

Workforce Development Strategy

2014 - 2017

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1. Introduction

The council is currently undergoing a period of considerable change as it makes its transition to Future Council. A Future Council strategy has been developed to define the approach we are taking to bring about the fundamental organisational transformation required to enable us to be an effective, efficient, high performing and sustainable Future Council.

One of the key priorities of the [Future Council Strategy](#) is to develop and implement a Workforce Development Strategy for 2014-17. This strategy has been developed to define the council's strategic workforce development priorities and objectives. The diagram at Appendix 1 summarises the strategy and is supported by a high level programme plan at Appendix 2.

The key outcome of this strategy and programme plan is to ensure that the transition to the new business model is successful by identifying, supporting and addressing the organisation's current and future learning and development requirements. This will enable us to have a high performing, motivated, flexible and diverse workforce in place, with leaders at every level. It will also ensure that our employees and members have the right skills, knowledge and behaviours to perform effectively in their role and to deliver our priorities and Future Council outcomes.

As a council we have a responsibility for the development of the wider workforce in Adult Social Care, i.e. the independent sector, third sector and community groups. The Adults and Communities Workforce Development Strategy sets out the approach to develop and support this wider workforce.

In addition, a Children and Young People's Trust Workforce Strategy and Plan has been developed to strengthen the integrated working between partners to deliver the workforce development aspects of the Children and Young People's plan.

Both these strategies will support and complement the council's strategic Workforce Development Strategy.

The strategy has been developed in consultation with employees using feedback received through Talkabouts, manager conferences, employee focus groups and the employee survey.

2. Our challenges

Many of the challenges facing the council and the changes that are required to deliver the Future Council outcomes will have workforce development dependencies, as it is employees who are at the centre of delivering, maintaining and continuously improving the Future Council.

The key workforce development challenges facing the council include:

- **Recruiting and retaining key skilled employees in a time of significantly increased financial pressure.** It is important that we recruit people with the right skills and values, who are able to contribute to achieving our priorities. We also need to retain our highly skilled employees so we do not lose their skills and experience.
- **An ageing workforce.** Only 11% of our current workforce is under the age of 30, with 50% in the 30-49 years bracket and 39% over the age of 50. We have to address this demographic by increasing the number of young people employed within the organisation who will bring with them fresh new ideas, innovation and skills. We also need to ensure that skills and experience are not leaving the organisation with employees by putting in place effective skills transfer, workforce and succession planning.
- **Equipping employees with functional skills.** Part of the focus of the council's 'people achieving their potential' priority, is to equip adults with the right skills and qualifications. The skills audit data we hold tells us that 11% of our current workforce do not currently hold a level 2 qualification. As one of the largest employers in the borough and with over 80% of the workforce living in Barnsley, we have a responsibility to support our employees to develop their numeracy, literacy and IT skills to level 2.
- **Rising customer expectations and demands.** As commercial organisations continue to improve their customer service, people expect the same level of improvement from the public sector. We need to ensure we have a set of consistent performance managed service standards and that our employees and members are equipped with a standardised set of customer service skills.
- **Working together and enabling others to do more for themselves.** Continued reducing resources means the council will need to build on existing and develop new partnership arrangements, whilst also enabling our partners, communities and individuals to take greater responsibility for doing more themselves to become strong and resilient. This different relationship with our partners and communities will require a different set of enabling skills to enable change in communities and the development of community assets and the voluntary and community sector. We need to ensure our employees understand and are able to explain clearly what the council is able to deliver and are equipped with the skills to advise customers of where and how to access service provision outside of the council. We also need to ensure that members have a clear understanding of what services the council is able to deliver in order to manage the expectations of the people they represent and to facilitate change through the new area arrangements.

- **Having a flexible and adaptable workforce.** Our workforce has reduced significantly from 6,098 employees in 2010 to 3,586 employees in 2014, a reduction of 41%. Whilst the challenges we face mean we will continue to employ fewer people, we need to utilise the remaining resources we have effectively, ensuring our workforce is highly skilled, productive and more commercial and business like so they can respond effectively to local needs, develop our business units and to be able to compete for new business. Our employees need to be flexible and have skills that can be deployed in different ways, not just in traditional job roles or professions.
- **Strong managerial and political leadership and leaders at every level.** Each and every employee and member has a role to play in ensuring the fundamental and sustainable change we require is successful. Whilst the managerial and political leadership will drive the change, our employees and members will be at the heart of delivering it on the ground.

3. Our workforce development priorities

The six workforce development priorities for the council are:



Values and Behaviours

Ensure all employees are aware of and understand what is expected of them and are working in line with the council's agreed core values and behaviours.



Skills

Ensure employees have the skills to do their job, have good skills in numeracy, literacy and IT, and have the necessary skills and knowledge to be innovative, high performing, customer and business focused.



Recruitment and Retention

Ensure we recruit and retain the right workforce in line with our values and behaviours, address key future occupational skill shortages, ensure we retain knowledge and skills within the organisation, promote jobs and careers, identify, develop and motivate talent and address diversity issues.



Management

Equip managers with the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviours to deliver change, to be entrepreneurial, creative and innovative, to motivate, engage and develop their teams, and to support a performance culture in order to maximise effectiveness and efficiency.



Leadership

Develop strong, ambitious, motivational and effective leadership both within senior management and political roles to drive the radical changes needed to become a Future Council and inspire and motivate others to achieve their full potential.



Member Development

Ensure members have the necessary skills and knowledge they need to effectively carry out their roles under the constitution and to enable change under the new area arrangements.

4. Our approach

Our commitment

We are committed to ensuring our employees and members receive the necessary training, development and support they need to do their job effectively, to achieve their potential and to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to transform the council and the services it provides.

Where are we now

Values and behaviours

Employees have collectively developed a new vision and set of core values for the council.

Working together for a brighter future, a better Barnsley

Working together – with our communities

A brighter future – people achieve their potential

A better Barnsley – our residents think and feel we are making a difference together

Our Values:



We're a Team

We all work together towards the same goal – to make Barnsley a better place for the people who live, work and visit here



We're Honest

We always say what we mean. Most of all we're reliable, fair and true



We'll be Excellent

We work really hard to provide the best quality and value for money for the people of Barnsley. Only our best is good enough



We're Proud

We're dedicated to making Barnsley a better place. We take pride in our work

Aligned to the vision and values, a set of behaviours, in the form of a pledge, have also been developed. These are available at Appendix 3.

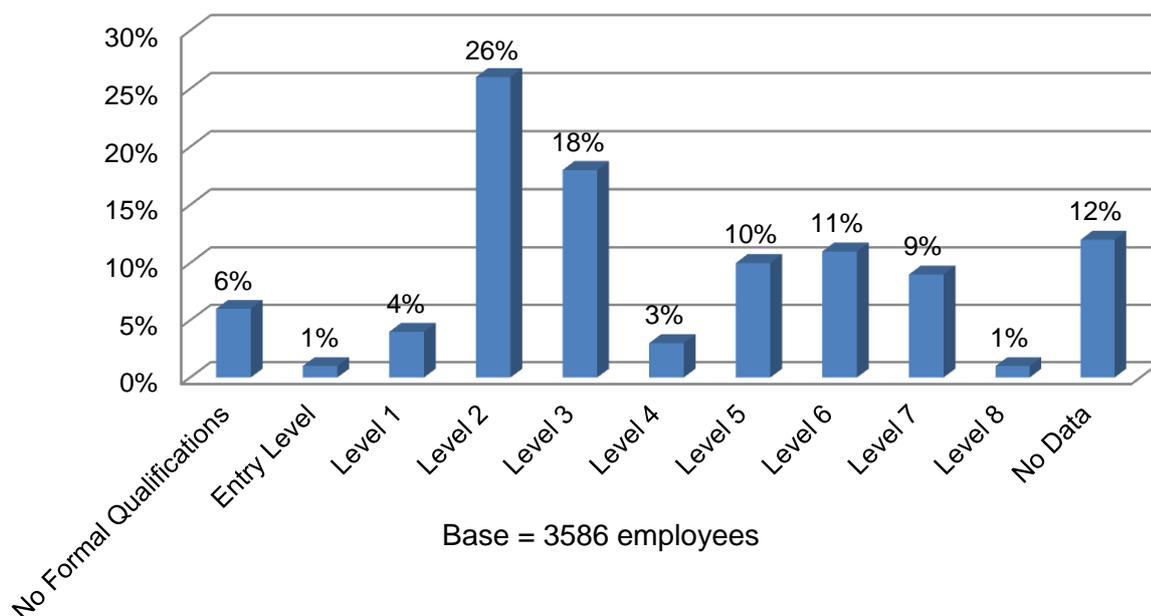
It is important that we ensure the new vision, values and behaviours are more than just words on paper, are understood by all employees and become 'the way we do things here'.

In order to bring about the culture change needed to effectively support the transition to a Future Council, we need to communicate and embed these throughout the organisation in our key policies and procedures so that all employees understand what is expected of them and that they work in accordance with our values and behaviours.

Skills

Workforce data held as at 1 April 2014 relating to the qualification levels of our workforce shows that 11% of the workforce do not currently hold a Level 2 qualification, with 6% of employees having no formal qualification.

Workforce Qualification Levels



In addition, data from a skills audit carried out across all directorates during 2010 with the key purpose of identifying basic skills levels of employees identified that 12% of employees have numeracy skills below Level 2 and 8% of employees have literacy skills below Level 2.

Whilst IT skills were not assessed as part of the skills audit, invigilators identified that approximately 300 employees taking the basic skills assessments experienced some difficulty with the use of a PC, keyboard and mouse.

If we are to demonstrate our commitment to workforce development, it is important that we provide the necessary support to our employees to develop their skills in numeracy, literacy and IT.

The data used for the qualification and skills levels of our employees was captured in 2010. Although it has been updated for new employees and those moving posts since that date, it is recognised that further work needs to be undertaken to bring the data up-to-date and to capture data for the 12% of employees for whom we currently hold no information regarding their skills and qualification levels.

Learning and development needs are identified in the main through the completion of Performance and Development Reviews (P&DRs), and also through supervision meetings, one to ones, tool box talks etc. However, it is recognised that these needs are predominantly job specific and personal development needs and often do not take account of council / service business requirements.

Feedback from the Employee Survey 2013 has identified that there has been a reduction in the number of employees who have had a P&DR in the last 12 months to 75% in 2013 from 86% in 2011. This means that learning and development needs for the organisation are not being clearly identified.

The results of the employee survey and feedback from employees, has identified the need to improve the process in order to ensure the completion of P&DRs for all employees. These improvements are being developed in consultation with managers and employees from across the organisation.

Feedback from the Employee Survey 2013 has identified a decline in satisfaction with opportunities for skills and career development, areas that already had low satisfaction levels in the Employee Survey 2011. These are areas that need to be addressed and improved.

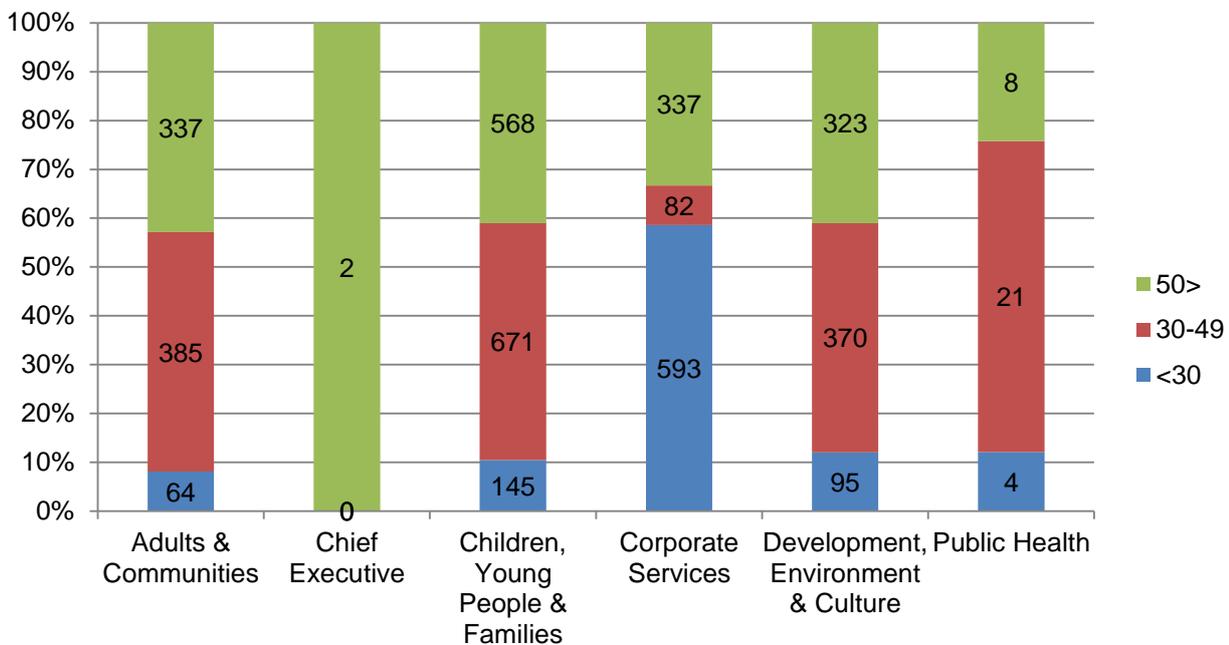
The Future Council outcomes are now in place which provides the foundations to develop a workforce development plan and programme.

Recruitment and retention

Workforce data as at 1 April 2014 shows that we have an ageing workforce, with only 11% (390) of our current workforce under the age of 30. 50% are between the ages of 30 and 49 and 39% are age 50 and above.

The age profile by directorate is as shown below:

Workforce Age Profile



Base = 3586 employees

We currently have an apprenticeship programme in place that equips young people with a work based qualification, develops their knowledge and skills and contributes to increasing the number of young people employed with the council. Currently 33 of the 390 employees under the age of 30 are apprentices. We have been working to increase the number of corporate apprenticeship placements within the council and these have increased over the last 12 months from 28 to 47 placements.

The number of employees leaving the organisation in 2013/14 was 512, which equates to a turnover rate of 13.25%. This is lower than the 2012/13 turnover figure of 16.52%. The LGA Local Government Survey Research Report for 2012/13¹ gives an average retention rate for councils of 12%.

Learning from experiences of the last recession, we have taken a different approach to our budget reductions than some other organisations when it comes to early retirements and voluntary severances. We assess whether there will be any skills gaps as a result of individuals leaving and, if so, what plans are in place to address them. This approach helps to prevent occupational skills shortages along with increasing the number of apprenticeships in certain occupational areas.

However, there currently are no structured talent management, workforce planning and succession planning processes in place to help inform the service redesign process and to ensure that skills and knowledge does not leave the organisations with employees.

Management

There is currently no strategic approach to management development linked to business need, which has led to a mix of management training and development activities being delivered across the organisation. Accredited management development does take place, but this is delivered by a range of providers and sourced by individual directorates.

Corporate responsibility training is in place in a number of areas such as Human Resources, Financial Services, Information Services, Risk Management and Health and Safety. However, there is no defined mandatory programme which pulls this together as a suite of training for managers to ensure compliance and accountability.

A managers group was formed and two successful conferences held in 2013 which were focused on informing managers of key improvement activity but also involving them in the start of the Future Council journey. The next conference will be held in May 2014.

Leadership

The Barnsley Leadership Team was formed in 2007 in response to feedback from the Employee Survey in relation to the Senior Management Team's role and the consistency of leadership in general. The team have worked on a number of key projects in learning sets and held regular facilitated development sessions.

¹ The survey was undertaken by the Local Government Association between September and December 2013. 46% (161) of councils provided responses to the survey, 64% of which were from councils within the Yorkshire and Humberside region.

Whilst the Employee Survey 2013 identified some improvements in employee perceptions of the Senior Management Team, there is still room for further progress to be made.

Accredited leadership development takes place which is sourced by individual directorates and tends to be delivered as a combination of generic leadership competencies along with professional specific leadership competencies. However, this means that there is currently no consistent approach to leadership development across the organisation.

Our leaders and managers have been involved in creating a set of management and leadership behaviours which will provide a good foundation, along with the Future Council outcomes, to develop a leadership development programme.

Member development

The council has a good member development offer and has been successfully re-assessed against the Member Development Charter. However, it is recognised that the offer does need to be continuously reviewed to ensure it is providing all members with the skills and knowledge they need to carry out their roles and to facilitate change through the new area working arrangements.

Member development is not mandatory therefore take-up amongst those holding office is not consistent. There is a lot of focus on providing information about the organisation and national policy initiatives and whilst skills training is included, the current offer does not always help members to better carry out their specific roles. Currently, there is no formal monitoring or evaluation of the programme to ensure it is effective and having a positive impact on their development.

Delivery of learning and development

Workforce development is currently sourced by individual directorates and is delivered by internal and external providers, through a variety of methods. It is difficult to quantify whether this approach is meeting the requirements of the council and whether it offers value for money.

Internal delivery, other than corporate compliance training, is delivered in the main by the Adults & Communities and Children, Young People & Families Workforce Development teams and through the council's e-learning solution BOLD.

Training budgets are also devolved and vary considerably in size which means there is a risk of inequality in employees receiving learning and development depending on the availability of funds within the budget and the priorities identified.

Continuing professional development and statutory requirements are currently being met but feedback from employee surveys and the Talkabouts are that other development is being forgotten.

What we need to do

Whilst some progress has been made to implement some of the workforce development changes required to become a Future Council, there are a number of other key projects and initiatives that will take the council from where it is now and further drive the changes and improvements required. These include:

Values and behaviours

- Fully embedding the new vision, values and behaviours into the organisation and ensuring all employees understand what is expected of them by making them visible throughout the organisation and including them in key policies and procedures, e.g. job profiles, P&DRs, supervision policies, recruitment and selection.

Skills

- Development of a Workforce Development Plan linked to business requirements including those identified in the Public Health, Adults & Communities, and Children, Young People & Families Workforce Development Plans.
- Development and implementation of a learning and development programme that is linked to organisational business needs and ensures our employees receive the necessary training, development and support they need to do their job effectively, to achieve their potential and to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to transform the council and the services it provides.
- Continuously improving our service delivery and customer relationship by establishing a customer service training programme including a customer service apprenticeship programme.
- Ensure employees have an understanding of what services the council delivers and have the necessary skills and knowledge to explain clearly the limitations of what can be delivered, whilst at the same time advising customers of where and how to access service provision outside of the council.
- Further developing and implementing a functional skills programme to increase the number of employees who have basic numeracy, literacy and IT skills up to Level 2. We also need to bring the data we hold on employee qualifications and basic skills levels up-to-date.
- Supporting our employees to achieve their full potential by developing and implementing a coaching programme to build coaching capacity across the organisation.
- Ensuring all new employees, including those moving jobs and employees new to management roles, undertake an induction to help them settle into their new role as quickly as possible and receive the necessary information to enable them to do their job effectively.
- Establishing a mentoring scheme which will support employees to achieve their objectives, career aspirations and potential.

- Ensuring all employees who require professional registration receive ongoing support through continuous professional development, professional appraisal and other standards required by the professional body.
- Improving the P&DR process, in consultation with employees, to ensure the completion of P&DRs for all employees and to ensure organisational learning and development requirements are accurately captured.

Recruitment and retention

- Increase the number of young people that are employed with the council by implementing vacancy management controls where all appropriate vacancies are filled, where possible, by apprentices if there are no suitable 'at risk' employees. This will also reduce recruitment costs for lower graded posts within the council.
- Establishing a strategic approach to talent management that will help us attract, recruit, manage, develop and retain a diverse workforce that holds our core values, contributes significantly to helping us to achieve our objectives and makes a difference to our organisation's performance.
- Develop and implement a talent management procedure, supported by a talent management portal, that will help us to effectively identify, develop and retain transactional and transformational talent within the organisation and provide opportunities for employees to reach their potential through job shadowing, voluntary work or short-term assignments.
- Undertaking effective workforce and succession planning to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills, knowledge, values and behaviours, in the right place at the right time, to provide employees with career development opportunities, and to ensure that we retain knowledge and skills within the organisation.

Management

- Supporting managers to manage the change required to meet our Future Council outcomes by developing and implementing a bespoke management development programme. This programme will include how to develop new business models, business planning, LEAN thinking, maximising commercial opportunities and managing performance.
- Developing mandatory corporate responsibility training, mainly provided through the council's e-learning solution, BOLD, to ensure managers are consistently applying policies, procedures and processes.
- Continue to hold twice-yearly manager conferences to develop managers and provide an opportunity for them to network with other managers, share ideas and good practice and 'thinking space' to work collaboratively on key issues and solutions.

Leadership

- Supporting the senior management and political leadership to drive the changes required to meet our Future Council outcomes through continued commitment to the Member Development Charter and by developing and implementing a bespoke leadership development programme based on the outcomes and leadership behaviours.

Member development

- Moving responsibility for member development under the Director of Human Resources, Performance and Communications to ensure there is a consistent approach to member development as part of the Workforce Development Strategy in order to support the achievement of the council's priorities and outcomes.
- Improving the member development offer to ensure it is roles focused, specifically targeted at helping members gain the skills they need to carry out their roles under the constitution. This will include community leadership and an understanding of what the council can and cannot deliver in the future in order to manage their own expectations and those of the people they represent.
- Developing and delivering a standard blended learning package of activities for all those holding office that will give them the practical skills needed to fulfil their roles.
- Formally evaluate the member development offer to ensure it is effective and is having a positive impact on their development.
- Continue to commit to the Member Development Charter.

Delivery of learning and development

- Bringing the strategic responsibility for workforce development together under the Director of Human Resources, Performance and Communications and centralising training budgets.
- Assessing the resources that exist within the organisation and the capacity to deliver the learning and development needs identified in order to maximise training budgets and keep money within the organisation, before progressing to external procurement of providers.
- Continuing to support, develop and widen the apprenticeship offer within the organisation by identifying employees who could undertake an apprenticeship programme, as opposed to another method of learning and development. As apprenticeship frameworks include the achievement of functional skills for those employees who do not currently hold them at the required level, this will also help to improve the basic skills levels of employees.

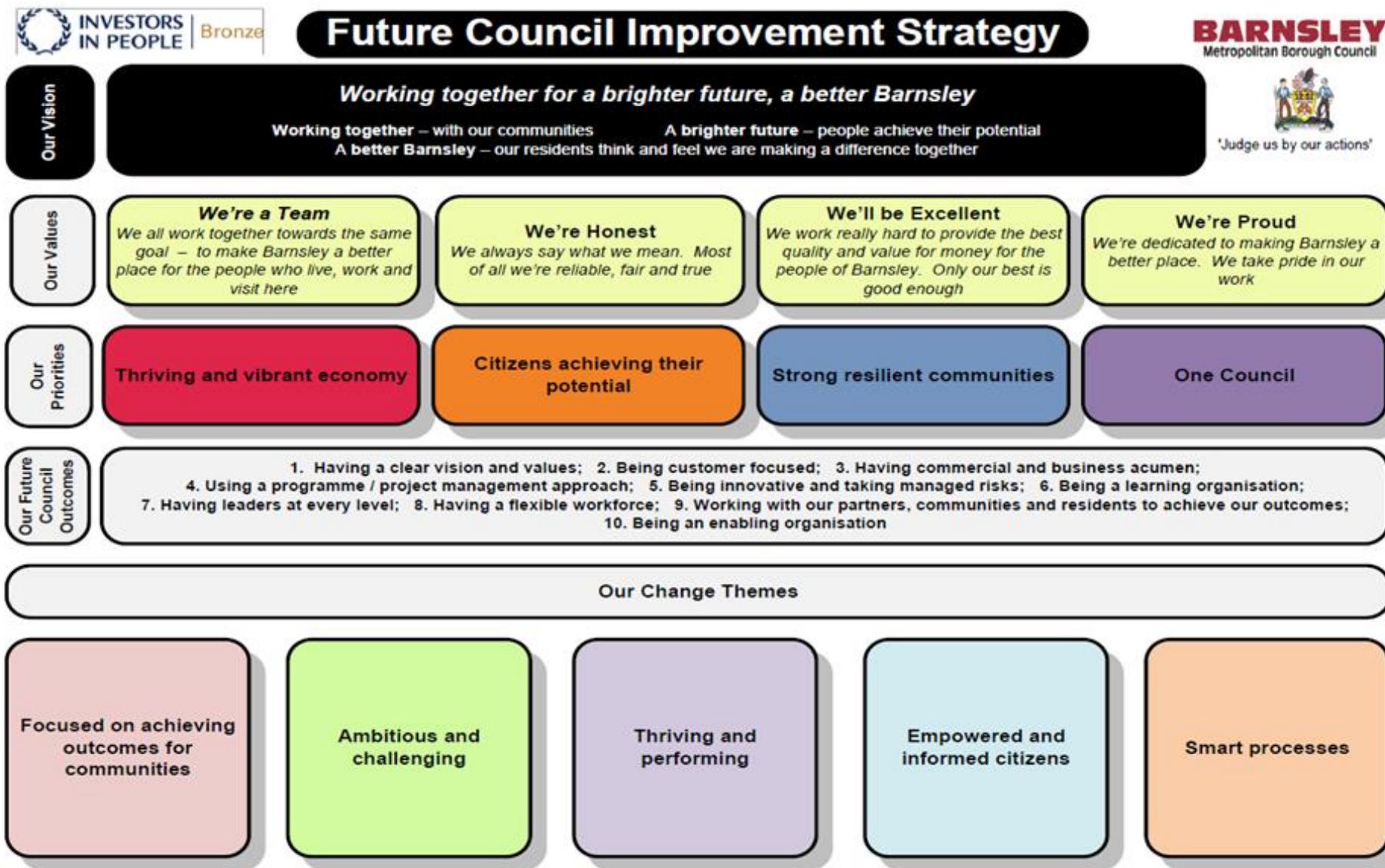
5. Implementation of the strategy and monitoring of progress

A Future Council Change Programme Board will monitor progress against and will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Workforce Development Strategy and Workforce Development Plan. The programme board will be chaired by Diana Terris, Chief Executive.

As we move through this period of constant change and transformation, we will review the strategy in consultation with employees to ensure it continues to meet their expectations and delivers its agreed outcomes.

The effectiveness of changes and improvements implemented as a result of the strategy will be evaluated through feedback from employee consultation groups, manager conferences, Talkabouts and the Talkabout Challenge site and analysis of employee surveys and Investors in People assessments.

We will also review our strategy on an annual basis to ensure it remains valid and fit for purpose.



Our Values and Behaviours

Our Values:



We're a Team
We all work together towards the same goal – to make Barnsley a better place for the people who live, work and visit here



We're Honest
We always say what we mean. Most of all we're reliable, fair and true



We'll be Excellent
We work really hard to provide the best quality and value for money for the people of Barnsley. Only our best is good enough



We're Proud
We're dedicated to making Barnsley a better place. We take pride in our work

Employees' Pledge - As an employee I promise to:

Work with my colleagues, partners, customers and the wider community

Think about our customers and always put their needs first

Share my skills, knowledge and expertise with others

Act professionally and take responsibility for my actions

Understand the needs of others and support them whenever I can

Be honest about any mistakes I make, correct them and learn from them

Work hard, use my initiative and tackle challenges with a positive attitude

Assess how well I'm doing, ask for feedback and keep improving

Be open to change and willing to work in different ways

Use resources wisely, not wastefully

Follow the council's vision and be true to its values

Understand the impact my work has on the council's performance

Take pride in my work and in the council's successes and achievements

Managers' Pledge - As a manager I promise to:

Give the people I work with a clear understanding of their purpose and responsibilities

Encourage people to share their ideas and skills – and be creative

Work with all my colleagues to develop the best services for the people of Barnsley

Be clear, honest and fair – and never use corporate jargon (tell me if I do!)

Talk to anyone affected by my actions and involve them in making decisions

Work hard to get the best out of all the different people I work with

Help my colleagues develop their own careers and achieve their ambitions

Regularly tell the people and teams I work with how they are doing

Assess our successes and failures and come up with ways to improve

Set a good example by always being true to the council's values

Speak up for the council and always present its work in a positive light

Show my appreciation of the efforts made by people and teams I work with

