

# People Strategy

## Q2 2024/25 Highlights

- **Performance Appraisal Review:** Peer review undertaken to gain perspectives on best practice across local authorities. In line with a critical review of the PDR exercise undertaken in Watford to review what went well and what could be improved. Employee feedback was also sought to gain insights into the employee/ manager experience of the new PDR format.
- **Health and Wellbeing Program Development:** Recognising the crucial role of health and well-being in employee engagement and productivity, we explored multiple avenues to implement an impactful yet cost-effective health and wellbeing initiative. We are in the process of developing specialised training programs and comprehensive toolkits focusing on key topics such as neurodiversity and menopause. These subjects were selected due to their significant impact on many employees' lives and the need for greater awareness and support within the workplace. By addressing these areas, we aim to foster an inclusive environment that acknowledges and supports the diverse needs of our staff. The rollout of these initiatives is planned for the third quarter, and we anticipate they will significantly contribute to enhancing employee well-being and our culture.
- **National Inclusion Week:** In celebration of National Inclusion Week and to reinforce our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we established a Corporate Equalities Working Group, which held its first meeting to plan on promoting equality across the organisation. Among the week's highlights was a cultural buffet held in Watford, where employees showcased dishes from their heritage and shared personal stories. This event not only celebrated our diverse workforce but also fostered a deeper sense of community and understanding among colleagues. Additionally, employees were invited to sign an inclusion pledge, reaffirming our collective commitment to creating a workplace where every person matters, and every voice is heard.
- **Employee benefits:** We are delighted to announce the launch of a new employee benefit scheme in partnership with Kaarp, now accessible to all staff members. This comprehensive program offers a wide array of benefits and discounts designed to cater to the diverse needs and preferences of our workforce. By expanding our benefits offering, we aim to provide meaningful and valuable support that enhances the overall employee experience. This initiative underscores our ongoing commitment to recognising and rewarding our employees' contributions, as well as promoting their well-being and satisfaction within the workplace.

## Q3 2024/25 Priorities

- **CMB and SDL Away Day:** As part of our ongoing leadership development initiatives, members of the Corporate Management Board (CMB) and Service Delivery Leads (SDLs) will participate in further training. This training is designed to deepen understanding of shared priorities, explore diverse working styles, and enhance cohesion and collaborative thinking between these two distinct leadership groups.
- **Digital Upskilling programme:** We will conduct a comprehensive digital skills audit to assess our current capabilities across the council. Based on the results, we'll explore options to address any gaps, particularly in data and AI skills, for all employees. This may include launching a Watford Data and AI Academy to provide targeted training and development opportunities.
- **Celebration of Watford Event:** We are planning a celebration event for all employees to acknowledge and celebrate our collective achievements that align with the organisation's values. This event will provide an opportunity to recognise outstanding contributions and foster a sense of community. Further details will be shared as plans are finalised.
- **White Ribbon:** We are participating in the White Ribbon campaign before the end of the year to demonstrate our commitment to ending male violence against women. Plans are being explored to involve staff in awareness-raising activities and pledge initiatives.

