

Agenda

Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Monday, 14 February 2022, 2.00 pm
County Hall, Worcester

All County Councillors are invited to attend and participate

This document can be provided in alternative formats such as Large Print, an audio recording or Braille; it can also be emailed as a Microsoft Word attachment. Please contact Scrutiny on telephone number 01905 844965 or by emailing scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Monday, 14 February 2022, 2.00 pm, Council Chamber

Membership

Councillors:

Cllr Mike Rouse (Chairman), Cllr James Stanley (Vice Chairman), Cllr Mel Allcott, Cllr Aled Evans, Cllr Laura Gretton, Cllr Peter Griffiths, Cllr Emma Marshall, Cllr Natalie McVey and Cllr Craig Warhurst

Agenda

Item No	Subject	Page No
1	Apologies and Welcome	
2	Declarations of Interest and of any Party Whip	
3	Public Participation <i>Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance in writing or by e-mail indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case day Friday 11 February). Further details are available on the Council's website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone number/e-mail address listed in this agenda and on the website.</i>	
4	Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting	
5	Smarter, Healthier, Greener Ways of Working	To follow
6	Recruitment and Retention of Staff	1 - 36
7	Corporate Procurement Strategy Overview	To follow
8	Work Programme	37 - 40

Agenda produced and published by the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP. To obtain further information or hard copies of this agenda, please contact Emma James/Jo Weston 01905 844965, email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the [Council's Website](#)

Date of Issue: Friday, 4 February 2022

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CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 14 FEBRUARY 2022

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF STAFF

Summary

1. The Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel has requested an overview of the Council's position on recruitment and retention of staff, to include an overview of the challenges the Council face, recruitment to specialised roles, vacancy management, and the use of consultants, which is part of the Panel's work programme.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services and Communication and the Assistant Director for Human Resources, Organisational Development and Engagement have been invited to attend the meeting.

Background

3. The [latest official labour market and migration statistics](#), along with other forward looking survey indicators (e.g. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development), provide warning signals that rising recruitment and retention difficulties and a higher cost of living look set to combine to drive pay inflation higher in the new year.
4. The official data shows that vacancies have risen to another record high in most industries and now total well in excess of a million and various employer surveys suggest the surge in hiring activity looks set to continue alongside a low incidence of redundancies.
5. 2022 will be a challenging year for all employers as they seek to develop and retain their current workforce to mitigate skill and labour shortages.
6. In its '[local government workforce summary data – Nov 2021](#)' the Local Government Association (LGA) reported on recruitment and retention difficulties at a high level as follows:



7. Worcestershire County Council as an employer faces similar challenges to those felt by all employers nationally. The Council's new Workforce Strategy 2021 – 2024 (Appendix 1) recognises the need to be ambitious in its approach to rise to these challenges, with Recruitment and Retention as one of the 5 key pillars.

8. The Council's priority is to ensure it has the right people, with the right skills, in the right roles and that they are empowered and supported to exceed expectations.

9. The Council is actively aspiring through its Workforce Strategy to be an employer of choice through the following activities:

Recruiting the right people, in the right way:

- Finding creative ways to attract new employees who share the Council's values whilst focusing on inclusion, equality and diversity.
- Providing a great candidate experience through an improved recruitment process, including digital recruitment and onboarding.
- An inspiring induction for all new employees which is tailored to their role.
- Values and behaviours recognised alongside professional accreditations.

Retaining talented and high performing employees:

- Flexible total reward packages which recognise the skills, capabilities and achievements of employees and can be personalised to their needs.
- Employee benefits portal which is linked to performance and is flexible to adapt through employee life changes.
- Tailored total reward statements which support the growth and retention of talent.
- Clear and flexible generic job descriptions.
- Recognition and celebration of the achievements of the Council's amazing employees.

Development of a compelling employee value proposition:

- Identify how the Council family is unique and what it stands for.
- Showcase the key reasons why the Council's employees are proud and motivated to be part of the family; such as the Council's inspiring vision, distinctive culture and flexible working.

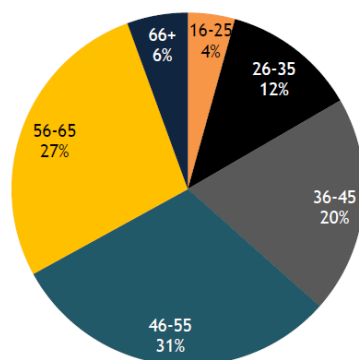
10. The Council's Human Resources Operations Partners are currently working with

relevant directorate leadership teams to create annual workforce plans which address workforce capacity and capability and future workforce demand. Within this process, Assistant Directors have identified their 'recruitment hotspots' so they are able to put in place 'tactical' interventions to recruit. These 'hotspots' are defined as having permanency less than 85% and where there have been failed recruitment campaigns. For each of these areas a brief overview is provided in Appendix 2.

11. An important factor to consider when looking at workforce planning is the age profile of the workforce. The following chart shows the age demographics for the Council at quarter 4 2020/2021:

AGE PROFILE

16-25	121
26-35	345
36-45	558
46-55	853
56-65	768
66+	156



12. Over 27% of the Council's workforce are over 56 years of age. A key focus of workforce planning therefore must be succession planning, horizon scanning for potential future skills gaps and leadership development. This will enable a proactive rather than reactive approach to employees leaving the organisation. Critical to this is the Council's current Apprenticeships Strategy which is a key programme linked to succession planning.

Recruitment and Retention - Tactical Interventions

13. As an employer, the Council is able to directly respond to acute recruitment or retention challenges which is critical to maintaining staffing levels to meet service demand. It is important to emphasise that a number of these can only be used where there is a business case to support its use. This would include evidence to show failed recruitment campaigns, market pay benchmarking or acute levels of vacancies (<85% permanency).

Direct Interventions:

Market Forces Supplement

14. It is essential that the Council is able to attract and retain high performing staff with the skills, knowledge and experience to meet the changing needs in service delivery. There are times when the grading for a post results in an inability to successfully recruit to or retain staff in particular posts. In such cases it may be appropriate to pay a market force supplement in addition to the salary to ensure that such a post is filled. Such a payment is lawful under the Equality Act 2010 where there is evidence to justify that market factors are the "material reason" for the post attracting a higher rate of pay than other posts graded similarly.

15. At quarter 4 2020/21 Worcestershire County Council paid a total cost of £219,891 per annum. This is equivalent to less than 0.003% of the Councils total salary bill.

Welcome and Retention Payments

16. Often a discretionary scheme in its application, introduced as a positive measure to attract and retain staff in areas where there are acute recruitment hotspots and often where there are national shortages, these payments often enable the Council to be competitive against market with evidence to support any payments. These payments tend to be reviewed on an annual basis.

17. One case study to show the success of this type of intervention is social workers in Children's Services. In November 2017 qualified social worker permanency was at 64% with a significant reliance on agency staffing. As a result of this the Council introduced a welcome and retention scheme which offered up to £3,000 to join the Council and £3,000 for staying. The combination of salary plus market force supplements and the welcome and retention payment placed total remuneration in an upper quartile position when compared to regional partners. In introducing the scheme, the agreed target was to achieve more than 85% permanency and to sustain that level which would significantly reduce the reliance on agency staffing.

18. To show how successful this scheme has been, as of December 2021:

- Overall Social Work permanent staffing is 263.7 FTE, **92% of positions are permanently filled**
- Social Work frontline practitioners permanent staffing is currently at 167.7 FTE; **88% of positions are permanently filled**
- Social Work Management posts permanent staffing is currently at 57.76 FTE, **99% of positions are permanently filled**

Indirect Interventions

Social Work Academy

19. The Social Work Academy (SWA) was launched in January 2018 as a direct result of Children's Services receiving an Inadequate Ofsted rating. The SWA purpose is to provide opportunities for social workers in training, qualified social workers & social work leaders to develop and maintain their skills, knowledge, and values throughout their careers in Worcestershire to support with career development and progression.

20. There are clear progression pathways for qualified and unqualified staff. The Social Work Academy is split into four faculties and is responsible for learning programmes including assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE), Social Worker and Management development, together with Student placements and Practice Education.

21. The SWA works in line with Social Work frameworks such as the Professional Capability Framework, Knowledge Skills Statements and Social Work England professional standards.

22. The SWA is a key enabler to the Council's recruitment & retention of excellent permanent social work staff to meet current and future demands for service provision

and nurtures excellence in social work and to support the development of students, Newly Qualified Social Workers and practice education.

23. The Council has a defined route for a Non-Qualified Social Workers (NQSWS) 'grow our own' recruitment process with Worcestershire Children First (WCF) and the People Directorate. The Council works with local Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and Universities within the West Midlands Teaching partnership to source high quality social work student placement. The Council offers excellent learning opportunities and the majority of these students become NQSWS's completing the ASYE.

24. In 2020 the SWA agreed a clear and robust process with WCF and the People Directorate to recruit final placement students to the ASYE programme and a clear process was agreed with Social Work Opportunities as part of the Workforce Strategy. To date 49 final placement students in WCF and 27 final placement students in the People Directorate were successful in gaining employment after they qualified. This number is likely to increase and there is a clear plan from when the SWA identify placement with local HEI and Universities and this is part of the workforce plan.

Apprenticeships

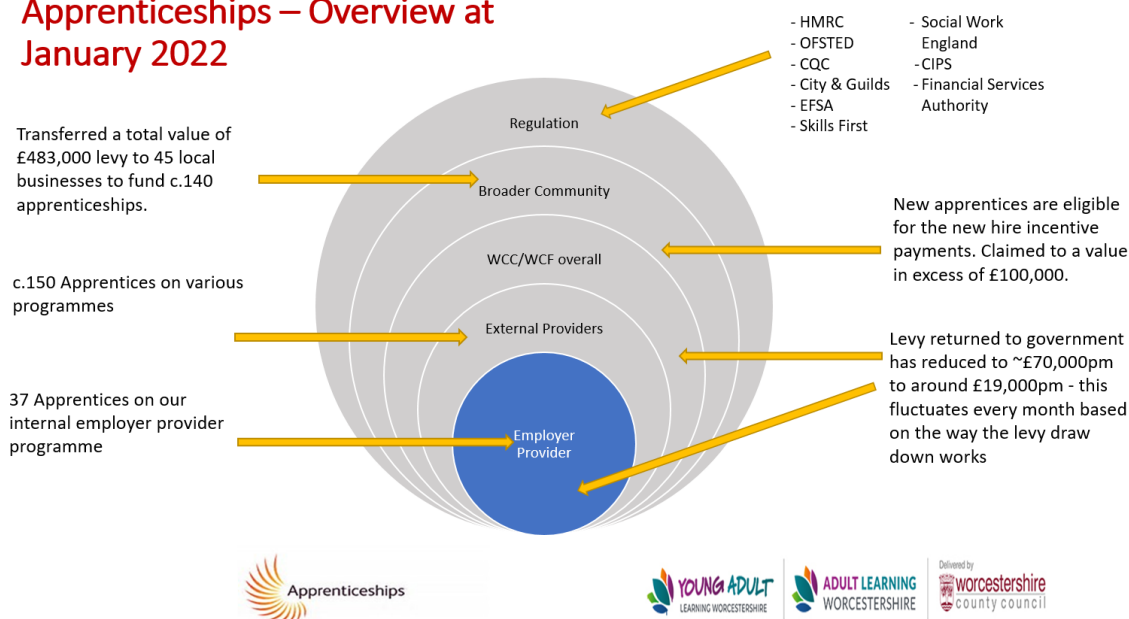
25. The Council approved a new apprenticeship strategy in 2020 which focussed on creating a highly trained, ambitious and flexible workforce in order to continue to attract and retain the talent to live and work in Worcestershire.

26. This strategic approach to attract, retain and develop the Council's workforce to meet our communities' needs, both now and in the future, is a vital aspect of the Council's future workforce strategy.

27 Apprenticeships can make a positive contribution by creating opportunities for people to develop, and by providing a framework for the workforce, of all ages, to undertake relevant qualifications, helping to raise skills, performance and aspirations.

28. Significant progress has been made in the use of apprenticeships in the Council since implementation of the strategy. The following provides an overview of the current status:

Apprenticeships – Overview at January 2022



29. The use of internal and external apprenticeships continues to be a critical recruitment and retention initiative and remains a focus of the Council’s workforce strategy.

Use of Agency and Consultants

30. In the year-to-date at quarter 3 Worcestershire County Council has spent £2,840,317 on agency staff and £6,887,880 on consultancy. Whilst spend appears significant, it is important to contextualise this.

31. The use of agency staffing/consultancy is not an uncommon practice in local authorities. This is due to the need to often recruit to short term specific projects or specialist roles. What is important is to ensure agency staffing is not long term with true agency length of service being less than 3 months; this can extend to 6 months, but it would normally be expected to see an agreed exit strategy at this stage.

Turnover

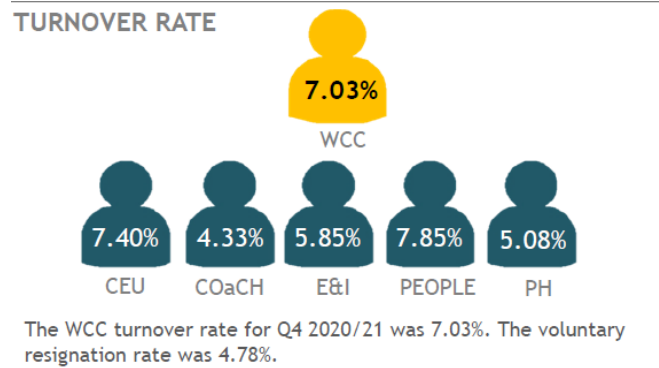
32. There’s no set point at which employee turnover starts to have a negative impact on an organisation’s performance. Much depends on the type of labour markets in which the Council competes. Where it’s relatively easy to find and train new employees quickly and at reasonably low cost, it’s possible to sustain high quality levels of service provision despite having a high turnover rate.

33. However, especially where skills are relatively scarce, where recruitment is costly or where it takes several weeks to fill a vacancy, turnover is likely to be problematic. The more valuable the employees in question - for instance where individuals have specialist skills or where they have developed strong relationships with customers - the more damaging the resignation, particularly when they move on to work for competitors.

34. The Council’s Human Resources, Organisational Development and Engagement Team regularly monitor employee turnover rates and it is understood how these affect

the organisation's performance and ability to achieve its strategic goals. In 2020 the Council invested in HR Operations Partners who work directly with directorates on workforce planning and specific recruitment and retention practices. The reasons behind turnover may highlight issues within the workforce such as dissatisfaction with career progression opportunities and so continued engagement with the workforce is key as supported by the Council's annual survey which explores areas specific to recruitment and retention.

35. The Council at Q.4 2020/21 had a Turnover Rate of 7.03%. The voluntary turnover rate was 4.78%.



36. Current in year figures at Q3. 2021/22 is 6.30% with a projected end of year position of approx. 8%. In the LGAs workforce report published November 2021, the average turnover for Local Authorities is 13.6%.

Workforce Engagement

37. The Strategic Leadership Team and Chief Officer Group must strive to address any issues and seek to make sure Council employees experience good work, reflected in overall job quality.

38. [CIPD define good work](#) as follows:

- is fairly rewarded and gives people the means to securely make a living
- allows for work–life balance
- gives opportunities to develop and ideally a sense of fulfilment
- provides a supportive environment with constructive relationships
- gives employees the voice and choice they need to shape their working lives
- is physically and mentally healthy.

39. Job quality can be affected by a range of factors, including employment legislation, labour market conditions, HR practices, the quality of people management and by workers themselves. The [CIPD Good Work Index](#) gives insights which will help the Council as an organisation to improve and protect job quality at every level.

40. Employee engagement goes beyond motivation and simple job satisfaction. It can be seen as a combination of commitment to the organisation and its values and a willingness to help colleagues.

41. As part of the Workforce Strategy, the Council is developing its approach to employee engagement.

42. A first step on that journey is the reintroduction of the Annual Staff Survey and a series of shorter pulse checks throughout each year.

43. The Annual Staff Survey 2022 launches in February 2022, with a return to pre COVID-19 questions, and it is critical to enable understanding of the recruitment and retention priorities of the Council's employees in the context of the national and regional recruitment challenges.

44. The Annual Staff Survey 2022 will specifically explore 3 areas in relation to recruitment and retention, testing what attracted an employee, what is important now and what is important in 2 years' time.

45. These are as follows and the full survey questions can be seen in Appendix 3:

- Thinking about what attracted you to join the Council, please RANK the (3) factors that were most important to you
- Thinking about why you stay working for the Council, please RANK the (3) factors that are most important to you
- Thinking ahead, 2 years from now, please RANK the (3) factors that will be most important to keeping you motivated to work for the Council

46. Against these questions, a number of options for selection are then available as follows:

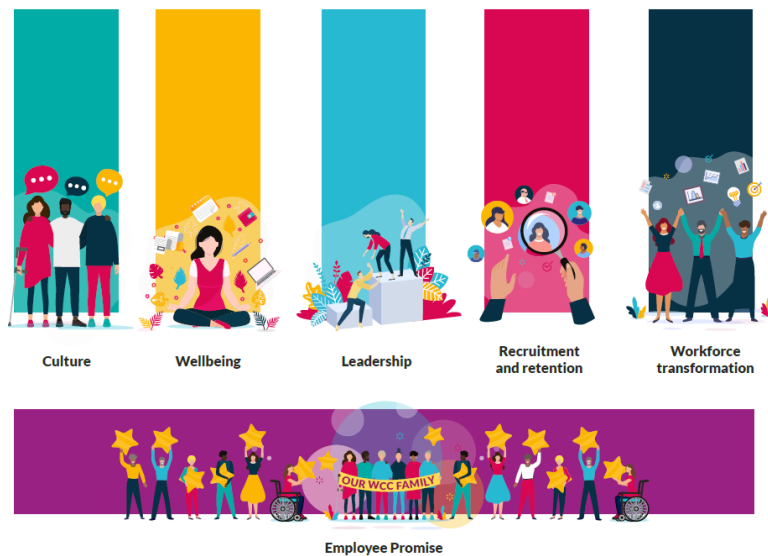
- Benefits (inc. holiday and other entitlements)
- Career pathway / opportunities for progression
- Challenging work
- Development and training opportunities
- Flexible working
- I feel that I can make a difference
- Job security
- Location
- Pension
- Salary
- Variety of work
- Other - please describe

Future Focus

47. Of upmost importance is to implement the Council's Workforce Strategy 2021-2024 in full. The three-year workforce strategy is the blueprint for HR, OD and Engagement and will be used to drive forward the aspiration of a Worcestershire County Council family.

48. Each service area is using the strategy to develop their annual workforce plans, supported by their HR Operations Partners. This will then be cascaded into team and individual's objectives as part of the performance review process, creating a golden thread throughout the organisation.

49. The Council's pillars of success, underpinned by the employee promise, reflect the organisational workforce goals. The Directorate believes focusing on these pillars of success will ensure the Council is an employer of choice, which enables building a high performing and flexible workforce, which is responsive to the needs of the people of Worcestershire both now and in the future.



50. The Council will enhance candidate attraction and retention of existing workforce, through the development of compelling Employee Value Proposition, underpinned by the Council's robust Total Reward Strategy.

51. The refreshed employee value proposition (EVP) will set out the Council's unique set of benefits that an employee receives in return for the skills, capabilities, and experience they bring to the organisation, improving the ability to attract and retain staff.

52. The Council is focusing on delivering its strategic ambition to create a climate of change to increase the embedding of equality, diversity and inclusion across the Council, as an employer, commissioner and service provider.

53. An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has been developed, and associated Governance, which will enable creation of a diverse and inclusive workforce which is representative of the communities served, ensure the services we commissioned or provided by the Council meet the needs of customers and identify and tackle all forms of discrimination and promote a culture of inclusion. The Council is currently recruiting to our Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Manager role, who will facilitate the delivery of the EDI Strategy.

Purpose of the Meeting

54. The Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- Consider the information provided in the report
- Determine any comments the Panel would wish to make to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services and Communication
- Agree whether any further Scrutiny is required at this stage.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Workforce Strategy 2021-2024

Appendix 2 – Summary of known recruitment hotspots January 2022

Appendix 3 – Annual workforce survey 2022

Contact Points

Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 11 March 2021 [weblink to Minutes and Agenda](#)

Our Workforce Strategy

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Worcestershire
County Council

2021 - 2024



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Our current workforce

39% of employees feel valued for their contribution to the council

There are 1646 full time equivalent employees and a headcount of 2753, reflecting a high number of part time workers

93% of mid-year performance reviews were rated successful or above

59% of our workforce are front line staff

5% of our workforce are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds

7% of our workforce have a disability

Average employee salary is £22,604

Employees took an average of 7.44 sickness days

71% of our workforce is female

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58% of our workforce are over 46

Employee turnover is 10%

63% of our workforce have worked for WCC for over 5 years

31% of our workforce attended management and leadership courses in the last year

Top 2 absence reasons were musculoskeletal and stress.



What do we need to look like in the future?

Our workforce vision is that we will be an employer of choice and will have:

- A culture where our employees live and breathe our vision and values through everything they do and they want to contribute to our success.
- An environment where our employees perform at their best and demonstrate our behaviours on a daily basis.
- A workforce which has personal and collective resilience by putting employee wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.
- Visible leadership at all levels from leaders who have the freedom to act; making us a high performing organisation.
- The right people, with the right skills, in the right roles who are empowered and supported to succeed.
- A flexible workforce which is responsive to the needs of the people of Worcestershire both now and in the future.



Our values

Our values make us who we are, and we want our employees to live and breathe them in everything they do.

We plan to review our values and behaviours as part of our workforce strategy to ensure they show who we want to be, and they are integrated into the way we work.



Customer focus

“Putting customer need at the heart of everything we do”

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Freedom within boundaries

“Courage to make constructive change”

Can do culture

“Being proactive to achieve excellence”

Pillars of success

The three-year workforce strategy is the blueprint for HR, OD and Engagement and will be used to drive forward our aspiration of a WCC family. Each service area will use this strategy to develop their annual workforce plans, supported by their HR Operations Partners. This will then be cascaded into team and individual's objectives as part of the performance review process, creating a golden thread throughout the organisation.

Our pillars of success, underpinned by the employee promise, reflect our organisational workforce goals. We believe focusing on our pillars of success will ensure we are an employer of choice. Enabling us to build a high performing and flexible workforce, which is responsive to the needs of the people of Worcestershire both now and in the future.



Culture



Wellbeing



Leadership



**Recruitment
and retention**



**Workforce
transformation**



Employee Promise

Culture

Develop a WCC family culture where our employees live and breathe our vision and values through everything they do.

We will build our performance culture through:

Development of our values and behaviours:

- Review and refresh our vision, values and behaviours.
- Encourage our workforce to live and breathe our values in everything they do.
- Continue to embed our vision and values through all workforce processes including recruitment, onboarding and performance management.
- Develop a compelling and competitive employee offer which underpins our WCC family culture.

Culture development:

- Promote collaboration across teams, innovative thinking and proactive feedback.
- Enable our employees to make decisions and have freedom within boundaries.
- Develop and promote leadership qualities across all roles including technical leadership as well as those in more traditional leadership roles.
- Manage performance effectively and recognise and reward high achievers.
- Celebrate diversity and encourage equality and inclusivity amongst all of our workforce.
- One clear message for all staff which is communicated from the top down.
- Encourage a reflective approach so we are responsive to workforce needs and can adapt to change.
- Build a safe environment where we can all talk openly about any issues or wellbeing needs.



Wellbeing

Build a workforce which has personal and collective resilience with mental, social and physical wellbeing at the centre of everything we do.

Our wellbeing strategy includes mental, social and physical wellbeing and will be delivered by the following activities:

A competitive wellbeing offer:

- Wellbeing days, wellbeing champions and mental health first aiders in place in all areas of the Council.
- Physical and virtual safe zones for people to talk and ask for support for their mental, social and physical wellbeing.
- A flexible benefit offering with a range of wellbeing support included such as physiotherapy, mental health support, gym membership and annual flu vaccinations.
- A comprehensive employee assistance programme (EAP).

A safe working environment that meets individual's wellbeing needs:

- Speaking to employees about what they need from their work environment and being flexible to support changing circumstances.
- Establish forums for staff to speak openly about wellbeing and inclusivity.
- Flexible and agile working approaches with the right equipment to work safely.

Modernise our ways of working to support our employee's wellbeing:

- Listen to our employees and provide clear information about their role, our goals and what we expect.
- Review our policies to ensure they are clear and support best practise.
- Launch and embed a workplace adjustment passport so we understand what support or adjustments our employees need to thrive in their role.
- Empower employees to make decisions and to learn new skills to develop in their roles.



Leadership

Visible leadership and compelling engagement at all levels from leaders who have the freedom to act; making us high performing.

Our leadership will help make us a high performing organisation through:

Development of leaders at all levels who take responsibility and have the freedom to act:

- Set and maintain expectations of what good leaders are and the competencies and behaviours we expect.
- Enable and empower leaders to make decisions and have freedom within boundaries to achieve our goals and improve performance.
- A new Management and Leadership Development Programme alongside best practice learning materials.
- Performance coaching and mentoring scheme which enables leaders to provide support to grow and develop their teams.
- A focus on inclusivity to ensure we are supporting all of our workforce.

Development of future leaders:

- Apprenticeship programmes which develop our pipeline of future leaders and provide management qualifications at all levels.
- Clear career pathways for our aspiring leaders.
- Recognise that leadership in the future will be different and support technical leadership as well as the traditional team management leadership.

Great leadership is celebrated and recognised:

- Our Celebrating You recognition scheme.
- Seek opportunities to showcase our employees externally at a national level.
- Case studies and clear communication across functions which highlight the competencies and behaviours of our great leaders.



Recruitment and retention

We will have the right people, with the right skills, in the right roles and we will empower and support them to exceed expectations.

We will ensure we are an employer of choice through the following activities:

Recruiting the right people, in the right way:

- Finding creative ways to attract new employees who share our values whilst focusing on inclusion, equality and diversity.
- Providing a great candidate experience through an improved recruitment process, including digital recruitment and onboarding.
- An inspiring induction for all new employees which is tailored to their role.
- Values and behaviours recognised alongside professional accreditations.

Retaining talented and high performing employees:

- Flexible total reward packages which recognise the skills, capabilities and achievements of our employees and can be personalised to their needs.
- Employee benefits portal which is linked to performance and is flexible to adapt through employee life changes.
- Tailored total reward statements which support the growth and retention of talent.
- Clear and flexible generic job descriptions.
- Recognition and celebration of the achievements of our amazing employees.

Development of our compelling employee value proposition:

- Identify how our WCC family is unique and what we stand for.
- Showcase the key reasons why our employees are proud and motivated to be part of the WCC family; such as our inspiring vision, our distinctive culture and flexible working.



Workforce transformation

We will build a flexible workforce which is responsive to the needs of the people of Worcestershire both now and in the future as demand and complexity increase.

We will build our future workforce by:

- Creating a WCC family through a focus on removing barriers and working together to achieve one common goal.
- Developing new and improved ways of working and digital innovation across all service areas.
- Embedding inclusion in all of our business processes and policies.
- Supporting the development of the skills that we need to work in new ways.
- Personalisation for our employees which leads to a feeling of belonging.
- Enabling the development of workforce and succession plans which are underpinned by individual directorate plans to ensure future needs are anticipated and met.
- Building a flexible working environment where we can be responsive to the needs of the people of Worcestershire both now and in the future.
- Investing in new people technology which enhances the employee experience. This includes, performance management, learning management and recruitment.
- Developing of a data culture where insight about our workforce is used consistently to create a high performance and productivity focused environment.



Employee Promise

Our employees are essential for the successful delivery of our workforce strategy and together we will achieve our goals. All of our employees take personal responsibility for what they need to do to support our workforce strategy.

As an employee, I am committed to:

- Taking part in a performance related conversation with my line manager at least twice a year.
- Adhering to the Council's Code of Conduct and all standards, policies and procedures relevant to my role.
- Supporting and taking part in the embedding of an organisational performance and productivity culture.
- Asking for help when I need it, using my annual leave entitlement and taking regular breaks to support my wellbeing. I choose what is right for me from our flexible benefits offer.
- Working to the best of my ability every day to perform my job to the required standard. I take ownership of my own performance and I do everything I can to make sure my objectives are met. I always listen to feedback and use it to improve how I do things.
- Taking time to support my team and offer help as needed.
- Always being inclusive of others, encouraging equality and celebrating diversity.
- Participating fully in all training identified for me and making sure I then use what I have learnt in my role.
- Engaging in a career pathway conversation with my line manager, that meets my individual continuing professional development needs.
- Taking accountability and ownership for my actions. I positively challenge and make suggestions about how we can improve.
- Adapting to new ways of working and I am open to change. I seek solutions to problems, and look for better ways of doing things.
- Representing our Council positively in everything I do, by supporting our values on a daily basis.
- Understanding and contributing to the aims and values of my service and the Council.



How will we know we have made progress?

It is really important that we monitor and publish our progress so we that we are confident that we are making our strategy a reality.

There will be regular reports to the Chief Officer Group and the Strategic Leadership Team as well as frequent updates for employees.

The progress of our Workforce Strategy cannot be measured in numbers alone, so we will use a combination of methods which include how people feel and what they see that is different as well as data.

Against our pillars of success we will:

- identify success criteria including key performance indicators
- establish a baseline position
- measure, monitor and regularly assess progress made from the baseline position using changes in key performance indicators and qualitative assessment

We will also invite internal and external audit including peer review.

Pillar	Example measurement methods
Employee Promise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Employee engagement levels ■ Performance reviews ■ Staff Surveys
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff surveys ■ Employee engagement levels ■ Performance reviews
Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff Surveys ■ Sickness average per employee ■ Return to work conversations
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Performance reviews ■ Career pathways and succession plans ■ Employee engagement levels
Recruitment and Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quarterly HR, OD and engagement workforce data ■ Staff Surveys ■ Levels of staff turnover
Workforce Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff surveys ■ Performance reviews ■ Workforce Plans

Our future family

By delivering this strategy we will have:

- A workforce which has personal and collective resilience with wellbeing centred in everything we do.
- A culture where our employees live and breathe our vision and values and want to contribute to our success.
- Visible leadership at all levels from leaders who have the freedom to act; making us high performing.
- The right people, with the right skills, in the right roles and we will empower and support them to exceed expectations.
- A flexible workforce which is responsive to the needs of the people of Worcestershire both now and in the future as demand and complexity increase.





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Annual Staff Survey 2022

How do you feel at work?

The following statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job.

If you have never had this feeling, select (Never) after the statement.

If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by selecting the statement that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

(Never/ A few times a year or less/ Once a month or less/ A few times a month/ Once a week/ A few times a week/ Every day)

- At my work, I feel bursting with energy
- At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
- I am enthusiastic about my job
- My job inspires me
- When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work
- I feel happy when I am working intensely
- I am proud of the work that I do
- I am immersed in my work
- I get carried away when I'm working

Working at the County Council

The following questions will help us understand what you think of the County Council, your job and what it's like to work here. If you do not know or would prefer not to answer a particular question, please leave it blank.

Strategy, Leadership and Pride

(Agree strongly – Disagree strongly)

- The County Council has a clear vision for the future
- I understand the County Council's vision
- I agree with the County Council's vision
- I understand how my work contributes to the County Council's objectives
- I trust the information I receive from Senior Leaders
- I trust the information I receive from my Line Manager
- I am proud to work for Worcestershire County Council
- I would recommend Worcestershire County Council as an employer to friends and family
- I feel the County Council is an inclusive employer
- I believe the County Council recognises and celebrates diversity

Please use the box below if you would like to explain or expand on your response:

Your Voice and Involvement

(Agree strongly – Disagree strongly)

- I feel able to make suggestions to improve services
- My opinion is listened to and taken into consideration
- I receive feedback on my ideas and suggestions
- I want to participate in activities to improve my service
- I am involved in decisions which affect my work
- The work environment at the County Council enables me to come up with ideas and to seek solutions beyond traditional approaches
- The culture at the County Council enables me to come up with ideas and to seek solutions beyond traditional approaches
- I feel empowered to act and have freedom within boundaries

Annual Staff Survey 2022

Please use the box below if you would like to explain or expand on your response:

Recognition and Development Opportunities

(Agree strongly – Disagree strongly)

- I feel valued for my contribution to the County Council
- I regularly receive recognition or praise for doing good work
- I am offered constructive feedback on the work I do
- There are opportunities for me to learn and grow at work

Please use the box below if you would like to explain or expand on your response:

Health and Well-being

(Very effectively/ Quite effectively/ Not very effectively/ Not at all effectively)

- How do you feel you are managing your own mental wellbeing at the moment?
- How do you feel you are managing your own social wellbeing at the moment?
- How do you feel you are managing your own physical wellbeing at the moment?
- How do you feel you are managing your own financial wellbeing at the moment?

(Agree strongly – Disagree strongly)

- I am happy with the balance between my home and work life
- My line manager is available, and responds in a timely and positive way when I need support
- I feel I can talk to my manager about my health and well-being
- The work I have to do is manageable I have good working relationships with my colleagues
- I have the tools and resources to do my job well
- I feel I am supported to work effectively by the County Council

Please use the box below if you would like to explain or expand on your response:

What factors were important to you when you joined the County Council and what factors do you stay for?

Thinking about what attracted you to join the Council, please RANK the (3) factors that were most important to you (1 being most important, 2 being the second most important and 3 being the third most important).

- Benefits (inc. holiday and other entitlements)
- Career pathway / opportunities for progression
- Challenging work
- Development and training opportunities
- Flexible working
- I feel that I can make a difference
- Job security
- Location
- Pension
- Salary
- Variety of work
- Other - please describe below:

Please use the box below if you would like to explain or expand on your response:

Thinking about why you stay working for the Council, please RANK the (3) factors that are most important to you (1 being most important, 2 being the second most important and 3 being the third most important).

- Benefits (inc. holiday and other entitlements)
- Career pathway / opportunities for progression
- Challenging work

Annual Staff Survey 2022

- Development and training opportunities
- Flexible working
- I feel that I can make a difference
- Job security
- Location
- Pension
- Salary
- Variety of work
- Other - please describe below:

Please use the box below if you would like to explain or expand on your response:

Thinking ahead, 2 years from now, please RANK the (3) factors that will be most important to keeping you motivated to work for the Council

(1 being most important, 2 being the second most important and 3 being the third most important).

- Benefits (inc. holiday and other entitlements)
- Career pathway / opportunities for progression
- Challenging work
- Development and training opportunities
- Flexible working
- I feel that I can make a difference
- Job security
- Location
- Pension
- Salary
- Variety of work
- Other - please describe below:

Please use the box below if you would like to explain or expand on your response:

Demographic Questions

Concerned about confidentiality? We are too. All survey responses are anonymous. Individual responses are never looked at in isolation; it's the summary of responses that are analysed to give us the most robust data and to help us to understand the pattern of responses. Questions that refer to personal information would only be used at corporate or directorate level and never in relation to a specific team or wider team, or to identify a particular individual.

We would be grateful if you provide an answer for as many questions as possible to help us ensure that we are getting a representative picture of staff views and that we can identify areas which may be of concern to particular groups of staff.

If there is any question you feel uncomfortable with, you may select 'Prefer not to say' as your response.

All information provided will be treated as private and confidential and held in accordance with the relevant data protection regulations.

Gender

What best describes your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe
- If you prefer to self-describe, please use the box below

Age

What is your age?

Annual Staff Survey 2022

- 16 - 24 years old
- 25 - 34 years old
- 35 - 44 years old
- 45 - 54 years old
- 55 - 64 years old
- 65 years old or more
- Prefer not to say

How long have you been working for Worcestershire County Council (full years)?

- Less than a year
- 1 - 3 years
- 4 - 6 years
- 7 - 10 years
- 10 or more years
- Prefer not to say

How long have you been working in your current role (full years)?

- Less than a year
- 1 - 3 years
- 4 - 6 years
- 7 - 10 years
- 10 or more years
- Prefer not to say

How many hours are you contracted to work per week?

- 20 hours or less
- 21 - 34 hours
- 35 or more hours
- Prefer not to say

Long-standing Health Condition or Disability

Do you have any long-standing health condition or disability? (Long-standing means anything that has affected or could affect you over a period of at least 12 months)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Sexual Orientation

What is your sexual orientation?

- Bisexual
- Gay / Lesbian
- Heterosexual / Straight
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe
- If you prefer to self-describe, please use the box below

Ethnic Origin

I would describe my ethnic origin as: (please note that this question does not refer to your nationality/ country of origin)

- White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- Any other White Background

Annual Staff Survey 2022

- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups
- Asian or Asian British
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British
- Arab
- Prefer not to say
- Any other ethnic group
- Please describe below

Are you working for the County Council as a Social Worker?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Finally...

What motivated you to complete the survey? Please tick all that apply

- I believe that every member of staff should complete the survey
- I believe the survey is important
- If we do not speak up, no change will be made
- It was easy to complete the survey
- I wanted to offer my ideas and suggestions
- I wanted to offer my feedback on issues that need attention
- I was provided with time or practical support to complete the survey
- I was sent many reminders
- My colleagues encouraged me to participate
- My manager instructed me to participate
- My team or myself were praised for participating
- Taking part in the survey shows commitment
- The findings might help improve my way of working
- The findings might help my team
- The findings might help other teams or the County Council as a whole
- The survey was communicated in a creative/ fun way
- The survey was communicated in a very clear way
- Other - please describe below

Thank you very much for completing this survey. Please click the 'submit' button below.

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Recruitment Hotspots

Summary Overview

January 2022

'Hotspot' defined as permanency less than 85% and where there have been failed recruitment campaigns

People Services

POSITION	Commentary
Mental Health Social Workers 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental Health returned to WCC in April 2021 and a review of service/performance is underway.• There is a national recruitment challenge for Mental Health Social Workers.• Pay competitive - Market Forces Supplement introduced November 2021• Appointed internal additional management capacity to support workforce• Workforce plan being created to go live 1st April 2022• Alternative short-term capacity in place
Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP) 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As above + 3 years training required to be qualified as an AMHP once you are an experienced Social Worker• Pay competitive - Market Forces Supplement introduced November 2021• Appointed Interim manager to cover MH Area Manager post who is AMHP and will work on rota• Workforce plan being created to go live 1st April 2022• Alternative short-term capacity in place
Experienced Adult Social Workers 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy adopted 'Grow your own' focusing on recruiting less experienced, Newly Qualified (ASYE) Social Workers (lower level) and non-qualified social work assistants and reviewing cases to ensure aligned with level of Social Workers. Also supporting Student Placements to convert Newly Qualified• The mitigation is working whilst we still have higher number of experienced Social Workers across our Area Teams. However, this will not be sustainable should we lose high numbers of Experienced Social Workers
Experienced Hospital Based Social Worker 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruited Social Care Workers in hard to fill roles and reviewed case loads• Filled 10 out of 12 vacancies, had a lot of interest of health care workers wanting a change
Reablement – PI Assistants 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaged with Third Party provider to run recruitment campaign• Third party also provide selection (sifting and interviewing) to enable WCC managers to focus on service delivery• To date we have started/offered 52% of the hours needed and this includes replacing for turnover• BCF funded additional capacity to support with Pathway 1, which resulted in additional capacity of c144 posts.• Proposed mandatory Covid vaccination for these posts April 2022• Skills for Care workforce data show 178,000 vacancies in the West Midlands at end of 2020/21. Current vacancy rates are running at 12.2% which is 1.7% higher than pre Covid
Support/Care Workers 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National staff shortages and recruitment campaigns to encourage people into care working• Used paid targeted campaigns through our advertising provider• Introduced £250 welcome payment for a 3-month period for Howbury & Exmoor Drive

Recruitment Hotspots
Summary Overview
January 2022

WCF

POSITION	Commentary
Children's Social Workers 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Worker permanency rate is now 91%, because of the activity Market Forces Supplement in place • Welcome and retention payments in place • Increase in Team Managers to reduce team size to allow for more support
SEND Case Workers 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of turnover (15 resignations in 2021) • All vacancies now recruited • Paid recruitment campaign • Targeted agency recruitment via Agencies
Children's Homes – Riddings and Vale Roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Mgr • Assistant Manager • RSW 37 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed 'golden hello' payment of £1000 for RSW until 31 March 2022 • Agreed MFS for 3 years for roles of RM and Assistant Manager of £3000 – places total remuneration in competitive to upper quartile range • New approach agreed Jan 2022 to resolve issues. Won't know if this is successful until new campaign commences.

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COaCH

POSITION	Commentary
Business & Policy Manager 35 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertised via free channels 3 times • Recruited 1 out of 3 posts • Set up rolling free advertising • Placed vacancies with Agencies via Matrix • Setting up paid advertising to promote all roles within this service. Outside of the traditional Local Authority media routes
Executive Assistant 35 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertised via free channels 3 times • Have started/offered 2 out of 4 posts • Set up rolling free advertising • Placed vacancies with Agencies via Matrix • Setting up paid advertising to promote all roles within this service. Outside of the traditional Local Authority media routes
Member Support Officer 35 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertised via free channels twice • Set up rolling free advertising

Recruitment Hotspots
Summary Overview
January 2022

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placed vacancies with Agencies via Matrix Setting up paid advertising to promote all roles within this service. Outside of the traditional Local Authority media routes
<p>Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Project Manager Category Manager (x2) <p>35 hrs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously not advertised through normal channels. Agency approached which resulted in candidates being put forward at day rate salary equivalent Now agreed to commence a recruitment process with support from TMP to access all channels for a targeted approach Is causing a short term service delivery issue as the current post holders have left Recruitment campaign commencing Agreed mitigations put in place incl. using TMP (search partner) to target the market
<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Manager – E,D&I <p>35 hrs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now advertised 3 times including MFS Failed on all 3 occasions Previously used interim support but this is costly Have been unable to recruit through normal recruitment and via interim search Framework created but at risk of delivering on statutory compliance

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CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 14 FEBRUARY 2022

WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Summary

1. From time to time the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel will review its work programme and consider which issues should be investigated as a priority.

Background

2. Worcestershire County Council has a rolling annual Work Programme for Overview and Scrutiny. The suggested 2021/22 Work Programme has been developed by taking into account issues still to be completed from 2020/21, the views of Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members and the findings of the budget scrutiny process.
3. Suggested issues have been prioritised using scrutiny feasibility criteria in order to ensure that topics are selected subjectively and the 'added value' of a review is considered right from the beginning.
4. The Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is responsible for scrutiny of:
 - Commissioning, contracts and commerce and ensuring the corporate commissioning cycle works well
 - Transformation
 - Finance
 - Localism and Communities
 - Organisation and employees
5. The current Work Programme was discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) on 21 July 2021 and agreed by Council on 9 September 2021.

Dates of Future 2022 Meetings

- 17 March at 10am
- 23 May at 2pm
- 6 July at 2pm
- 21 September at 10am
- 14 November at 2pm

Purpose of the Meeting

The Panel is asked to:

- Consider the 2020/21 Work Programme (attached at Appendix 1) and agree whether it would like to make any amendments
- Retain the flexibility to take into account any urgent issues which may arise.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2021/22

Contact Points

Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844964 / 844965
Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- [Agenda and minutes of OSPB on 21 July 2021](#)
- [Agenda and minutes of Council on 9 September 2021](#)

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2022

Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting	Issue for Scrutiny	Date of Last Report	Notes/Follow-up Action
14 February 2022	Smarter, Healthier and Greener Ways of Working		Panel Member suggestion July 2021
	Recruitment and Retention of Staff (challenges the Council face, vacancy management, use of consultants)		Suggested by 15 December OSPB and agreed at Agenda Planning 20 December 2021
	Corporate Procurement Strategy		Suggested at 24 September 2021 meeting
17 March 2022	Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring (Q3 October to December/Period 9)	24 January 2020 11 March 2021 20 July 2021 8 November 2021	
	Customer Experience		Panel Member suggestion July 2021
	West Mercia Energy Joint Committee Business Plan	17 January 2021	
23 May 2022	GDPR/Data protection Overview		Agenda planning October 2021
	Update on the Libraries Strategy/transformation (post Covid-19) – to include the E-Library		Panel Member suggestion July and September 2021
Possible Future Items			
TBC	Update on the Councils Strategy for Museums, Arts and Culture		
TBC	Data Analytics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Power BI Strategy - Instant Atlas - Framework for publicly accessible data 	17 January 2021	

TBC	Performance of registration of deaths within 5 days	8 November 2021	Agreed by Panel 8 November 2021
TBC	Council Communication	8 November 2021	Agreed by Panel 8 November 2021
July/September (tbc)	Community engagement (Here2Help)		
Standing Items			
November/January	Budget Scrutiny		
March	Annual update on the Council's energy purchasing arrangement via the West Mercia Energy Joint Committee including the Business Plan	17 January 2022	Agreed at October 2021 Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board
TBC	Councillors Divisional Funding Scheme	20 July 2021	
TBC	Worcestershire County Council Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Policy (RIPA)		