Nottinghamshire County Council

Appendix A

Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy

September 2020 – September 2021

Background and context

The first phase of the Covid-19 pandemic saw the abrupt enforcement of a national lockdown which included the requirement to remain at home and work from home wherever possible. This necessitated the Council putting in place an emergency response with new operating models to ensure continued delivery of critical frontline and statutory services for vulnerable children and adults. Additional new services, such as the Community Hub were created and operational in a matter of days. Key workers providing critical services, often working in the community and residents' homes, were exempt from the requirement to work from home. Council buildings were closed and all other employees were asked to remain working at or from home.

The Council's workforce responded positively to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many have been flexible in altering their duties, working hours and where they work from to ensure the Council can continue to deliver critical services to its most vulnerable residents.

Some of the Council's frontline workforce continued to provide services as they had before the lockdown; albeit with new models of service delivery and stricter requirements such as social distancing, infection control and use of Personal Protective Equipment etc. Following the completion of a corporate skills audit, some staff were temporarily redeployed to new and different frontline roles to ensure there were sufficient staff to support the delivery of critical services.

The majority of back office, support and enabling staff were able to continue the roles they were undertaking before the crisis, adapted to be undertaken from home using new tools and ways of working. This was made possible by the progress the Council had made and the arrangements already in place before the pandemic as a result of the Smarter Working Programme; roll out of Microsoft Teams functionality early on in the response and expansion of the range of flexible working arrangements already in place.

In the early summer the situation began to improve and government restrictions were eased. Government Guidance on reopening and safe working in offices was reflected in the Council's Property and Premises Recovery Plan and Council's Building Reoccupation Strategy, supported by the Workforce Considerations for Building Reoccupation Strategy. This set out workplace readiness principles, priorities for reoccupation, how to prepare the workforce and checklist for managers for return to work and continuing work in a new context in the shorter term. Council buildings were made covid-secure and a small number of people began to return to Council buildings and offices in a phased and managed way from early September.

The focus began to shift to recovery and how the Council could learn and build from the experiences and approaches during the response to the emergency. It became apparent that it may not be possible or desirable for things to go back to how they were before the crisis and the phrase "new normal" became common. Many of the

Council's old ways of working were no longer in place or suitable and the world of work had changed. Employees and their managers wanted to build from a new baseline and new position using the experiences gleaned from the different ways of working during the pandemic to develop and build the "new normal". This included the things we did well such as being more agile as an organisation; working quickly and more flexibly; empowering, enabling and engaging our workforce to be more innovative and creative to get the job done in difficult circumstances.

The Government's COVID-19 Recovery Strategy "Our Plan to Rebuild" described a phased recovery and set out the aim of returning life to as close as normal as possible, for as many people as possible, as fast and fairly as possible in a way that avoids a new epidemic, minimises lives lost and maximises health, economic and social outcomes. A Council-wide Recovery Strategy was developed in line with the Government's approach, including the Council's workforce.

Unfortunately, during September and October the pandemic worsened as the Country entered the predicted second wave with the likelihood of some control measures being in place for some time. The initial Government response centred on local outbreak control plans and measures, but another national lockdown was implemented in November.

The Council will need to adapt its response over the winter and plan for the future recovery which has led to the development of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy. This will need to be an iterative approach reflecting changing circumstances. In addition to the changes brought about due to the pandemic, the Council will need to reflect the increasingly challenging financial position.

What we are trying to achieve

The strategy sets out to define the "new normal" for the Council's workforce now and in the short to medium term. In the immediate short term this relates to the response to the next phase of the pandemic. An important aspect of the strategy and supporting action plan is to establish and describe a new baseline and context to support our employees' wellbeing and resilience and organisational resilience as we respond to the second phase and recovery from the pandemic. This will be critical to our continued success.

The strategy will help to shape what work will look like within the Council in a new world context – where and how people will be working, what they will they be doing (new operating models, digitisation, automation), how they will collaborate and work together and organisational culture, values and behaviours.

The strategy also sets out our aspirations for the future of our workforce and provides the building blocks/foundations for future workforce planning, development and transformation. As such it will provide a route map from where we are now to where we want to be in future and assist in developing and iterating our future vision which will be set out in the new Council Plan and underpinning Workforce Strategy in 2021.This will build on work and activities underway before the pandemic and develop them for the future. For example, strength-based approaches in children's and adults' services; leadership development; coaching; flexible working and continuing to be a good employer and employer of choice.

We also want to identify the positives and learning and new approaches we want to retain from how people worked and responded during the pandemic and build this into our future workforce model. We want to harness the positivity, engagement and collaboration, sustain momentum and the innovation, creativity and willingness to change which our employees demonstrated. We will also need to identify what we want to stop or do differently in the future to ensure we continue to progress, improve and transform the Council.

Underpinning Principles

- We will continue to invest in our workforce to build our organisational resilience during and beyond Covid-19.
- Workforce plans will reflect the physical and psychological environment and working relationships and ensure the physical and mental health and well-being of our employees is considered at every stage of planning.
- The intention is to create and foster an inclusive flexible working environment where the differing needs of colleagues are recognised and respected alongside service needs.
- Managers will be empowered to make decisions about how their teams operate within the existing parameters of Council policies and procedures.
- Employees will be engaged in developing and implementing activities and approaches to ensure their needs are met.
- Learning and experiences throughout the Covid emergency will be used to shape the future workforce and ways of working.
- Any plans put in place must be sufficiently flexible to reflect ongoing impacts of Covid-19 including the need to implement a Local Outbreak Management Plan or national control measures.
- We will continue to engage regularly with the recognised trades unions for consultation purposes, to understand their members' issues and to work together to address these wherever possible.
- The input of our self-managed support networks and groups and the Corporate Equality Group will continue to inform and shape our approach.

Key Themes

The activities to deliver the strategy have been grouped into themes which are set out below and reflected in the supporting Action Plan. (Appendix 1)

Organisational culture

This theme deals with the behavioural and social elements of working for the Council and the individual and collective norms which form the organisational culture. This includes capturing and locking in the learning, engagement and positive behaviours from the Council's response to Covid-19 and using these as a springboard for the future. It will also build on work undertaken within departments on values and beliefs to develop a shared corporate vision of who we are as an organisation and how we do things in Nottinghamshire.

A cultural inquiry tool will help define the culture the Council and its employees want to and have begun to develop. This work can then be used to identify the steps the Council needs to take and key milestones to being a progressive, forward thinking organisation, delivering improved outcomes for local people and a great place to work.

Within this theme there is also activity to review the employment relationship and restate and reaffirm the psychological contract and the commitments therein. This includes ensuring that employees are provided with tools, opportunities and support to empower and enable them to deliver in a positive, supportive culture, based on trust.

This theme will draw upon information from corporate and departmental employee wellbeing surveys; feedback provided through the Extended Leadership Team; discussions as part of the Webinar programme with the Corporate Leadership Team; Exit interviews; EPDR's and more informal and anecdotal feedback from employees, staff support networks and trades union representatives.

Leadership development

As the Council moves into the next phase of response, and ultimately recovery, the Council needs to develop strong, confident and engaging leadership capacity with a clearly articulated vision of success and positive role modelling.

The leadership development theme will build on the level of confidence amongst leaders and managers to do things differently, in new ways and operate in a new context to remove barriers to change, foster innovation and creativity which has been demonstrated during the crisis. This will build on the momentum and positive experiences of Covid-19 and learning from the less positive aspects.

The response to the pandemic has seen a changing profile and importance of the role of manager with the need for enhanced skills to lead and manage differently including having difficult conversations, challenging presenteeism cultures and more effective performance management and data/evidence-based approaches to enhance productivity. Work will therefore be undertaken to redefine, clarify the role, accountability, responsibilities and expectations of managers and leaders across the organisation. New tools and toolkits will be developed within a framework of policies and procedures, building on what is already available, to encourage ownership and ensure managers are supported to undertake their roles.

There will be a focus on empowering leaders, managers and employees by removing perceived and real barriers, including the fear of failure and need to ask for permission, which can impede effective leadership, change and transformation.

The leadership theme will also build and develop activity already in place such as coaching and developing strength-based leadership approaches across the Council. The existing leadership development programme will be reviewed and developed to support leading in new ways in a new context. This will include providing and promoting opportunities for career development and career pathways, generally and for specific groups. For example, black staff into leadership roles and women into senior management.

People development

The People Development theme seeks to ensure that employees have the support, skills and tools to enable them to undertake their roles, encourage and empower employees to shape the way they work. It also identifies activities to involve front line employees more in re-evaluating the way in which we do things and identifying and implementing opportunities for change, service improvement and transformation. This will include continuous improvement cycles, data-driven decision making and empowerment which encourage innovation, creativity, learning and service-led change.

This section of the action plan includes reviewing corporate and departmental or role specific competencies to ensure consistency and development of transferrable skills to encourage collaboration and working across the Council. It also includes skills development programmes for specific areas and specific/technical skills in addition to enhancing more generic skills which the Council will need for the future e.g. digital skills. This will be delivered within the context of improving awareness and better use of the existing learning and development offer, enhanced where necessary to provide additional resources and support for employees, to encourage greater responsibility for learning and personal development.

This theme also includes a review of our approach to role and job design and career pathways across the whole Council to enhance opportunities for career development and ensure greater consistency to enable us to grow, develop and retain our own staff and encourage collaborative working as the Council moves away from hierarchical, silo based career paths to portfolio careers maximising the development and use of transferrable skills.

This theme also considers the way in which employees are recognised, rewarded and valued for the work that they do at an individual and team level to develop a workforce which is empowered and engaged in improving outcomes for local people.

Employee health and wellbeing

During the first phase of the pandemic it was important to capture the mood of how individual employees were feeling. An employee well-being survey was therefore undertaken in late May to “check-in” and gather feedback direct from employees.

Approximately 40% of the Council’s workforce responded to the survey. 95% of employees who completed the survey responded positively to questions in relation to the Council’s overall response to Covid-19; how the Council’s response related to their role and how well informed they felt by their line manager. Satisfaction levels in relation to communication with and support from managers and colleagues were around 90%. There was an 80% satisfaction level with wellbeing information and support and having the tools to do their job. Overall 75% were satisfied with their health, safety and wellbeing whilst working during the pandemic. Employees described feeling “protected”, “supported” and “well cared for”. Other comments included “the Council is a wonderful place to work”, “thank you NCC for being family” and “I am proud to work for NCC”.

Employees were most concerned at that time about the wider economy, the economic wellbeing of friends and families and the financial/economic future for the Council. Although they felt more positive about the future for their individual roles

and their service area/department. In response to this area of particular concern, the council secured the offer of free financial advice sessions which were made available to every employee.

The valuable intelligence gathered as a result of this exercise has been used to shape this strategy. Further surveys, alongside other tools such as the webinars and question and answer sessions set out in the action plan, will be used to gather additional information from a wide cross section of the Council's workforce as the second phase of response and recovery progress.

Throughout the first wave of the pandemic increased peer support and collaboration was evident with people finding new and different ways to work together and help each other. As the pandemic has continued and worsened again people have had to draw on their reserves of resilience. The need to develop and sustain organisational and individual resilience over the medium to longer term is becoming increasingly important and is a key theme in this strategy.

Over time the psychological impacts of bereavement and trauma and sustained periods of change and uncertainty and resultant anxieties have become increasingly apparent; particularly amongst those undertaking frontline roles for long periods. Considering the psychological impacts on our employees and the people they support, building strength and resilience across the workforce to ensure our workforce is sustainable for the future is critical. The need to support employees to deal with increasingly difficult and changing situations, at home and work, over longer periods and the resultant fatigue is key to the wellbeing theme of the strategy.

This theme builds on existing provision and approaches, reviews and adapts them to reflect the increasingly difficult and complex circumstances that the Council and its workforce find themselves in. This starts with promotion and making better use of our existing packages and support mechanisms for employees including Workplace Health Champions, Mental Health First Aiders, the Council's Buddy Scheme, Counselling Service, Coaching, line management, staff support networks and self-managed groups. These will then be added to and supplemented as necessary. This work needs to reflect known health inequalities across the Council's workforce and the differing needs of particular staff groups. Sharing best practice with local partners, exemplar national employers and existing staff support networks and trades union colleagues will facilitate this work.

Smarter working and the working environment

The workplaces of the future for the Council will be environments designed to help drive the organisation forward with a shared sense of purpose and a culture of collaboration which reinforces the Council's vision as a forward-thinking organisation. They will need to reflect an increasingly agile and flexible workforce, make smarter use of hybrid workspaces which merge the physical and virtual office with a reduced office estate spread countywide. Workspaces will reflect the need to ensure meaningful encounters and collaboration between employees and with their managers, knowledge sharing and reflect purposeful and different ways of working when people come into shared spaces. Working environments will be designed to support a culture that promotes wellbeing and productivity, including positive cultures of change management with staff being given flexibility and trust in how to organise their work.

This theme also reflects the need for the Council to review its approach and develop a fit for purpose support package for increased home working reflecting the different aspects of technology, equipment and wellbeing. Managers will need to be skilled in supporting and leading their teams remotely and employees will need ongoing support and training as we increase use of digital technology.

Digital innovation, efficiency, automation and workforce enablement are key aspects of this theme with enhanced utilisation of software platforms to support information sharing, increased productivity and collaboration to ensure that staff support each other in a meaningful way which delivers improved outcomes and meets objectives wherever people are working from, whatever they are working on and whichever part of organisation they work in.

The strategy and supporting action plan reflect the need for flexibility, agility and pace and the need to learn from and incorporate the positives from the “test bed” we created during the first phase of our response to the pandemic. Working patterns and arrangements for the future will need to build on the work already underway with Timewise to become a truly flexible employer in all aspects.

Implementation of the strategy

This strategy has been developed by the cross-council Workforce Resilience and Recovery Working Group building on corporate and departmental feedback and activity and utilising results and feedback from the wellbeing survey. It reflects learning and experience during the first phase of response to the pandemic and builds on activity underway in departments and corporately prior to the pandemic. It is proposed to use a series of task and finish groups led by members of the working group, supported by corporate enabling services, to take forward the initial scoping and implementation of the strategy and action plan. It is also planned to engage the Council’s Extended Leadership Team in taking forward these activities to encourage broader ownership of the solutions.

The Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group will also play a role in the workforce aspects of the next phases of transformation and act as a sounding board in relation to workforce issues such as organisational redesign to avoid duplication of effort and help ensure alignment with various ongoing areas of work. For example, the Smarter Working and Investing in Nottinghamshire programmes and activity in relation to premises reoccupation.

A key aspect of the implementation of the strategy and the development of the future culture of the organisation is communication and engagement with employees from across the Council, including front line workers. The action plan therefore includes a review of how the Council communicates with employees. This work is already underway with an initial mapping of existing channels and approaches within departments to identify possible learning which can be applied across the whole Council to improve consistency of messaging as a quick win. This programme of work will ultimately lead to a new Employee Communication and Engagement Strategy to support ongoing engagement, involvement and empowerment of employees and their managers by working through line managers and their teams

and encouraging more bottom up communication and collaboration and cross council working.

An initial area of activity will involve communication about the strategy itself including telling managers and employees what we are doing, why and what we hope to achieve, timescales for the work and seeking their views and input.

Throughout the coronavirus outbreak weekly discussions have taken place with the recognised trades unions. This has provided a helpful forum to raise both strategic and operational issues. The normal employment relations mechanisms were suspended at the outset of lockdown but have now been reinstated. It is proposed to continue with the corporate discussions alongside more department focussed forums where the more detailed discussions about specific services can take place.

Discussions have also taken place with the employee self-managed groups to ensure proper consideration is given to the potential impacts of the situation on colleagues with certain protected characteristics. This includes black, asian and minority ethnic employees and employees with a disability or underlying health condition. Working with these support networks has resulted in very positive and constructive engagement which it is intended to continue through the next phases of the pandemic. To date this has included considering the results of the Public Health England research in relation to “Disparities in the risk and outcomes of Covid-19” for different groups which has been used to develop the risk assessment process and underpin the development of the strategy and action plan.

Nottinghamshire County Council

Nottinghamshire County Council Workforce Resilience and Recovery Action Plan (September 2020 to September 2021)

Context:
The plan sits within the context of cross-cutting, transformation, an increasingly challenging financial position and ongoing Covid situation requiring us to work differently and more efficiently and the political dynamic in the run-up to the election in May 2021 and beyond. It recognises that the Council's workforce is its most valuable asset and this position has been reinforced by the contributions of so many during the Covid outbreak. Their safety and that of service users continues to be of primary importance. It also recognises that some people have continued to work with little change since the pandemic outbreak whilst for others the changes have been radical and that this situation is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Purpose of this plan:

- To establish and describe a new baseline and context to support our workforce resilience and recovery, including return to work, working in different ways in different settings and continuing to work if people have not been away.
- Define the "**New normal**" for now and the short to medium term.
- Describe what work looks like in the new world context and the Council – where, how people will be working, what will they be doing (new operating models, digitisation, automation) - "balanced/blended approach" including individual/service needs.
- Set out our aspirations for the future workforce – to provide building blocks/foundations for future workforce planning, development and transformation. Get ready and begin/enable transition from previous to new norms.
- **Plan/route map** from where we are now to where want to be in future – develop and iterate our future vision as set out in the new Council Plan and underpinning Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy.
- **Build on** work and activities underway **before** pandemic e.g. strength-based approaches, leadership development, coaching, flexible working (Timewise+), good employer/employer of choice.
- **Capture** what do we want to retain in terms of **good learning and positives** from how people worked and responded during the first phase of the emergency and build from here – during response and recovery phases to harness positivity, engagement, retain momentum and move forward with pace whilst guarding against the opportunity to slip back into previous ways of working.

Principles underpinning workforce resilience and recovery:

- We will continue to invest in our workforce to build our organisational resilience during and beyond Covid-19.
- Workforce plans will need to cover the physical and psychological environment and working relationships and ensure the physical and mental health and well-being of our employees are considered at every stage of planning.
- The intention is to create and foster an inclusive flexible working environment where the differing needs of colleagues are recognised and respected alongside service needs.
- Managers will be empowered and enabled to make decisions about how their teams operate within the parameters of NCC policies and procedures.
- Employees will be engaged in developing and implementing new activities and approaches to ensure their needs are met.
- Learning and experiences throughout the Covid emergency will be used to shape the future workforce and ways of working.
- Any plans put in place must be sufficiently flexible to reflect ongoing impacts of Covid-19 including the need to implement a Local Outbreak Management Plan or national control measures.
- We will continue to engage regularly with the recognised trade unions for consultation purposes, to understand their members' issues and to work together to address these wherever possible.
- The input of our self-managed support networks and groups and the Corporate Equality Group will continue to inform and shape our approach.

Implementation:

Overall Responsibility: Marjorie Toward, Service Director Customers, Governance and Employees

Lead Manager: Gill Elder, Head of Human Resources

Delivery Lead Officers: Workforce Recovery Group members from all departments

Delivered by: All Managers; HRWOD

Key stakeholders: Elected Members, Corporate Leadership Team and departmental Senior Leadership Teams, Recognised Trade Unions: self-managed groups;

Organisational culture – develop and maintain a culture of continuous improvement to ensure Nottinghamshire County Council maintains a working environment and workforce which is resilient, capable, agile and responsive to current and emerging challenges.				
Topic	**Areas for action**	**Specific actions**	**Timescale**	**Lead**
Determine what culture we want to create/have begun to create and maintain in future	• Take the opportunity to return to work by designing the future of work, employing the lessons, practices and goodwill we have built during our crisis response. • Review and reconsider our values, shared beliefs, identity and prioritise what is most important – develop a shared vision which defines "who we are as an organisation" and "how we do things in Nottinghamshire". • Create a continuous improvement cycle through data driven decision making and empowerment which encourages innovation, creativity, learning and change. (X ref transformation programme)	• Review departmental cultural change programmes to identify areas of commonality for roll out across the Council. • Review departmental work on values and beliefs to align and develop a shared vision which defines corporately "who we are as an organisation" and "how we do things in Nottinghamshire". • Analyse findings of departmental specific survey(s) undertaken alongside the Corporate Survey in June 2020 to identify things which staff value the most to embed in our culture moving forward. Use this analysis to identify key actions. • Develop a series of Webinars and Q&A sessions led by CEO & CLT for leaders, managers and employees to contribute and engage in as a means of promoting open and honest conversations about values, the organisation and how it works. • Undertake a further cultural enquiry (using surveys, webinars, Q&A sessions as well as exit data) to understand the current temperature across the Council's workforce and encourage shared commitment and accountability.	October 2020 October 2020 Autumn 2020 October 2020 Spring 2021? (?link to new council plan)	Workforce Group Workforce Group Workforce Group HR, TUs Staff Support Groups Departmental Managers HR/OD Workforce Group

		• Finalise the work that is currently underway to develop a core performance data set.	Autumn 2020	
Review and reaffirm the psychological contract	• Provide employees with the tools, opportunities and support to empower and enable them to deliver in a positive, supportive culture based on trust. • Promote trust in employees through the revised smarter working vision and expanded flexible working provision with less emphasis on traditional job descriptions and when/ where work is undertaken and greater focus on achieving targets and goals. • Review and develop quality working relationships and the ways of working we wish to promote. Role modelling by senior leaders. • Encourage the development of effective support networks. • Reward and recognition mechanisms and their application.	• Quality assurance of EPDR checks to be carried out at corporate and departmental levels to ensure that employees are getting regular support through supervisions and EPDRs and solution focussed and structured conversations. • Identify themes emerging from coaching through coaching network and departmental feedback to develop action plan. • Review current coaching and mentoring practices used in departments to enhance Coaching and Mentoring offer available corporately. • Review how different departments reward and recognise individual and team contribution and roll out best practice across the council. • Review corporate approach to employee recognition and promote widely to attract and retain the employees we need.	Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020 Winter 2020-Spring 2021	HR Departmental Managers HR Departmental Leads HR Departmental Leads HR Workforce Group Workforce Group

Leadership Development – develop and maintain a confident, strong, engaging and emergent leadership with a clearly articulated vision of success and positive role modelling which supports and enables change.				
Topic	**Areas for action**	**Specific actions**	**Timescale**	**Lead**
Map current position	• Identify current leadership and management skills and approaches, levels of confidence and engagement and readiness for change amongst managers. • Identify opportunities and the means to capture, share and learn from experiences from Covid-19 response across the Council.	• Targeted questionnaire/survey/focus groups of managers and leadership teams to: - Assess and understand current leadership skills & approaches; - capture management learnings from Covid 19 response. • Use the findings of the questionnaire/survey to develop and refine Leadership and Development programme for future and identify further development opportunities.	Autumn 2020 Spring 2021	HR/OD HR/OD
Clarify Leadership and Management roles and expectations	• Redefine, clarify the role, accountability, responsibilities and expectations of managers and leaders at each tier, generically (what do we mean by manager and leader at NCC?). Overlay service specific responsibilities. (X ref OD principles work). • Redefine leadership competencies – now and for the future.	• Review new programme "Owning and Driving Performance" commissioned by ASCH department to establish how this approach can be rolled out across the council to encourage high performance culture. • Review of competency framework to incorporate strength-based practice and approaches.	Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020 Spring 2021	HR Workforce Group HR/OD, Workforce group ELT
Support for managers	• Strengthen support arrangements and encourage take up amongst managers e.g. supervision, EPDR, coaching, mentoring, peer support, action learning sets, buddy arrangements etc. • Review key policies and procedures to support different leadership and	• Increase cross-Council working to widen and enhance peer support and networking by identifying and promoting existing and new opportunities. • Attend Departmental SLTs & ELTs to develop work programme to prioritise review of key policies and procedures to improve, streamline and strengthen our processes.	Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020	Workforce Group HR

	management – more enabling and empowering of leaders and managers. • Review and develop toolkits for managers, building on what is already available, to encourage ownership and develop confidence.	Commission work to review and develop toolkits for managers by managers.	Spring 2021	Workforce Group
Leadership and management skills development	• Review, to reflect post-Covid world, and roll out new leadership development programme to support leading in a new context, leading differently. • Provide and promote opportunities for career development and career pathways – generally and for specific groups (e.g. black staff into leadership roles, women into senior management)	• Provide a new learning module on "**Managing with Confidence"** to enable all managers to have enabling conversations with their employees in the new normal. • Provide targeted modules for employees from specific groups as part of the wider **Leadership Development Programme** to enable them to develop the confidence and skills to progress their careers including applying for alternative / promotional roles. • Develop specific tools and support in relation to managing and leading remotely.	Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020	HR/OD HR/OD HR/OD SWT
Encourage dialogue and healthy conversations	• Culture and approach of honesty, transparency and ability to ask difficult questions and have positive dialogue with a focus on individuals and interventions. • Help and encourage managers to take time to better understand their teams and address issues on an individual basis to reflect particular circumstances. • Encourage employees to share information so they can be supported effectively.	• Provide targeted training, coaching and mentoring to develop managerial confidence and skills to undertake difficult discussions. • Develop and introduce Manager's Mental Health First Aiders Training. • Training for managers to ensure that supervisions have a behavioural and solution focus (Emotional intelligence, softer coaching skills etc). • Refresh, build on and relaunch next phase of "manager as a coach" and training. • Refresh and relaunch managers resilience training.	Autumn 2020 to Spring 2021 Spring 2021 Spring 2021 Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020	HR/OD HR/OD HR/OD HR/OD HR/OD

People development – ensure that people have the skills, support and tools to deliver with opportunities for development and to shape the way we work and that people are rewarded, recognised and valued for the work they do.				
Topic	**Areas for action**	**Specific actions**	**Timescale**	**Lead**
Job roles and design and career progression	• Review corporate and departmental/role specific competencies to ensure consistency, transferrable skills, encourage working across the Council. • Flexibility, agility, pace – learn from and incorporate positives from the test bed we have created to redefine work, working patterns, arrangements etc. • Review our approach to role and job design and career pathways across the whole Council to enable career development, consistency, enable us to grow, develop and retain our own staff and encourage collaborative working. (portfolio type careers).	• Review of competency framework to incorporate strength-based practice and approaches. • Use the work undertaken with Time Wise to help embed flexible working in its widest sense in designing job roles. • Provide additional support and training to managers on job design and developing career pathways. • Map potential career progression routes and pathways through the organisation as part of new operating model and organisational design principles	Autumn 2020 - Spring 2021 Autumn 2020 Spring 2021 Spring 2021	HR Workforce Group HR/OD HR HR Workforce Group
Skills development	• Promote the idea of a learning organisation where recent experience provides a springboard for change and where people can develop their career portfolio and access opportunities for career progression. • Identify and focus on the strengths of the workforce, share knowledge and build on existing talent. • Build on and raise profile of learning portal and responsibilities for learning and personal development.	• Collate and analyse information on current learning opportunities available both at Corporate and Departmental levels to inform future learning offer. • Promote Coaching through our inhouse Coaching network to enable all employees to reach their full potential. • Combine all available information in one place on different Corporate and Departmental learning/training opportunities to develop an easy to follow “One Learning Catalogue” for all employees and promote this across the Council.	Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020 Spring 2021	HR Workforce Group HR/OD HR/OD

	• Skills development programmes– specific areas, specific/technical skills, raising of levels of generic skills e.g. digital. • Recruitment, onboarding and induction of new staff – interface with ongoing learning and development, culture etc. • Evaluate the engagement and impact of the participants in the specialist programme run by Health locally.	• Identify additional development and training needs and creative solutions to embed learning eg development of Peer Support networks. • Value, promote and set expectations re continuous personal and professional development. • Improve base line digital skills and enhance more specialist technological skills in particular service areas as required.	Spring 2021 Spring 2021 Spring 2021	HR/OD Workforce Group HR/OD Workforce Group HR/OD
Employee support and engagement	• Expand the existing package of employee support, reward and recognition which demonstrates how we value people and develops the idea of employer as social safety net with an expanded role in employees' financial, physical and mental well-being. • Promote and make better use of our existing packages and support mechanisms for employees and build on these e.g. Workplace Health Champions, Mental Health First Aiders, Buddy Scheme, Care First, Coaching, line management, staff support networks, self-managed groups.	• Use Workforce Group to develop a revised package of employee support, reward and recognition and "test" with employees. • Redesign and relaunch an accessible NCC "landing page" to promote the Council as an employer of choice and provide information on benefits of working for the council at one place to assist attraction and retention. • Develop and implement revised Communication and Engagement Strategy to involve front line employees in re-evaluating how/the way in which we do things, change, service improvement and transformation. • Develop smarter working toolkit resources as part of package to support employees and managers. • Consider financial payment for front line workers.	Spring 2021 Spring 2021 Autumn/ Winter 2020 Autumn 2020 October 2020	HR Workforce Group HR/OD Digital, Workforce Group Workforce Group Comms Team SWT CLT

Employee Health and Well-being – develop and maintain a healthy, motivated, emotionally resilient and well-supported workforce working together with shared values to achieve shared ambitions.				
Topic	**Areas for action**	**Specific actions**	**Timescale**	**Lead**
Covid specific issues	• Understand the differing impacts on people continuing to work through the pandemic to develop a risk managed approach which recognises and responds to the physical, mental and emotional toll placed on some colleagues. • Identify the specific risks to employees with additional vulnerabilities, e.g. age, long term health condition or ethnic background, encourage the joint completion of risk assessment and shared responsibility for identifying and addressing any risks presented. • Support the development of greater resilience across our workforce through health promotion but also coaching.	• Provide additional guidance to managers and employees regarding relevant risk assessments to complete depending on work circumstances. • Update employee health and well-being action plan with refreshed provision for employee health initiatives generally and more specific Covid for both mental and physical health and wellbeing. • Provide additional support to managers to ensure they are confident to engage and jointly complete the risk assessment for people with additional vulnerabilities and to consider actions required to protect BME employees during the Covid pandemic.	Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020	HR HR Workforce Group HR Staff Support Groups Workforce Group
Physical and mental health and emotional resilience	• Utilise the expertise within Public Health to enhance existing provision, promoting health initiatives across the workforce and better understand the impact of such campaigns. • Identify mechanisms to measure the health and wellbeing of our existing workforce and explore what role our	• Encourage greater involvement of workplace health champions to develop and promote health initiatives across the workforce and enhance infrastructure to support champions. • Increase number and promote use of Mental Health First Aiders.	Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020 Autumn 2020	HR/OD Workforce Group HR/OD HR/OD HR/OD

	package plays in recruitment and retention. • Analysis of Council's workforce compared with the wider economically active population.	• Review and relaunch resilience training and tools and use feedback to develop next iteration. • Carry out a survey/collect feedback to measure effectiveness of existing health and wellbeing support available across the council and identify opportunities for improvement. • Consider specific needs of front line workers' physical and mental health and emotional resilience	Winter 2020 -Spring 2021 October 2020	HR/OD Workforce Group
Health inequalities and specific needs/focus	• Put in place the necessary support packages to address known health inequalities across the workforce. • Identify and share best practice with local partners and exemplar national employers. • Enhance current support for employees facing domestic abuse potentially exacerbated by extended homeworking.	• Engage with different parts of the workforce and staff support groups to understand health issues specific to those groups, develop and put in place the necessary support packages to address known health inequalities. • Use Q&A and webinars to identify additional needs and potential solutions. • Work with Public Health colleagues to review data, identify underlying issues and potential support mechanisms.	Autumn 2020 Spring 2021 Autumn 2020 Winter2020-Spring 2021	HR Staff Support Groups Workforce Group HR/OD HR/OD

Smarter working and the working environment – develop and maintain workplaces and working environments which are responsive and ensure delivery of organisational objectives, drive change and encourage innovation and creativity with a shared sense of purpose and a culture of collaboration.				
Topic	**Areas for action**	**Specific actions**	**Timescale**	**Lead**
Where work is delivered from in future	• Hybrid workspaces blending physical and virtual office space.	• Monitor the partial reoccupation of Council buildings to evaluate the success and to draw any learning from the work undertaken to date. • Review position in light of Covid-19 situation. • Support managers to determine where the contractual work base will be for new employees and by mutual agreement for existing employees based on service imperative and cost effectiveness. • Reach position in relation to Homeworking support including management of risk, equipment and possible payment of allowance.	Ongoing Ongoing Autumn/ Winter 2020 October 2020	Smarter Working Team Property and Premises Gp HR SWT CLT
How we work	• Consider how work needs to be delivered and facilitate methods for collaboration both digitally and face to face.	• Collate information gathered on current and future need for office equipment and technology to facilitate remote, agile working. • Apply learning from the recent employee wellbeing survey to understand what people value from the current situation and what they do not like to develop a blended, hybrid model for flexible working. • Use outputs from Timewise workshop on 8th July 2020 to develop a further range of	Ongoing Spring 2021 Autumn 2020	SWT SWT HR/OD

		actions to embed a new model of flexible working into the organisation.		
Enhanced role for technology	• Ensuring availability of tools and technology with enhanced training and support • Increased digitisation and automation of basic tasks to free up capacity. • Roll out of new software platforms	• Develop a series of case studies to promote how technology has supported and enabled a change in working practices. • Review internal processes across the council to enable automation of tasks and improve efficiency.	Autumn 2020 Ongoing	SWT Corporate Prog
September 2020	Author: Gill Elder, Head of HR and Avneet Nahal, Executive Officer			

This plan should be considered in the context of a number of existing action plans and programmes including:

- Existing People Strategy 2019 to 2021 – source information on core attributes
- Employee Health and Well-being
- Health and Safety
- Investing in Nottinghamshire (Smarter Working Phase 2)
- Digital Strategy and Improving Customer Experience through Digital Development Programme
- Leadership Development Programme – existing, aspirant, qualification/on job/apprenticeships including consideration of Kickstart
- Apprenticeship Strategy
- Corporate and departmental Equalities action plans
- Disability Confident self-assessment and action plan
- Gender Pay Gap action plan
- Support for Black Workers Action Plan (subject to approval)
- Workforce Profile Data
- Existing service and departmental workforce/resourcing plans