



# KNOWSLEY COUNCIL PEOPLE STRATEGY

2026-2030

DELIVERING FOR RESIDENTS THROUGH OUR PEOPLE

# INTRODUCTION FROM THE LEADER



*Graham Morgan*

**Councillor Graham Morgan**  
**Leader of Knowsley Council**

Knowsley Council is ambitious about the future of our borough. Through Knowsley 2030, we have set out a clear vision to create a place of opportunity, inclusion and resilience where our residents and communities can thrive.

Delivering this vision depends on the commitment, talent and dedication of our workforce. Every day, colleagues across the Council make a difference to people's lives, working alongside residents, communities, businesses and partners to support stronger neighbourhoods, create opportunities and improve outcomes.

This People Strategy sets out the culture we want to build together. At its heart are our shared behaviours of being Proactive, Accountable, Collaborative and Empowering. These behaviours define how we work together, how we lead and how we deliver for Knowsley.

We want Knowsley Council to be a place where people feel trusted, valued and empowered to make a difference. A place where everyone understands the contribution they make and feels proud of the role they play in supporting our communities to thrive.

This strategy belongs to all of us. Together, we will continue to build a Council that reflects the very best of public service and delivers better outcomes for the people of Knowsley.

# INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Knowsley Council's People Strategy is fundamental to delivering the ambitions set out in Knowsley 2030 and the Council Plan 2025-2030.

Delivering those ambitions will require us to respond to increasing demand for services, significant financial pressures, changing workforce expectations and rapid advances in technology. At the same time, we remain committed to improving outcomes for residents, strengthening communities and ensuring every pound we spend delivers maximum value.

## **Our workforce is central to meeting these challenges.**

As our largest asset and our biggest investment, our people determine our ability to deliver excellent services, support residents at the earliest opportunity and respond to changing needs across the borough. Every day, colleagues across the Council work alongside residents, communities, businesses and partners to improve lives, create opportunities and help Knowsley's people and communities

to thrive. The choices we make about our workforce will play a significant role in determining our future success.

For that reason, this strategy is not simply about developing our people. It is about ensuring the Council has the organisational capability, leadership and workforce needed to deliver its priorities now and in the future.

## **Our Strategic Workforce Choices**

To support the delivery of Knowsley 2030, we are making four clear workforce commitments.

We will:

- Prioritise leadership because great leadership is the single biggest influence on organisational performance, culture and employee experience.
- Strengthen workforce planning to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right roles, aligned to current and future demand.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'James Duncan'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light blue background.

**James Duncan**  
Chief Executive

- Build internal capability by investing in skills, career pathways and talent development, reducing reliance on reactive recruitment and agency solutions wherever possible.
- Focus relentlessly on impact, ensuring that our people, resources and effort are concentrated on what makes the greatest difference to residents and communities.

These choices are particularly important in a challenging financial environment. We cannot do everything, and we cannot invest everywhere. We must be deliberate in where we focus our resources and ensure our workforce is aligned to the areas where it can have the greatest impact.

### **What This Means for Residents**

These choices are not simply about our workforce – they are about improving outcomes for the people and communities we serve.

By focusing our effort where it will have the greatest impact, we will be better placed to:

- Provide earlier support and intervention where it can prevent problems from escalating.
- Deliver more sustainable and responsive services.
- Build stronger and more consistent relationships between residents and the people who support them.
- Make better use of public resources and maximise the value of every pound we spend.
- Ensure our services continue to adapt to changing needs across the borough.

Ultimately, this strategy is about ensuring Knowsley Council has the capacity, capability and culture needed to support Knowsley's people and communities to thrive.

This strategy sets out how we will build a workforce that is proactive, accountable, collaborative and empowering; how we will strengthen leadership at every level; and how we will create the conditions for people to perform at their best.

Importantly, this is not a strategy for HR. Ownership sits with leaders across the organisation and success will depend on every manager and employee playing their part. Together, we will build a resilient, skilled and adaptable workforce that is equipped to meet future challenges and continue supporting Knowsley's people and communities to thrive.

# DELIVERING KNOWSLEY 2030

Our workforce is at the heart of delivering the ambitions set out in [Knowsley 2030](#) and the [Council Plan](#).

Every role contributes to a Knowsley:

- where strong and safe communities can shape their future;
- where people are active and healthy and have access to the support they need;
- where people of all ages are confident and can achieve their full potential;
- with a thriving, inclusive economy with opportunities for people and business; and,
- with welcoming, vibrant, well-connected neighbourhoods and town centres.



# COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES

The Knowsley Council Plan 2025-2030 has a clear vision of 'Supporting Knowsley's People and Communities to Thrive' and is focused on three key priorities:

1. Effective support for those in need
2. Encourage growth that benefits everyone
3. Deliver targeted support to encourage fairness and opportunity

The Knowsley Council Plan considers the future opportunities and ambitions for local people whilst dealing with the long-standing challenges facing Knowsley residents and communities.

Our workforce is the bridge between strategy and delivery.  
When our workforce thrives, our communities thrive.

THIS STRATEGY IS FOR EVERY  
EMPLOYEE, IN EVERY ROLE  
BECAUSE WE ALL SHAPE  
KNOWSLEY'S FUTURE. NO  
MATTER YOUR JOB OR TEAM,  
THIS STRATEGY IS YOURS.  
WE'LL DELIVER IT TOGETHER.

# OUR VISION FOR OUR WORKFORCE

We are building a workforce that is:

## **Clear on its purpose**

Understanding how every role contributes to delivering the Council Plan and improving outcomes for residents.

## **Focused on outcomes**

Prioritising effort and resources where they make the greatest difference for Knowsley.

## **Led effectively**

Supported by visible, accountable leaders who empower people and drive improvement.

## **Empowered to improve**

Taking ownership, speaking up and continuously improving how we work.

## **Equipped for the future**

Developing the skills, behaviours and capabilities needed to meet future challenges and opportunities.

At the heart of this vision are our **behaviours**:

- **Proactive**  
I am proactive and try new ways to improve. I actively seek out new ideas and better ways of working to improve services and outcomes for our residents.
- **Accountable**  
I take ownership of my work, deliver on commitments, and focus on results that make a real impact for residents and communities. I am transparent about progress, learn from experience, and take pride in delivering what counts.
- **Collaborative**  
I build positive relationships with colleagues, partners and communities. I listen, share ideas, and involve others so we can find the best way forward for residents.
- **Empowering**  
I create an environment where everyone feels supported to thrive. I encourage others to develop their skills, confidence and capability. I recognise and celebrate Knowsley's diversity.

These behaviours have been co-designed with our employees across the organisation and are underpinned by the Council Plan. Our behaviours define how we work, lead and deliver at Knowsley Council. They are expected, measured and embedded across the organisation.

These behaviours apply to **everyone** at Knowsley Council regardless of role, level, or team. They reflect how we work together to make a real difference for our borough. Our leaders create an environment where these behaviours can thrive, and our employees will be expected to demonstrate our behaviours in all that they do.

# OUR EMPLOYEE PROMISE

## **Our Commitment to You**

By delivering this strategy, we will create an environment where you can do meaningful work, develop your skills and make a difference to Knowsley. We want Knowsley Council to be a place where people feel supported, valued and empowered to perform at their best.

We will:

### **Support you to thrive and grow**

We will invest in your wellbeing and create an environment where you feel supported, included and able to succeed.

### **Invest in your development**

We will provide opportunities to learn, develop new skills and build a rewarding career within Knowsley Council.

### **Value diversity and inclusion**

We will foster a culture where difference is respected, diversity is celebrated and everyone feels they belong.

## **Create opportunities to progress**

We will strengthen career pathways, talent development and succession planning so that people can fulfil their potential.

## **Empower you to make a difference**

We will empower you to contribute ideas, improve services and make a meaningful impact for residents and communities.



# YOUR COMMITMENT TO KNOWSLEY



We ask all employees to:

## **Live our behaviours**

Be Proactive, Accountable, Collaborative and Empowering. Don't just talk about our behaviours, show them in how you work, lead, and support others. Challenge others when they fall short of the behaviours we expect in Knowsley Council.

## **Take accountability**

Whether you manage people or not, take accountability and responsibility for your work and the difference you make – be bold by speaking up even when it's challenging, listen to others, be visible, trust others and build their confidence. Inspire those around you by being honest, self-aware, open, willing to admit mistakes and build trust and help others to feel safe to be themselves.

## **Make a real impact**

Focus on what matters most to Knowsley residents and our communities. Know how your role connects to our shared goals and take pride in the difference you make.

## **Keep growing**

Stay curious and open to learning. Take ownership of your development and help others grow too. Invest in your wellbeing and encourage others to do the same. Be part of making Knowsley Council a place where people want to work and stay.

## **Speak up and contribute**

Speak up, share ideas, and help shape how we work. Your perspective matters and together, we'll build a better future for our residents and communities.



# OUR PEOPLE STRATEGY PRIORITIES

Our Strategic Workforce Choices set out where we will focus our effort and investment. The four priorities below are how we will deliver those commitments. Together, they will strengthen leadership, workforce capability, organisational performance and our ability to deliver better outcomes for Knowsley.

We will focus on the areas that will have the greatest impact on performance, sustainability and outcomes.

## 1. A Culture Where Everyone Can Thrive

### Strategic Objective:

Create a high-performing and inclusive culture where our behaviours are consistently demonstrated, people feel they belong, and everyone is supported and expected to deliver.

### We will:

- Embed behaviours across the employee lifecycle
- Ensure leaders consistently role model expectations
- Create a culture where challenge and speaking up are encouraged
- Invest in wellbeing to support resilience and attendance
- Build an inclusive workplace where difference is valued

### This will result in:

- Stronger employee engagement
- Reduced sickness absence
- Greater confidence to improve how we work

## 2. Inspiring Leadership at Every Level

### Strategic Objective:

Strengthen leadership as the primary driver of performance, culture and employee experience, bringing our behaviours to life whilst driving outcomes for residents.

### We will:

- Define and apply clear leadership expectations
- Invest in leadership development at all levels
- Ensure leaders are visible and accessible
- Build strong leadership pipelines
- Recognise and celebrate great leadership and address poor leadership performance

### This will result in:

- More consistent and effective leadership
- Improved employee experience and retention
- Stronger delivery of Council priorities

### 3. Delivering What Counts for Knowsley

#### Strategic Objective:

Ensure every role is aligned to clear outcomes with strong accountability.

#### We will:

- Build employee understanding of how their role contributes to the Council Plan and broader ambitions for Knowsley
- We will increasingly focus our workforce on prevention, early intervention and delivering support at the earliest opportunity
- Set clear expectations for performance and behaviours
- Embed regular, high-quality performance conversations
- Strengthen employee voice
- Use performance data to drive improvement

#### This will result in:

- Improved productivity and performance
- Clear organisational focus
- Better outcomes for residents

### 4. Building the Workforce We Need for Knowsley's Future

#### Strategic Objective:

Build a sustainable, skilled and future-ready workforce.

#### We will:

- Adopt forward-thinking working practices that align with the changing world of work and evolving employee expectations
- Use strategic workforce planning to align capacity, capability and demand
- Reduce reliance on agency and build internal pipelines
- Strengthen recruitment for critical roles
- Develop future skills, including digital capability
- Improve recruitment practices to ensure we're recruiting for the future

#### This will result in:

- Reduced agency dependency
- Improved workforce stability
- A more resilient organisation

# DELIVERING OUR PEOPLE STRATEGY

We will monitor progress through a focused set of indicators aligned to:

- Workforce performance and productivity
- Workforce capability and stability
- Financial sustainability
- Improved outcomes for residents

Progress will be reported regularly to the Executive Management Team and reviewed through established governance arrangements.

The People Strategy will be delivered through a phased approach over the period 2026–2030, supporting the delivery of Knowsley 2030 and the Council Plan 2025–2030. The focus will be on strengthening leadership, culture, workforce capability, performance and workforce sustainability.

## Delivery Phases

| Phase     | Focus              |
|-----------|--------------------|
| Year 1    | Foundations        |
| Year 2    | Rollout and Embed  |
| Year 3    | Drive Impact       |
| Years 4–5 | Optimise and Renew |

Progress will be reviewed annually and delivery plans refreshed where required.

## Year 1 Priorities (2026–27)

The first year of the strategy will focus on building the foundations required for long-term success.

### Priority 1: A Culture Where Everyone Can Thrive

Key actions:

- Launch and embed the PACE behaviours.
- Strengthen wellbeing and attendance support.
- Design and prepare for the launch of The Journey.
- Review employee experience and identify improvement opportunities.
- Continue the programme of HR policy review and modernisation.

### **Priority 2: Inspiring Leadership at Every Level**

Key actions:

- Define leadership expectations.
- Strengthen leadership visibility and engagement.
- Review management structures and capacity.
- Design leadership development and succession approaches.

### **Priority 3: Delivering What Counts for Knowsley**

Key actions:

- Strengthen understanding of Council priorities and outcomes.
- Design a new performance framework.
- Improve performance and development conversations.
- Strengthen employee voice and engagement.

### **Priority 4: Building the Workforce We Need for Knowsley's Future**

Key actions:

- Complete strategic workforce planning.
- Review workforce capacity and capability.
- Identify workforce risks and skills gaps.
- Develop talent pipelines and succession plans.

### **Year 1 Success Indicators**

- PACE behaviours embedded within recruitment processes.
- Leadership expectations launched.
- Team discussions completed across all services.
- Leaders and managers complete The Journey.
- Strategic workforce planning completed.
- Executive dashboard implemented.



