part of one organisation, one team.



one  
team



# People Strategy Goals



Becoming an employer of choice

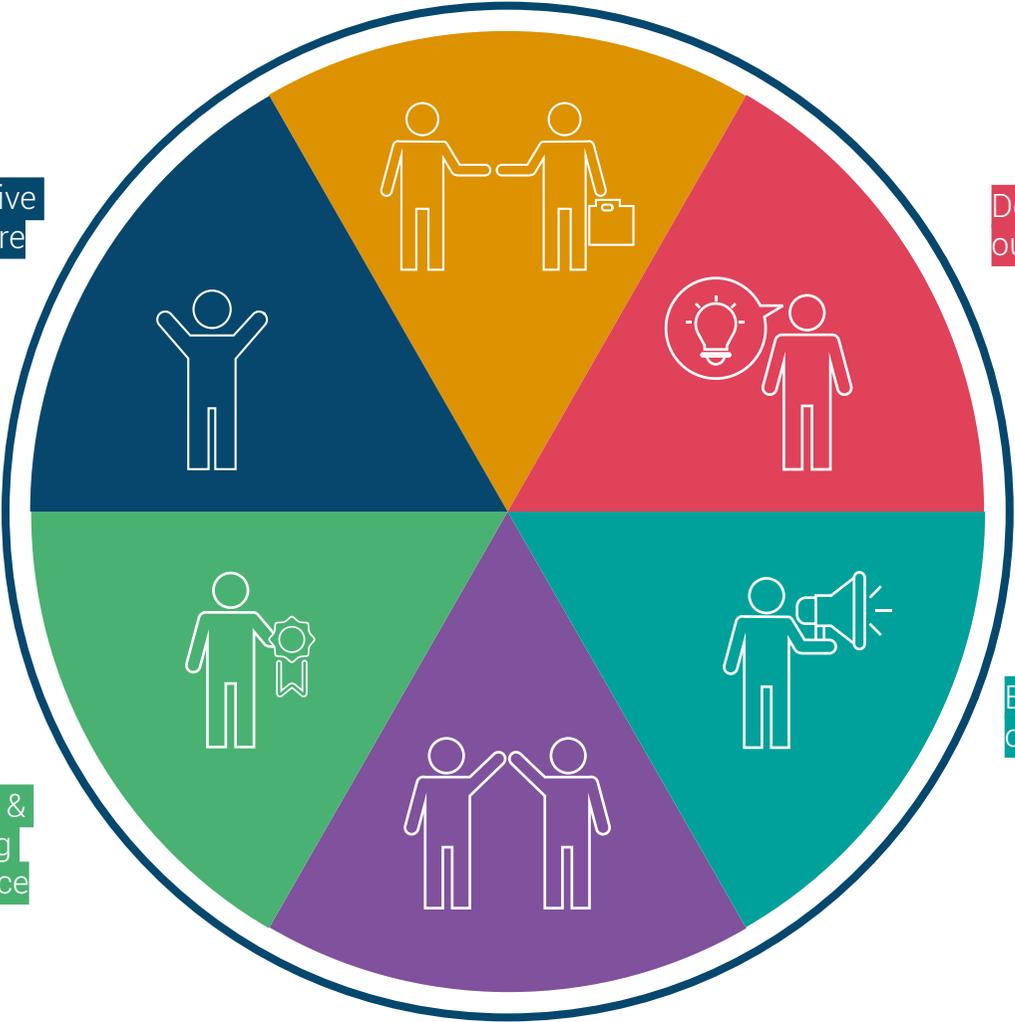
Developing our people

Engaging our people

Supporting our people

Rewarding & recognising performance

Creating a positive workplace culture





# Becoming an employer of choice

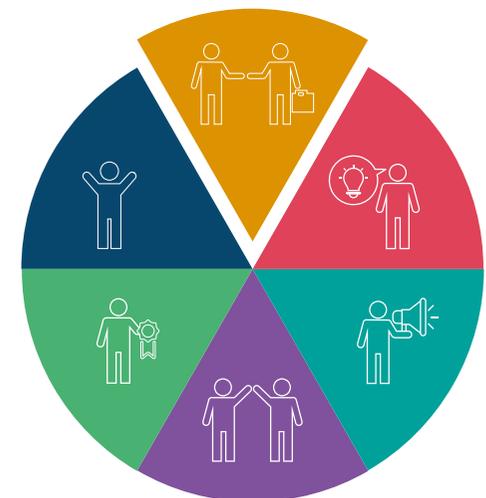
As one of the largest employers in Dorset, we want our employees to want to work with us because we are an employer of choice, not necessity.

We need to take time to understand our employee journey, how we attract people, have a recruitment a process that works for all and develop our individual and team strengths. When we do say goodbye, we do it well, understanding how we can continue to make improvements.

the profile of our organisation, enabling us to forecast what roles we need to recruit to, where we need to address skills shortages and where our challenges are in recruiting and retaining employees

## Our employer of choice commitments are:

- develop an impactful approach to welcoming new employees and make sure that everyone receives the information, resources and support they need to perform well
- promote and proactively work towards enabling a diverse and healthy workforce across all levels of our organisation, acting as a role model for all Dorset employers
- develop a clear brand that communicates our values and aids successful recruitment
- make sure all employees can work efficiently and productively as possible, equipped with the digital skills to use modern technology and become digital champions in the workplace and community
- review and modernise our approaches to recruitment and retention, to make sure that we attract and retain valued employees and can deliver on our digital ambition
- make sure the organisation has terms and conditions that reflect business need and the ambitions of a modern organisation
- develop a workforce plan that helps us to understand



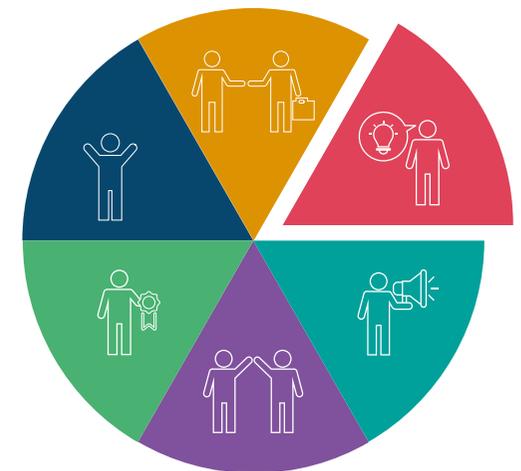


# Developing our people

As we develop as an organisation, we want to make sure that we continually facilitate the learning and development of our employees so they are empowered to take an active role in their development.

## Our learning and development commitments are:

- maximise the use of the apprenticeship levy to develop our existing employees, and attracting our employees of the future
- develop a dedicated programme of learning to help us to provide great customer experiences. We will also promote using a strengths based approach when working with our customers, to help them shape solutions with us
- develop a coaching and mentoring culture
- create Leadership and Management development programmes unique to what we want to achieve in Dorset Council
- Understand the skills and capabilities we need to become a digital council, equipping people to work together to design and continuously improve service provision, and embrace new technology such as robotics and artificial intelligence
- work across our sites to bring learning and development conversations to our employees' daily working environment through personal development plans, learning masterclasses and group learning events
- encourage learning and development to be part of the way we work, through dedicated learning days
- when we do need to bring in external expertise, we commit to making sure that we learn from others' knowledge and skills so that we build and develop our workforce resilience





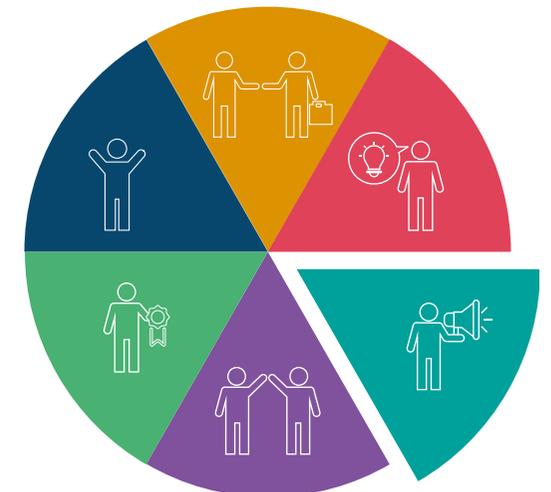
# Engaging our people

We want our employees to be engaged; they are our most important resource and we value them. Engaged employees are more likely to be highly motivated and more productive.

In a large and diverse organisation like Dorset Council, we need to put mechanisms in place to encourage feedback so that our employees have a voice and can help to shape how we work together now, and in the future.

## Our commitments to engaging our people are:

- facilitate meaningful 'big conversations' through our employee forum, which is open to all employees of Dorset Council
- continue our commitment to developing strong working relationships with recognised trade unions, to help us shape our culture together based on best practice and compliance with negotiated agreements
- establish a leadership forum, to bring together our people leaders on a regular basis
- undertake regular, valuable, two-way engagement, through a range of internal communications channels
- seek feedback on a regular basis, evaluating it and sharing this back to the organisation in a timely manner, with clear messaging about how we are using this feedback to make improvements
- engage employees in how we spend our learning and development budget

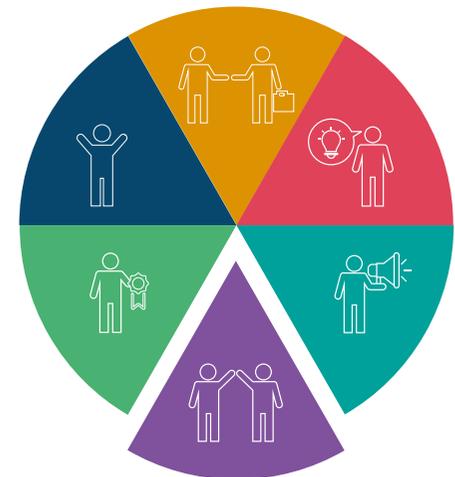


# Supporting our people

We want to create an environment where employees can maintain good health and resilience and develop a positive work / home life balance. A healthy, productive and motivated workforce benefits the experience of the people we are here for, our customers, residents and communities.

## Our commitments to supporting our people are:

- work with our employees and partners to create a strategic employee wellbeing programme, incorporating the [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#)
- revisit policies to ensure practice is supporting workplace wellbeing
- ensure safety is prioritised in the workplace, risks to employees are managed effectively and all relevant information is shared
- make sure employees can access a range of initiatives and services aimed at maintaining good physical and mental health, helping them remain in work and achieve their potential, regardless of any health issues
- develop opportunities for our leaders to grow knowledge and skills to manage wellbeing issues in the workplace
- build understanding and reduce stigma of mental health conditions through awareness programmes and initiatives



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## Rewarding and recognising performance

We are committed to our core behaviours and our organisational values. These help us to provide a consistent shared approach to how we work, and a set of organisational standards we expect to see when we are working with each other, and our customers.

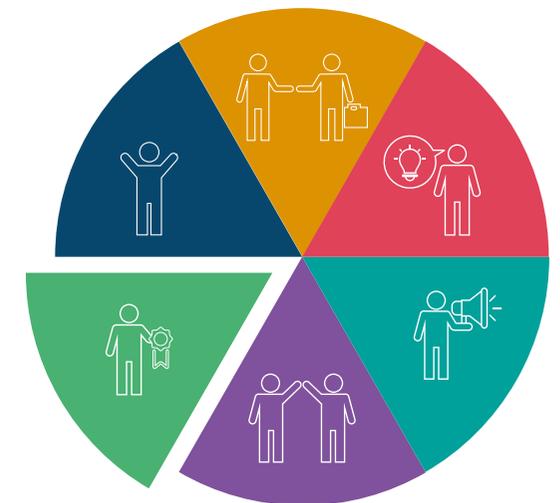
It's important that we celebrate when things are going well, and it's also important that we provide a safe environment to have respectful conversations when things aren't working as we would like. We want to create an environment where we work on solutions together.

Recognising when our behaviours and values are being demonstrated consistently will help our employees to feel valued and motivated. This is an important factor in recruiting and retaining the right people for Dorset Council, as well as providing the best possible services for our communities.

### Our commitments to reward and recognising performance are:

- launch and develop an Employment Offer with employees, which enables a personal and flexible approach to employee benefits
- develop a strategic approach to identify and develop those who are performing exceptionally well with a talent management and succession programme, so that we develop our leaders of the future in-house where possible
- with a flatter management structure, provide more ways for employees who are working towards leadership roles, to develop the skills and experience they need to succeed in the future

- Review our approach to performance management, moving towards regular developmental and performance conversations, being focused on outcomes rather than process





# Creating a positive workplace culture

We believe that 'the way we do things around here' impacts on how well we work together. We are committed to empowering our employees at all levels within the organisation to be innovative and develop our services together. To do this well, we need to provide an environment which enables us to perform at our best.

## Our commitments to creating a positive workplace culture are:

- work together to design a culture shaping programme which will seek to understand who we are as an organisation, how the way we work influences our culture, and understand how we can be at our best
- develop an organisational approach to how we work and make the best use of our office accommodation to enable innovation, collaboration and flexibility
- create a fun place to work where can encourage innovation, continually learn from what we do and collaborate with others to get the best results
- embed our core behaviours into our policies, processes and everything we do
- undertake regular culture snapshots through our surveys, acting on areas which prohibit a healthy and positive workplace culture

- work with managers and employees to help build successful teams
- share success stories across the organisation, recognise and celebrate what we do well and share that learning across the organisation



# Success measures

- employees feel the council is an employer of choice, as indicated by employee surveys
- improved job performance, as indicated by a range of key performance indicators
- our Employee Offer is being accessed and positive feedback is received by employees
- positive impact on line management relationships
- increased sense of trust and fairness in the organisation (employee surveys)
- proportion of employees who leave their current roles, are doing so because they have been promoted internally or externally
- increased number of apprenticeships and a higher engagement of other learning opportunities
- increased formal coaching programmes initiated within the organisation
- reduced skills gaps (skills gap analysis reports)
- employees feel that the organisation recognises and values the importance of their wellbeing (employee surveys)
- employees feel able to talk about their emotional health and ask for support, should they need it (employee surveys)
- we provide a range of flexible working options to encourage a healthy work/home life balance
- higher engagement with health and wellbeing initiatives
- reduction in absence levels
- proportion of recruitment that is successful
- positive reception and feedback on our employer brand
- employees are satisfied with the range of Learning and Development opportunities available to them (employee surveys)