

Appendix 1

Learning and Development Strategy

2025 - 2028

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1. Introduction

Medway Council recognises the importance of investing in Learning and Development (L&D) to build a skilled, adaptable, and high-performing workforce. This strategy aligns with the Council's key objectives outlined in the Workforce Strategy (2024-2028) and Recruitment Strategy (2024-2026).

Our primary goal is to foster a culture of continuous learning that supports individual growth and the broader organisational vision. By embedding L&D into daily operations, we ensure that all employees can enhance their skills, contribute effectively, and deliver high-quality services to the residents of Medway.

The L&D Strategy is a core component of Medway Council's strategic framework, supporting the One Medway Council Plan and the Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan (FIT).

We recognise that learning and development takes place at four different levels; individual, team, directorate and organisational. By providing a range of learning opportunities, we ensure our workforce has the right skills to deliver services efficiently and effectively.

This strategy also addresses skills gaps identified through workforce planning and supports the Council's broader goals of service excellence, financial sustainability, and digital transformation.

2. Values and Behaviours

Our vision, priorities and L&D strategy are aligned with our values:

- **Proud to be Medway:** Taking pride in what we do.
- **Caring:** Compassionate towards our communities and colleagues.
- **Respectful:** Thoughtful about Medway's diversity, heritage, and one another.
- **Trusted:** We do what we say and are accountable.
- **Ambitious for Medway:** Empowering our colleagues to deliver with integrity.
- **Collaborative:** Working together – One Medway.

3. Budgets and Resources

Medway Council recognises the importance of managing resources effectively. The L&D budget for 2025/26 has been increased by 100% which will help meet some of the demand from service areas and support individuals to develop in their career. Future increases will be aligned to inflation. A proportion of the L&D budget (20%) will be held in reserve at the start each year to support key initiatives arising throughout the year.

4. Medway Council's Approach to Learning and Development

Medway Council recognises the diversity of its workforce. We are committed to creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment where every employee has the opportunity to thrive.

The key objectives of our L&D strategy are:

- To identify skills gaps and build future capabilities
- To enhance employee performance
- To promote a culture of continuous learning and improvement
- To support career progression and succession planning

We will achieve this through:

- Investment in professional qualifications and apprenticeships aligned to role
- An excellent induction programme including 5 days protected time
- Developing our future leaders – strategic leadership development programme
- Providing a suite of mandatory/statutory/compliance training, as required by the role.
- Supporting attendance at conferences and networking events
- Offering acting up, coaching and mentoring opportunities
- Embedding MedPay PPP Appraisal process and career discussions
- Providing a range of face-to-face, virtual and e-learning opportunities
- Continuous evaluation of learning

5. Key Responsibilities

Individual: Employees are responsible for identifying their learning and development needs, engaging fully in development activities, sharing learning outcomes, reflecting on learning, maintaining a learning portfolio, and managing work-life balance.

Line Manager: Managers collaborate with staff on development needs, align development to organisational priorities, set clear objectives for learning activities, evaluate learning outcomes, facilitate knowledge sharing, promote reflective practice, ensure compliance with statutory requirements, and maximise team capability.

Organisation: The organisation aligns learning with strategic goals, supports and develops managers, maintains comprehensive records, optimises resources for learning, and ensures equitable distribution of resources.

6. Key Principles

Learning and development should be integral to the planning process at an individual, team, directorate and organisational level (Appendix 2). This will help build a resilient workforce capable of delivering the Council's priorities and preparing the workforce for emerging challenges and opportunities in a changing environment.

Requests for L&D must meet one of the three priorities below -

Priority 1:

Statutory/Compliance/Mandatory requirements.

Priority 2:

Essential training – supports the organisation to deliver against Medway Council's priorities and provides individuals with role critical skills to perform day-to-day tasks.

Priority 3:

Developmental training – supports career growth and succession planning but is not immediately required.

Priority will be given to priorities 1 and 2 first. Priority 3 will be considered in the context of the remaining budget and size of the directorate.

7. Key Priorities

Our Workforce Strategy comprises three key priorities:



The L&D Strategy aligns with each of these three key priorities. The key workforce areas that this strategy will actively support are:

Key Priority 1 – Workforce 2028

- **Talent Development and Succession Planning:** Build an early talent pipeline by working with the community on work experience, internships and apprenticeships. Embed the nine-box diamond as a talent management tool to help build a pool of staff with potential to grow into future leadership roles.
- **Onboarding and engaging:** Ensure all new employees receive a structured induction programme to support their learning.

Key Priority 2 – Enabling our people to develop

- **Developing Leadership Framework:** Identify and develop a Leadership Framework, linked to behaviours and competencies to ensure consistency and development of our senior leadership team.
- **Strengthen line management capability:** Continue to review and promote the Complete Medway Manager Programme, focused on enhancing the core competences of managers. Evaluate the impact across the organisation and refine the programme where needed.
- **Inclusion, Diversity, and Wellbeing:** Promote diversity and inclusion across the organisation, providing equitable access to training and development that encourages all staff to thrive.
- **Build our early talent pipeline:** Work with schools, colleges and universities to offer work experience, internships and apprenticeships.
- **Digital Transformation and New Learning Methods:** In preparation for Medway 2.0, conduct a skills analysis exercise to meet the changing needs of the Council and the digital environment, aligning budget, upskilling and training appropriately.

Key Priority 3 – Engagement, Reward and Wellbeing

- **Engagement:** Provide line managers with the skills and confidence to engage in career conversations with individuals and offer tailored development plans that align with individual career goals and meet the requirements of career progression frameworks.
- **Reward:** Introduce key performance indicators to measure where apprenticeships, professional qualifications and other learning methods are linked to promotion.
- **Wellbeing:** Promote and deliver modules on key wellbeing topics such as managing stress, resilience, mental health and emotional intelligence. Engage with employee forums and wellbeing champions to identify relevant topics based on staff feedback.

In addition, an overarching action will be to consider climate change in all delivery methods as outlined in the Climate Change Action Plan.

8. Action Plan

The L&D Strategy sets out the strategic direction for Learning and Development across Medway Council for 2025 to 2028 focusing on the three strategic HR priorities.

The action plan sets out the steps necessary to deliver on these priorities and realise the associated outcomes.

The action plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. Some of the actions may however require a longer-term focus which will carry forward to the next iteration of the action plan.

9. Evaluation

Medway Council will evaluate the effectiveness of L&D programmes through the following methods:

- Skills gap analysis – using evaluation forms to assess whether the training has closed identified gaps.
- Engagement and participation – monitoring attendance and completion rates.
- Return on investment (ROI) – comparing the cost of training to the benefits gained.
- Performance metrics – using KPI's to measure career progression and retention rates.

Appendix 1 - ACTION PLAN

1. Workforce 2028

No	Action	Outcome	Measure	Responsible Owner	Due Date
	Build our early talent pipeline				
1.1	Build on existing partnerships with schools and local colleges/universities to increase our offer of work experience opportunities and internships.	Aligns with Medway's strategic goals for inclusive growth.	Increase in the number of young people accessing early talent initiatives across the Council.	Learning and Development (Apprenticeships) Resourcing (work experience and internships)	Q4
1.2	Deliver training session on nine-box diamond in discussion with the HR Business Partners.	Shared understanding of how to assess employee potential and performance. Aligns with organisational goals (eg. talent development, succession planning)	Training delivered. HR and leadership have a shared understanding and increased confidence in using the model. 20% increase in the use of nine box diamond.	HR Business Partner and Learning and Development	Q1-Q4 On going roll out of training.
1.3	Implement, promote and support mentoring for staff through the completion of the	Increase in leadership capacity	5% of staff engaged in mentoring during the first year of roll-out.	Learning and Development	By Q4 develop mentoring

	experienced leadership / management development programmes.				programme. 2026/27 – implement and promote.
1.4	Undertake a comprehensive review of the Medway College of Social Care including stakeholder consultation to determine future demand.	Determines viability of future investment	Report produced and findings presented with recommendations.	Learning and Development	Quarter 3

2. Enabling our people to develop

No	Action	Outcome	Measure	Responsible Owner	Time
Developing Leadership Framework – linked to FBI Divisional Plan 2025/26 (3.1)					
2.1	Design a strategic leadership competency framework that defines the core behaviours and competencies expected of senior leaders.	Clear expectation for leadership behaviours and competencies.	100% participation by senior leaders in shaping framework.	Nicola Smith	Completed January 2025.
2.2	Roll out the strategic leadership competency framework with all Service Managers and above through formal briefings and email	All senior leaders are informed and aligned with the new leadership expectations.	100% of senior leaders attend briefing.	Nicola Smith	Quarter 1

		All senior leaders display the expected behaviours and competencies.	Analysis of MedPay PPP annual appraisals for senior managers.	HR	Quarter 4
2.3	Develop a strategic leadership training programme that reflects the behaviours and competencies outlined in the framework.	A structured leadership programme that builds on leadership capability based on defined behaviours and competencies.	Programme launched. 100% attendance of senior leaders in Medway Council attend programme.	Learning and Development	Quarter 3
2.4	Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the strategic leadership training programme using participant feedback, performance data and retention metrics.	Builds leadership capability, supports succession planning and enables consistent leadership behaviours across the organisation.	Evaluation report completed. Increase in retention. Increase in leadership confidence.	Learning and Development	Quarter 4
Strengthen line management capability – linked to FBI Divisional Plan 2025/26 (3.1)					
2.5	Continue to promote The Complete Medway Manager Programme, focused on enhancing the core competencies of managers (Range 8 and below) and evaluate the effectiveness and impact across the organisation.	Managers are equipped with the essential leadership skills to lead teams and drive service improvement.	75% of managers completed 3 or more modules. All new managers complete all modules within 6 month of joining Medway. Positive evaluation results Improved score in staff survey relating to management.	Learning and Development	Quarters 1-4

	Inclusion, Diversity, and Wellbeing - – linked to FBI Divisional Plan 2025/26 (3.2)				
2.7	Promote inclusive learning and development initiatives that ensure all staff have equitable access to training opportunities that support their growth and success.	A more inclusive and equitable learning culture where all employees feel valued, supported and empowered to develop their skills and progress in their careers.	% of staff attending training by diverse talent groups. % of staff progressing across diverse talent groups.	Learning and Development	By Q4
2.8	Collaborate with Medway Council's employee networks to gather feedback on content and remove barriers to participation.	L&D training is more inclusive, representative and accessible.	Positive feedback from staff. Feedback from staff forums and EDI survey.	Learning and Development and Lesley Jones	Quarter 2
	Digital Transformation Medway 2.0 - linked to FBI Divisional Plan 2025/26 (3.1):				
2.9	Codesign the digital skills framework and assessment tool with the Chief Information Officer.	A clear tool that can be used by staff to assess their digital skills	Completion of framework tool Readiness for launch	Learning and Development	Quarter 2
2.10	Launch the self-assessment tool and collect the responses.	Staff able to assess their digital capabilities to inform future training needs.	50% response rate	Learning and Development	Quarter 3
2.11	Analyse the results and produce a report with recommendations.	A clear understanding of digital capability	Report produced within timescale.	Learning and Development	Quarter 4

		across the organisation			
2.12	Develop a targeted training and upskilling plan that aligns with the budget, service needs and incorporates feedback from service areas.	A focused training programme aligned to budget that addresses skill needs and supports service improvement	Training plan approved by Corporate Management Team Positive feedback from service areas.	Learning and Development	Quarter 2 2026

3. Engagement, Reward and Wellbeing

No	Action	Outcome	Measure	Responsible Owner	Time
	Engagement				
3.1	Provide line managers with the skills to engage in career conversations with individuals and offer tailored development plans that align with individual career goals and meet the requirements of career progression frameworks.	Increase in staff retention through improved staff engagement.	100% of line managers trained	Learning and Development	Q4
3.2	Engage Service Managers in a structured training needs assessment to identify future capability requirements and priority areas for	Informs the learning and development plan for 2025-26 and addresses workforce development needs.	Achieve a 100% response rate from Service Managers and compile a summary report of key findings and	Learning and Development	Q2

	development across their teams.		recommendations presented to DMT's.		
	Reward				
3.3	Develop and implement a set of KPIs to measure the impact of apprenticeships, professional qualifications and other learning methods on employee promotion rates.	An understanding of how formal learning contributes to career progression.	% of promoted staff who completed formal learning tracked and reported.	Collaborate with Systems to extract relevant data	Q4
	Wellbeing				
3.4	Promote and deliver modules on key wellbeing topics such as managing stress, resilience, mental health and emotional intelligence. Engage with employee forums and wellbeing champions to identify relevant topics	Staff are equipped with practical tools to manage wellbeing and reduce workplace absence.	<p>Increase in participation rates across the Council</p> <p>Reduction in stress related absences.</p> <p>Positive feedback from staff.</p>	Learning and Development	Q2-4

Appendix 2 – Learning and Development planning cycle

