



CABINET

Subject Heading:

***Refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy
2025-2027 and Beyond***

Cabinet Member:

Ray Morgon – Leader of Council

ELT Lead:

Andrew Blake-Herbert

Report Author and contact details:

***Joanne Budden – Assistant Director of
Human Resources and Organisational
Development***

Joanne Budden@havering.gov.uk

Policy context:

The refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy 2025–2027: *Choose Havering – Building the Future Together*. The strategy sets out a clear and ambitious roadmap to develop, attract, and retain a skilled, inclusive, and future-ready workforce that can meet the evolving needs of our residents and communities.

Financial summary:

***Strategy – No direct financial implications
required to date.***

Is this a Key Decision?

No

When should this matter be reviewed?

April 2028

Reviewing OSC:

NA

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

SUMMARY

This refreshed strategy builds on the foundations of the 2022–2025 Workforce Strategy and reflects Havering Council's continued commitment to becoming a modern, inclusive, and high-performing organisation. It is shaped by workforce feedback, legislative developments, and the Council's strategic priorities, and is designed to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the next three years.

The strategy is structured around five strategic people themes:

1. Organisational Design, Culture, Values and Behaviours
2. Leading Our Workforce
3. Developing Our Workforce
4. Treating Our Workforce Fairly with Kindness and Respect
5. Supporting Our Workforce

Each theme is underpinned by a detailed action plan, with clear milestones across three implementation phases:

- Year 3 (2025/26): Foundation and Initial Implementation
- Year 4 (2026/27): Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement
- Year 5 (2027): Consolidation and Planning for the 2027–2030 Strategy

The refreshed strategy introduces a more dynamic and inclusive tone, celebrating the Council's 60th anniversary and reinforcing our ICARE values—Integrity, Care, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone. It encourages a culture of accountability, ownership, and continuous improvement, while recognising the importance of wellbeing, equity, and innovation.

Key enhancements include:

- Expansion of the ICARE ambassador programme and annual recognition awards
- A strengthened 'Choose Havering' pledge, setting clear expectations for staff and leaders
- A refreshed PDR framework and mentoring programme
- New career pathways, succession planning, and apprenticeship opportunities
- A comprehensive EDI workforce plan and Total Reward Strategy
- Enhanced wellbeing support and HR transformation initiatives

Directorates and programme teams will be accountable for aligning their workforce plans with the strategy. Progress will be monitored through regular reporting, PDR alignment, and annual reviews. The strategy is a live document, designed to evolve in response to changing needs, financial pressures, and legislative developments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

Note and Support the following;

- The implementation of all elements of the refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy 2025–2027.
- The continued alignment of directorate and programme workforce plans with the strategic themes and action plans outlined in the strategy.
- The annual review and evolution of the strategy to ensure it remains responsive to organisational priorities, workforce feedback, and external developments.

REPORT DETAIL

The original People Strategy, adopted in November 2019, laid the foundation for a more agile and future-ready workforce. Despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council successfully transitioned to the Workforce Strategy 2022–2025, which supported transformation efforts and strengthened workforce capability.

The refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy 2025–2027 builds on this progress and introduces a more structured, forward-looking implementation plan. It reflects the Council’s 60-year legacy of embracing change and positions the workforce to meet future challenges through innovation, inclusivity, and accountability.

Key developments in the refreshed strategy include:

- A clear three-phase implementation roadmap (Foundation, Implementation, Consolidation).
- A stronger emphasis on values-led culture through the ICARE framework and the ‘Choose Havering’ pledge.
- Enhanced leadership development, career progression, and digital capability.
- A renewed focus on equity, diversity, inclusion, and staff wellbeing.
- A commitment to continuous improvement, with annual reviews and directorate-level accountability.

The strategy is supported by detailed themed action plans and a refreshed tone that is inclusive, motivational, and aligned with the Council’s ambition to be a “Great Place to Work.”

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision:

The refreshed strategy ensures the Council remains responsive to workforce challenges, emerging technologies, and evolving service demands. It reinforces a culture of accountability, collaboration, and continuous development, while maintaining a strong focus on inclusivity and staff wellbeing.

Other options considered:

Not applicable. The strategy refresh is a continuation of the Council's long-term workforce development approach

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

This report is seeking asking Cabinet to note and support:

- The implementation of all elements of the refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy 2025–2027.
- The continued alignment of directorate and programme workforce plans with the strategic themes and action plans outlined in the strategy.
- The annual review and evolution of the strategy to ensure it remains responsive to organisational priorities, workforce feedback, and external developments.

Much of the work required to implement the strategy will be undertaken by existing resources which have already been budgeted for including staffing, ICT systems and contracts such occupational health.

There may be a need for some targeted investment in leadership development, developing digital infrastructure, career pathways, and wellbeing initiatives. Use of reserve funding and/or integration into the annual budget cycle to ensure alignment with the Council's strategic priorities. Finance Business Partners will support modelling and risk assessment.

There is a risk that without a refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy, the Council could experience difficulties recruiting and retaining staff leading to an adverse impact on service delivery and spend in the form of reliance on agency.

Legal implications and risks:

The strategy aligns with current employment legislation, including the forthcoming Employment Rights Bill (2025/26). Legal advice will be sought to ensure compliance with all statutory obligations.

Human Resources implications and risks:

The strategy will be delivered through a collaborative approach involving HR, directorates, and programme teams. HR will act as a strategic partner, supporting implementation, monitoring progress, and embedding best practice across the organisation. All Leaders/Managers are accountable for the delivery of this strategy through their workforce plans.

Equalities implications and risks:

An Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) will be completed annually to ensure the strategy promotes fairness, eliminates discrimination, and advances equality of opportunity. The strategy includes specific actions to address diversity pay gaps, inclusive leadership, and equitable access to development opportunities.

Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks

The strategy includes a renewed focus on staff wellbeing, including the implementation of a new Occupational Health and EAP provider, and the development of workplace wellbeing solutions. These initiatives aim to improve mental and physical health, reduce absenteeism, and enhance staff engagement.

Environmental and climate change implications and risks:

The strategy supports the Council's sustainability agenda through flexible working, digital transformation, and reduced reliance on physical office space. These actions contribute to lowering the Council's carbon footprint and promoting environmentally responsible practices.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Guidance on completing this section can be found on this link:

<https://onesourceict.sharepoint.com/sites/SustIntranet/SitePages/Committee-Guidance.aspx>

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet, 30th June 2025

- Cabinet Report - Workforce Strategy Refresh - Appendix A – Final
- ICARE Values and Behaviours Framework
- Choose Havering Pledge