

 **Accountable**

 **Integrity**

 **Empower**

 **Respect**

 **Excellence**

Living our values every day  


## Introduction

The council's strategic plan, *Together We Can: Our Plan for Gloucestershire* sets out our approach to tackling the many and varied challenges that our county faces.

The plan outlines our priorities for addressing the challenges and opportunities we face:

- Protecting the most vulnerable people in our county
- Building sustainable communities
- Investing in vital services and infrastructure
- Growing our economy
- Creating a council fit for the future

Our colleagues are critical to achieving these priorities and our vision to 'improve the quality of life for Gloucestershire people and communities'. We all invest our skills, knowledge and experience every day. Our 2017 Employee Survey reiterated that we are committed to the council's vision and that there is a real appetite to be engaged in the decisions that will improve how we work with the people of Gloucestershire.

This Employee Engagement Strategy details a range of initiatives that will support us in harnessing our creativity and establishing a place where we are even more proud to work.

## Strategy aims and objectives

This strategy has been designed to engage and support all Gloucestershire County Council colleagues, whether full time, part time or agency. It does not include those employed in schools. We want to achieve an environment where we listen to each other and as a result, improve motivation, ways of working and individual capability at all levels.

Based on feedback from the Employee Engagement Survey and engagement good practice, this strategy aims to:

- Bring to life the council's vision, values and behaviours;
- Engage managers to confidently lead and engage with their teams to support them to develop and flourish;
- Support and empower leadership to provide a strong, strategic narrative about the organisation and its future direction;
- Embed employee voice throughout the organisation

## Benefits - Why Employee Engagement is important

We know that how we communicate and listen to each other is at the heart of engagement. In improving how we engage with each other, we are aiming to:

- Improve understanding of the council's vision and priorities, therefore have a greater sense of purpose
- Develop and live by shared values that result in greater trust and motivation to perform well
- Experience greater job satisfaction and involvement in the direction of our own job
- Have a desire to improve the way things are and to make a difference to people's lives
- Feel empowered at work and enabled to contribute ideas that are acted on
- Be advocates for the council and the work it does
- Work well in teams and with partners
- Think, behave and act in a positive way
- Feel happier, healthier and more fulfilled
- Feel more involved in the ongoing changes in our organisation

## Achieving our vision through our values and behaviours

In June 2017, we commenced work on the development of our new organisational values and behaviours with the support and input of managers and staff.

Through taking a consultative approach we have now agreed to:



### Accountable

We do what we say we will.



### Integrity

We are honest, fair and speak up.



### Empower

We enable communities and colleagues to be the best we can.



### Respect

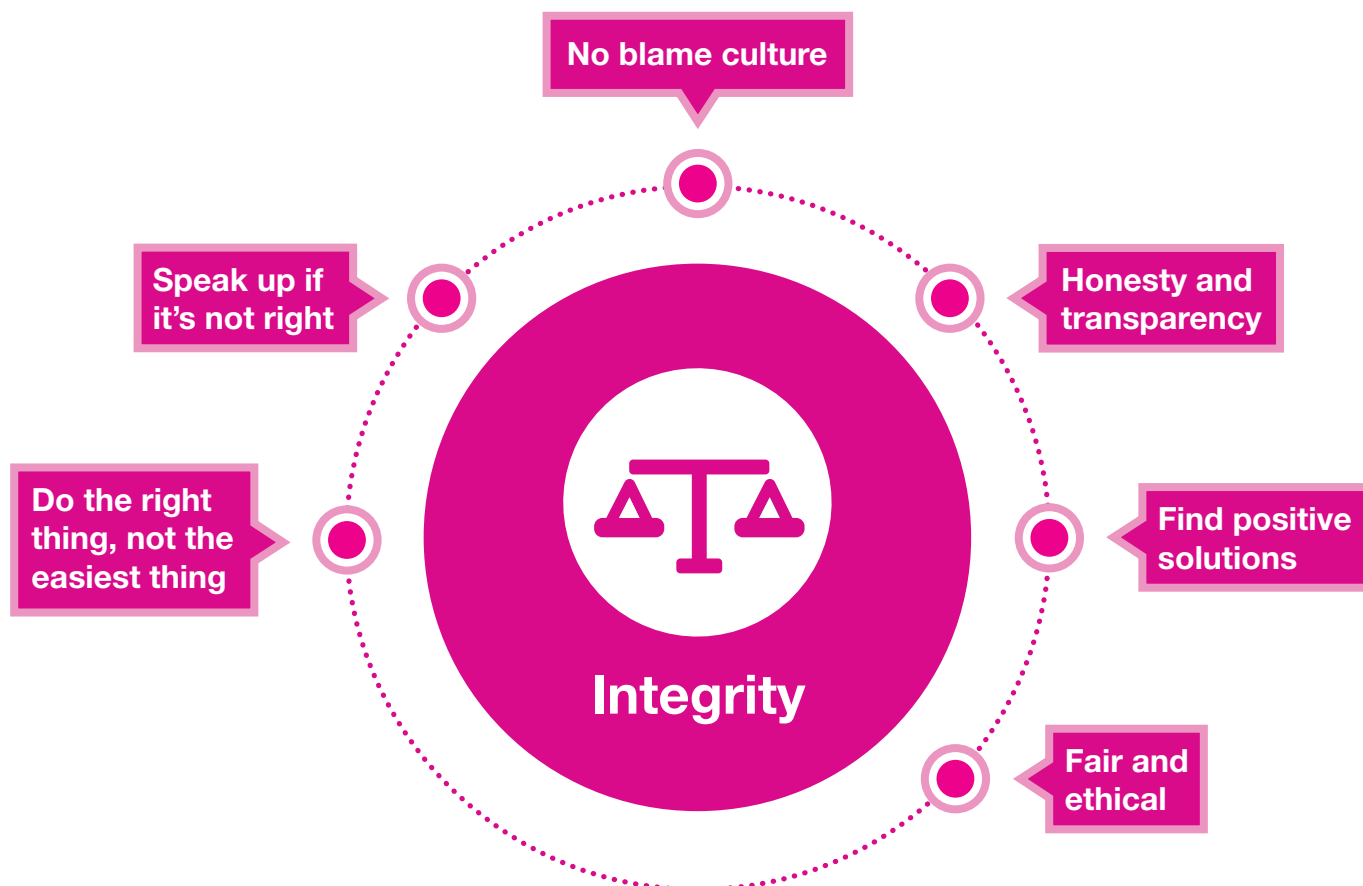
We value and listen to each other.



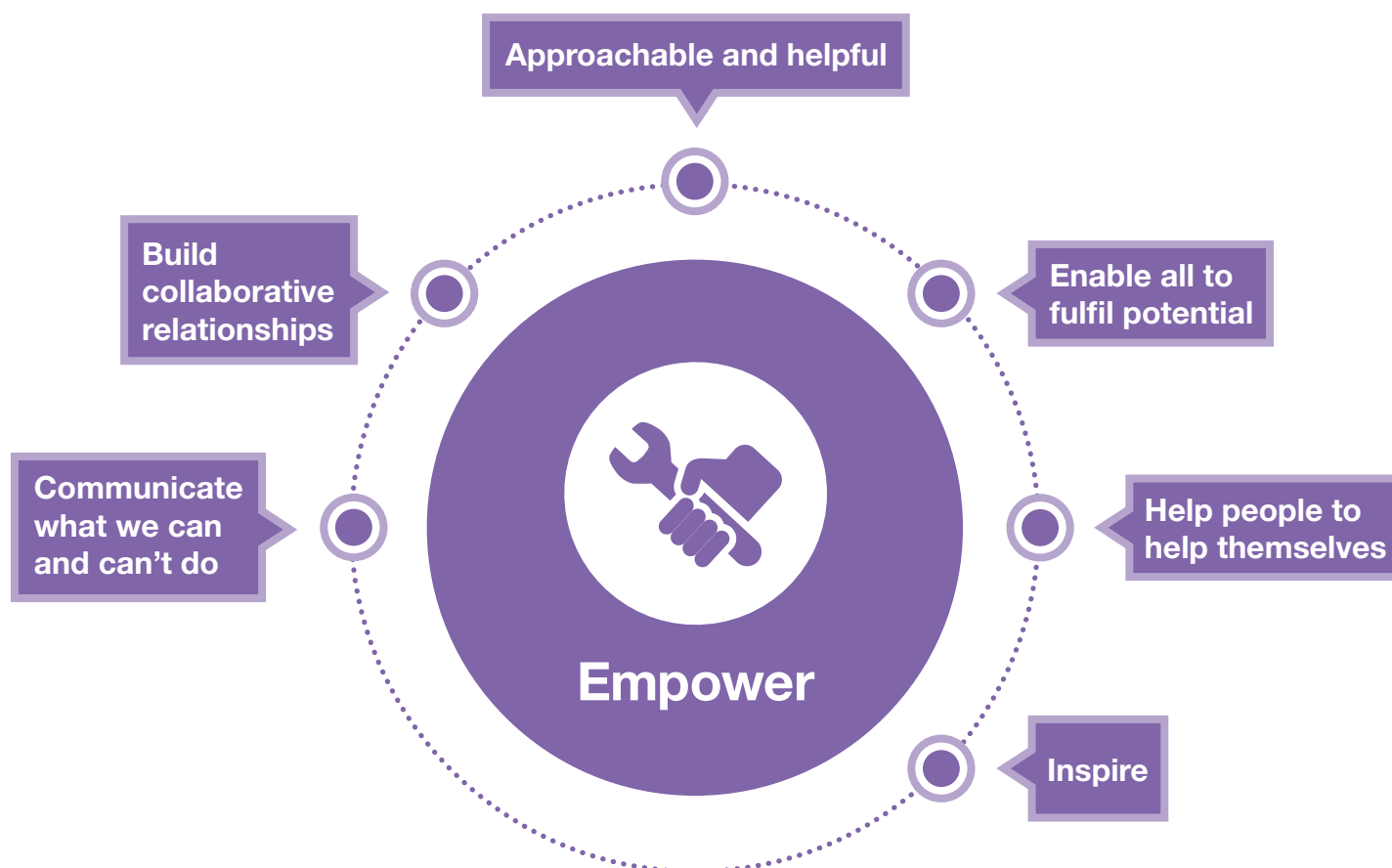
### Excellence

We continually improve through listening, learning and innovation.

## What does this mean in practice?



## What does this mean in practice?





**Accountable**



**Integrity**



**Empower**



**Respect**



**Excellence**

## How will we know it's working?

We need to make sure that the work we do to improve employee engagement is really making a difference to you. To help us do this, we will use a number of different evaluation tools to monitor progress including:

- Workforce analysis statistics such as absence rates; turnover; health and safety incidents.
- Corporate performance measures including customer satisfaction; financial efficiencies; strategic objectives and corporate project progression.
- An annual employee engagement survey which will allow us to find out how engaged we are, address any particular issues and analyse the factors behind success.
- Pulse surveys to test particular issues throughout the year.

We will report on our progress to CoMT on an annual basis and let you know how we are doing through our internal communications channels.

## Engagement Strategies and Initiatives

Consistent themes have emerged from the feedback you have given us in employee surveys and other engagement activities; external audits and inspections – all of which have helped focus the engagement activities and action plan set out in this strategy. These will lead us on a journey of improvement over the next three years.

### Understand and embed the vision, values and behaviours

Our annual employee survey undertaken in 2017 established that we were in an excellent position of having 91% of us committed to delivering the council's vision but only 53% felt that this vision was clear and inspiring. Discussions with colleagues showed that people believed in the public sector; felt their role contributed to society and that this was what they were committed to. We have worked together to establish what it is that is important to us and to create our new values and behaviours which will be launched in May 2018. Through good communication and engagement within teams and across the council we aim to ensure we know what the values and behaviours are; how they apply to our service area and job role and what we do to recognise successful delivery or speak up if this is not happening. We will role model the values and these will be embedded within policies and processes throughout the organisation.

Given the concerns about barriers in some services to colleagues feeling able to challenge poor performance without consequence, we have launched the **'Speak up if it's not right'** campaign. This will help us to embed new behaviours with a focus on resolving issues informally first whilst ensuring we all understand the variety of support available.

### Leadership and Governance

We know that our managers and leaders play a vital role in effective employee engagement and so as leaders we will work with you to clarify your roles and responsibilities and provide new tools to help champion a positive culture. We will continue to promote a coaching and restorative approach to leadership and management. We will embed a strong one team approach and ensure our activities are not too Shire Hall based and recognise the challenges and opportunities in other locations. We will embed the leadership behaviours and values with core management competencies at various levels across the organisation. We will develop the existing leadership and management training offer with toolkits, masterclasses, apprenticeships and management conferences.

### Recognition and feedback

The council recognised the value of effective one to one conversations (often called supervision meetings) as one of our most valuable engagement resources and a key to effective performance management. These are essential checking in points for us and should take place throughout the year in addition to the annual performance review. They provide an opportunity to gain the necessary clarity on expectations and behaviour, gain direction and ensure that we all feel encouraged and supported. Good managers should be accessible, supportive, interested and keen to make sure employees feel trusted and are able to perform well.

These should be accompanied by regular, constructive team meetings where everyone is encouraged to contribute and share information and ideas. New tools will be made available to managers to help them run these meetings and cascade important service and corporate messages.

### **Improve internal communication and feedback channels**

We want to promote better communication between service areas by positively modelling staff engagement and demonstrating this through our leadership team. We will develop and support a structured approach to employee voice groups where colleagues will play a pivotal role in improving employee engagement. We will further improve and review existing channels of communication and explore more digital means of communicating with you and listening to your feedback, as part of the council's digital strategy.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

To have an engaged workforce we all need to feel happy and healthy. We will work with the Health and Wellbeing group to implement the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and associated action plan.



## Action Plan

The strategic plan outlines the strategies and initiatives to support enhanced engagement at Gloucestershire County Council over the next three years.

Key Driver	Initiative	Actions	Who	Year of plan
Understand and embed the vision, values and behaviours	<b>Communications campaign</b>	We will promote the values and behaviours with the communications campaign to ensure that we know, understand and can effectively demonstrate.  Via Employee Voice reps, roll out a programme to ensure all teams and managers commit to visible actions to demonstrate values.	CoMT HR Comms	1
	<b>Speak up if it's not right</b>	We will ensure that everyone understands the channels available to them to speak up if it's not right and to influence change within the organisation.  Develop a culture through the promotion of our values where we feel comfortable raising concerns and empowered to make a difference.	CoMT Dir. Strat & Chall. HR Comms	1
	<b>Process and Policy review</b>	Review processes and policies at a corporate and cluster level to align to new values and outcomes of the Public Concern at work report. Grievance and appraisal are top priority and other processes will be built into a longer term plan.	HR CoMT	1 1 2/3
	<b>Embed values and behaviours</b>	Values and behaviours are embedded throughout the organisation's policies, processes and practices and is sustainable.	CoMT	3
	<b>Embed values and behaviours</b>	Values and behaviours are embedded throughout the organisation's policies, processes and practices and is sustainable.	CoMT	3
Roles and Responsibilities	<b>Defining the manager's role</b>	Clarify the role of Directors and managers for engagement and the cascade of information and feedback.	CoMT	1
	<b>Implement the manager's role</b>	Ensure managers understand their role and how to promote the culture of engagement.	HR	1/2
	<b>Employees' Voice</b>	Ensure that employees feel confident that they can and should speak up to improve the organisation.  Establish an ongoing network of employees who both make up employee voice groups and provide a structured means to engage with all teams.	CoMT Managers Comms HR	1 1
		Consider how we can utilise digital systems for ongoing engagement with the Employee Voice groups.		2
Leadership	<b>PDR Process</b>	Improve the effectiveness of the PDR process via the professional development of managers.	CoMT HR	1
	<b>Role model</b>	Ensure leaders and managers are fully engaged and are role modelling the values and behaviours.	CoMT	1/2
	<b>Implementing behaviour change</b>	Ensure managers understand how to implement behaviour change and manage performance in line with values and behaviours.	CoMT HR	1/2

Key Driver	Initiative	Actions	Who	Year of plan
	<b>Management Development</b>	Launch managers' toolkit for holding effective one to ones, appraisals and team meetings.  Ensure leadership and management development is meeting the needs of managers.	HR	1
	<b>Move towards Involved Change</b>	Improving employee engagement in the initial stages of change programmes. Where we seek to understand the perspective of others particularly in the frontline so that they are part of the journey.	Managers	2
	<b>Networking</b>	Develop a network for middle managers – similar to the Leadership conference.	HR	2
<b>Improved feedback channels / Speak up if it's not right</b>	<b>Speak up if it's not right</b>	Implement the defined comms campaign.	HR & Comms	1
	<b>Two way communication</b>	Develop cascade approach to key messages from leadership team and upward communication of actions being taken in service areas.	CoMT HR & Comms	2
	<b>Digital Communications</b>	Develop appropriate digital means of two way communication in line with the Digital Strategy.  Improve internal access to information and internal support with real-time open data in line with the Digital Engagement Strategy.  Develop staffnet information on departments and 'who does what'.	Comms	2
	<b>Employee Engagement Survey</b>	Operate the staff survey annually.  Increase the response rate by at least 5% each year.  Consider how to encourage an increased response from those outside of Shire Hall.  Develop a structured response to findings	HR & Comms Managers	ongoing
	<b>Pulse surveys</b>	Introduce pulse surveys to ascertain progress against actions or views on topical areas. This will enable us to target hot spots and evaluate response to new initiatives in a more timely manner.	HR & Comms	2
	<b>Service area health checks</b>	Work in conjunction with service areas undertaking health checks as part of the annual calendar of activity to ensure that there is less duplication of effort and maximising of opportunity for feedback.	HR & Comms & Directors	1
<b>Health and Wellbeing - Value each other</b>	<b>Health and wellbeing</b>	The Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action plans are fully aligned and working towards similar outcomes to the Employee Engagement Strategy.  Continue to promote health and well being initiatives across the council.	HR & OH	1/2
	<b>Employee Networks</b>	Strengthen and develop the existing staff networks and introduce new networks if there is an identified need.  Utilise these networks in relevant projects to further enhance two way communication.  Ensure that networks are seen as an integral part of employee engagement with particular strengths in accessing the views of particular groups of staff.	Employee network led	2