



**Melton Borough Council
Workforce Strategy
2018 - 2020**

Message from the Leader and Chief Executive



At Melton our mission is:

**Helping People
Shaping Places**

Our Workforce Strategy aims to ensure we attract, retain and develop the best possible team, by focussing on four themes:

**Recruitment & retention
Reward & recognition
Leadership & development
Engagement & well-being**

We are an ambitious Council, and are always looking to “punch above our weight”, but we know that to achieve our ambitions we need the best possible team.

We fully appreciate the hard work and dedication that everyone at Melton puts in to make sure we deliver our priorities for the community. We also recognise that like many Councils we have undergone our fair share of challenges and significant periods of change, so supporting our teams so they enjoy their work, and have the opportunity to develop and perform at their best is a top priority.

This strategy sets out how we build on our existing foundations and respond to current and future challenges and opportunities. We want Melton to be a good community, where capable and public-spirited people want to work and build a career with us. To do this we need to attract and retain the best possible team, and reward and recognise hard work and success.

Good leadership is vital to building a positive and productive culture and we recognise we will only achieve our goals by caring about the well-being of our colleagues, empowering them to push the boundaries and supporting them to deliver.

Vision and Priorities

Our vision for the borough:

We are ambitious for Melton's future. We want to enhance the quality of life for everyone by enabling more homes to be built, attracting quality jobs and supporting strong and prosperous communities.

Our Priorities for 2018-2020 are:

Our Place Priorities

- Promoting aspiration and growth in a vibrant economy, attracting quality jobs
- Developing a thriving town centre and rural offer; recognised as a great place to invest, live and visit
- Increasing the availability of good quality homes which meet local needs.
- Achieving a clean and attractive local environment.
- Working with our partners to improve physical and digital infrastructure.

Our People Priorities

- Helping people fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions.
- Work with our partners to address vulnerability and tackle the root causes of social problems, building safe, happy and healthy communities.
- Focussing on our priority neighbourhoods, support people to overcome disadvantage and live well independently.

Our Organisational Priorities

- Delivering quality services to business and residents; understanding what really matters to our customers.
- Maintaining a personal approach, but harnessing appropriate technology to make our services more accessible and fit for the digital economy
- Becoming a more agile and commercial council; securing our financial future
- Being a great place to work and build a career.

To ensure that we can achieve our vision we have a set of Corporate Values to shape behaviours in the workplace and underpin how we deliver services to the community.



We Care: valuing others and developing ourselves; committed and passionate about what we do



We Innovate: ambitious, creative and resourceful; responding positively to challenges



We Achieve: taking responsibility and seeking excellence; always proud to serve

We are Melton

Purpose of the Workforce Strategy

This strategy sets out how we will develop our workforce to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place to deliver the Council's vision and priorities over the coming years.

We want Melton to be a place for people to grow their career and feel like they are making a real difference to the people we serve. In a changing economic environment, we recognise the importance of being able to recruit, retain and develop the best possible team; a motivated workforce working within a positive and productive culture.

To be able to achieve the vision we have identified four key areas of focus:

Recruitment and retention

To attract and retain the right talent through robust selection processes which focus not just on technical ability but behaviours and competencies linked to our values. Ensuring this is a place to build a career.

Leadership and development

To develop the wider set of skills required to support a forward-looking Council while recognising and supporting individual career aspirations.

Reward and recognition

Providing a range of benefits, which makes Melton an attractive place to work, reinforces our values and supports retention.

Engagement and wellbeing

Maximising productivity and innovation by working to ensure a good community through an empowered, healthy and happy workforce.

The strategy outlines what we already have in place, some of the challenges we have identified and what we are going to do over the next two years to achieve our aspirations.

Challenges for the Future

We are living in a world of unprecedented change. What we are doing now is very different to what we were doing ten years ago. Change will continue and we need to foster a culture that will enable the Council to deliver quality services to the people of Melton.

With a new local plan on the horizon and the go ahead for a Melton bypass there is a lot to deliver to ensure we “shape the place”. A motivated and enthusiastic workforce are going to be at the heart of helping people to help themselves and supporting the development of thriving and prosperous communities.

Digital revolution

The digital revolution is affecting much of our everyday lives. It results in changes to customers expectations both in the way services are delivered but also the timeliness of them; quicker and 24/7. Technology enhancements are moving quickly. To be able to keep up to date people need to be equipped with the skills to ensure they are making the right investments, deploy and maintain systems and make the best use of them.

Financial challenges

There are significant financial challenges facing local government over the next few years brought about by uncertainty over funding streams and changes to financing structures. As a result, the Council must think and act more commercially in order to help generate income and achieve the significant financial savings required. This will mean developing more specialist skills and resources in staff especially those in positions of responsibility and leadership. The objective will be to shift the perspective of management and help influence a positive shift towards an 'enterprising' culture.

Demographic and diversity

People are living longer which alter the demographic of the local area; and like many areas the borough has an ageing population. We need to be flexible in the way we deliver some of our services as customer needs alter. As Melton grows as a place there is also the potential for greater diversity within local communities. We need to have a better understanding of our local citizens which can be supported by ensuring the workforce is representative and diversity and the sharing of different opinion and ideas is encouraged.

The 21st Century Public Servant

The University of Birmingham has completed a commission to look at the future of public services. Through this they have identified the need to pay attention to the

changing roles undertaken by public servants and the associated support and development needs. The report “The 21st Century Public Servant” looks at the changing environment and identifies 10 themes and challenges for people working in the public sector. It identified that often 21st century public servants are working in 19th century style organisations and that to deliver integrated, collaborative services with improved outcomes for the community there needs to be changes to the way employees are incentivised, developed and managed.

Place shaper

Increasingly there is more emphasis on our teams to work in partnership and collaborate with a range of additional service providers to deliver the best outcomes for the community. It is more than simply providing a service to the end user. We are expected to see greater commissioning of services and working more cooperatively with a range of organisations.

Brexit

There is uncertainty around the impact of Brexit on the labour and skills market, employment law and immigration. Regardless of what happens we need to ensure we have a workforce that is resilient, robust and able to respond to the changes. We need to make sure we keep abreast of the proposals and understand the impact Brexit will have on Melton in the future both in terms of the impact on the local businesses and community, and our own workforce.

Skills gap

Many local authorities are finding it hard to recruit to key professional posts. UK employment is at an all time high and job seekers are enjoying the choice of vacancies in a competitive market. Private sector employers are often able to offer more benefits in terms of remuneration and other packages contributing to the lack of talent becoming available for key positions. The inability to fill vacancies places increasing pressure on existing employees and impacts on service delivery. How we seek out the talent and skills we require needs a different approach in order to address the gap and avoid it having a detrimental impact.

Recruitment and retention

To attract and retain the right talent through robust selection processes which focus not just on technical ability but behaviours and competencies linked to our values. Ensuring this is a place to build a career.

In 2018 a key issue for Melton is being able to attract and retain employees in a variety of professional roles. However, Melton is not on its own, with the LGA reporting 71 per cent of councils experiencing difficulties in 2015/16 compared to 52 per cent in 2009/10. Competitive salaries in the private sector are having an impact on areas such as Planning and Finance making it difficult to attract and retain employees with the skills and knowledge required.

Turnover at Melton has increased over the past few years, although this has been a national trend in the public sector. It is currently at 18% for 2017/18 compared to 14% in 2015/16. Some turnover of the workforce is healthy; high turnover means there is a risk of losing continuity, resilience and institutional knowledge which impact negatively on overall performance and the ability to meet corporate priorities. For this reason, it is important to ensure that we are recruiting people who fit with the core values of the Council and will want to stay and develop their career with us.

A review of job roles and the skills required for each post helps services to develop a workforce fit for the future. Opportunity should be given to look at job families with clear competencies, better suited for more agile working.

We want to be an outstanding employer within our community; a place where people will enjoy working and want to develop their career in local government. In 2018 we launched a recruitment microsite which advertises what is great about working at Melton, showcases examples of people's experiences of working for us and promotes all our benefits including our excellent flexible working arrangements. We will continue to develop this site and use alternative marketing opportunities including talent search and advocacy to maximise the exposure of our vacancies to as wide a field as possible.

We have reviewed our induction process and put together a checklist and programme to support managers and new recruits. The introduction of a buddy system has been welcomed however there is more work required to ensure this becomes part of the Melton way.

Reward and recognition

Providing a range of benefits, which makes Melton an attractive place to work, reinforces our values and supports retention.

At Melton we use a structured job evaluation process to determine the grade of a role and pay in accordance with the nationally recognised pay spine. We use annual increments within the bands for pay progression and on occasions will use honorariums to recognise individuals who undertake work over and above what is expected of them. Working within a transparent and fair remuneration system it is important to consider other non-monetary rewards for employees to maximise the desirability of the council as place to work.

We know our employees value “time”. They value the flexi time system, the generous annual leave, ability to purchase additional leave and time off at Christmas. We are also aware that some employees are not aware of their total reward package and what other benefits are available to them including retail discounts and employee assistance programme for example. The development of a workplace charter will provide employees clarity on what they can expect in terms of a total reward package and address this gap.

Salary benchmarking will check that we are paying the market rate for our positions and if not we can look at the reasons why and review the job roles.

Leadership and development

To develop the wider set of skills required to support a forward-looking Council while recognising and supporting individuals career aspirations.

We recognise that good leadership requires more than just good technical and professional knowledge. Technological, economic and social changes mean our customers have different expectations on how services are delivered so we need to have a flexible workforce who can respond to these changes. We want to ensure that our teams are able to build a breadth of skills and knowledge to provide good leadership but also to respond to the changing climate.

We have delivered an in house Management Development Programme for middle managers – we need to do more and build on this programme to upskill our team leaders and aspiring managers. Our career paths for professional positions have rewarded the attainment of professional qualifications. We need to recognise the wider skills and expertise required for a modern and ambitious council and build these into our career paths.

Example of wider skills required:

- Communications
- Commissioning
- Negotiation
- Commercial
- Emotional Intelligence
- Financial
- HR
- Project Management
- Digital, data and technology
- Coaching and Mentoring

A new appraisal process is being rolled out in 2018. Employees will be asked to rate themselves against the core values as well as the usual setting of objectives against the corporate priorities. From here individual development plans will ensure that the corporate training plan is structured and develops expertise in the right areas. However, just delivering training is not enough, we need to get feedback from our teams on the outcomes of training and measure the impact it has on them. We will do more to monitor and gain feedback from the development opportunities we offer.

The apprentice levy enables us to access structured learning for both new appointees and existing employees. This is being utilised with 5 employees currently signed up for qualifications. We need to make sure that we are making the best use of the levy and keeping up to date with the new framework of learning being introduced for the benefit of some professions for example Planning and Finance.

Engagement and Wellbeing

Maximising productivity and innovation by working to ensure a good community through an empowered, healthy and happy workforce.

Change and new challenges can be unsettling and staff will be kept engaged as we move along the journey. We know that a more engaged workforce leads to improved moral and motivation and in turn increased productivity and efficiency.

Our teams tell us that we could do more to improve internal communications. We have refreshed a “service champions” group who are representative of all service areas to talk through emerging issues with the Chief Executive. This will continue to develop with the group responding to issues that matter, for example staff parking and arranging social activities.

We will develop the communications strategy and policies to support managers in ensuring positive and good communications amongst their own team but also corporately across directorates and other partnerships.

Sickness absence rates at Melton are generally low compared with other authorities however we can still do more to improve monitoring, spot trends and provide early support for those who may need it. We have an Employee Assistance Programme but this is underutilised. More communications around the support services available to employees will be a priority.

Against a background of changing demographics we will ensure a working environment that is fair, equitable and free from unlawful discrimination. We will continue to ensure legal compliance and aim to have workforce which represents the community in which we work.

Developing and delivering the Strategy

The strategy has been developed to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan and take into account a range of factors that are likely to impact on the delivery of service in future years.

Employees were invited to a range of Culture Workshops where they were asked to comment on various aspects of working at Melton. The information received from these workshops has led to the formation and development of this strategy and actions but also the review of the new Corporate Values.

Data has also been taken from exit interviews and questionnaires to spot trends and reasons for leaving employment at the Council. This told us that most were leaving for a higher paid job and to develop their career. That said the reasons people liked working at Melton were around being proud of what they achieved, good team working and being trusted and empowered to deliver.

The annual staff survey has also provided a good insight into the culture of the Council and identified areas to address. Engagement has dropped with less people completing the last staff survey which will be addressed through the action plan. Of those that did complete it, 60% said they were looking to develop their careers. We need to make sure that we can meet those aspirations or risk a continued high level of turnover.

Action Plan

The action plan that accompanies this strategy outlines how our Workforce Strategy will be implemented. It will be kept updated and monitored by the HR and Communications Manager with progress reported through the Joint Staff Working Group. It will be the role of Senior Management Team and Service Managers to support and communicate the delivery of the strategy and action plan.