

2024 - 2027 PEOPLE STRATEGY



**Barking &
Dagenham**

FORWARD

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to our People Strategy. We've always said that the people who work here are our greatest strength, and this strategy outlines how we will deliver our ambitions for our borough and our workforce. We're proud to have retained the Investors in People GOLD accreditation, and colleagues have shown time and time again that they want to make a difference to the people who live in Barking and Dagenham.

This is an organisational wide strategy to deliver on our Corporate Plan, supporting you to be equipped, motivated, and aligned with our mission to deliver the best services to our community, every day. And it's about changing our culture and how we work to meet our needs today and in the future.

So, everyone is responsible for the delivery of this strategy – myself, Directors, managers and staff across the council.

I hope you find this strategy useful, which includes five strategic priorities that have been developed to address our workforce needs, with a framework for improvement. Look out for more updates as we roll it out.

Thanks everyone,

Fiona Taylor, Chief Executive



**Barking &
Dagenham**

HOW IT FITS TOGETHER

The **People Strategy** is designed to align seamlessly with our broader strategic objectives and plans. It is an organisational wide strategy crafted to support and enhance our corporate plan, enabling our workforce to be equipped, motivated, and aligned with our mission to deliver services to our community.

Our Vision

to make Barking and Dagenham a place where people are proud of and want to live, work, study and stay.

DRIVE Values

Corporate Plan 2023 to 2026

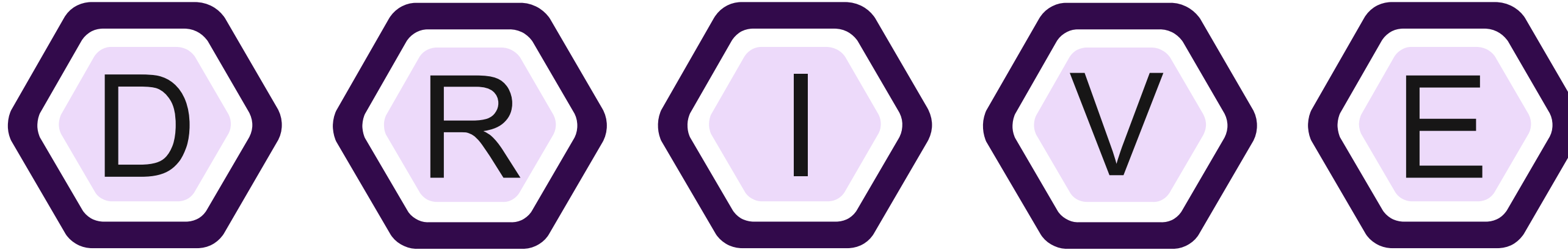
People Strategy

Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

Annual Service Plans

Individual PFD objectives

OUR VALUES



Our DRIVE Values underpin all the work that we do, they provide the guiding principles and for all Barking and Dagenham employees.

These values are designed to ensure that we consistently deliver the best outcomes for our residents, respond to their needs in a helpful and friendly way, inspire others and ourselves to achieve our best, value residents when making decisions, and engage with residents and colleagues in the best way we can.

Deliver the best outcomes for residents whenever we can.

Respond to residents' needs in a helpful and friendly way.

Inspire others and ourselves to achieve their best.

Value residents when making decisions.

Engage with residents and colleagues in the best way we can.

These values are embedded in our culture and are reflected in our corporate plan and. They are used to build strong teams, clarify roles, and simplify processes to ensure that we deliver the best service and support the best outcomes for residents

We have a values-based approach to recruitment which helps select and assess applicants in line with our DRIVE values.

By consistently applying these values, we create a culture of accountability, inclusivity, and excellence that drives the council forward and to better deliver services to residents.

PEOPLE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The development of our new people strategy was a comprehensive and inclusive process, ensuring that it aligns with our organisational needs and priorities. We began by actively listening to our staff, through various channels, gathering a range of insights. This approach allowed us to understand the real challenges and opportunities from the perspective of those who are directly impacted by the strategy. Additionally, we reflected on the principles and standards set by Investors in People, which provided a valuable framework for enhancing our people practices and ensuring that we maintain our and build on our GOLD accreditation.

To gain a deeper understanding of the strategic direction and priorities, we conducted interviews with senior leaders across the organisation. These interviews were crucial in identifying the key areas of focus and the vision for the future. By engaging with leaders, we were able to align the people strategy with the broader organisational goals and ensure that it supports our mission to deliver the best services to our community. The insights from these interviews helped shape the strategic priorities and actions outlined in the strategy.

Throughout the development process, we maintained a collaborative approach by sharing the draft strategy with a wide range of stakeholders, including staff networks and trade unions. This iterative process allowed us to gather diverse perspectives and make necessary adjustments to ensure the strategy was relevant and effective. By involving various stakeholders, we hope to have fostered a sense of ownership and commitment to the strategy's success. The final strategy reflects our collective efforts and is designed to equip, motivate, and align our workforce with our organisational mission.



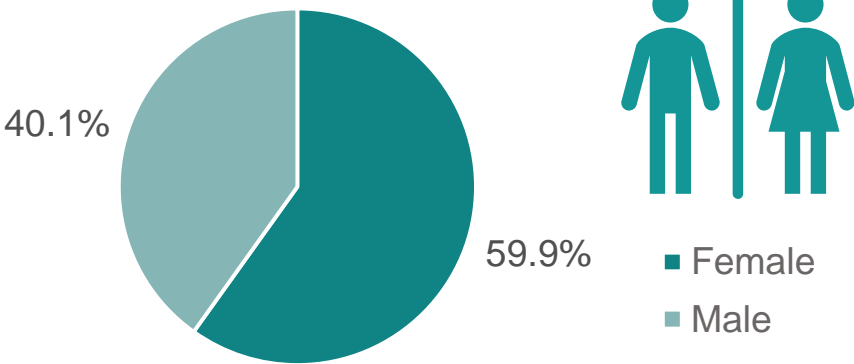
OUR WORKFORCE

Summary

2594 staff work for the council. **32%** live in the borough. **83.6%** of staff are full time, and **16.4%** part time.

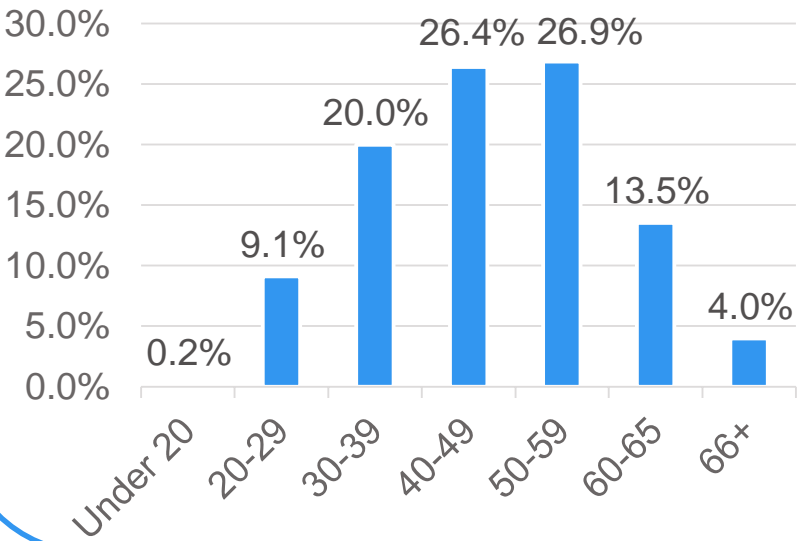


Gender



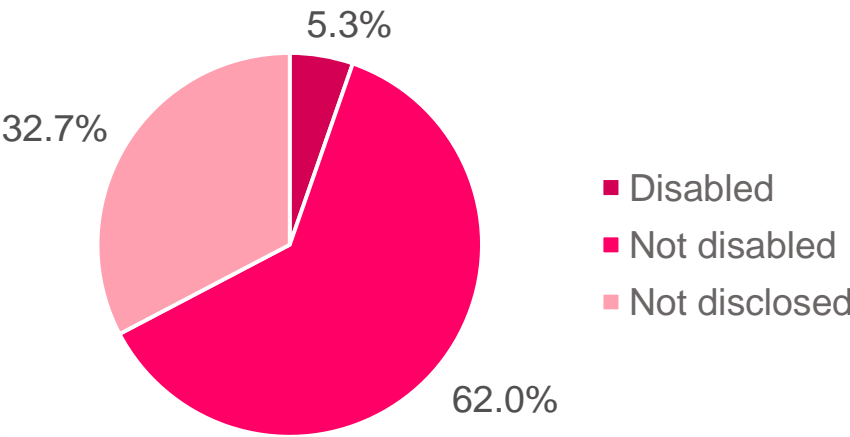
Our gender pay gap is **0.0%** (median).
There is a near equal gender split at the lower pay grades.

Age

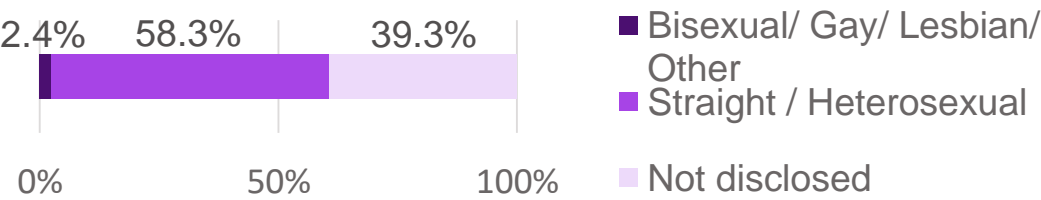


Over half the workforce, **53.5%** are **aged 40- 59**.
Only **9.3%** are **under 30**
Employees aged 50 and over are over represented at lower pay grades.

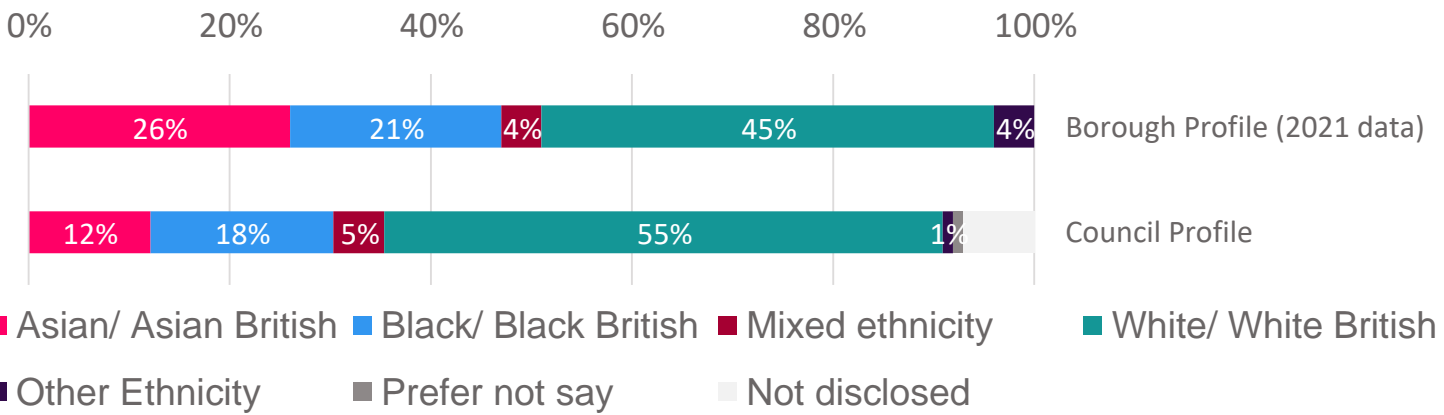
Disability



Sexual Orientation



Ethnicity



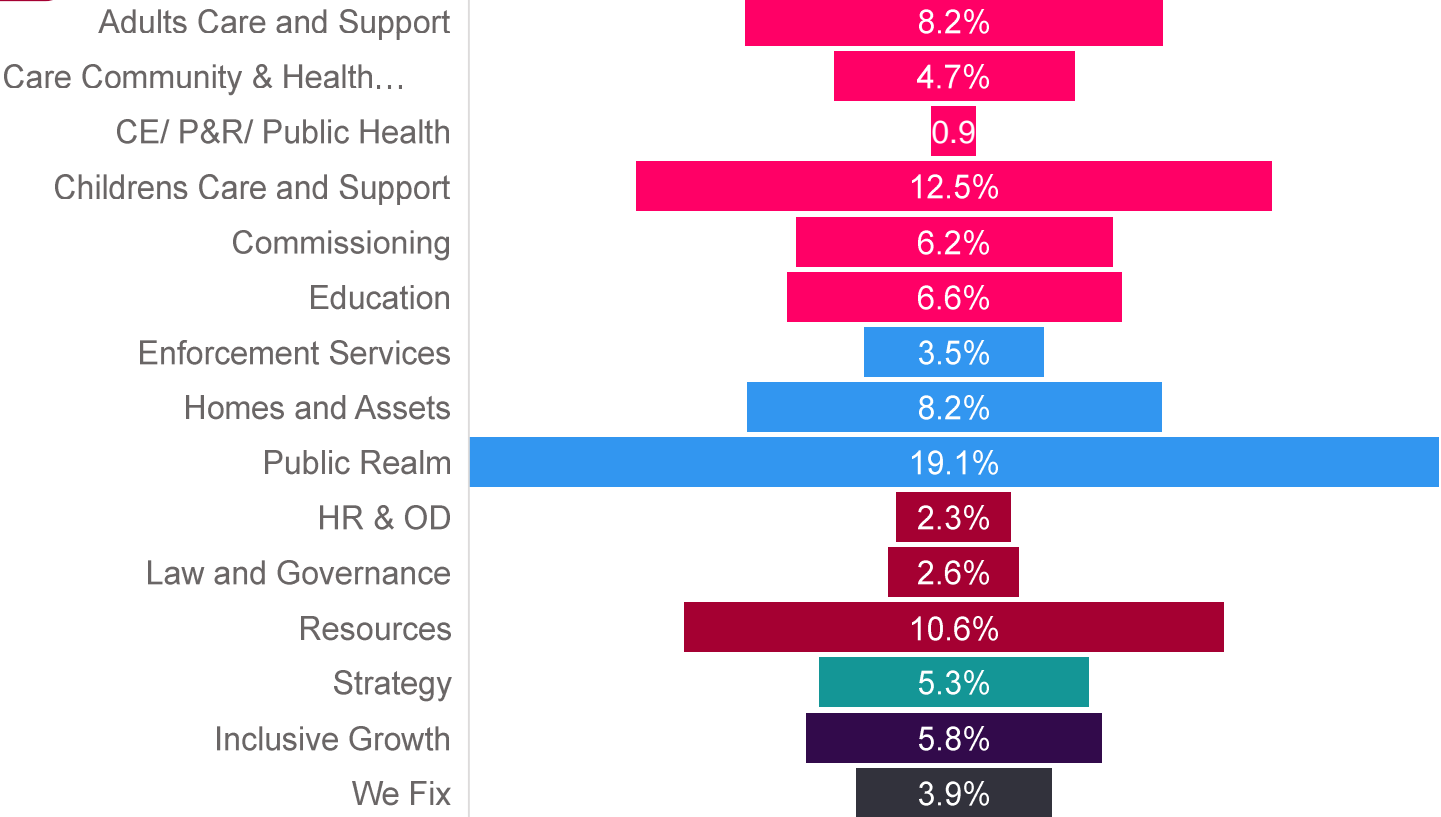
Our ethnicity pay gap is **0.0%** (median).

Religion

Only **59%** of our staff declared their religion.
Biggest 3: **31%** Christian, **11.5%** no religion, **8.2%** Muslim.

OUR WORKFORCE

Workforce by Directorate/Service block



Our two largest areas are People Inclusion and Resilience and Housing, Environment and Communities.

39.2%



30.8%



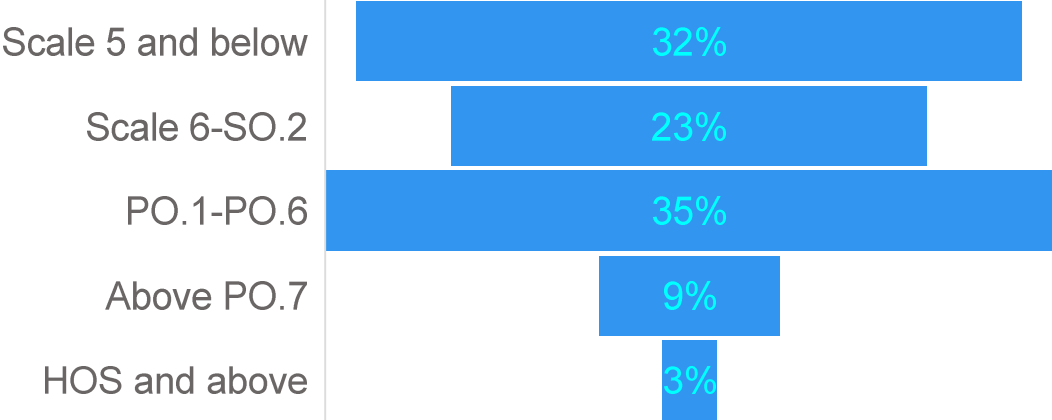
Flexible Working

Many of our staff work in the borough 5 days a week on a range of shift patterns. We have a policy of working in the borough 3 days a week for all other staff, and we support multiple flexible working options, including: compressed hours, flexi-time, and permanent home working.

Turn Over

The average length of service is **8 years**, with an overall turn over rate of **9%**, rising to **17%** in the first year.

Salary pay bands



Staff Development

Staff development is supported through Performance, Feedback and Development conversations, which have **94%** staff engagement.

6.7% of staff (**174** people) are currently completing apprenticeships.

Our average annual development spend is **£90** per person (excluding levy).

We have **85%** compliance with completing all mandatory training **98%** for data protection.



WHAT OUR STAFF SAY

We use the Investors in People (IiP) framework as a key diagnostic tool to understand how we lead, manage and develop our staff and to assess our culture. The IiP framework helps us identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, ensuring that we invest in our people and strive for high performance and delivery of the council's vision.

We are proud to be a “we invest in people” Gold council, for the second consecutive time in 2024.

The report highlighted our employees continue to express pride and enthusiasm about “making a difference” to the residents of Barking and Dagenham and have a real desire to provide quality services that meet their needs.

Our IiP survey results, highlighted managing performance and delivering continuous improvements as strengths, both scoring higher than the industry average. It also highlighted leading and inspiring people and recognising and rewarding high performance as areas for further development.

“It's not perfect, but it definitely feels like we are much better now as a Council at talking to one another - and trying to work together to find ways of solving issues”

“There are challenges but at the end of the day I love my job and the opportunity it gives me to make a difference to the residents I come into contact with”

“My manager and I talk regularly about my performance and how I am doing..... and I've definitely improved as a result of that feedback and guidance”

CURRENT ACHIEVEMENTS

We have lots to celebrate, and a workforce who show pride and enthusiasm about “making a difference” to the residents of Barking and Dagenham and a real desire to provide quality services that meet their needs.

We have established many initiatives and policies to support and develop our workforce. Our people strategy will enable us to build a strong connection between these initiatives and our priorities.



CURRENT CHALLENGES

The London Borough of Barking & Dagenham is currently facing a range of external challenges that impact its ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently, navigating the complexities of demographic changes, including population growth and increased diversity, which require tailored services and resources to meet the needs of all residents.

The borough is also grappling with the impacts of austerity measures, cost of living crisis and budget constraints, which have necessitated difficult decisions regarding resource allocation and service delivery.

We continue to be in a period of rapid technological change, creating both opportunity but also impacting on the skills required of the workforce, which now spans 5 generations.

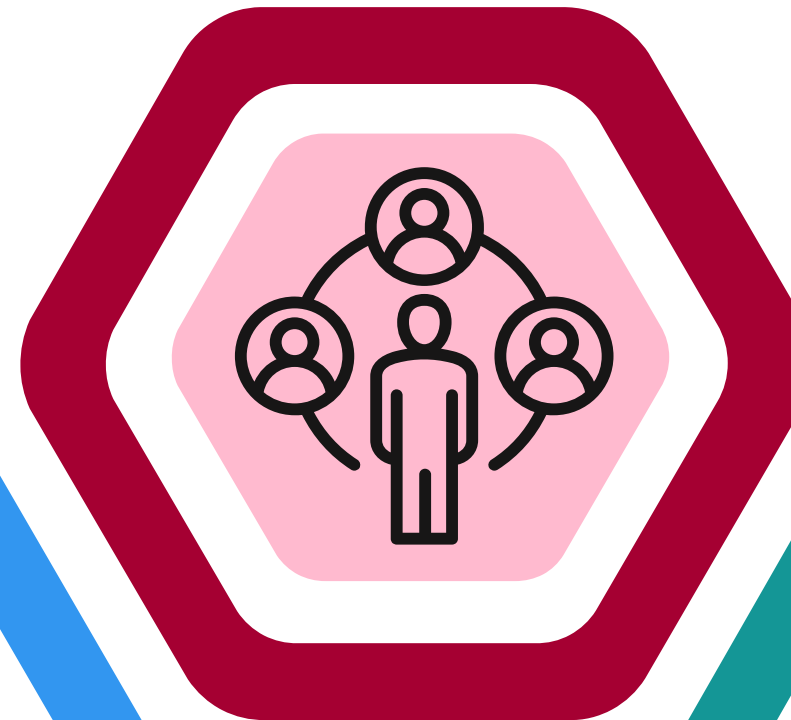
This is all happening in the context of new employment laws and regulations, a challenging recruitment environment and changing needs of our employees.



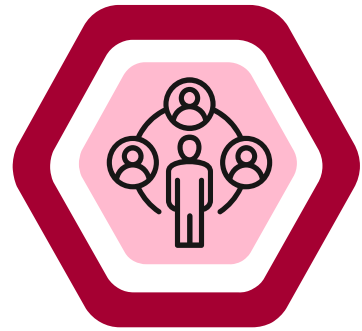
OUR PRIORITIES

Our people strategy outlines 5 strategic priorities that have been identified and developed to address the LBBDs workforce needs and provides a framework for improvement.

Leadership & Trust
Inclusion & Wellbeing
Design & Transformation
Attracting & Developing
Performance & Recognition



OUR PRIORITIES



LEADERSHIP & TRUST

We nurture a culture of trust, transparency and inclusive leadership, role modelling our DRIVE values and providing a clear sense of direction for LBBD, that inspires the workforce to deliver. There are opportunities for two-way communication and feedback where input is valued.



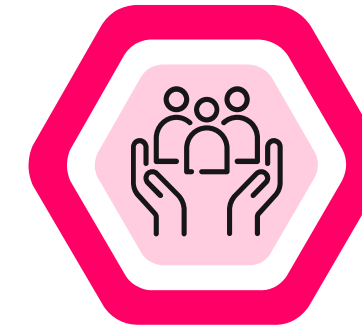
INCLUSION & WELLBEING

We strive to be an inclusive employer, with equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of everything we do. We ensure our employee policies and procedures are fair and consistent, supporting staff wellbeing, enabling everyone to be their best self at work. We do not shy away from tackling behaviours that does not align with our DRIVE values.



DESIGN & TRANSFORMATION

We aim to have an organisational design that meets the changing needs of our residents. Creating opportunities to connect and collaborate, we take a people-centric approach, developing the skills for co-production, with staff and the community, to deliver transformation where it is needed most. Creating efficient teams that harness the benefits of new technologies.



ATTRACTING & DEVELOPING

We work hard to ensure LBBD is seen as a great place to work and somewhere that people can truly make a difference, in a challenging context. We aim to attract, recruit, develop and retain great and diverse talent. There are opportunities for individuals to develop skills and knowledge, supporting their career progression.



PERFORMANCE & RECOGNITION

We create a culture to enable individuals and teams to perform to the best of their ability and celebrate success in a meaningful way. This includes managers being equipped to be skilled people managers. We highlight and share great performance and high productivity while identifying and addressing areas of poor performance.



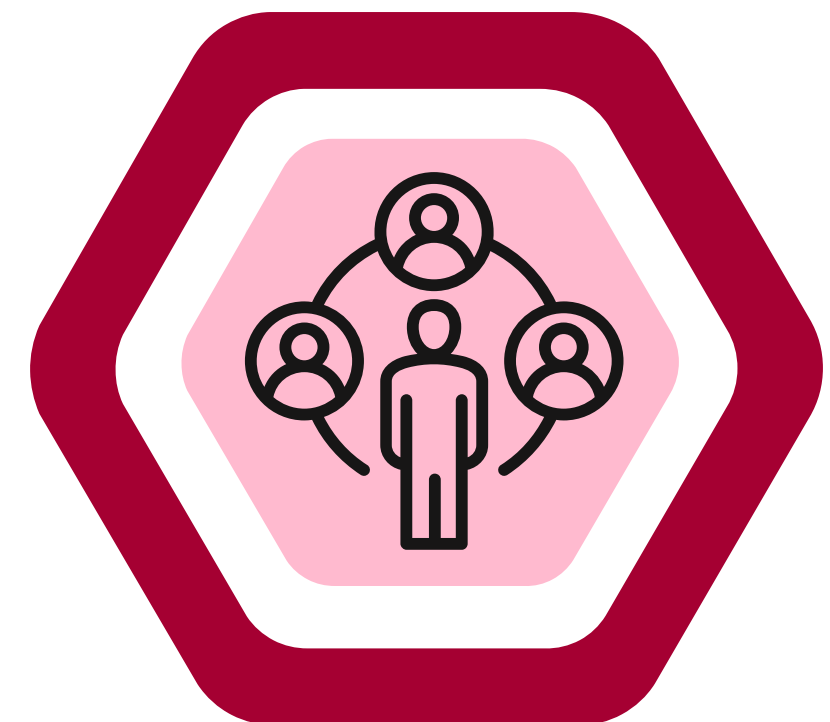
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Why is this a priority

We are working in challenging times and in this context, leadership and trust is more important than ever. Staff need to trust leaders to take the right decisions and leaders must be able to trust staff to deliver in their role. We know that effective leadership is a key factor for staff happiness and retention.

Our regular staff and manager briefings provide all staff an opportunity to hear from and engage with our senior leadership team. In feedback staff have commented that it “makes our leadership team feel closer to the workforce.” and value “that we are kept up to date and given the chance to ask questions” helping staff to “understanding the bigger picture and the directions that the council are working toward”.



LEADERSHIP & TRUST

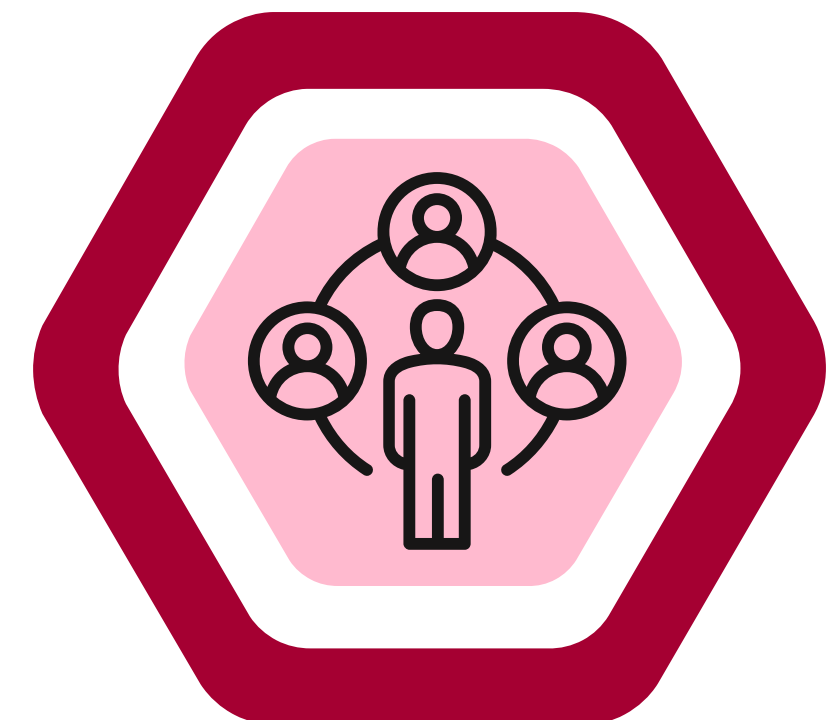
We nurture a culture of trust, transparency and inclusive leadership, role modelling our DRIVE values and providing a clear sense of direction for LBBD, that inspires the workforce to deliver. There are opportunities for two-way communication and feedback where input is valued.

What does success look like:

- Our Leaders are visible and inspire staff
- Leaders are self-aware and recognise the impact of their words and actions
- Our workforce have a clear sense of direction and everyone understands the part they play
- Each individual is clear about the accountability that sits within their role
- Managers and staff feel equipped and supported to carry out their work and take decisions
- Regular two-way communication and feedback channels are fully harnessed across the workforce, with feedback being used to constructively drive improvement
- Leaders and managers are able to effectively challenge when required.
- The expertise of the workforce is valued and staff are given the autonomy to draw on these skill to deliver great services to our residents.

Key measures include:

Staff survey • PFD analysis • staff engagement • 360 feedback





INCLUSION & WELLBEING

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Why is this a priority

We recognise that an environment where our staff feel valued, have positive wellbeing and psychological safety is one where they will be able to thrive. Our workforce should feel safe and connected and 'see people like themselves developing their careers at the council'. We continue to strive to have a workforce that is representative of the borough that we serve.

A collaborative project between our occupational health team and public health teams looked to proactively support the health and wellbeing of our frontline staff. The project addressed a significant increase in mental health referrals and a backlog of assessments due to the pandemic. By securing additional funding, the OH team increased resources and implemented thematic wellbeing workshops. The project led to a reduction in sickness due to stress and improved access to health checks and counselling, demonstrating the importance of early intervention. The success highlighted the value of group counselling sessions, which will continue to be offered to support workforce mental health.



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What does success look like:

- LBBD is a welcoming organisation where everyone feels valued
- We have skilled managers who are able to support all their teams, recognising individual needs and support reasonable adjustments when required
- Managers focus on creating a positive psychologically safe work environments, role modelling healthy behaviours and sign posting health and wellbeing interventions.
- There is an equitable environment for career progression opportunities, and professional development is openly discussed and actively supported by managers
- Allyship is encouraged and active across all parts and all levels of the council
- Managers are culturally competent and can adapt to meet individual needs
- Staff absence is well managed
- Staff wellbeing is openly discussed and addressed in one to ones and we proactively support when physical and mental health challenges exist.

Key measures include:

Workforce profile • staff sickness absence • staff network feedback



DESIGN & TRANSFORMATION

We aim to have an organisational design that meets the changing needs of our residents. Creating opportunities to connect and collaborate, we take a people-centric approach, developing the skills for co-production, with staff and the community, to deliver transformation where it is needed most. Creating efficient teams that harness the benefits of new technologies.

Why is this a priority

As a complex organisation facing financial challenges, our goal is to develop a creative and skilled workforce that collaborates with the community and partners, leveraging a localities model. In our data-rich environment, we recognise the potential of data to predict future needs. It's crucial that our structure fosters collaboration, knowledge sharing, and governance oversight. It is vital that we involve the workforce in the future design, taking them on the transformation journey.

Our insights and innovation team, conducted a pilot to test a preventative approach to debt in the borough. Using council-held data, they identified residents that had council tax and rent arrears, and wider vulnerabilities. They then proactively contacted them using texts and calls and offered support from the Homes and Money Hub to sort their financial issues. Over the course of the pilot, the Homes and Money Hub secured £400k of financial benefits for the residents they worked with, and they paid back £75k more of their arrears compared to a (control) group of residents that did not receive proactive support.



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What does success look like:

- There is an efficient organisational structure where clear accountability sits at the lowest level, allowing for effective delivery
- Oversight of changing requirements for skills amongst workforce, including digital capabilities
- There is organisational capability to horizon scan at a local and national level, leading to informed work force planning
- Systems and processes are designed in a way that support managers to be self-sufficient
- Collaborative working across services and with internal and external partners is the norm, enabling problems to be resolved quickly
- An adaptable, flexible and agile workforce that can respond to changing circumstances and embrace change
- New technology solutions are evaluated and implemented where value can be demonstrated

Key measures include:

Productivity metrics • staff survey • benchmarking



ATTRACTING & DEVELOPING

We work hard to ensure LBBD is seen as a great place to work and somewhere that people can truly make a difference, in a challenging context. We aim to attract, recruit, develop and retain great and diverse talent. There are opportunities for individuals to develop skills and knowledge, supporting their career progression.

Why is this a priority

We need to ensure we have a skilled workforce who are able to deliver and adapt to meet the needs of our residents. There is a nationally recognised recruitment challenge across the sector which is acute in some services, and so we need to stand out from the crowd. We need to ensure that we retain and grow our own talent, we know many of our staff want to develop their careers at LBBD and we need to provide opportunities for this to happen.

Our Enforcement team developed a strategy to ensure a “fit for purpose” workforce, supporting learning and development, empowering and valuing staff, and attracting local talent, especially young people and care leavers. They took a three-pronged approach: creating apprenticeships for entry and advancement, upskilling existing officers through training and development opportunities, and enhancing managerial leadership skills. This strategy led to significant workforce improvements, including more staff completing apprenticeships, increased staff retention, and recognition through various awards. The approach addressed skills gaps, improved service delivery, and created a more satisfied workforce.



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What does success look like:

- Established brand that supports in recruiting
- We recognise and harness opportunities to recruit from the talent that sits within our local community, removing barriers where they exist
- We inspire young people to start a career in local government and invest in our future talent pipeline
- An agile and adaptive recruitment methodology, enabling us to move at pace.
- Our new starters have an onboarding and induction experience that smoothly and rapidly embeds them in the organisation and our values.
- Succession plans for all supervisor, professional or management posts.
- Critical key career pathways are defined and talent pools identified.
- Apprenticeship programme that aligns to personal and organisational needs.
- Utilise exit/stay data to support our understanding of staff motivation.
- A continuous learning culture is supported, with an understanding that learning opportunities can exist everyday.

Key measures include:

Recruitment statistics • L&D offer • Apprenticeship Levy allocation





PERFORMANCE & RECOGNITION

We create a culture to enable individuals and teams to perform to the best of their ability and celebrate success in a meaningful way. This includes managers being equipped to be skilled people managers. We highlight and share great performance and high productivity while identifying and addressing areas of poor performance.

Why is this a priority

Getting the basics right, with a focus on maximising resources and ensuring value for money is key. We need high performing individuals and teams, underpinned by strong levels of motivation amongst our workforce. Staff need to feel their achievements are recognised, giving them a sense of pride in their work, and that they are contributing to progress in the borough.

Ellie Roworth started her journey with the council in 2014 as a business admin apprentice. Demonstrating her drive to learn and develop from the outset, she quickly moved up to become the Elections Manager, the youngest in London. Reflecting on her journey, Ellie attributed much of her success to the support and recognition she received from her managers, "If it wasn't for them believing in me at the time and giving me that opportunity to go out and learn and get my qualifications, then I wouldn't be where I'm at today."





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What does success look like:

- All managers and staff have clear, meaningful and measurable objectives
- All teams have performance indicators and SLA's where appropriate, linked to the Corporate Plan and objectives
- Achievement is celebrated in multiple, meaningful ways that resonate with the individual member of staff
- There is a focus on improving performance, through regular feedback providing support where appropriate and managers have the confidence and skill when challenging conversation are required.
- We have a working environment where staff are able to discuss any issues affecting their work
- We seek to identify individual strength and maximising opportunities to draw on these strengths within the workplace

Key measures include:

PFD completion • retention data • career progression



HOW WE DELIVER

To ensure the priorities identified in this people strategy and the success we have defined is delivered. There is a people strategy delivery plan, reviewed annually, outlining both what is already established practice and key actions that align with our overarching priorities.

This people strategy delivery plan will serve as a roadmap, supporting in the development of annual service plans, guiding our efforts and ensuring that every initiative we undertake contributes to our vision of success. Through this structured approach, we will be able to track progress, measure outcomes, and make informed adjustments to stay on course towards achieving our strategic objectives.

**Our
Vision**

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Dagenham a place
where people are proud
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DRIVE Values

Corporate Plan 2023 to 2026

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