



Draft Workforce Strategy 2015 -2019

February 2015



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Foreword

Our Workforce Strategy 2015 – 2019 sets out how we will engage, develop, enable and empower a workforce that will achieve the vision and aspirations of Brent Council and its partners, delivering excellent public services to our communities, creating the right opportunities for all who live and work here, and changing lives in Brent for the better.

Much has been achieved in this respect already through the rollout of the Council's earlier People Strategy. These achievements are summarised here and include the enhancement of health and well-being initiatives for staff, such as the launch of our new employee assistance programme, the roll out of new flexible working policies and the expansion of our apprenticeship programme. However, we need to do even more to continue improving our workforce and ensure that it is properly equipped to meet future challenges.

We are operating in a context that is financially extremely challenging, and there is no doubt that this will have profound implications for our workforce. Much is uncertain but, to meet this challenge, we need to work more creatively, more efficiently and more effectively in partnership with other organisations. Most importantly, we need staff who are motivated and committed to our vision, who are flexible and able to adapt quickly to a rapidly changing context, and equipped with the skills and knowledge to achieve genuine excellence and deliver the outcomes we aspire to.

This strategy seeks to ensure that these goals are achieved.

Cara Davani

HR Director, Brent Council

1. About the Strategy

1.1 Introduction

Public sector organisations, including Brent Council face some serious challenges over the coming years. Significant public spending and efficiency pressures, an ageing workforce, shortages of some key workers, changing skill requirements, new technologies, new ways of working, contributing to a sustainable environment, ensuring that the needs of the communities we serve are understood and that cohesion between different communities is promoted and maintained, competition for high calibre employees: these and many more. And there will be fresh challenges just beyond the horizon.

It is essential that we plan for these challenges and for future demand. It is clear that, to meet the financial challenges in particular, the nature of our workforce will need to change. We are going to need a streamlined, flexible workforce that can adapt quickly to changing needs and circumstances. We need staff who are committed to our vision, who are motivated and able to anticipate and respond to customer needs, and who have with the skills and knowledge to achieve genuine excellence in service delivery. We need staff who, above all, are able to focus on and deliver the outcomes we aspire to for the people who live and work in Brent. The Workforce Strategy provides us with a framework for achieving this.

1.2 Our vision, our priorities for the borough and our values

Our vision for the borough of Brent, agreed and shared with partners and residents through the borough planning process, is to make Brent a place that creates – through excellence in all local services – the right opportunities for all who live and work here, and to change lives for the better. The priority objectives through which we intend to work with our communities and our partners to achieve this vision are set out in the Borough Plan. Our priorities are:

1. Better lives

This means:

- making sure that local people have the best possible life chances, regardless of their starting position
- supporting local enterprise, generating jobs for local people, helping people into work and promoting fair pay
- making sure that our schools are amongst the best and that our children and young people achieve to their potential
- enabling people to live healthier lives and reducing health inequalities
- supporting vulnerable people and families when they need it.

2. Better place

This means:

- making sure that Brent is an attractive place to live, with a pleasant environment, clean streets, well-cared for parks and green spaces
- continuing to reduce crime, especially violent crime, and making people feel safer
- increasing the supply of affordable, good quality housing
- supporting good quality, accessible arts and leisure facilities.

3. Better locally

This means:

- building resilience and promoting citizenship, fairness and responsibility amongst local people and strengthening the sense of community amongst the people who live and work here
- promoting cohesion and integration amongst our communities

- making sure that everyone has a fair say in the way that services are delivered, that they are listened to and taken seriously
- making sure that inequalities in the quality of life in different parts of the borough are tackled by a stronger focus on local needs
- building partnership – between local service providers and between local services and residents – to find new ways of providing services that are more finely tailored to individual, community and local needs.

The actions we take to achieve our priorities are underpinned by our **core values**. These are:

- Fairness – we are driven by a determination to reduce inequality and injustice.
- Respect for people – we actively engage with our residents and staff, seek their views, and use them to shape our decision-making.
- Valuing diversity – we plan and respond to the needs of our different communities, challenge discrimination, value contributions from all and are champions of equalities and human rights.
- Excellence in all our services – we strive to achieve the very best standards of service for all our residents.

These values inform what we do and how we do it. They are not new. For example, the council has been focused on excellent customer-focused services that deliver improving outcomes for some years. Equally, fairness, respect for people and valuing diversity is built into everything we do. But making our values an explicit foundation for our workforce strategy is important. They apply to everyone working on behalf of the council including all staff and members.

1.3 Achieving our vision

To achieve our vision and bring about real and sustainable improvements in the lives of local people, we need a workforce of the highest quality: skilled and motivated, confident and flexible, knowledgeable about and connected with our local communities, committed to our vision and immersed in our values. We recognise that our greatest asset in meeting future challenges is our people and that developing our workforce to meet to these challenges is critical. We want to have a workforce that is able to respond proactively to emerging national and local priorities. We want to be an exemplary employer able to attract and retain the best staff. And we want to be a modern, efficient organisation that delivers value for money.

1.4 Workforce Strategy Priorities

The priorities, objectives and expected outcomes of our Workforce Strategy are therefore as follows:

Priority	Objective	Outcomes
Recruitment and retention	To make sure that we recruit, retain and appropriately reward a diverse, highly skilled and motivated workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong recruitment and retention rates • Improved applicant field • Solutions to hard to fill posts • Awards that enhance Brent's reputation as an employer of choice • liP Gold Standard • Positive outcomes from staff surveys • Apprenticeship targets of 100 job opportunities with the council achieved by 2016, including targets for Looked After Children
Leadership and Management	To develop leadership and management effectiveness and consistency in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liP Gold Standard • Confident managers, with ability to differentiate between different levels of staff performance

	management practice across the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More internal staff with the skills and capacity to be recruited as senior managers from within the organisation • A workforce that is more reflective of the community at senior levels • Corporate priority outcomes achieved • Improving positive outcomes from staff surveys
Skills Development	To plan, deliver and evaluate learning and development programmes and activities that support all our staff in developing the skills they need to perform effectively, both now and in the future, and to develop professionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More management vacancies filled from within • Employees and managers across the organisation able to describe learning needs and skills improvement in relation to the organisation's strategic priorities • Direct link between learning and development initiatives and performance improvement demonstrated • Brent residents experience excellent services whether they encounter Brent employees or contractors • Increasing skill levels confirmed by skills audit year on year • High levels of compliance with mandatory training
An efficient and modern, customer-focused organisation	To ensure that excellent services are delivered to all residents and service users through a focus on organisational effectiveness, high performance and value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services that are recognised by users and residents as improved • Targeted efficiency savings achieved • New partnerships and service delivery models developed and implemented with improved outcomes • Improved attendance levels
Understanding and valuing diversity	To develop the workforce, through targeted recruitment and development, so that it is proportionately representative at all levels of the communities we serve, and so that the diverse needs of the community are understood and responded to effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appropriately representative workforce • Increased BME and female representation at senior levels • Increased representation of disabled employees across the workforce • All council employees receive equal pay for work of equal value • Engagement and participation across all communities • More accessible services • Reduced inequalities in service outcomes

1.5 How the Strategy was developed

The Workforce Strategy is rooted in Brent's 2015 – 2019 Human Resources Strategy, which seeks to build a workforce that:

- Is motivated, high performing and committed to our core values
- Delivers excellent services to residents
- Welcomes innovation, partnership and integrated working across services
- Works to high professional standards

- Is able to adapt to changing work processes, structures and new technology with ease

The Workforce Strategy was developed through:

- review of the Borough and Corporate Plan and other key plans and documents to ensure that the council's priorities and their implications for our workforce are properly reflected in the strategy
- an analysis of data about the council's current workforce
- consideration of key issues affecting local authorities in general and Brent in particular
- discussion with the senior management team about the needs of the workforce for the future
- interviews with senior managers from across the council to establish workforce needs within and across departments
- discussions with the Trade Unions
- skills analysis and the review of the outcomes of the 2010 – 2014 People Strategy.

1.6 What we have achieved so far

In today's context, workforce planning in local authorities has never been more important. But workforce planning is not new to Brent. A review of our 2010-2014 People Strategy has shown how we have been continuously reviewing the services that are essential to residents and users and how best they can be delivered, exploring the most appropriate delivery structures, and analysing, enabling, developing and supporting the skills, behaviours, attitudes and performance that we need from our employees. Workforce planning has helped to ensure that the impact of change on our workforce is clearly understood, effectively communicated and built into our corporate and service plans, our financial plans and our training plans.

The outcomes of the **2010-14 People Strategy Review** highlighted a range of achievements over the period, against the Strategy's workforce objectives. For example:

- **To develop strong leadership:** Full staff surveys and mini surveys across the council confirmed positive perceptions of managers amongst staff, and a willingness to 'go the extra mile'. Downsizing of the council was achieved and effectively managed as part of our drive to service transformation and efficiency savings. Linked key performance indicators were established for people, performance and budget management. Our Human Resources function was restructured to better meet the needs of the council, and a revised capability procedure was implemented along with new grievance and disciplinary policies and other key policies.
- **To reconfigure the organisation in line with One Council principles:** A new senior management structure was implemented to better meet the needs of the changing organisation. An *Employee Benefits* review was undertaken, successfully bringing together and consolidating terms and conditions of employment for all staff on NJC terms and conditions. The working week was harmonised across the council to 36 hours (40 hours for key graded staff). A new Oracle HR/Payroll system was introduced to deliver enhanced staff and management self-service, data management and reporting. The London Living Wage was made a minimum requirement for all non-school permanent staff, and its adoption was recommended to schools.
- **To support effective change management:** Change management training and executive coaching was provided for managers. Specific training on change initiatives has been provided to support departments and teams where needed – in the case of Welfare Reform changes, for example. The council's *Change Managing Policy* was reviewed to encourage greater flexibility and adaptability. Project management training for managers was strengthened. These developments helped to support the effective management of a number of restructurings within the council, including that of the *Brent Integrated Support (BIBS)*, which led to streamlining and service efficiencies.

- **To build an adaptable and efficient workforce:** An enhanced flexible working policy was introduced to enable a more agile and responsive workforce. *Flexible and Smarter Ways of Working* workshops were delivered across the council. London Weighting was harmonised and consolidated. Corporate recruitment was reviewed to create a more streamlined and business-focused recruitment service. The quality of recruitment material and application packs was improved to better present the council as an employer of choice. A new framework for engagement with trade unions was successfully implemented, resulting in closer working relationships and improved consultation. The number of interims and consultants working for the council was reduced. A programme of *Ready, Steady, Go* activities supported preparations for the move to the Civic Centre, with a 93% employee attendance rate achieved. These improvements contributed to the council's achievement of *Investors in People* accreditation at Silver level.
- **To fill skills and resource gaps:** A restructuring of the corporate learning and development function was successfully completed. A new mentoring scheme was introduced, which included access to external mentors. 93% of training participants reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied that course attendance benefited them as individuals.
- **To recruit, retain and develop motivated and talented people:** A new apprentice programme was launched, to recruit 100 apprentices over the next three years; 21 apprentices have already begun the programme in various departments across the council, one of whom has already found permanent employment with the Council. We see this programme as a potentially significant tool for recognising and developing local talent and helping to meet the council's future workforce requirements. At 85%, Brent has one of the highest retention rates in the country for graduates completing the graduate scheme. In 2013, all of the council's business support activities were integrated, resulting in standardisation of processes, financial efficiencies and a more streamlined service. Employee demographic data was refreshed, with a 77% response rate across the eight of the nine diversity characteristics, indicating a growing confidence in the council's commitment to equality and human rights.

Over the coming years we will build on these achievements and continue to systematically develop and improve the skills of our managers and staff so that they are in the best possible position to respond flexibly to new challenges and deliver the improved outcomes for local people that the council is determined to see.

1.7 Structure of the document

The remainder of the document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the national and local context for Brent's workforce
- Section 3 sets out our current workforce profile and characteristics
- Section 4 summarises the future skills needs identified through audits and reviews and staff and manager feedback
- Section 5 outlines the key actions proposed to meet the Strategy objectives and achieve its outcomes
- Section 6 sets out roles and responsibilities with regard to the Strategy
- Section 7 describes how the strategy will be implemented, monitored and reviewed

2. The national and local context

2.1 Budgetary and workforce reductions

The Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2012 required us to identify significant savings

across the council. This is inevitably having a huge impact on public services, requiring a smarter allocation of resources, more integrated partnership working, joint commissioning, and greater flexibility in the delivery of services. In short, the council has to deliver better services, in new ways, in order to ensure that the needs of Brent residents are met.

These changes have meant that the size of the council's workforce has already declined significantly. The total number of staff employed has fallen by more than 20%, from 3,172 (2,873 FTEs) in March 2010 to 2,328 (2,144 FTEs) in January 2014. In addition, the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, agreed by Full Council in February 2013, forecasts that further reductions of £53m will be needed in the council's budget by 2016/17. Essentially, by 2018, the council's budget will have been cut by half. A further significant decline in overall staff numbers will therefore be unavoidable.

The council is determined to limit as far as possible the direct impact on existing staff and to support them through these changes, by, for example, reducing numbers of agency workers, freezing vacancies in the lead up to restructurings, offering targeted voluntary redundancy and providing redeployment and reskilling opportunities wherever possible.

2.2 External Policy Framework

The external policy framework has also changed significantly. Universal credit and other welfare reforms, personalisation in social care, National Health Service reforms, early help for children in need, changes to the role of councils in relation to schools and support for children with special needs, and the government's localism agenda all have implications for the way we deliver services. The impact of housing and labour market conditions in London also has a significant impact on the council's ability to recruit and retain staff.

The council needs to continue adapting to this changing context, and this has significant implications for our workforce needs. Our workforce planning must reflect the changing ways the council enables, commissions and delivers services within our local community. New ways of working in the Civic Centre and other buildings, changes to the way we organise the delivery of services, and the changing needs and demands of the people we serve, all require a fundamentally different approach to working and doing business.

2.3 New service delivery arrangements

The council has already made significant changes to its service delivery arrangements. These include:

- Establishment of Brent Customer Services, which brought together the main customer facing services in the council;
- Integration of professional and business support services to develop *Brent's Integrated Business Support Service*;
- Process/customer 'journey' reviews in revenues and benefits, adult social care, and housing needs;
- Fundamental changes to the service offer and service provision arrangements for learning disability day services, libraries, waste and street cleaning, highways, parking, children's centres, special education needs and school improvement services;
- Major commissioning and procurement activities, including the commissioning of adult social care, children's social care, supporting people services and temporary accommodation, and the outsourcing of facilities management.

We need to make sure that we have a workforce with the capacity and skills to monitor and manage these new arrangements, and to contribute to further innovation. Effective skills for commissioning and procurement will be key, as will client side contract management.

2.4 Focus on customers

A key element in the work undertaken by the council in its transformation programme to date has been the strengthening of our focus on customers. A structure and staffing review carried out for the council in 2009, for example, found that a relatively small proportion of staff was employed in customer facing roles. Organisational and service changes since then have aimed at increasing the proportion of staff time spent on customer facing roles. As a result, the proportion of staff working in customer facing roles increased by 10% between 2009 and 2013.

The council's current customer access strategy reinforces the council's commitment to the customer and the relationship between the customer and the council in the future.

2.5 New structure and staffing arrangements

Our structure and staffing changes over the past three years led to the introduction of a new management model, harmonised pay and conditions and a new core contract. New departmental and senior management structures are also in place.

On-going change in the organisation, including the transfer of functions as part of the changing way we work with partners and the development of new delivery mechanisms, will require a workforce that is flexible and able to adapt to changing structures.

2.6 Flexible working

The council has a flexible workforce. New flexible working policies have been implemented to enable our people to work more flexibly in line with new service arrangements. Our HR strategy acknowledges the impact that flexible working will have on the relationship between employees and managers. Performance is being measured on outcomes and results, not the need for physical presence and hours worked.

2.7 New technology and systems

Our business strategy encourages Brent's customers, partners and residents to do more business online. Using mobile and web technology, more of our services will become e-enabled. For most people, but not all, their initial point of contact with the council in future will be online.

Our IT strategy supports this shift. Mobile technologies such as smartphones, data pens and tablets allow staff in the field to access key customer data and complete transactions at the point of contact. As a result, staff will be more self-sufficient and able to carry out tasks remotely in line with our new flexible working arrangements.

New systems such as Oracle HR and Payroll being introduced will create greater efficiencies across the council.

2.8 Partnership and integrated working

Strengthening partnership working and more integrated ways of service planning, commissioning and delivery are important strategic priorities for the council. The *Oracle Shared Service Project* has seen Brent work alongside five other London boroughs to achieve service improvements in finance, procurement and HR through the new Oracle system. In areas such as Children and Young People, occupational groups across Brent's Children's Partnership are working together, increasingly using common practices and approaches. 2014 has also seen the implementation of joint arrangements for shared resources with Barnet for Registration and Nationality services.

2.9 Responding to labour market pressures

Labour market pressures are always very fluid, and having good market intelligence data is vital to ensure that the council is well placed to recruit people with the right skill sets and experience. Equally important is the need for the council to remain competitive in the market both to recruit and retain staff.

Currently, there are pockets of professional roles that the council finds hard to recruit. These include specialist managerial roles such as those in procurement, adult social care and children’s social care, social workers in children’s social care and surveyors. There are also difficulties sourcing people in public health and in transportation.

The unemployment rate in Brent has consistently been some 2 -3% above London and the UK rate for the past 15 years. Working with partners to address this and create more job opportunities for local people is a key priority for the council. As one of the biggest employers in the borough, we need to look for more ways to bring more local people into the council’s workforce.

3. Our Workforce Profile

The council needs an appropriately balanced work profile – in terms of age and representativeness of the community – in order to meet our future workforce requirements and help achieve the prioritised outcomes for our communities. An analysis of Brent’s workforce for 2013-14 shows that an overall profile as set out in the following table.

Headcount	FTE	Female	BAME	Disabled	Sexuality (LGBT categories)	Religion (% collected)
2378	2,301	65% (65%)	62% (61%)	8% (6%)	3%	64%

A more detailed analysis reveals the following characteristics within this profile:

Age: The largest age group in Brent’s workforce is staff aged 41 – 50. The proportion of staff aged 16 – 39 has increased over the past year, while the proportion of staff aged 40 – 64 has fallen. Brent has a young workforce compared to other London boroughs.

Disability: Brent has the 5th highest proportion of disabled staff of all London boroughs, although the council recognises that there is still under-reporting in this area. The number of staff declaring a disability increased over the past year, however, even though staffing levels were reduced, indicating that disabled staff were not disadvantaged by change programmes. There is a correlation between age and disability – older staff are more likely to be disabled. Adults Social Care has the highest proportion of disabled staff across the council.

Ethnicity: The ethnic diversity of Brent’s workforce closely reflects the community that we serve. Brent has the highest proportion of BAME staff of all London boroughs. However, BAME staff are unevenly distributed throughout the workforce and are under-represented at senior management levels although we still have the 4th highest number of BAME staff at senior levels across London. Asian staff are more likely to work on a part time basis than staff of other ethnicities.

Gender: Brent’s workforce has a high proportion of female staff overall, but these are unevenly distributed throughout the workforce. Women make up more than 50% of the Corporate Management Team, but are under-represented at HAY grade management levels, making up

only 45% of staff, compared with 65% of the overall workforce. Women are also under-represented in Environment and Neighbourhood Services and Finance and IT departments. Women are far more likely than men to work part-time.

Gender identity and expression: 1% of staff have declared that they are transgender. GIRES estimates that 1% of the UK population experience gender variance and 0.02% of the UK population will undergo gender transition.

Religion or belief: 36% of staff who responded to questions about equality characteristics preferred not to say whether or not they had a religion. 86% of those who did respond have a religion or belief, the other 14% having no religion or beliefs. This reflects the makeup of our local community and is far higher than the proportion of the UK general population reporting a religion or belief. In comparison to the local community, Muslim staff are under-represented in Brent's workforce.

Sexual orientation: 3% of staff have declared that they are LGB. For benchmarking purposes, it is estimated that 6% of the population is LGB. LGB staff are equally split between men and women. It is likely that there is under-reporting in this area.

The overall picture, in terms of a representative workforce, is a positive one reflecting the focused actions taken by the council in recent years. Last year's achievements included, for example: the establishment of a Diversity Reference Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, to champion equality and diversity; *Open Doors* events to mark *International Day for Disabled People* and *International Women's Day*; Black History Month celebrations; a series of *Ways to Wellbeing* events, encouraging staff to take simple actions to enhance their wellbeing; a move to the new Civic Centre, which has provided multi-faith prayer facilities and has significantly improved accessibility for disabled staff; a programme to recruit 100 apprentices over the next three years, opening up access to job opportunities; *Investors in People* accreditation at Silver level, in recognition of our good practice people management; becoming a *London Living Wage* employer, addressing inequalities in the pay structure; a revised *Recruitment and Selection* policy, requiring all recruitment panels to be balanced in gender and ethnicity; roll-out of the council's new *Flexible Working Policy*, giving far more staff access to flexible working practices; accreditation as a *Two Ticks* employer, recognising our commitment to empowering disabled people on our staff.

These achievements notwithstanding, there is, as always, still more that we have to do. In particular:

- Diversity at the most senior levels of the council's workforce is lower than expected, with the under-representation of BAME people in senior management especially marked. In addition, promotion rates for BAME staff are lower than would be expected from the overall demographic profile.
- While the proportion of disabled staff compares favourably with most local authorities, it remains the case that disabled candidates are still less likely to be employed than expected.
- A high proportion of staff did not disclose their disability status (19%), ethnicity (18%), religion or belief (36%) or sexual orientation (37%), which suggests a lack either of confidence or of engagement, or of both, in workforce equality initiatives.

4. Future Skills Needs

This section summarises the skills, behaviours and knowledge that have been identified as being of importance for staff in the future. They are organised under ten key headings, based on the contextual analysis above, and also on previous reviews and skills audits and staff and manager feedback across the council. The list is not exhaustive. Some are generic and relevant to a number of staff groups, some are more focused on managers, and some are relevant to particular service areas. Most are consistent with the skills requirements identified by many other public sector organisations.

Anticipating and managing change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the local context and borough and council priorities • Anticipating and planning for the future • Managing change for continuous improvement • Generating income • Commissioning, procurement and risk management • IT skills – as a result of the increasing importance of technology • Flexible working – ability to self-manage, time manage and work in isolation; prioritisation and smart working
Focusing on the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with residents and service users • Working with service users to improve needs analysis and service delivery and outcomes • Responsive customer service
Evidence-based decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting and analysing management information, and making judgments and formulating policy change based on evidence • Data protection and compliance • Risk management – balancing innovation with sound decision making and planning
Leadership and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching, mentoring and developing staff • Managing conflict, challenging others and giving feedback in difficult situations • Strategy and planning • Equalities and human rights • Financial skills, including budget monitoring and management, ensuring value for money and forecasting • Managing service delivery • Contract management • Lean management processes • Performance management, including evaluation and feedback • Commissioning and procurement • Programme and project management • Client-side management • Interview and questioning skills
Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influencing skills – important when working across boundaries / departments / remits where there is no formal authority • Partnership working and involving and engaging stakeholders • Working with external suppliers or providers
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills – the softer skills of listening, questioning to establish information and develop understanding of requirements • Writing skills, including report writing • Event management

The planning and targeting of workforce learning and development opportunities, within departments as well as corporately, will need to reflect these needs.

The **Corporate Learning and Development** offer to address our skills needs will be organised into the following categories:

- **Personal Development** – e.g. personal effectiveness; health and wellbeing; career management.
- **Professional Development** – writing; customer care; training and facilitation; project management; IT; specialist (such as investigations); mentoring.
- **Essential** – e.g. health and safety; data protection; and equalities.
- **Management Development** – e.g. Brent manager essentials.
- **Induction** – e.g. corporate induction; manager induction.
- **Trainee Programmes** – e.g. apprenticeships; national graduates; graduate initiatives.
- **Organisational** – e.g. support for organisational change projects; work placements etc.

5. Workforce Strategy Priorities and Key Actions 2015 – 2018

The priorities of the Workforce Strategy have been developed to reflect the background context and analyses set out in earlier sections. The following table outlines the key actions that will be taken to achieve the objectives of the Strategy, and the outcomes they are expected to lead to.

Priority and objective	Key Actions	Outcomes
<p>Recruitment and retention</p> <p>To make sure that we recruit, retain and appropriately reward a diverse, highly skilled and motivated workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of effective workforce planning in all service areas • Review Brent’s reward and recruitment strategies to ensure that they remain competitive in the labour market and that they appropriately reflect talent, contribution and extra effort • Review the use of executive search to ensure high quality candidates from a range of diverse backgrounds • Raise Brent’s profile through articles in trade magazines/speaking at conferences • Make submissions for awards to raise Brent’s profile as an excellent place to work • Run targeted recruitment campaigns to ensure we recruit sufficient specialists where required • Identify and implement new approaches to address the issues related to hard to fill positions (e.g. Adult Social Care, Children’s Social Care, Public Health, Transportation) • Grow and develop local talent through apprenticeships within the council, structured work experience, internships and an in-house Graduate Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough and Corporate Plan priority objectives achieved • Strong recruitment and retention rates in all areas • Improved applicant field • Reduced vacancies in posts identified as hard to fill • Awards that enhance Brent’s reputation as an employer of choice • Existing good practice validated by liP Gold Standard accreditation • Accreditation at <i>Excellence Level</i> of the <i>London Healthy Workplace Charter</i> • Positive outcomes from staff surveys • Apprenticeship targets of 100 job opportunities with the council achieved by 2016,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all staff complete exit forms and are offered exit interviews, and review exit interview data by department and service • Develop and implement initiatives to ensure effective employee engagement • Promote the council as an organisation that supports health and well-being in the workplace, by signing up to and gathering evidence to show that it meets the standards of the LHWC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> including targets for Looked After Children • Reduced use of agency staff and consultants
<p>Leadership and Management</p> <p>To develop leadership and management effectiveness and consistency in management practice across the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, deliver and evaluate a leadership and management development programme, aligned to the Future Skills Framework, to build the capacity of our managers to lead the organisation through change and building skills for tasks such as staff development, performance management, commissioning and workforce planning • Roll out the Brent Manager Essentials programme, providing structured training for managers on performance management, financial management, council governance systems, HR systems and policies, project management • Develop and implement an internal communications strategy to highlight key workforce messages, including existing and emerging successes, the full range of benefits in working for the council, and learning and development opportunities • Develop an agreed list of key and behaviours and standards expected for managers and ensure that these are communicated and understood • Provide leadership development opportunities for Members, linked to Borough Plan priorities • Design and deliver an executive development programme for the corporate leadership team • Roll out coaching and mentoring activities to help embed learning across our management network • Create opportunities for shadowing and secondment, and for managers to network with other private and public sector organisations • Provide all new leaders and managers with appropriate induction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough and Corporate Plan priority objectives achieved • Existing good practice validated by liP Gold Standard accreditation • Confident managers, with ability to differentiate between different levels of staff performance • Corporate priority outcomes achieved • Improving positive outcomes from staff surveys • More internal staff with the skills and capacity to be recruited as senior managers from within the organisation • A workforce that is more reflective of the community at senior levels

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a positive action development programme to support an increase in BAME senior managers. 	
<p>Skills Development</p> <p>To plan, deliver and evaluate learning and development programmes and activities that support all our staff in developing the skills they need to perform effectively, both now and in the future, and to develop professionally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an annual skills audit across the organisation to identify emerging needs • Create development programmes and pathways for talented staff • Develop and put into practice an induction checklist • Review and develop enhanced corporate and local induction programmes and processes for new staff • Establish clear training matrices for all roles, including requirements for essential training and Continuous Professional Development, in accordance with the Future Skills Framework • Deliver a high quality corporate offer that includes training with a customer service focus at its core • Develop and enhance the use of mobile learning and e-learning across the organisation • Provide learning and development guidance/access to buy into the corporate offer for contractors to ensure that minimum staff training requirements are met • Develop and implement robust systems for the evaluation of learning and development activities to demonstrate their impact on improving performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough and corporate priority outcomes achieved • More management vacancies filled from within • Employees and managers across the organisation are able to describe learning needs and skills improvement in relation to the organisation's strategic priorities • Brent residents experience excellent services whether they encounter Brent employees or contractors • Increasing skill levels confirmed by skills audit year on year • High levels of compliance with essential training • Evidence of impact of learning and development on performance • Increased usage of mobile learning and e-learning across the workforce
<p>An efficient and modern, customer-focused organisation</p> <p>To ensure that excellent services are delivered to all residents and service users through a focus on organisational effectiveness, high performance and value for money</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll-out Brent's Performance Management Framework, ensuring that it is understood and implemented across the organisation, and that all managers, staff and teams are focused on customers and improved outcomes • Provide organisational development support for One Council and transformational change projects • Develop and provide appropriate training and support for new processes, technology and systems such as Oracle • Explore and evaluate different delivery models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough and corporate priority outcomes achieved • Services are recognised by users and residents as improved • Confident and effective staff • Targeted efficiency savings achieved • New partnerships and service delivery models developed and implemented

	<p>for services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define, promote and implement flexible working to improve efficiency, ensuring that it is embedded across the organisation • Provide improved health and counselling services • Support managers in promoting well-being and managing sickness absence, particularly in areas with higher sickness levels 	<p>with improved outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved attendance • Reduced sickness levels
<p>Understanding and valuing diversity</p> <p>To develop the workforce, through targeted recruitment and development, so that it is proportionately representative at all levels of the communities we serve, and so that the diverse needs of the community are understood and responded to effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out Brent's Equality Strategy, ensuring that it is effectively communicated, and that the roles and responsibilities of all Members, managers and staff are clearly understood • Increase diversity training for all staff and enhance training provisions for disability awareness, including mental health • Review and monitor pay across the council to ensure that all council employees receive equal pay for work of equal value • Embed diversity as a priority in procurement policies and practices • Develop and implement positive action programmes to improve job opportunities for BAME staff at senior levels and representation of disabled employees across the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced inequalities in service outcomes • Equality Strategy objectives achieved • An appropriately representative workforce • Increased BAME representation at senior levels • Increased representation of disabled employees across the workforce • All council employees receive equal pay for work of equal value • More accessible services • Evidence that contractors are compliant with Brent's equality and human rights policies • Positive outcomes from staff surveys

A separate action plan will set out the actions in more detail, with responsibilities and milestones, and implementation of these actions will be monitored closely, and their impact measured and reported at regular intervals. The actions will be reviewed and amended annually as part of our planning framework, in response to emerging issues, changing context, skills audits and manager and staff feedback.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone who works for the council, whether directly or through commissioning, has a role to play in ensuring that the objectives of the Workforce Strategy are reflected in the planning and delivery of their services.

Cabinet Members and Lead Member	Cabinet Members are responsible for ensuring that the Council has a workforce that is fit for purpose and offers excellent services, and therefore for approving the Workforce Strategy and reviewing its impact. The Lead Member has a key role to play in challenging officers about the implementation and impact of the strategy.
Corporate Management Team (CMT)	CMT is responsible for ensuring that the Workforce Strategy is robust, integrated into service planning and delivery, and is effectively implemented across the council. Individual members are expected to have oversight of the strategy in their areas of responsibility and ensure that information about workforce and learning and development needs are identified.
Directors and Heads of Service	Directors and Heads of Service lead by example and are responsible for ensuring that the Workforce Strategy is implemented in their service areas, that there is compliance with policies associated with the strategy, and that the strategy is monitored and reviewed.
Council-wide managers	All Brent managers are responsible for ensuring that their workforce and learning and development needs are identified and that action is taken to meet them. They are also responsible for gathering and making available information about the impact of these actions on staff well-being and performance.
Council-wide staff	All council staff are responsible for working with managers to identify their learning and development needs and adapting to agreed new ways of working.
HR Improvement Group (HRIG)	This group, comprising senior stakeholders from across the council acts as a Programme Board, responsible for driving the workforce strategy and for monitoring the its implementation across the council. It ensures that evidence on the progress of the strategy is gathered and collated for challenge by the CMT and Members.
Diversity Reference Group (DRG)	This senior strategic group acts as a Programme Board, responsible for driving the equality and human rights strategy. It has an important role to play in ensuring that the Workforce Strategy is consistent with the Council's Equality Strategy
HR Team	The HR Team, overseen by the HR Director, is responsible for the co-ordination and operational management of the workforce strategy, including its monitoring and review. The Team co-ordinates workforce information across the council and ensures that evaluative reports on progress are made available to the HR Improvement Group and CMT.
Trade Unions	The recognised trade unions within the council, are responsible for supporting their members on workforce issues, and through their involvement in the monthly Trade Union meetings with the HR Director contribute to the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the workforce strategy.

7. Monitoring and Review of the Strategy

Progress against achievement of the workforce strategy and objectives will be monitored across the council throughout the year, co-ordinated by the HR Team, with challenge from the HR Improvement Group.

An annual report evaluating progress and outcomes achieved will be reported to the Corporate Management Team and General Purposes Committee