

HR STRATEGY

2023 - 2026





ENSURING WE HAVE THE RIGHT PEOPLE WITH THE RIGHT SKILLS IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME, AND TAKING A PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH TO DELIVERING THE WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY'S GOALS.

We live and work in a time of great change, and any strategy that sets itself in stone is likely to be outdated very quickly. With this in mind, our new HR Strategy will need to remain flexible and adaptable. Elements of it may evolve to reflect a changing environment or changing priorities as we work through to 2026.

The Combined Authority has seen significant change during and since the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside responding to the new political leadership and revised Mayoral objectives. The organisation has continued to operate flexibly, amending our plans to support people, organisations, communities and our partners across the region as the impact of the pandemic continued to unfold and as the current cost of living crisis emerged. The current Business Plan for 2022/23, and future plans, will build on the achievements the Combined Authority has made since its establishment, but it also sets a new direction.

The purpose of the Combined Authority is to support the region to grow and deliver on its shared ambitions and priorities. To achieve this, we are focused on delivering five core objectives.

Each section of the strategy sets out what our objectives are, the actions we will take, and the indicators we will use to gauge success by 2026.

CORE OBJECTIVES



Creating West of England Sustainable Transport (WEST)



Tackling the climate and ecological emergencies



Securing decent jobs and training



Increasing the availability of affordable places to call home



Putting the West of England on the map for global and national success

UNDERPINNING EVERYTHING WE DO IS:

OUR VISION

The West of England is recognised globally as a region of innovation and opportunity, where all residents can thrive, businesses flourish and the environment is protected for future generations.

OUR PURPOSE

Bring the West of England together, to open up opportunities to improve people's lives now and in the future.

OUR MISSION

Leading work to ensure that residents have better skills, more job opportunities and a better quality of life.

THEME 1: SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE:

To develop and sustain an organisational structure that enables the ongoing delivery of organisational objectives and ensures organisational resilience.

ACTIONS:

ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a workforce planning strategy and tool, and an approach to workforce planning that enables the organisation to take a medium- to long-term view of resourcing needs within each Directorate • Undertake annual people planning exercises to identify future structural opportunities for improvement, succession management issues, top talent, development requirements and recruitment needs • Work with Finance to review and monitor that contract types reflect funding • Support leaders in creating and facilitating change programmes/projects leading to enhanced institutional capability, performance and wellbeing • Through the Staff Survey and appraisals, identify areas where leadership skills are falling short of the required standards and implement improvement plans
WIDER ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop process maps that demonstrate key milestones for organisational change and resourcing elements e.g. job evaluation within managing change policy and process and awareness of timescales and who needs to be informed and when i.e. Finance • Use information from workforce planning to inform process and timeframes • Define and develop a set of principles for organisational structure
SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies and methods to recruit and retain key senior management staff • Develop strategy and action plans for future proofing the organisation to ensure that if a future mass exodus of Directors happens, what would we do • Ensure the appropriate staff development interventions (including development of competencies, coaching, mentoring, 360 feedback, formal development programmes) are effectively delivered for managers and leaders at all levels of the organisation

THEME 2: PERFORMANCE, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure we have the people with the right skills, knowledge and experience who are effectively led and organised to deliver the Business Plan, both now and in the future.

We want to be committed to the pursuit of knowledge and the development of skills and be recognised as an employer that invests in people's development and progression, whilst also ensuring that we are competitive within the recruitment market.

We will aim to provide first-class personal and career development for staff at all levels of the organisation using a variety of providers and platforms.

Decisions around investment in staff development will be made on a fair basis, taking account of how such development fits with the achievement of objectives. Staff development requirements will be considered on an annual basis through the Personal Development Review (PDR) process.

Fair processes will underpin decisions around the promotion and development of staff.

HR will ensure that we have a workforce planning process in place across all levels of the organisation, including senior levels, to mitigate any organisational vulnerability in succession management and to ensure we effectively identify talent.



LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	<p>Through an organisation-wide training needs analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key themes of learning needs across the organisation and recommend solutions to addressing the needs • Review the all-staff learning opportunities, previously addressed through the Employee Development Programme, to identify future ways to provide all-staff learning • Review and recommend options for supporting staff through coaching and mentoring opportunities and explore options such as an informal mentoring programme or equivalent • Identify the skills available internally within the organisation that can be shared across the organisation • Review and identify hard and soft skills required within the organisation • Research, recommend and implement options for leadership training, for both current and future leaders, establishing options with university/college partnerships and potential bespoke programmes • Identify generic topics of learning that enable employees to understand how the organisation works e.g. how finance/funding works <p>Alongside the training needs analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the learning and development opportunities for staff are appropriate and balanced in accordance with the L&D budget available • Review statutory and mandatory learning to ensure fitness for purpose, and that it meets the organisation-wide Health & Safety needs, and review monitoring processes to ensure compliance • Use the performance management platform to enable learning needs to be collated and reviewed to enable solutions to be identified • Fully make sure of the people planning process to spot talent and develop staff for future leadership roles
HR-DELIVERED OR HR-SUPPORTED LEARNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, create and deliver HR learning topics • Develop new interventions that support the institutional strategy, for example, in areas such as unconscious bias, living the values, digital awareness and capability, and a range of compliance-related programmes • Ensure our staff development plans are fully integrated with individual appraisals and learning management system

- Review the PDR and managing performance/appraisal process to ensure it is as effective and usable as possible
- Review our narrative as an organisation regarding employer of choice (i.e. on careers site/recruitment templates) that promote what the Combined Authority offers in terms of learning and development
- Maintain close attention on the quality and quantity of personal development plans that arise from annual appraisals and identify common learning themes
- Identify generic topics of learning that enable employees to understand how the organisation works i.e. how finance/funding works, Project Management
- Review the L&D corporate budget, taking into consideration what other Combined Authorities and unitary authorities have allocated
- Following any budget review, review the individual learning policy to establish fitness for purpose (e.g. whether other qualifications would be supported)
- Develop an approach that enables staff to understand what learning and development is needed for career progression, and the opportunities available to access the learning



THEME 3: RESOURCING

OBJECTIVE:

To effectively recruit the right quantity and quality of staff that we need to support the Combined Authority's purpose.

Good resourcing starts with good planning, and HR will ensure that any decisions to recruit are only made following a full consideration of the options available. If we decide to recruit, we will only recruit individuals who demonstrate the right values, skills, knowledge, experience and motivation. We want our recruitment processes to be efficient and effective, giving candidates at all levels an excellent experience in their interactions with our organisation.

HR will ensure that our pay, rewards and other benefits are competitive with the markets in which we seek to compete for the recruitment, motivation and retention of talent, as well as ensuring pay and grading is fair, competitive and consistent across the organisation. We will ensure that our recruitment and selection processes provide high quality and diverse candidates.

RETENTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create, devise, implement and roll out a retention policy • Consider schemes/rewards for promoting the Combined Authority as an employer of choice (e.g. employment referral scheme) • Set and agree turnover rate (e.g. 10%) for the organisation • Review, manage and maintain an appropriate level of interim usage and costings • Support the agreed turnover rate by establishing methods to retain talents within the organisation that enables 'available' staff to be identified easily
PAY AND BENEFITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review pay and benefits packages to ensure they are appropriate across all levels • Consider and review benefits such as market supplements, refer a friend • Benchmark our approach to pay and reward against other Combined Authorities and competitors • Undertake Equal Pay reporting as required as the organisation grows and create action plans as required
ATTRACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement the Careers Site, including branding, messaging EVP, EDI and early careers offer • Review the Apprenticeship scheme and supporting documentation to continue its implementation with increased numbers • Review, develop and implement a process for internships • Review and continue to implement the fast stream civil service scheme, ensuring the process is effective and documented • Research and consider longer term options such as graduate schemes
RECRUITMENT LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a resourcing learning programme to ensure that all recruiting managers have the full skill set to implement the recruitment process and ensure a consistent and successful approach to recruitment e.g. learning topics – interviewing, writing job descriptions, non-conscious bias • To establish whether a mandatory learning programme is required before being able to recruit, including use of modules via WeLearn and use WeLearn as the platform to access/book the learning • Continue to obtain and review internal and external feedback on the resourcing process, and identify areas of improvement

INTERNAL RECRUITMENT PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued review and improvement of recruitment process to ensure a positive, effective and efficient recruitment experience for candidates, line management and HR staff • Enhance interview process (interview process, panel best practice, non-conscious bias) • Continued review of Tribepad functionality and application process • External advertising and effective use of social media to enhance attraction • Work with stakeholders to ensure that recruitment advertising is effective, focused and good value for money • Develop a Recruitment Code of Practice to ensure effective delivery of good outcomes to recruitment campaigns • Ensure we have effective methods in place to attract international talent • Review our approach to the recruitment and employment of ad hoc and associate staff to ensure legal/regulatory compliance, consistency of process and value for money • Ensure job description and person specs are accurate, are excellent quality and reflect their grade fairly and consistently • Conduct a review of job title families to ensure a consistent approach to job titles and respective grades
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with stakeholders to ensure that recruitment maximises potential interest from a diverse range of candidates • Where necessary, take positive action through our recruitment and selection activity to make sure our staff profiles reflect an inclusive and diverse community • Actively and positively promote EDI through recruitment process i.e. diversity with interview panels and include within training • Create, report, monitor and present recruitment KPI data

THEME 4: OPERATING EXCELLENCE

OBJECTIVE:

To develop and maintain effective and efficient HR processes.

HR will develop and maintain excellent HR, payroll and pension processes. We will ensure that our policies are clearly written, well communicated, well understood and effectively applied.

ACTIONS:

HR SERVICE TO THE ORGANISATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and promote service level agreements for key elements of HR customer processes (i.e. resourcing, HR inbox)• Ensure that all staff have easy access to up-to-date and clearly articulated policies and procedures which are well understood and consistently and accurately applied• Ensure that managers are provided with relevant and easy to use management information reports and reporting tools for all HR-related information• Research and implement online technologies wherever possible to increase efficiency with HR processes• Ensure a 'right first time' culture in the way we do our work• Review and enhance the HR Connect pages to ensure continued fitness for purpose• Produce and publish HR and Resourcing KPI metrics for the HR department's performance and for the performance of the organisation
HR TEAM DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure all our HR staff are appropriately skilled and motivated, and provide an excellent HR service to the organisation• Ensure that all HR team members identify learning needs• Continuously review quarterly key HR platforms to ensure fitness for purpose e.g. Tribepad, PDR process, LMS, LinkedIn approach
HR STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formally review the HR structure on a yearly basis to ensure that our ability to provide the HR service is possible• Informally review the HR structure against the workplan every three months

THEME 5: ENGAGEMENT, INCLUSION AND CULTURE

OBJECTIVE:

To successfully engage our staff in the achievement of the Combined Authority's strategic objectives.

We want to make sure that the organisation is not just a fair and equitable employer, but that it is seen by colleagues as a wonderful place to work.

We want our staff feel proud to work here, feel valued, are engaged in the work they do, and are managed by managers who are engaged, focused and supportive.

HR will facilitate, develop and help to maintain a culture of excellence, where equality of opportunity exists for all to fulfil their potential.

We will work in accordance with our core values of collaboration, ambition, creativity and support, and make sure that all of our staff do as well, through encouraging a culture where inappropriate behaviours are challenged, improvements are made, and the values match what people experience.

HR will make sure that our HR policies and procedures recognise and embrace the diversity of our communities and encourage an inclusive and collaborative culture.



ENGAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to have high levels of staff satisfaction and engagement through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Working with colleagues in Internal Communications to develop and provide staff engagement interventions so that staff are aligned with, and have opportunities to influence, the organisation's strategic objectives and future direction ◦ Regularly seeking organisational feedback via staff surveys, reviewing action plans agreed by CLT and ensuring the HR strategy and priorities within it takes into account any actions from staff surveys ◦ Working with colleagues in Internal Communications to champion changes to our culture by being the leader of our values and associated behaviours ◦ Maintaining a positive relationship with our recognised trade unions and other employee representatives when appropriate ◦ Conduct regular staff surveys and pulse surveys
INCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish methods to raise awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion into everyday activity, ensuring we are non-discriminatory in our systems and processes, that we comply with legal obligations, and we are seen as a fair and equitable employer • As we grow as an organisation, monitor, audit and report on our equality and diversity metrics, and develop and deliver plans for improvement in performance where necessary • Set EDI targets and set up methods to monitor and review our achievement against them
CULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that we have a culture where all leaders (operational and political) work together to prioritise organisational delivery and enable a culture of finding solutions together.



THEME 6: HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

OBJECTIVE:

To maintain and develop the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff.

HR will work with colleagues within Occupational Health, as well as our Health and Safety representatives to ensure that our staff are provided with a safe and healthy environment in which to work. Where possible we will not only maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff but will look to provide a culture and environment in which staff can take greater personal responsibility for their own health, safety and wellbeing.

HEALTH & WELLBEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor and where necessary take action to alleviate workplace stress and mental health issues• Proactively take forward the actions within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy
HEALTH & SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and implement health and safety compliance monitoring processes to ensure all staff complete the statutory and mandatory training• Review health and safety training on a yearly basis to ensure training is effective• Maintain a focus on safety through the PDR process

PRIORITIES

HR STRATEGY PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED AND AGREED AT CLT 28 MARCH 2023:

THEME	PRIORITY	WHO	TIMEFRAMES
RESOURCING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review resourcing process (substantive & interim) Review employer brand Develop an attraction strategy Review apprenticeship process & documentation, to expand and promote the organisation's apprenticeship offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing HR & Comms/ Marketing HR HR 	
ORGANISATION WIDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh the values and our vision, mission & purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Led by CLT Working groups 	
PERFORMANCE, LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the organisational employee learning & development approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR & CLT 	
HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Health & Wellbeing Strategy and associated action plan, and start to take forward relevant actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR 	

Contact the team

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