

Service Area Plan Year :	1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026
Service Area :	People & Communications
Service Area Manager:	Tracy Dolphin
Portfolio Holder(s):	CIlr Jessica Melrose - People and Organisational Development

Sections:

Links to Warwick 2030 Strategy
Main Aspects of Workloads and Major Workstreams
Performance
Risk Management

Theme and Strategic Goals		Direct	Indirect		
Delivering Valued, Sustainable Services					
1.1 Ensure sustainability is at the heart of our decision making	1.1.1 We will develop climate and sustainability impact tool to help inform, shape and improve our decision making.	<p>"The purpose of the 'People Strategy' is to support the Corporate Strategy to create a framework for the effective leadership and workforce planning of our people in order to provide the organisational capacity to meet our corporate objectives in delivering excellent services. Aims of the strategy are to establish our strategic approach to ensure we have the right people in the right place with the right knowledge and skills, working in an inclusive, positive, and supportive culture in relation to the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Smarter Working & the Working Environment <input type="checkbox"/> People (Workforce) Planning, Organisational Development & Performance <input type="checkbox"/> People Recruitment, Retention and Brand Identity <input type="checkbox"/> People Equality Diversity & Inclusion <input type="checkbox"/> People Learning and Development <input type="checkbox"/> People Health & Well-being <input type="checkbox"/> People Communications & Engagement <p>This relates directly to how we want to attract and retain the best talent to deliver our ambitions. The People and Communications Theme includes links to the Marketing and Communications Strategy which aims to deliver a first class, effective and efficient communication service for the Council. Our communications are credible, consistent across all platforms and reflect the customer journey. Our aims are to: Deliver the council's news in a clear, balanced format; promote and celebrate the council's successes; promote a responsive and decisive decision making process; develop and improve our digital capabilities to use them effectively; demonstrate collaboration with partners and stakeholders and engage and inform staff through our internal engagement processes. "</p>	No indirect areas		
1.2 Continue to ensure the Council's finances remain on a firm and sustainable footing	1.2.1 Our medium-term financial strategy will set out the steps we will take to ensure we continue to be financially sustainable and can continue to invest across the district – this will include making better use of existing resources and consider how we can increase income generating opportunities. 1.2.2 Our change programme will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how the Council delivers services to ensure they remain responsive and accessible to customer needs.				
1.3 Achieve and demonstrate delivery of high quality services	1.3.1 By reviewing how Council services are delivered and measuring performance will help ensure high quality services are being delivered across the Council. 1.3.2 The Digital and Customer Strategy and Change Management Programme will make it easier for customers to contact the Council 24/7, 365 days a year and enable our customer service team to help more customers at the first point of contact through different communication channels. 1.3.3 We will measure our performance and develop how we use data, benchmarking and customer insight to ensure we continuously learn and improve how we deliver services 1.3.4 We will further develop our approach to commissioning and contract management across the Council to continue to ensure residents receive the best service possible and value for the taxpayer. 1.3.5 Ensure Council homes are safe and meet the Decent Homes standard for all our tenants including improving the energy efficiency of their homes and meeting all new social housing regulatory requirements.				
1.4 We want to attract and retain the best talent to deliver our ambitions	Our People Strategy will help to attract the right people with the right skills the Council needs and are recognised locally, regionally and nationally as an employer of choice.				
1.5 Ensure the best use of the council's assets and resources to deliver the council wider corporate aims and support the circular economy	1.5.1 A new Asset Strategy and Management Plan will set out how we will best use our assets to drive sustainability, enable regeneration, and commercial value to contribute to our long-term financial position and place shaping ambitions. 1.5.2 We will continue to develop our approach for maximising social value through our place shaping initiatives and investments, to recycle the Warwick District Pound				
Low cost, low carbon energy across the District					
2.1 Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions from the council's public buildings	2.1.1 Significantly improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and introduce renewable energy generation capacity where possible. 2.1.2 Assess the creation of an investment fund for energy conservation and energy generation projects. Develop a Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency Strategy, for existing Council homes to reach a minimum of EPC C by 2030. Aim to go further to reduce carbon emissions and energy bills for Council tenants by exploring how we can maximise the impact and prioritisation of our maintenance programme and any external funding opportunities. This will include developing the toolkit to measure and assess impact.			A theme of the People Strategy is 'Smarter Working and the Working Environment' - We understand that smarter working empowers us all to make the right decisions about where, when and how we work, optimising the use of 'agile' workplaces and technology and reducing our carbon footprint. To improve the focus on outputs and enable a positive work-life balance.	No indirect areas
2.2 Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions from existing Council Housing Stock	Working with tenants and using sector best practice to ensure that our homes are safe, energy efficient, free from damp and mould and, as a minimum, meet decent home standards.				
2.3 Provide homes which are safe and meet the decent homes standard for all our tenant including improving energy efficiency of their homes.	New Council homes are net zero carbon in operation. To support this, we will set out our aspirations relating to carbon performance and for WDC-led developments recognising that there may be times when these aspirations cannot be fully achieved in light of viability.				
2.4 Ensure new housing developments led by the Council are exemplars of planning and construction to meet the climate emergency and other challenges	By working in partnership locally, regionally and nationally, we will identify, evaluate and undertake initiatives to help local people reduce their energy needs				
2.5 Explore multiple, innovative approaches to make it easier for others in the district					
Creating Vibrant, Safe and Healthy Communities of the Future					
3.1 Support all our communities, rural and urban to be economically ready for the future, with the right infrastructure and protect community identity with a focus on people and the environment	3.1.1 Enhance our town centres by working with businesses in place making initiatives, events and active travel to support the daytime and nighttime economy. This will include taking forward the future high street fund and the progression of the creative quarter. 3.1.2 Any opportunities for an investment zone will focus on the transition to a green economy, protect against unsuitable development and deliver for biodiversity, sustainable transport, and job creation. 3.1.3 Promote the district as a location for advanced manufacturing, "green" industries, creative games and hi-tech based companies, building on our national reputation. Work with educational establishments to inspire people to learn new skills, help local people access jobs and opportunities. 3.1.4 Increase the volume of high quality, low carbon, affordable and social housing including increasing the Council's and Milverton Homes' home building activity. This will help meet demand for housing and help tackle rough sleeping and homelessness.	A number of work streams within People and Communications support this goal including links with our People Health and Wellbeing theme; People Communications and Engagement where we understand the importance of two way communication.	The People & Communications Service links with wider strategies and policies guidelines across the Council Health and Wellbeing; Safeguarding; supporting enabling of the Digital Strategy through training and links with the People Strategy.		
3.2 Promote vibrant communities, a welcoming atmosphere and good mental and physical health and wellbeing within all our towns and villages.	3.2.1 Support our creative community, including local artists, dancers, actors, musicians and history and heritage organisations through a revised Creative Framework and a programme of support through UKSPF projects. 3.2.2 Build on our reputation as a home for national and international sporting events. 3.2.3 Encourage everyone to have a more active lifestyle via use of our leisure centres, parks and open spaces, other sports facilities, and the provision of other outreach activities. 3.2.4 Review, update and continue to take forward initiatives in the Climate Emergency Action Programme and evaluate their impact 3.2.5 Using our joint WDC/SDC new Local Plan to: • prioritise housing development on brownfield sites. • minimize use of greenfield sites where possible. • promote new developments using 20-minute neighbourhood/settlement designs. • ensuring convenient access to services and shop. • protect existing community identities. • ensure the provision of appropriate infrastructure is available to support new and existing development. 3.2.6 In partnership with Warwickshire County Council, promote and implement active travel choices as a priority – public transport, walking and cycling. 3.2.7 Adopt a Net Zero Carbon DPD and provide supplementary guidance, training and support to ensure that new homes and other building in the district are net zero carbon.				
3.3 Enhance the Biodiversity of the District	3.3.1 Increase the level of biodiversity on Council owned land and create a network of accessible linked biodiversity rich spaces. 3.3.2 Encourage residents, communities and businesses to enhance the biodiversity of the district using the planning system, the Biodiversity Net Gain legislation and other opportunities				
3.4 To champion new and innovative ways of working together to improve health and wellbeing and tackle inequalities – focussing on prevention and building resilience in communities	3.4.1 Reduce health inequalities within the district and develop a series of health and community wellbeing hubs. 3.4.2 Develop and implement an asset based community development strategy where the Council and partners will work with communities to build capacity to help address their own health, safety and wellbeing needs, especially those with a more deprived socioeconomic or isolated backgrounds. 3.4.3 Working with partners to deliver community safety interventions to address ASB and fear of crime.				

Service Overview

Key to : Actual Workload to date 25/26 (updated half yearly)	
	Significant issues or delays in service delivery that require immediate attention
	Potential issues or delays in service delivery that require corrective actions
	Service being delivered as expected
	Completed
	Not Started

	Service Being Delivered	Main aspects of service delivery	Estimated Expected Workload	Notes	Actual Workload to date 25/26 (updated half yearly)	Percentage of estimated workload experienced 25/26
	Human Resources (EDI, Health and Wellbeing)	Develop and manage the People Strategy and associated themes to meet the Council's priorities.		Quarterly update to Workforce Steering Group on key initiatives		
		To ensure the Council Policies and practices are fit for purpose and within legislation to maintain its role as a fair and equitable employer		Triggers through legislation or clarification of policies		
		To provide management information regularly to enable the Council to make informed decisions, for example absence, turnover and agency costs.	Av days lost to sickness/Reasons. Turnover trends.	Quarterly		
		To continue to work with all service areas to review their efficiencies and resourcing.		Work with the HR Business Partners to support this aspect		
		To support services with Employee Relations issues and provide ongoing training to empower managers to manage performance management/conflict issues confidentially.	Informal/Formal case work	Work with the HR Business Partners support this aspect		
		To support the internal Health Officers Group to enable a robust Health and Wellbeing plan		Quarterly update to Workforce Steering Group on key initiatives		
		Continued review of EDI priorities		Quarterly update to Workforce Steering Group on key initiatives/Annual report to SLT and Employment Committee		
	Payroll	To liaise with Warwickshire County Council to co-ordinate payroll and HR transactional services		Monthly		
		To ensure people management information – FTE, absence etc is up to date on a regular basis	Vacancies/ fixed term/ secondments	Quarterly		
		To co-ordinate pension information between WDC and WCC		Monthly		
To maintain and provide 'Self-Serve' to all staff and Councillors which includes Expenses, Overtime, Mileage, Annual Leave and training for staff		Access to report and information for all Managers/ HOS	Continued maintenance and improvements to system			
Learning & Development	To review key themes, to determine corporate training needs (WSG)	Annual data: Appraisals/ Training Hours/ Attendees/ Trends	Quarterly update with Workforce Steering Group/Annual Report to SLT including data			
	To support Service Areas to complete training needs to support Corporate Training through the LMS system /WSG/Appraisals		Annually through PDP's/ongoing/Interim update to Appraisal system planned for 25/26			
	To provide comprehensive, blended learning solutions for all staff and managers across the Council, including e-learning.		E-Learning/Hybrid/Face to Face			
Marketing & Communications	To coordinate and manage all corporate communications, both internally and externally, providing advice and assistance where necessary and in line with the Council's Marketing Strategy. I.e. Right information in the right format at the right time; ensure the reputation of the Council is paramount	As per measures on SAP	Aligns to Corporate Strategy 2030. Marketing Strategy update planned for 2025.			
	To support the Local Resilience Forum in delivering the County-wide Emergency Plan	Monthly stats	Attend regular meetings to share news/content coverage/Tweets per month/Facebook followers			
	Manage and deliver the council's emergency communications across all platforms		Co-ordination with key stakeholders to ensure correct and timely information aligned to the LRF plan.			
	To provide communications and marketing support across the Council to help promote services across all platforms	Monthly stats	Part of communications briefings between Councillors/Officers/Media and Design			
	To communicate and engage staff in corporate projects and initiatives to ensure they are positive ambassadors for the council's strategic aims.		Key projects updated at Managers Forum and through the intranet/5 things and 'Take 5/Monthly updates			
	To provide a comprehensive graphic design service to all service areas		Data updated as part of Monthly Media Statistics			
	To ensure management information relating to key areas of our communications is provided through the marketing updates	Monthly stats	Data updated as part of Monthly Media Statistics			
Website	To support Staff Voice and ensure they are utilised as a communication tool in the Council		6 weekly			
	To manage the corporate web site, developing best practice and ensuring service areas present information and digital services appropriately for our customers and is monitored accordingly	As per measures on SAP	WDC residents, businesses and visitors/Monitored monthly/ Review of capacity to support Digital Strategy and maintain monitoring of Website			
Service Management	Budgets	Monthly budget monitoring as part of Finance's corporate budgetary control		Monthly		
		Delivering service within budget		Quarterly Reviews		
		Annual review of the Equipment Reserve		Annually		
		Undertake Finance year-end training		Annually		
	Procurement	Attendance of key officers at in-house/external ongoing training		As and when required		
		Regular meetings with procurement officers		As and when required		
		Procurement project meetings for major projects		As and when required		
		Appropriate training for all officers undertaking procurement.		As and when required		
		Early involvement of the procurement team in relevant procurement exercises.		As and when required		
		Ensuring procurement undertaken is in accordance with the Council's Code of Procurement practice.				
	Contract Management	Identify contracts due for renewal during the year: Work Perks Contract/Print Contract				
		Training in relation to contract monitoring		As and when required		
		Quarterly update of the contract register		Or as contracts are planned for renewal		
	Audits	Plan for Audit programme 2025 - 2026: Equality and Diversity/Support for other audits across the Council		Equality and Diversity update provided to SLT/Emp Com Sept 2024 - Annual update		
		Implementation of outstanding audit recommendations		Ongoing/Update of Recruitment and Selection linked to RRR		
Risk Register	Review at departmental management meetings		Discussed where relevant for both immediate medium term and long term			
	Annual review		As part of Service Area Plan			
	Implementation of mitigation and control		As part of Service Area Plan			
	Team Operational Plan risks are reviewed monthly by the management team.		And discussed with teams at team meetings			
	Review of Risk register quarterly as part of 1-1 with Line Manager if required		Discussed where relevant for both immediate medium term and long term			
	Identifying new risks, managing existing risks, developing risk mitigation and removing redundant risks.		Discussed where relevant for both immediate medium term and long term			
Service Assurance	Actions arising out of Annual SA document		Reviewed annually for actions			
	Monitoring of customer measures		Reviewed annually for actions			
	Refresher training in procurement and finance procedures, where appropriate		Reviewed annually for actions			
	Update of Business Continuity Plan		Reviewed annually for actions			
Corporate Health and Safety	Ongoing reviews of risk assessments where relevant		Reviewed annually for actions			
Service Delivery	Responding to and supporting business change throughout the Council.		Aligned to Change Programme through promoting communications and engagement/implementation			
	Change in how services are delivered and impact on resource to manage the change		E.g. Restructures			

Workforce Planning and Development	Establishment	16.28 FTE		
	Vacancies	0		
	Continuing development of post holders		Part of Personal/Team Development	
	Recruitment to vacant posts.		Where required	
	Review critical posts and activities to ensure continuity of service.		Review of resilience in specific roles and capacity on resources based on increase in work programmes	
	Completion of the PDPs as part of the appraisal process		Part of Personal/Team Development	

Managing Planned Changes, Major Work streams, Projects and Budget Pressures

Key to : On track? (RAG)	
	Significant issues or delays that require immediate attention
	Potential issues or delays that require corrective actions
	On track, no immediate issues or risks
	Completed
	Not Started

Change/Project	Reference Code on Corporate Project List	Sponsor/Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Input Needed from other Services	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Planned End Date	On track? (RAG)	Comments
Alignment/Support for Digital Strategy - linked to Warwick 2030: Programme of transformation and digitalisation of Council services to take advantage of new technologies and promote efficient ways of working to improve the customer journey.		Tracy Dolphin	Link to capacity to support Website updates and monitoring	Working with CDS	All (Directly)	Defined as part of project plan.	April 2030	Amber	Corporate Initiative
Corporate HQ Relocation: Support for the possible future relocation of services and staff from S1		Tracy Dolphin	As part of Relocation Project Board	As part of Relocation Project Board	All (Directly)	Defined as part of project plan.	April 2029	Amber	Corporate Initiative
Preparation for Employment Rights Bill: Zero hours/Flexible Working/Statutory Sick Pay/Family leave/Protections from harrasment/Unfair Dismissal/Fire and Rehire/Sectoral Collective Bargaining/Trade Unions/Enforcement		Tracy Dolphin	To be reviewed	Governance	All (Directly)	Defined as part of RRR project and aligned to other themes within the People Strategy.	Bill to take effect no earlier than 2026 - Planned end date TBC	White	Policies are updated on a regular basis either due to legislative directive or for clarification. The changes based on the Bill are out for consultation at present. We attend regular HR updates with West Midlands Employers and our Legal team to ensure we are provided with up to date information to be able to prepare any changes within agreed timescales
Website Review Appraisal of the Council's website and hosting solution to identify potential improvements to usability, design, integration and resilience.		Matt Pearce/Nicki Curwood	CapEx - Unfunded Revenue - Unfunded	CDS	All (Directly)	Will be defined as part of project plan.	August 2025	Green	Project working with CDS to support the Communications team prior to the end of the existing Jadu Web CMS platform
Continued development of Payroll Bureau		Tracy Dolphin/Sue Firminger	Within existing budget		All (Directly)	Defined as part of People Strategy themes	Ongoing	Green	Part of the RRR project to ensure efficiencies in the system to support staff and Managers. This is ongoing as the system provides us with opportunities to develop aligned to WCC
Marketing and Communications Strategy Update		Nicki Curwood	Within existing budget		All (Directly)	Defined as part of People Strategy themes	June 2025	Amber	Implementation and launch within this timescale
Recruitment Remuneration and Retention Project (RRR)		Tracy Dolphin	Within existing budget		All (Directly)	Defined as part of People Strategy themes	Update to SLT/Employment Committee Sept 2025 (from actions identified in 2024)	Amber	
Equalities and Diversity Action Plan		Tracy Dolphin/ Daniel Keating	Within existing budget		All (Directly)	Defined as part of People Strategy themes	Update to SLT/Employment Committee Sept 2025 (from actions identified in 2024)	Green	
Continued support for Apprenticeship Programme		Tracy Dolphin	Within existing budget		All (Directly)	Defined as theme within RRR project	Update to SLT/Employment Committee Sept 2025 (from actions identified in 2024)	Green	
Support the delivery and promotion of the Corporate Strategy, principles and values		Tracy Dolphin/Nicki Curwood	Within existing budget		All (Directly or Indirectly)	Defined as part of the marketing strategy themes	2030	Green	
Change Management programme - engaging staff and promoting achievements		Tracy Dolphin	All services contribute to the change process and will need to outline areas for service growth or efficiencies which may impact on People and Communication Resources as a support service		All (Directly or Indirectly)	Defined as part of Corporate Strategy initiative	Ongoing	Green	

											Reporting Month
Ref	Type	Corporate Plan Links	Corporate Plan Measure	Measure	Target	Higher or lower is better?	Progress	Comments	Current Status	Lead Officer	Reporting Month
			Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Staff Turnover percentage of Headcount	3.3%	Lower	0.0%	Headcount Starters and Leavers information to be added			April-25
PC1	Measure	Effective Staff	Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Average Number of working days lost per employee (based on FTE)	2.65	Lower	0.0%	Within range		Karen Weatherburn	Q1 Apr - Jun
PC2	Measure	Effective Staff	Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Number of impressions across Social Media	1000000	Higher	0.0%	Within range		Tracy Dolphin	Q1 Apr - Jun
PC3	Measure	Maintain or Improve services	Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Impressions measure the amount of times our posts have been seen by people on social media.						Nicki Curwood	Q1 Apr - Jun
PC4	Measure	Maintain or Improve services	Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Engagement across Social Media This measures all types of engagement received to WDC posts on social media - reaction (likes), shares, comments, link clicks to the website.	62000	Higher	0.0%	Within range		Nicki Curwood	Q1 Apr - Jun
PC5	Measure	Maintain or Improve services	Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Engagement rate Looks at how many times our posts were engaged with compared to how many times they appeared in people's timelines	5.00%	Higher	0.0%	Within range		Nicki Curwood	Q1 Apr - Jun
PC6	Measure	Maintain or Improve services	Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Website satisfaction levels	60%	Higher	0.0%	Narrative to be added on specific numbers		Nicki Curwood	April-25
PC7	Measure	Maintain or Improve services	Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Web form completions	2500	Higher	0.0%	Within range		Nicki Curwood	As Heading
PC8	Measure	Maintain or Improve services	Linked to all measures and support of services from a support service	Task success in searches - achieve what you set out to do	60%	Higher	0.0%	Within range		Nicki Curwood	As Heading