

Report summary:

This report provides an update on the successful launch of the Council's new People Strategy, People Focused, and outlines progress on associated actions designed to embed the strategy across the organisation. It highlights key engagement activities, current progress, and the next steps to ensure the strategy delivers on its ambitions.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the Personnel Committee:

1. Notes the successful launch of the People Strategy – People Focused.
2. Endorses the ongoing implementation of the strategy and key actions.
3. Supports continued engagement and communication to embed the strategy across the organisation.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure members are informed of progress and support the delivery of a strategy that underpins organisational culture, staff wellbeing, and service excellence.

Officer: Gemma Roberts, Assistant Director – People & Performance

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

Assets and Economy
 Communications and Democracy
 Council, Corporate and External Engagement
 Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
 Environment - Nature and Climate
 Environment - Operational
 Finance
 Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
 Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Equalities impact assessment will be undertaken for specific actions as part of the implementation of the strategy.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information n/a

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- A supported and engaged community
- Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- Resilient economy that supports local business
- Financially secure and improving quality of services

1.0 Background

The People Strategy, People Focused, was officially launched on 25 November 2025 following engagement with staff through surveys, focus groups, and the collection of information obtained through the staff suggestion scheme, exit interviews and general feedback. The strategy sets out clear ambitions under three themes:

- Connect – Our ambition is for people to have a sense of belonging, be proud to work here, feel engaged, and recognised. That everyone can do their best work in a purpose driven environment, focused on excellence in leadership, where people are accountable, and are connected.
- Grow – Our ambition is for everyone to grow and develop, in a way that works for them and the organisation, putting people in the best place for the future. Managers are clear on expectations and are developed to be highly capable, positive, confident and dynamic.
- Thrive – Our ambition is for people to feel they have a voice, are Happy, Healthy, Here and thriving; feeling ready for change and equipped to continue making a meaningful impact in the communities we serve. People are trusted and valued, owning their performance, career and growth.

A full copy of the strategy, can be found at appendix 1.

Supporting elements include refreshed organisational behaviours, a Management Charter, and a Customer Charter, all designed to reinforce a positive culture and high-quality service delivery.

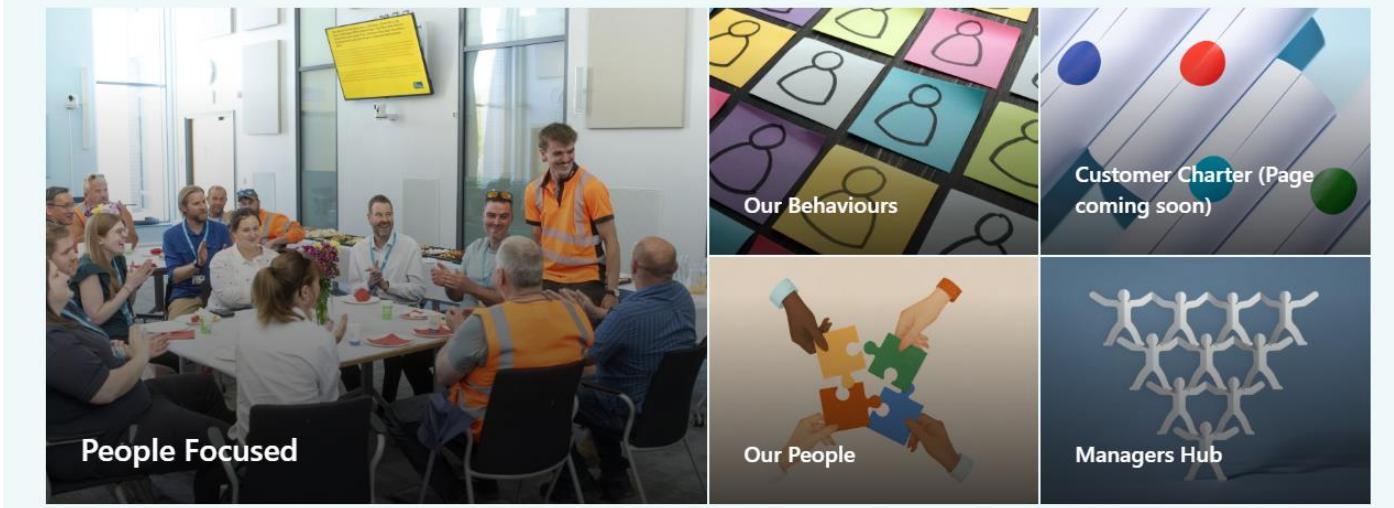
2.0 Launch Activities

The launch was marked by a series of engagement events:

- Virtual Staff Briefing: Led by the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director for People and Performance, introducing the strategy and its importance.
- SLT Floor Walks and Depot Visits: Direct engagement with staff across sites to answer questions and gather feedback.
- Coffee, Cake & Connect Sessions: Informal opportunities for staff to discuss the strategy and share ideas.



- One Team East Devon Hub launched: Dedicated site, which will evolve and develop over time. As part of the launch the hub includes FAQs, the full strategy, the strategy on a page, videos (all support engagement with the strategy in a way that works for different people), the refreshed behaviours, a 'Our People' section, which has people profiles and staff stories.



3.0 Current Position

Since the launch we have:

- The weekly staff newsletter has been re-branded and is now called 'One Team East Devon' and weekly news is categorised under the relevant strategy theme.
- Continued to develop the hub. We have seen positive engagement on the hub with 390 views on our People Focused page.
- Begun encouraging staff to get involved by seeking volunteers for our staff led groups both under Connect and Thrive.
- Published the action plan sitting behind the strategy, Focusing on Action.
- Continue to review and communicate with staff on action from the staff survey.
- Piloted Change and Resilience workshops, with the aim of rolling this out across the organisation during 2026.

Focusing on Action is now live and provides a practical framework for delivering the strategy. Key actions include:

- Connect:
 - Establishing staff-led groups such as *How We Connect* to champion engagement.
 - Developing a Communication & Engagement Plan to ensure consistent messaging.
- Grow:
 - Launching a mentoring programme to support career development.
 - Reviewing recruitment and induction processes to attract and retain talent.
 - Creating a Managers Hub with resources and guidance.
- Thrive:
 - Develop an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training programme, aimed at enhancing awareness across the organisation.
 - Refreshing one-to-one and performance reviews, to align them with the new strategy.
 - Roll out change and resilience workshops across the organisation.

Progress updates will be shared regularly via newsletters, intranet posts, and staff forums.

4.0 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and People Focused

People Focused has been positioned to provide an anchor over the next couple of years to demonstrate our support and commitment to our staff and ensure we do not lose sight of the importance of our people during this time. With LGR a lot is out of our control, but the strategy supports in taking control where we can and supporting our staff to be in the best possible place, alongside focusing on how we can support staff with the change process.

5.0 Next Steps

- Embed People Focused and deliver on actions within the focusing on action, action plan. Forming a key deliverable for the Governance Directorate Plan.
- Continue embedding the refreshed behaviours through team discussions and leadership visibility.
- Monitor and report on action plan delivery, including measurable outcomes.
- Maintain two-way communication with staff to ensure feedback informs ongoing improvements and action.

Financial implications:

There are no new financial implications arising from this report. (SD)

Legal implications:

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report.

Appendix 1

Link to full strategy - [People Focused.pdf](#)