

## **Employment Matters Committee**

**3 July 2025**

### **Learning and Development Strategy 2025 - 2028**

Report from: Sam Beck Farley, Chief Organisational Culture Officer

Author: Lisa Morgan, Head of Learning and Development (Acting)

#### **Summary**

This report presents the proposed Learning and Development Strategy for 2025 – 2028. The strategy is designed to complement the Workforce Strategy, Recruitment Strategy, the One Medway Council Plan and the Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan.

#### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1. The Employment Matters Committee is requested to note the Council's Learning and Development Strategy as set out at Appendix 1, to the report.
- 1.2. The Employment Matters Committee is requested to note the proposed key actions in the Learning and Development Strategy and timescales for delivery in each case.
- 1.3. The Employment Matters Committee is requested to propose other areas for improvement and associated key actions that they feel are necessary to ensure our learning and development strategy, enables us to meet the priorities and actions associated with the Workforce Strategy, Recruitment Strategy, One Medway Council Plan and the Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan.

#### **2. Budget and policy framework**

- 2.1. This strategy is a key enabler of the Council's broader strategic objectives. It supports the delivery of the Workforce Strategy, Recruitment Strategy, One Medway Council Plan and the Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan.
- 2.2. Progress updates will be provided annually by the Chief Organisational Culture Officer, to Corporate Management team.
- 2.3. This decision is within the Council's policy and budget framework.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. The Learning and Development Strategy enables us to deliver on our priorities through equipping employees with the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to thrive in a dynamic environment.
- 3.2. The Learning and Development Strategy sets out the key areas of focus areas and include talent development and succession planning, onboarding, leadership and management development, inclusion, diversity and wellbeing, digital transformation, reward and wellbeing.
- 3.3. Training is primarily delivered through in-house trainers, subject matter experts, eLearning and the apprenticeship levy. External training is procured in line with the Council's procurement and compliance requirements.
- 3.4. The Learning and Development budget was reduced from £513,000 in 2018/19 to £228,000 in 2024/25. Following a business case in September 2024, the budget was increased to £456,000 for 2025/26 to meet demand for mandatory, statutory and legislative training requirements, as well as support career development through the MedPay Performance, Progression and Pay (PPP) framework. Future budget increases will be linked to inflation.
- 3.5. Requests for training were previously received on an ad hoc basis. From April 2025, training requests will be coordinated through Directorate Management Teams and prioritized in line with strategic objectives. Professional qualification requests will continue to be funded via the apprenticeship levy unless the qualification is not available via this route.
- 3.6. The Learning and Development Strategy is available at Appendix 1 to the report.

### 4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1. Learning and development is fundamental to both personal and professional growth and enhances confidence, skills and performance, supporting career progression and alignment with best practices.
- 4.2. Investment in development drives productivity, fosters innovation and improves retention by promoting a culture of continuous improvement and supports the Council's ambition to be recognised as an Employer of Choice.
- 4.3. Learning and Development will work collaboratively with managers to capture learning and development needs and ensure there is a structured planning cycle.
- 4.4. The Learning and Development Strategy focusses on key priorities for 2025-28. These actions will be reviewed quarterly with a refreshed action plan agreed annually.

## 5. Risk management

### 5.1 The following risks have been identified.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
An unstructured approach to learning and development.	Impact on workplace morale.  Will lead to unequal access to opportunities undermining the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion	Implementation of a structured planning cycle.  Training needs gathered from Heads of Service.	CIII
Insufficient budget to respond to mandatory training.	Failure to respond to requests could result in outdated practices and incorrect advice being given.	The increase to the Learning and Development budget for 2025/26 should ensure mandatory and statutory training needs are met.  Learning and Development Strategy proposes to prioritise these requests at the start of each year.	CIII
Inability to meet all training requests due to insufficient budget.	May affect morale and increase employee turnover.  Employees may feel disengaged.	Priority will be given to training that is mandatory and linked to the employee's current level within the career progression frameworks.  Exit interviews will be reviewed to ensure there is no correlation between employees leaving and learning and development.	AIII

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating

Risk Rating:

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very likely B Likely C Unlikely D Rare	I Catastrophic II Major III Moderate IV Minor

## 6. Consultation

- 6.1. Early consultation has taken place with Trade Unions via the Corporate Consultative Committee. Additional feedback was sought from the Disabled Network and Carer Forum.

## 7. Climate Change implications

- 7.1 [The Council declared a climate change emergency in April 2019](#) - item 1038D refers and has set a target for Medway to become carbon neutral by 2050.
- 7.2 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

## 8. Financial implications

- 8.1. There are no direct financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. The overall annual budget for Learning & Development was doubled for 2025/26 increasing the annual budget to £456,000. This increased budget will help meet demand for mandatory, statutory and legislative training requirements, as well as support career development through the MedPay Performance, Progression and Pay (PPP) framework. Any additional increases to this budget would need to be based on a further business case.

## 9. Legal implications

- 9.1 There are no immediate legal implications as a result of this recommendation.

## Lead officer contact

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## Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Learning and Development Strategy 2025 – 2028

## Background Documents

None