

People strategy – themes and work plan 2026 onwards

Theme	We will/ we will continue to:
Retain and attract	- Develop skills and knowledge to maintain services - Provide a fair reward package - Attract high-quality candidates - Focus on recruiting hard to fill roles
Develop and engage	- Develop future capacity through career graded posts, apprenticeships and graduate opportunities - Develop skilled and confident managers who work with integrity and build strong teams - Strengthen employee engagement by continuing to obtain, listen and act on employee feedback - Develop a resilient workforce and support people to be adaptable through uncertainty - Prepare employees for the transition to Unitary Councils - Maintain trust and clarity through transparent dialogue
Inclusion and wellbeing	- Prioritise mental health and wellbeing - Promote and support positive work life balance - Foster an inclusive workforce where everyone can be themselves. Support each other through collaboration and engagement.

Theme	We will/ we will continue to:	Actions
Retain and attract	Develop skills and knowledge to maintain services	- Monitor turnover and review leavers data regularly and consider initiatives to improve. Report to LT quarterly (ongoing) - Review workforce to highlight high risk roles/ areas and put plans in place to mitigate (Winter 2026/7) - Gather information to establish what employees like about working for NHC and what might cause them to leave through specific stay questionnaires (Spring 2026 and ongoing)

	Provide a fair reward package, including non-financial benefits	Continue to provide a variety of non-financial benefits (ongoing) Launch Electric Vehicle lease scheme (Spring 2026) Benchmarking of pay and benefits as part of Local Government Reorganisation process
	Attract high-quality candidates	Deliver a new applicant tracking system to support a better candidate experience, streamlined processes and automation (Spring 2026) Review and improve usage of social media and website for candidates (Autumn 2026) Ensure HR policies underpin fair and consistent recruitment (Autumn 2026) Use feedback to develop our job advertising and recruitment processes (ongoing).
	Focus on recruiting hard to fill roles	Further develop social media and website, making use of different media types and increasing reach of adverts (Autumn 2026) Support grow-your-own strategies, including developing existing staff (ongoing)
Develop and engage	Create clear development pathways and develop future capacity	Continue to recruit apprentice and graduates, ensuring appropriate opportunities to support their development (ongoing) Consider future capacity needs and make best use of skills of NHC employees (Winter 2026/7) Promote the development of career graded posts and support their implementation (ongoing) Promote use of apprenticeship levy for employees (ongoing)

	Develop and support skilled and confident managers who work with integrity and build strong teams	Develop change management skills for managers (ongoing) Run bitesize sessions for managers on key skill areas to support effective management of absence, performance and conduct (ongoing) Develop manager coaching skills (Autumn 2026) Develop a programme of development for senior managers (Summer 2026)
	Strengthen employee engagement by continuing to obtain, listen and act on feedback	Implement regular short employee surveys & act on feedback (ongoing) Form, develop and engage a group of Employee Change Champions for Local Government Reorganisation (Autumn 2026)
	Develop a resilient workforce and support people to be adaptable through uncertainty	Offer a variety of development opportunities to equip employees with skills and mindset to handle change and challenges effectively (ongoing)
	Prepare employees for the future	Review our Regular Performance review process to ensure framework for quality conversations about future roles and development required (Spring 2026) Continue to encourage and develop digital skills through awareness raising and training (Digital strategy, ongoing)
	Maintain trust and clarity through transparent dialogue	Run annual all staff events (ongoing) Regular opportunities for information and feedback at staff briefings (ongoing) Provide clear, accessible HR guidance to support consistent treatment and early resolution (ongoing) Ensure HR policies are updated in line with the Employment Rights Act (Spring 2026 onwards)

	Prioritise mental health and wellbeing & support employees through uncertainty	Review our health and wellbeing support (ongoing) Embed supportive approaches to absence management that promote wellbeing and early support (ongoing) Equip managers to confidently manage absence, including early intervention (ongoing) Create and launch a wellbeing room (monitoring ongoing) Awareness and signposting to support employee wellbeing, including our Mental Health First Aiders (ongoing) Events and training to support employee wellbeing (ongoing) ‘How are you?’ bitesize sessions for managers (Autumn 2026)
Inclusion and wellbeing	Promote and support a positive work life balance	Design roles that support flexibility and encourage managers to consider how flexibility could be developed in their teams (ongoing) Awareness raising around the positive impacts of flexibility (ongoing)
	Work together to develop an inclusive workforce where everyone can be themselves. Support each other through collaboration and engagement.	Aim to reduce our Gender Pay Gap through an annual action plan (ongoing) Continue the development of the Inclusion group and associated networks (ongoing) Provide training on unconscious bias for all managers (Winter 2026) Offer a variety of training and resources to increase awareness on EDI (ongoing)

		Ensure HR policies reflect our commitment to fairness, inclusion, respect and dignity at work (ongoing) Further develop our Values to provide clarity on how we demonstrate our values at work everyday (Autumn 26)
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