

# People Strategy for the Civil Service 2017–2020

**Developing our People; Building for the Future**





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# Message from the Civil Service Management Board

We are pleased to present the People Strategy for the Civil Service for 2017 to 2020. This Strategy has been developed in line with the commitment in the Civil Service Renewal Plan to build strategic HR capability in the Civil Service. The Renewal Plan builds on the strengths of the Civil Service and details the steps we are taking to ensure that we have the capacity and capability to meet the challenges facing us and to deliver an excellent service to the State.

People are the most important drivers of success in the Civil Service. It is incumbent on us to put the right tools and supports in place so that civil servants are empowered to excel individually, in teams, and in the Departments and Offices in which they work. Building on this, the Strategy is organised around three broad priorities:

- Be an Employer of Choice;
- Build the Workforce of the Future; and
- Build, Support and Value Managers as People Developers.

The Strategy aims to position HR as a strategic driver to enable the delivery of those three priorities. Delivering on the priorities will require an investment of time, energy, and resources as well as in the leadership, management, and development of our people.

Implementing this Strategy will ensure that initiatives developed under the Civil Service Renewal Plan, which have a strong people dimension, will be embedded in Departments and Offices. In this way, we hope to fulfil the vision that all civil servants reach their potential and operate at the highest levels of performance to achieve their objectives.

This Strategy is ambitious. It aims to strengthen strategic HR capability and capacity well beyond 2020. Implementation of the actions under the strategic priorities will be regularly assessed to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose and the People Strategy will be reviewed after a three-year period.

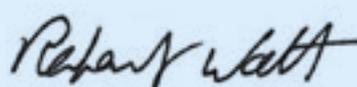
As Leaders in the Civil Service, we will support the delivery of this Civil Service People Strategy and continue to provide leadership and oversight, particularly in the implementation of the Action Plan which is designed to transform the strategic priorities into positive change across the Civil Service.

## The Civil Service Management Board



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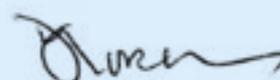
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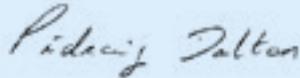
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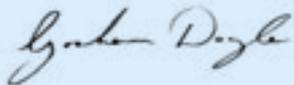
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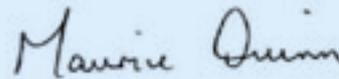
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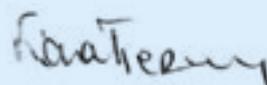
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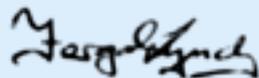
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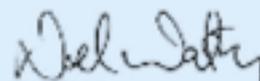
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# Foreword by the Chief Human Resources Officer for the Civil Service



I can think of no better definition of the Civil Service than this quote from the Civil Service Renewal Plan: *“The Civil Service exists as an independent, impartial body to serve the State and the people of Ireland by carrying out the work of Government and delivering public services efficiently and effectively. Everything we do impacts on Irish society”*.

To ensure that we continue to fulfil and sustain this role we need *“to be the best that we can be in everything we do”* and we need to retain, develop and attract the best people we can. We must continue to foster a culture which encourages initiative and innovation enabled by coaching and mentoring within a framework of collaboration and accountability.

Our People Strategy sets out the broad priorities for people management and development in the Civil Service. It focuses on the key people challenges for the Civil Service and is designed to ensure that current and future skill gaps are anticipated and addressed, that all colleagues are well managed and led in an environment that recognises their professional aspirations and personal challenges and encourages high performance.

The Strategy was developed in collaboration with the HR Community (i.e. those working in HR in the Civil Service) and senior management, under the stewardship of a Strategic HR Steering Group which I had the privilege to chair.

Transforming this Strategy into reality will require a commitment to significant change across the Civil Service. It will require positive and determined leadership along with commitment and support from all managers and staff. I welcome the support and commitment provided by the Civil Service Management Board in both developing the Strategy and its commitment to providing ongoing leadership and oversight for the implementation of the Action Plan.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Cagney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

**David Cagney**  
**Chief Human Resources Officer for the Civil Service**

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all who were involved in the development of the People Strategy including the HR Managers Forum, the Corporate Services Assistant Secretaries Network and the Senior Public Service. In particular, I would like to thank the members of the Strategic HR Steering Group for their guidance, insight, advice and expertise. I would also like to thank Professor Joe McDonagh, Director of Doctoral Studies, Trinity Business School, who brought an external perspective and expertise around HR trends and evolving practice to our People Strategy. I would like to acknowledge the significant work done by the Civil Service HR Division with assistance from the Civil Service Renewal Programme Management Office in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

A full list of members of the Strategic HR Steering Group is attached at Appendix A.

# Summary of Actions

## BE AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE



### Employee Engagement

- 1 Use the Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey results to drive higher staff engagement.
- 2 Promote and enhance staff recognition schemes across the Civil Service.
- 3 Develop more flexible and innovative ways of working.
- 4 Increase staff participation by making job roles more varied, meaningful and engaging.

### Staff Wellbeing

- 5 Develop an overarching Health and Wellbeing Framework for the Civil Service building on existing initiatives.
- 6 Provide additional support for people managers and HR Units to assist staff facing life changing events.

### Learning and Development

- 7 Complete the establishment of the Civil Service Learning and Development Centre.
- 8 Develop an overarching Civil Service Learning and Development Strategy and Action Plan.
- 9 Enhance Staff Development Programmes building on existing initiatives.
- 10 Conduct annual comprehensive skills audits.

### Communications

- 11 Establish a new Civil Service Communications Unit.

## BUILD THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE



### Strategic Workforce Planning

- 12 Strengthen strategic workforce planning in all Departments and Offices.
- 13 Develop a rolling three year integrated Civil Service wide Workforce Plan.
- 14 Expand the Mobility Scheme.

### Recruitment and Selection

- 15 Develop a rolling three year aggregated Civil Service Recruitment Plan.
- 16 Review the effectiveness of recruitment, selection, placement and promotion policies and processes.
- 17 Support the strengthening of professional expertise within corporate functions.

### Diversity

- 18 Review and revise the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- 19 Expand current models for engaging students in 2nd and 3rd level education.

## BUILD, SUPPORT AND VALUE MANAGERS AS PEOPLE DEVELOPERS



### Build and Support Managers

- 20 Establish a pilot Centre of Expertise/HR Advisory Service for organisational HR Units.
- 21 Re-emphasise and communicate the role of people managers.
- 22 Develop a modular programme based on the defined people manager role.
- 23 Strengthen accountability framework for people managers.

### Value Managers

- 24 Managers, at all levels, will model, support and recognise effective management behaviour.
- 25 Reflect the role of people managers in all HR policies and processes.

## POSITION HR AS A STRATEGIC DRIVER



### HR Roles

- 26 Review the current Civil Service HR Operating Model (HROM).
- 27 Develop and implement the revised HROM based on the findings of the Review.
- 28 Enhance collaboration and learning within the HR Community.
- 29 Develop a HR standards framework for HR roles.
- 30 Develop a clearly defined HR career structure.
- 31 Explore the feasibility of a partnership with CIPD to provide accreditation to HR staff.
- 32 Develop a continuous professional development plan for HR staff.

### HR Policies and Processes

- 33 Strengthen the development of People Strategies in all Departments and Offices.
- 34 Improve migration of transactional HR activity to National Shared Services Office.
- 35 Develop a suite of HR data analytics.
- 36 Ensure HR policies and processes are legally compliant and reflect best practice.

### HR Technology

- 37 Develop a Human Capital Management Strategy for the Civil Service.
- 38 Develop further transitional ICT solutions to improve delivery of HR services.
- 39 Enhance collaborative ICT tools to support Departments and Offices to build HR capability.
- 40 Improve access to Civil Service HR information through enhancement of the HR website.

# Section 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Civil Service People Strategy

The Civil Service People Strategy sets the strategic Human Resources (HR) agenda for 2017 to 2020 focusing on three key cross-cutting strategic HR priorities, which are:

- Be an Employer of Choice;
- Build the Workforce of the Future; and
- Build, Support and Value Managers as People Developers.

These priorities will be supported in their delivery by an enabling priority which is the positioning of HR as a strategic driver. These priorities are based on people management challenges faced by all Government Departments and Offices, irrespective of their size and the nature of their business. The Strategy will help to embed Civil Service Renewal HR initiatives as key business processes and will create a solid foundation for strengthening strategic HR capability beyond 2020.

The majority of Departments and Offices have, or are developing, their own People Strategies relevant to their business objectives and HR priorities. This overarching Strategy will help set the direction for those organisational People Strategies, ensure alignment with the Renewal Programme vision of 'One Civil Service' and support their implementation.

This Strategy is intended to positively impact all civil servants by supporting them to perform to the highest level, fulfil their potential and achieve their business objectives. There is a particular focus on leaders and managers, who have the key role in managing and developing people, and the HR Community, who support them in that role.

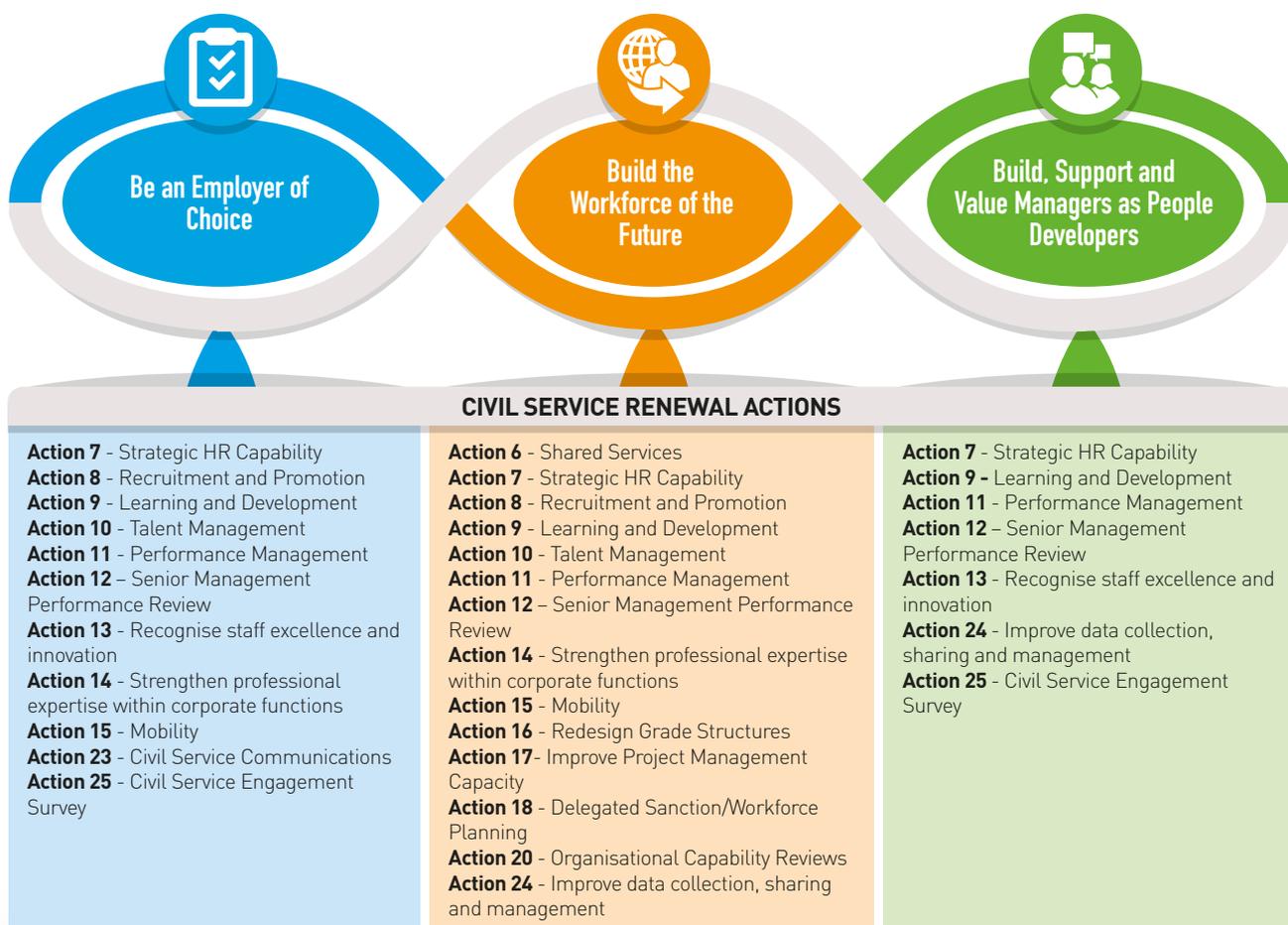
## 1.2 Building on Progress

Considerable progress has been made, through the Civil Service Renewal Programme, in developing and implementing key HR initiatives. These HR initiatives will act as a platform for enhancing the capability of all civil servants and encouraging a high performing and accountable workforce.

These initiatives include the development and implementation of new and revised performance management processes, as well as disciplinary and underperformance policies, that are in line with good practice. The initiatives also include the introduction of talent management and mobility opportunities for staff to develop their career potential and enrich their work experience. A new shared learning and development model for the Civil Service is also currently under development.

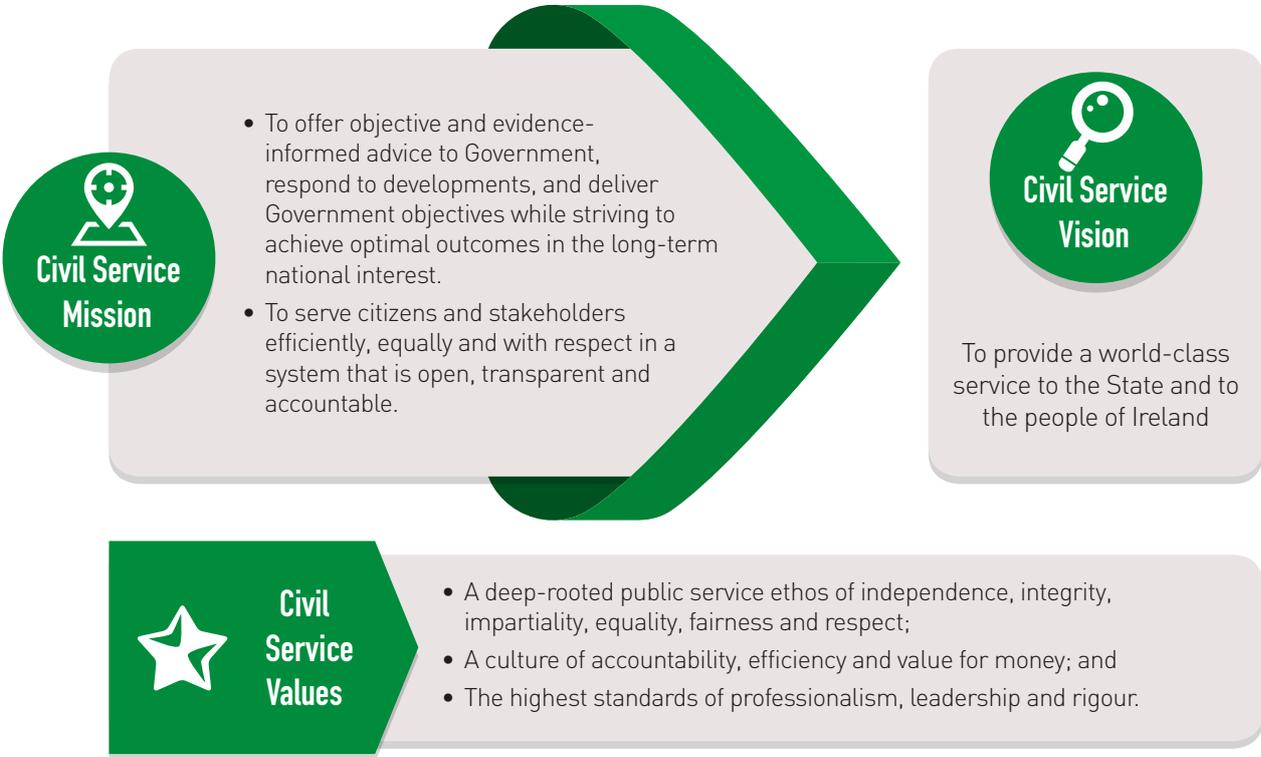
The linkages between Renewal actions and the HR priorities in this Strategy are set out below. Each of the actions set out in the People Strategy Action Plan, in Appendix C, also highlights the links with the Renewal actions.

## Strategic Priorities and Civil Service Renewal Actions Linkages



# Section 2: Our People Vision, Mission and Values

The Civil Service Renewal Plan set out a renewed Vision and Mission for the Civil Service which is underpinned by core Civil Service Values.



The People Mission and Vision is aligned with and supports the Civil Service Mission, Vision and Values.



# Section 3: Context for Change

The Civil Service consists of over 40 Departments and Offices with in excess of 37,000 staff and operates in a complex environment providing services to Government, members of the public and society. Significant variation exists across Civil Service organisations in terms of their size, business needs, grade structure and location. A diverse range of skills is required to meet all business needs.

The role of the Civil Service in the economic recovery highlighted the capability and resilience of our workforce which has been recognised both at home and abroad. The most recent customer satisfaction survey and business customer survey indicate a high level of satisfaction with the quality of services provided by the Civil Service which is continuing to improve.

There is considerable experience and depth of expertise in the Civil Service on which we must continue to build. There are, however, key challenges, some of which include:

- Up to 10,000 civil servants are eligible to retire over the next 5 to 10 years;
- A competitive labour market for attracting and retaining talented staff;
- Adapting and responding to the varying expectations of serving and newly recruited civil servants;
- Motivating and engaging current staff to achieve and maintain a high level of performance;
- Higher expectations for quality public services; and
- A need to exploit the opportunities provided by emerging technologies recognising their potential impact on job roles and organisational structures.

The 2015 Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey identified areas where the Civil Service could strengthen its capability and capacity, including:

- Performance Management;
- The extent to which each civil servant feels that they are involved in decision making in their organisations;
- Opportunities for career development, learning, mobility and promotion in the Civil Service; and
- Staff well-being and valuing staff contribution.

In addressing these challenges, Departments and Offices will build on the innovative HR initiatives developed under the Civil Service Renewal Plan being implemented across the Civil Service. These initiatives must now be embedded as core business processes if the objectives of the Plan (including managing the Civil Service as a single unified organisation) are to be realised and the challenges are to be addressed.

While considerable progress has been made in enhancing HR capability across the Civil Service over the last few years, Departments and Offices are at different stages of HR maturity. Some have retained a more traditional approach to HR while others have, or are in the process of, adopting a more strategic approach. The establishment of the National Shared Services Office (NSSO) provides further opportunities for HR Units to become more strategic in the future.

The new Learning and Development Centre presents a renewed opportunity for staff development. This Centre will play a vital role in the implementation of the Civil Service People Strategy, supporting many of the actions identified in the Action Plan.

The move towards strategic HR will continue to foster a culture which values people and people managers, supports high performance and reinforces the relationship between effective people management and an engaged, productive workforce.

## Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey 2017



83% of customers were satisfied with the outcome of their customer service experience.

## Civil Service Business Customer Survey 2016



82% of businesses were satisfied with the service they received during their last transaction.

## Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey 2015



**Performance Standards**  
44% of civil servants feel performance standards are high and that underperformance is managed effectively.



**Career development and mobility**  
44% of civil servants feel there are sufficient opportunities for career development, learning, mobility and promotion in the Civil Service.



**Learning and Development**  
52% of civil servants feel they have sufficient and effective opportunities for learning and development.

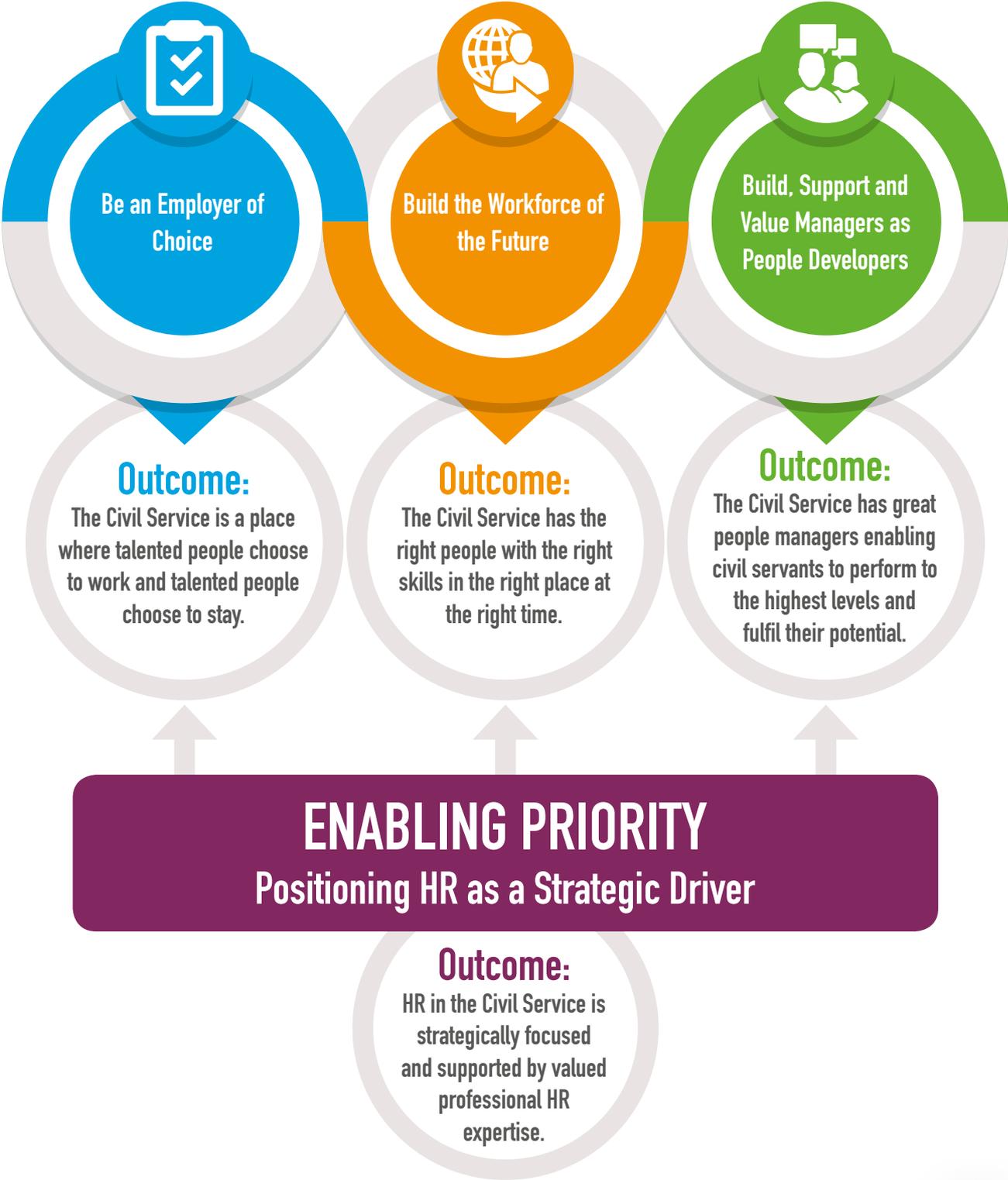


**Organisational Supports**  
44% of civil servants feel their organisation values their contribution and cares for their wellbeing.

# Section 4: Strategic Priorities

The People Strategy focuses on three key cross-cutting strategic HR priorities, shared by all Departments and Offices, and an enabling priority which will support the delivery of those priorities. The objective of these priorities is to deliver the People Vision and Mission and to ensure that the Civil Service has the HR capability to do so.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



# Section 5: Be an Employer of Choice

OUTCOME



The Civil Service is a place where talented people choose to work and talented people choose to stay.



## 5.1 What will this look like?

The Civil Service relies on a highly skilled and engaged workforce to deliver vital public services to the people of Ireland. In the context of a recovering economy, changing expectations and the retirement cliff, there is a need to retain, attract and engage talented, innovative and dedicated staff in the Civil Service.

The Civil Service will be a place where:

- Civil servants are energised by, connected to, and derive fulfilment from their work and are valued for the contribution they make;
- Teams are engaged, managed and well led to deliver a high level of performance;
- There is a culture of continuous learning and development (L&D) for staff facilitated by internal organisational L&D functions and the new L&D Centre;
- Diversity is encouraged and facilitated to make the composition of the Civil Service more reflective of Irish society;
- Discrimination is not condoned, equality is promoted and human rights are protected;
- Wellbeing of the individual and positive work life balance is a key feature in the workplace;
- Mobility and other opportunities will facilitate individual career development, expand skills and experience, and provide variety of opportunity for staff;
- Initiative is recognised and decision making is devolved appropriately; and
- Variety, complexity and value of the work of civil servants is recognised and promoted both internally and externally and translates into strong recruitment, retention and engagement levels.

## 5.2 Where are we now?

The Civil Service has a strong public service ethos epitomised in its core values of independence, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect which guides and influences how it does business.

The 2015 Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey provided insight into how civil servants view their work. The picture that emerged is of an energised, connected, resilient workforce who are interested in and have pride in their work supporting the Government in delivering essential services to the public.

This is a very good platform on which to build a strategy. However, challenges were also identified in a number of areas including the need for more delegation, promotion, recognition, mobility and regard for individual wellbeing.

Considerable progress has been made in the area of diversity and equality, particularly in relation to disability and gender. However, challenges remain with ensuring gender balance at the most senior levels and the wider diversity agenda.

## 5.3 How will we get there?

Promoting the Civil Service as an Employer of Choice for existing staff and potential new recruits will be achieved through supporting organisations to ensure roles are more varied and meaningful and by continually equipping our workforce with the appropriate skills to respond effectively to the evolving business challenges.

The Civil Service will improve communications with existing civil servants, potential new recruits and with the public to raise awareness of the richness, variety and importance of the work civil servants do on behalf of society.

The Civil Service will develop a new Diversity and Inclusion policy that will help address our public sector duty to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and protect the human rights of civil servants. Progression on mobility, opportunity for promotion, learning and development of staff will also help the Civil Service be seen as an Employer of Choice.

# Section 6: Build the Workforce of the Future

OUTCOME



The Civil Service has the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time.



## 6.1 What will this look like?

Strategic HR requires a highly co-ordinated and integrated view of the entire workforce as envisaged over a 5 to 10 year horizon. The workforce composition, timing of resourcing, and learning and development supports will be aligned with the strategic priorities of Departments, Offices and the overall Civil Service.

The Civil Service will achieve this by:

- Developing an aggregated Civil Service Workforce Plan (informed by workforce plans of individual Departments and Offices) aimed at delivering a consolidated forecast of resource requirements, identifying the people and/or skills where and when they are required;
- Developing an overarching Recruitment Plan for the Civil Service, in conjunction with the Public Appointments Service (PAS), informed by the Civil Service Workforce Plan, resourcing policy and labour market trends;
- Ensuring contractual models, resourcing and recruitment processes are flexible, agile and responsive to evolving business needs;
- Maintaining delegated staffing sanction so that Departments and Offices preserve the flexibility to tailor their workforce to suit their business needs;
- Strategically aligning performance management, mobility, talent management, diversity, promotion, recruitment, learning and development as well as other relevant HR policies to facilitate the matching of skills, expertise and experience to roles;
- Improved corporate expertise through the professionalisation of career streams; and
- Enhancing data analytic capability to support data driven workforce planning, resourcing, knowledge management and succession planning.

## 6.2 Where are we now?

The majority of Departments and Offices currently develop medium term workforce plans linked to business objectives and informed by Statements of Strategy. They are supported by the Civil Service HR Division (CSHRD), in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), through the delivery of workforce planning training, advisory support and guidance to facilitate knowledge sharing and best practice.

Mobility arrangements are being expanded at present to facilitate the introduction of new people and skills to Departments and Offices. In addition to recruitment carried out under licence by Departments and Offices, PAS continues to manage the increasing demand for competitions. Ensuring the right people are in the right jobs at the right time will be significantly enhanced by the development of comprehensive flexible workforce planning led resourcing and recruitment models.

## 6.3 How will we get there?

Building the workforce of the future will be achieved by embedding workforce planning as a key component of strategic business planning across the Civil Service. Organisational workforce plans will inform the development of a Civil Service wide Workforce Plan and associated Recruitment Plan. This will enable the development of agile resourcing, recruitment and selection mechanisms and a targeted approach to ensure the Civil Service has a diverse workforce more reflective of Irish society.

# Section 7: Build, Support and Value Managers as People Developers

OUTCOME



The Civil Service has great people managers enabling civil servants to perform to the highest levels and fulfil their potential.



## 7.1 What will this look like?

Leaders will understand that the performance of their organisation is dependent on the performance of their staff and the teams they work in, and recognise that a highly engaged workforce is a highly motivated workforce.

Managers have the key people management role and will understand what is expected of them in that role. They will be supported and have the confidence to effectively manage, motivate and develop their staff to enhance individual, team and organisational performance. Reflecting a culture of valuing good people management, managers at all levels in the Civil Service will:

- Understand the people management dimension of their role;
- Know and develop the skills and behaviours required for their people management role and be clear about their expected level of performance;
- Be accountable for the management of their staff;
- Optimise individual and team performance by tackling underperformance and supporting high performance;
- Be supported in that role by having access to high quality advice, guidance and expertise as well as learning and development initiatives;
- Take an active interest in the welfare of their staff;
- Encourage staff to share their ideas, take initiative, and have the authority and confidence to make decisions; and
- Foster a culture of learning and development by seeking out and supporting staff to find the right developmental opportunities and facilitating continuous professional development.

## 7.2 Where are we now?

The 2015 Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey highlighted the need to avail of the full range of staff capability by the provision of career and learning and development opportunities. Challenges with regard to the level of support civil servants receive from their managers and a perception that managers are not held accountable for managing their team were also identified.

Actions initiated under the Civil Service Renewal Plan offer potential for a cultural shift in people management, where the focus is on supporting managers and strengthening performance management across the Civil Service.

Collaborative networks such as the HR Managers Forum and the Employee Relations Network for HR staff are facilitating a shift towards a more supportive management culture. The development of new technology solutions such as ePMDS, eProbation and eLEADS (for senior management performance assessment) makes it easier to manage performance. The new Learning and Development Centre will also support managers in developing their own and their team's capability to have meaningful performance conversations.

## 7.3 How will we get there?

The Civil Service will foster a stronger culture of good people management by re-emphasising the people management role for all managers, so that they understand what is expected of them. Organisational HR Units (OHRs) will support people managers by ensuring that they have access to effective tools, supports, professional HR advice and expertise, so that managers can further develop their capacity and confidence to deal with all people management issues. OHRs will be supported by a Central HR Advisory Service so that they can build the supports and services necessary to provide services to people managers.

Managers at all levels will develop a stronger collaborative management culture by recognising and modelling good people management practices enabling the creation of a high performing work environment with the right conditions for dealing effectively with underperformance.

# Section 8: Positioning HR as a Strategic Driver

**OUTCOME**  **HR in the Civil Service is strategically focused and supported by valued professional HR expertise.** 

## 8.1 Delivering on the People Strategy

HR in the Civil Service needs to adapt to respond to the evolving demands from the business and deliver on the three strategic priorities. To meet these challenges there is a need to build on existing HR expertise and become more strategically focused on organisational performance. There is also a need to professionalise HR in the Civil Service in line with developments in the private and public sectors and in line with the commitment in the Civil Service Renewal Plan to strengthen corporate expertise.

## 8.2 Transition to Strategic HR

HR in the Civil Service is transitioning from a traditional 'personnel' function with a focus on activities, which are in a large part transactional and administrative, to becoming a more strategic support to managers at all levels. The expectations associated with this transition require a significant operational and cultural shift and a re-emphasis

on managers having the key people management role. This shift will require a change in mind-set among managers, particularly at senior levels, who have the key people management role. It will also require access to HR practitioners who can operate strategically to support management and staff to deliver on their objectives.

## 8.3 HR Operating Model

The enhancement of the three pillars of the *HR operating model* - *HR Roles, HR Policies and Processes, and HR Technology* - will enable the changes required to deliver on the HR priorities by strengthening strategic HR capability across the Civil Service (illustrated in Figure 8.1). In general, this means that staff who have a role in people management should be clear about that role, be supported in that role by HR professionals and be enabled by a coherent set of HR policies, streamlined processes and complementary technology which is fit for purpose.

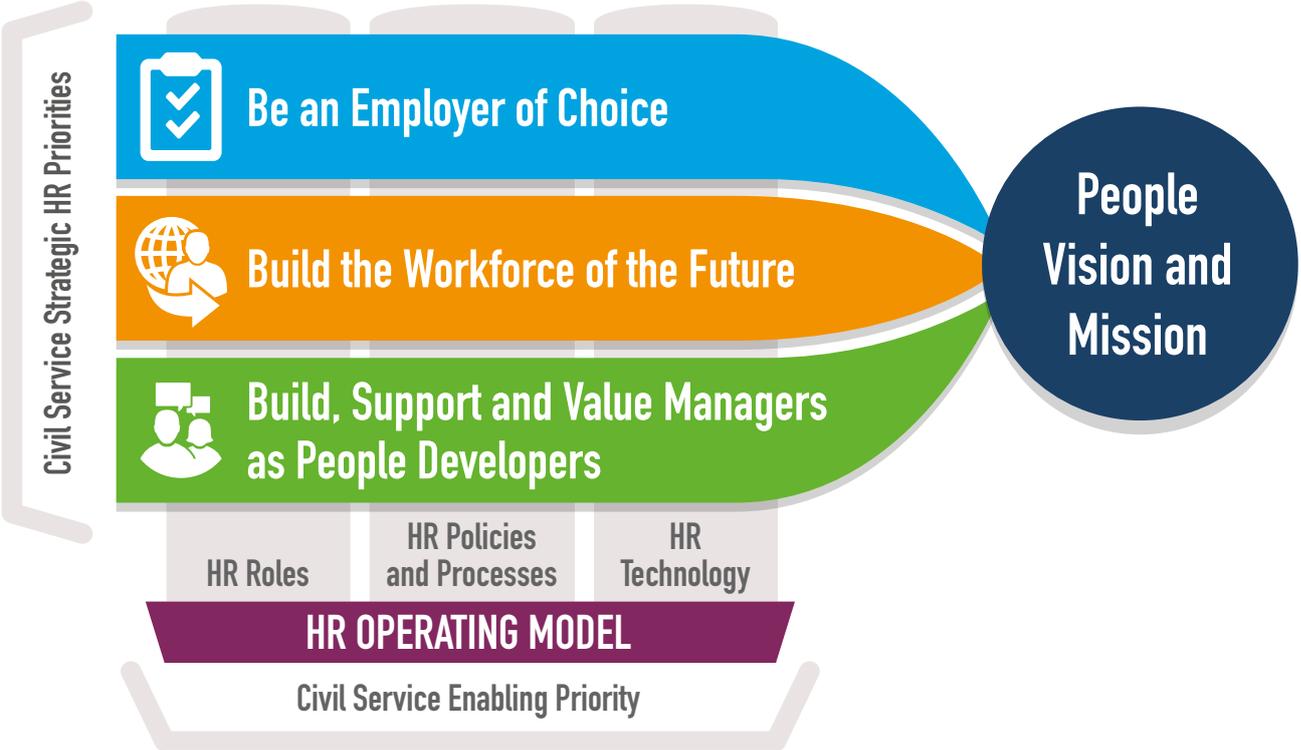


Figure 8.1



### 8.3.1 HR Roles

HR in the Civil Service is delivered by multiple stakeholders who all need to understand the people management dimension of their role. The services, supports and infrastructure needed to facilitate the effective interdependent relationships between these stakeholders will be further identified and enhanced when the HR Operating Model is redesigned and the Central HR Advisory Service is established.

## KEY HR STAKEHOLDERS

### Civil Servants

Civil servants at every level are responsible for their own performance and for taking the initiative to develop the skills and experience required to achieve high performance. They will be supported by their managers to develop the skills and experiences needed to deliver on their business objectives.

### Managers

Managers at every level have the key people management role and are responsible for workforce performance and development. They will be supported by HR Units in Civil Service organisations (OHR) that will provide tools, support and advice to managers. Senior management will be supported by a strategically focused HR function to meet complex business challenges (e.g. workforce planning).

### Organisational HR (OHR)

OHR, consisting of local (devolved and centralised) HR Units in Departments and Offices is responsible for acting as a proactive business partner, working within the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives and deliver on its business goals. Expertise will be in or available to OHR Units which will allow HR staff to provide increased levels of advice and support to assist managers in dealing with matters relating to people management and performance.

### Civil Service HR Division (CSHRD)

Civil Service HR Division is responsible for providing central policy, support and governance while supporting collaborative learning across the Civil Service HR Community. Strategically focused OHRs will be supported by a Central HR Advisory Service which will provide central guidance, support, expertise and direction on HR matters (e.g. employee relations, industrial relations, workforce planning, etc.).

### Service Providers

Effective HR operational services, which also support collaboration and learning, are delivered to OHRs through a range of HR service providers including the Learning and Development Centre, Public Appointments Service, National Shared Service Office, Office of the Chief Medical Officer, Civil Service Employee Assistance Service, Mediation Services. More detail on these services is set out at Appendix B.

Figure 8.2

## HR Career Structure

There will be a defined career structure for those working in HR in the Civil Service or for those who wish to develop a career in HR. HR staff or those interested in developing a career within HR will have the opportunity to develop themselves and their professional HR skills as well as acquiring Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) accreditation and membership. Continuing HR professional development will be facilitated by on-the-job training and the new Learning and Development Centre. There will be opportunities for building experience, through mobility, and career progression within the HR Community as well as between business and operational areas to ensure business knowledge and awareness is further developed. A blend of HR and business expertise will exist in the HR Community based on an agreed set of HR professional standards. Those already operating within HR Units will be facilitated to acquire appropriate qualifications to match expertise already acquired.

## HR Standards Framework

A common framework of HR standards will be developed. The framework will set out common standards in terms of knowledge (i.e. what do HR staff need to know?), activities (i.e. what do HR staff need to do?) and behaviours (i.e. how they need to do it?). This set of standards will help achieve clarity around the role and behaviours expected of the HR Community. This framework will facilitate the transition from operational to strategic HR by helping to bring coherence and consistency in HR areas which are common across the Civil Service such as coaching, mentoring, workforce planning, engagement, diversity and performance management. This framework will also form the basis of the development and selection processes for the HR career stream.



### 8.3.2 HR Policies and Processes

A suite of clear, coherent and fit for purpose HR policies is essential to support effective people management and a high performing workforce. The HR policy suite is being reviewed, streamlined and simplified to ensure that policies are clear, consistent, innovative, meet high professional standards and are supportive of strategic HR. New and revised policies will be developed collaboratively with the HR Community and, where appropriate, in consultation with the staff side. Policies will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are fit for purpose, compliant with employment law, supportive of strategic HR and reflect the roles and responsibilities of key HR stakeholders.

HR processes will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they are fit for purpose, efficient, standardised and consistently applied. The increasing use of data analytics will help improve HR policy and decision making. It will also help managers manage performance by identifying trends and areas for improvements (e.g. absenteeism). Enhanced collaboration and learning will be facilitated by leveraging existing networks and creating new collaborative platforms for the sharing of experiences, expertise and learning.



### 8.3.3 HR Technology

Effective HR technology is integral to effective people management, HR data analytics and the delivery of professional HR services across the Civil Service. Technology should be a key enabler of HR in the Civil Service as the delivery of HR changes to meet employee expectations and business requirements.

Information Technology (IT) solutions will facilitate enhanced collaboration in terms of information sharing, shared learning, consistency of approach and HR policy development. It will also support the professionalisation of HR, enhance HR service delivery and improve the quality of information for HR stakeholders.

For the longer term, a Human Capital Management Strategy is being developed to provide a value for money IT solution for HR services which will support the People Vision set out in this strategy. It will be centred on the users of services, be future-proofed, reflecting the needs of the modern workforce, including remote and mobile access as well as having the potential to support current HR initiatives (e.g. Learning and Development (L&D), workforce planning, resourcing, talent management, eProbation, Mobility, ePMDS, etc.).

This initiative will evolve around developing HR systems and services placing civil servants at the centre and underpinning the vision of One Civil Service by providing access to a single, accurate and integrated source of all HR data. It will also provide employees with efficient, standardised self-services which are streamlined and automated to provide access to the most up-to date information. This will allow management at all levels manage data effectively, and provide access to a comprehensive, consistent, responsive and credible reporting suite which provides trusted data to the end customer. It will assist in identifying trends, inform decisions and HR policy development, and provide civil servants and management with business support tools, including guidance, templates, etc.

# Section 9: Implementation

## 9.1 Action Plan

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The Civil Service People Strategy sets out the strategic direction for HR in the Civil Service for 2017 to 2020 focusing on the three key cross-cutting strategic HR priorities and the positioning of HR as a strategic driver. The Action Plan setting out the steps necessary to deliver on these priorities and realise the associated outcomes is set out in Appendix C. All of the actions will commence over the lifetime of the Strategy. Some actions may, however, require a longer term focus which will carry them forward to the next iteration of the Strategy.

## 9.2 Leadership and Governance

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A hallmark of the Civil Service Renewal Plan has been the recognition that delivery requires “*strong collective leadership, shared ownership and sustained investment and commitment*”.

The implementation of the People Action Plan, which is a substantial change management programme in itself, will require a similar approach. Oversight by the Civil Service Management Board (CSMB) is a necessary and key signal of the importance the Civil Service ascribes to the implementation of the People Strategy. Management Boards and the HR Managers Forum have been centrally involved in the development of the Strategy and will continue to have an important role in leading on, contributing to and supporting the roll out of the Action Plan.

Each strategic priority and the priority of positioning HR as a strategic driver will be led by two Priority Sponsors, representing both the business and HR perspective, and will be supported centrally by the Civil Service HR Division (CSHRD). A Strategic HR Advisory Group will provide guidance and direction for the overarching Strategy. The Chief HR Officer (CHRO) for the Civil Service and CSHRD will centrally support the Strategy, make necessary policy changes and take a lead on new Civil Service wide initiatives.

The governance and implementation roles for each of the stakeholders for managing the effective implementation of the Strategy are described in Figure 9.1.

## 9.3 Realising the Strategy

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The test of the Strategy’s worth will be in its implementation which must be led by Management Boards and HR Units within individual Departments and Offices. The implementation of the Strategy requires support, collaboration and action from all civil servants, particularly those with a people management role.

As this is a significant change programme, additional financial investment, programme management capacity and appropriate resources will be required to support the development and implementation of certain actions (e.g. HR Operating Model Review, enhancing professional expertise, technology).

To ensure a cohesive approach to the implementation of the Strategy there will be an ongoing communications and engagement programme for all stakeholders, particularly around the development and implementation of actions.

## 9.4 Review and Evaluation

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Strategic priorities will be reassessed on a regular basis to ensure continued alignment with a changing external and internal environment. Implementation of the actions will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that intended outcomes are being realised. A progress report will be published annually.

A comprehensive review of the Strategy will be conducted after three years in operation to ensure that the challenges are being addressed and that strategic HR capability has improved across the Civil Service.

## GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

### Civil Service Management Board (CSMB)

The CSMB will provide oversight on progress in the implementation of the Civil Service People Strategy.

### Management Boards in Departments and Offices

Management Boards will lead the drive for strategic HR in their organisations by modelling, supporting and recognising effective management behaviour.

### HR Managers Forum (HRMF)

- HR Managers (HRMs) will be the HR champions and drive the implementation of actions in their Departments and Offices.
- HRMs will lead on the development of organisational HR strategies which are aligned with the Civil Service strategic HR priorities.
- HRMs will provide regular updates to the CSHRD to inform CSMB progress reports.
- HRMF Sub Groups will be set up as collaborative working groups, chaired by a member of the HRMF, to progress the development and implementation of specific actions.

### Strategic HR Advisory Group

The CHRO will chair an Advisory Group consisting of representatives of Corporate Service Assistant Secretaries, HR Managers, National Shared Services Office, Public Appointments Service, Civil Service Renewal and an external expert, who will provide expertise, advice and direction for progressing the implementation of the Strategy.

### Priority Sponsors

Each strategic priority will have two Assistant Secretaries (one from the business and one from Corporate Services) as co-leaders who will drive and promote the development and implementation of each priority.

### Chief Human Resources Officer of the Civil Service (CHRO) and the Civil Service HR Division (CSHRD)

- The CHRO and CSHRD, leading centrally, will work collaboratively with stakeholders to progress the implementation of the Strategy.
- The CHRO will provide regular progress reports to the CSMB informed by progress from the CSHRD as well as individual Departments and Offices.

Figure 9.1

# Appendix A: Strategic HR Steering Group Membership

MEMBER	ORGANISATION
David Cagney (Chair)	Chief HR Officer for the Civil Service, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
David Coleman	Revenue
Martina Colville	Department of Justice and Equality
Patricia Cronin	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
Emer Darcy	Courts Service
Ann Derwin	Department Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Lucy Fallon Byrne	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
John Hughes	Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
Niall Leavy	Public Appointments Service
Fergal Mythen	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Ann Marie O'Connor	Department of Social Protection
Deirdre O'Keeffe	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Rob O'Toole	PeoplePoint
Niall Byrne*	Public Appointments Service
Gerard Hughes*	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
Laurence Kelly*	Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government

\*Members of the Steering Group when it was initially established but changed roles before finalisation of the Strategy.

# Appendix B: Service Providers

- The **National Shared Services Office** (NSSO) is responsible for delivering shared services within the Civil Service and setting standards and implementing Government policy for shared services across the Public Service in Ireland. It currently consists of:
  - » **PeoplePoint** - The Human Resources and Pensions Shared Service Centre provides greater efficiency in HR service delivery through standardising and optimising transactional HR and Pensions processes into one centralised centre; and
  - » **Payroll Shared Service Centre (PSSC)** - The PSSC was established in December 2013. The services provided by the PSSC include payroll processing and reporting, pension payment processing and reporting, customer service helpdesk, payment delivery, payment advice distribution and travel and subsistence processing and reporting.
- The **Public Appointments Service** (PAS) is the centralised provider of recruitment, assessment and selection services for the Civil Service. It also provides recruitment and consultancy services to local authorities, the Health Service Executive, An Garda Síochána and other public bodies.
- The **Civil Service Learning and Development Centre**, in DPER, will provide training in a range of subjects to civil servants across the Civil Service. The project to develop and launch the Learning and Development Centre for the Civil Service is at an advanced stage.
- The **Office of the Government Chief Information Officer** (OGCIO) is responsible for the implementation of the Public Service ICT Strategy, which is aligned with the Public Service Reform and Civil Service Renewal Plans. The Strategy ensures an integrated approach to the exploitation of ICT across all Departments and Public Service Bodies, accelerating the delivery of digital services across Ireland and a transformation in the use of the Government's information assets.
- The **Office of the Chief Medical Officer** (CMO) – The primary role of CMO is to assist the workplace rehabilitation of staff who are sick, advise on day to day work and health issues and protect employee health through health screening and immunisation programmes. The CMO is also involved in policy relating to work and health.
- The **Civil Service Employee Assistance Service** (CSEAS) - the primary aim of the CSEAS is to promote employee wellness and organisational effectiveness through the delivery of a wide range of confidential\* supports to staff and management. Assistance is given in addressing work and life difficulties which, if left unattended, could adversely affect work performance and/or attendance and quality of life.

\*Exceptions to confidentiality apply and can be viewed on the CSEAS website [www.cseas.per.gov.ie](http://www.cseas.per.gov.ie)
- The **Civil and Public Service Mediation Service** (CPSMS) is a shared resource of mediators, internal to the Civil and Public Service, who provide mediation services from within existing resources. The practitioners are serving civil and public servants, appropriately trained mediators professionally accredited and acting as a shared resource within Departments and Offices on a voluntary basis.

# Appendix C: Action Plan



Be an Employer of Choice



Build the Workforce of the Future



Build, Support and Value Managers as People Developers

1

Renewal Action

## Be an Employer of Choice

**OUTCOME**  **The Civil Service is a place where talented people choose to work and talented people choose to stay.** 

Actions	Intended Outcome	Intended Impact	Indicative End Date	Related Strategic Priority/ Renewal Action	Led by	
<b>Employee Engagement</b>						
1	Civil Service Employee Engagement survey results to be used to drive higher staff engagement.	Evidence for targeting areas for improvement and measuring success in improving staff engagement.	Medium	2018	  7 25	CS Renewal Management Boards
2	Celebrate success and innovation by developing, building on and promoting staff recognition schemes across the Civil Service.	Values, recognises and cultivates good performance by civil servants.	Medium	2018	  7 13	CS Renewal Management Boards HR Managers CSHRD
3	Organisations to develop more flexible and innovative ways of working including feasibility around use of emerging technology and flexible working methods.	Enhanced staff commitment, engagement and performance.	Medium	2020	   7 16 18 22	HR Managers CSHRD
4	Organisations to increase staff participation by making job roles more varied, meaningful and engaging.	Enhanced staff commitment, engagement and opportunities for career development.	Medium	2019	  7 8 9 10 14 15	HR Managers CSHRD
<b>Staff Wellbeing</b>						
5	Develop an overarching Health and Wellbeing Framework creating a platform for issues such as mental health, nutrition and healthy lifestyle.	Resilient and healthy workforce where civil servants are supported and valued.	High	2018	  7	HR Managers CSHRD CMO CSEAS Mediation Service
6	Provide additional support for people managers and HR Units to assist in responding to staff facing challenging life events.	People managers will have the confidence and capability in dealing with staff welfare and related performance issues.  Managers and staff feel supported and valued.	Medium	2018	  7	CSEAS CSHRD CMO

Learning and Development						
7	Complete the establishment of the Civil Service Learning and Development Centre	Enhanced HR service delivery. Improved skills and competencies across the Civil Service.  Facilitates the development of a learning culture across the Civil Service.	High	2017	   7 9	L&D
8	Develop an overarching Civil Service Learning and Development Action Plan.	Better developed staff with training consistent across the Civil Service.  Maximum benefit derived from L&D Centre.	Medium	2017	   7 9	L&D
9	Enhance staff development programmes building on existing initiatives such as the Graduate Development and Executive Leadership programmes.	Better developed staff with training consistent across the Civil Service.  Engagement and retention of staff improved.	High	2019	   7 9	L&D CSHRD HR Managers
10	Conduct annual comprehensive skills audits, actual and projected, to inform learning and development strategies and workforce plans.	Informed and improved workforce, succession and knowledge management planning.	Medium	2018	  7 9	HR Managers L&D
Communications						
11	New Civil Service Communications Unit to develop internal and external Communications Strategies and Action Plans	Perception of the Civil Service by the public, current civil servants and potential new recruits will be improved to assist with engagement, retention and attraction.	Medium	2018	   7 9	Renewal CSHRD

# Build the Workforce of the Future

OUTCOME



The Civil Service will have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time.



Actions	Intended Outcome	Intended Impact	Indicative End Date	Related Strategic Priority/ Renewal Action	Led by	
<b>Strategic Workforce Planning</b>						
12	Strengthen strategic workforce planning in Departments and Offices, aligning talent management and mobility, as a requirement for delegated sanction.	Resourcing requirements identified in Departments and Offices to ensure the right people are in the right jobs and to inform a Civil Service wide workforce plan.	High	2017	4 7	HR Managers CSHRD DPER Vote Sections
13	Develop a rolling three year integrated Civil Service wide Workforce Plan informed by organisational workforce plans.	Resourcing requirements identified on a Civil Service wide basis which will inform Civil Service wide recruitment forecast.	High	2018	4 7	CSHRD HR Managers PAS
14	Expand Mobility policy, following the review of pilot scheme, to expand mobility opportunities for civil servants at all levels and ensure alignment with workforce planning and staff development.	Coherent mobility policy which facilitates staff development and strategic alignment with other HR policies.	High	2018	7 10 15	CSHRD NSSO HR Managers
<b>Recruitment and Selection</b>						
15	Develop a rolling three year aggregated Civil Service Recruitment Plan.	Facilitate appropriate recruitment solutions to enable suitable placements and timely filling of roles. PAS will develop the plan for general service grades and graduate recruitment.	High	2017	7 8	PAS CSHRD HR Managers
16	Review the effectiveness of recruitment, selection, placement and promotion policies and processes to ensure they are fit for purpose including the use of flexible resourcing models.	Policies and processes will be developed and aligned to support the effective recruitment, selection, placement and promotion to meet the business needs.	High	2017+	7 8	CSHRD PAS HR Managers Management Boards
17	Support the strengthening of professional expertise within corporate functions.	Professional public administration in HR, ICT and Financial Management.	Medium	2018	7 14	CSHRD HR Managers

### Diversity

18	Review and revise the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Policy.	Composition of the Civil Service is reflective of Irish society; the value of a diverse workforce is recognised internally and externally and helps to address our public sector duty to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and protect the human rights of civil servants.	High	2018	  7 8	CSHRD HR Managers PAS
19	Expand current models for engaging students in the education sector.	Broaden awareness of career opportunities to attract high quality talent that reflects the diversity of Irish society.	Medium	2018	  7 8	CSHRD PAS HR Managers

# Build, Support and Value Managers as People Developers

OUTCOME



Great people managers enabling civil servants to perform to the highest level and fulfil their potential.



Actions	Intended Outcome	Intended Impact	Indicative End Date	Related Strategic Priority/ Renewal Action	Led by	
<b>Build and Support Managers</b>						
20	Establish a pilot Central HR Advisory Service (Centre of Expertise) for organisational HR Units.	Equip HR Units with the capacity and confidence to support line managers in the effective and proactive implementation of HR policies.	High	2018	7 11 14	CSHRD
21	Re-emphasise the role of the manager in terms of their people management responsibilities.	Managers will have clarity around the expected role and behaviours of people managers.	High	2018	7 9 10 11	CSHRD PAS Management Boards HR Managers
22	Develop a modular programme based on the defined people manager role, facilitated by the L&D Centre.	Competent people managers with improved performance who foster staff engagement, development and delegation.	Medium	2019	7 9	CSHRD L&D Centre HR Managers
23	Strengthen the accountability framework for people managers, at all levels, through the development of better indicators of effective people management.	Drive culture change where people managers are accountable for the management, development and performance of their teams.	Medium	2020	7 9 11 12	CSHRD

Value Managers						
24	Managers at all levels will model, support and recognise effective management behaviour.	Demonstrates the value of people management skills, encourages improved performance management, increases confidence and competence in addressing poor performance.	Medium	2017+	 7 11 12	Management Boards CSHRD
25	Ensure the defined role of the people manager is reflected in policies and processes including; recruitment, promotion, induction, probation, L&D, etc.	Recognises and values the importance of the people manager role.	Medium	2017+	 7 8 9 11 12	CSHRD HR Managers PAS L&D
<p>Action 26 commits to reviewing and strengthening the HR Operating Model which will most likely lead to a fundamental reconfiguration of CSHRD and HR Units so that people managers get the necessary support and advice they need. The pilot Centre of Expertise (action 20) is the first step towards a new HR Operating Model.</p>						

# Positioning HR as a Strategic Driver

OUTCOME



HR in the Civil Service is strategically focused and is supported by valued professional HR expertise.



Actions	Intended Outcome	Intended Impact	Indicative End Date	Related Strategic Priority/ Renewal Action	Led by	
<b>HR Roles</b>						
26	Review the current Civil Service HR Operating Model (HROM) and redesign to ensure the structures, supports and services provided by HR Units and CSHRD are fit for purpose.	Cost effective and fit for purpose HR services available to staff, people managers, Management Boards and HR Units.	High	2018	7 14	CSHRD HR Managers
27	Develop and implement the revised HROM based on the findings of the Review (at action 26).	Cost effective and fit for purpose HR services available to staff, people managers, Management Boards and HR Units.	High	2020	7 14	CSHRD HR Managers
28	Enhance collaboration and learning, building on existing networks, to promote and facilitate networking and exchange of best practice in the HR Community.	Enhanced expertise and knowledge across the HR Community. Leveraging of existing Networks including the HR Managers Forum, Employee Relations and Personnel Officers Networks.	Medium	2017+	 5 7 19	CSHRD HR Managers L&D
29	Develop a HR standards framework for HR roles setting out the required knowledge (i.e. what do HR staff need to know?), activities (what HR staff need to do?) and behaviours (how they need to do it?) for each role.	Achieve clarity around the role and behaviours of the HR Community. Assists with transition to strategic HR. Consistency established supported by standards and best practice.	High	2019	7 14	CSHRD HR Managers

HR Career Structure						
30	Develop a clearly defined HR career structure which includes mobility within the HR Community.	Assist with the retention and attraction of talented HR staff.	High	2019	   7 14 15	CSHRD HR Managers
31	Explore the feasibility of a partnership with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) to provide HR staff with professional accreditation.	Specialist nature of the role recognised. Opportunity for staff to develop a career in HR, gain professional accreditation and have the confidence that their expertise and skills have value and will be applied.	Medium	2018	   7 14	CSHRD HR Managers
32	Develop a continuous professional development (CPD) plan for the HR stream based on a framework of HR standards and facilitated by the Learning and Development Centre.	HR staff incentivised to develop and enhance their experience.  HR capability, credibility, professional expertise and specialist knowledge enhanced.	High	2020	   7 14	CSHRD HR Managers L&D
HR Policies and Processes						
33	Strengthen the development of People Strategies in all Departments and Offices.	Clarity about the strategic direction, role and focus of HR in each organisation.	High	2017	   4 7	Management Boards HR Managers CSHRD
34	Address challenges in partnership with the National Shared Services Office (NSSO) to support greater migration of HR transactional activity to the NSSO.	Full potential of shared services realised by migrating transactional activity and freeing up HR staff to become more strategic.	Medium	2017+	   5 7 19	NSSO CSHRD HR Managers
35	Develop a suite of HR data analytics to support and inform evidence based HR policy decisions and assist with decisions relating to people management.	Enhanced HR analytic capability to improve HR decision making and policy analysis.	High	2018	   7 19	CSHRD OGCIO HR Managers NSSO L&D
36	Ensure HR policies and processes are streamlined, consistent, fit for purpose, legally compliant and reflect best practice.	Robust HR policies and processes in place which are fit for purpose.	High	2017+	   4 7 14	CSHRD HR Managers

HR Technology						
37	Develop a Human Capital Management (HCM) Strategy to identify an appropriate ICT solution to enable effective delivery of HR services.	A HCM system which supports staff, people managers, HR Units, senior management and CSHRD to manage effectively.	High	2019	   7 19	CSHRD NSSO OGCIO HR Managers
38	Develop further transitional ICT solutions to improve delivery of HR services building on current initiatives.	Managers and HR Units enabled to manage and develop their staff by helping inform decisions with up to date information.	Medium	2017+	   7 19	CSHRD OGCIO HR Managers
39	Enhance collaborative ICT tools to enable and support Departments and Offices to build HR capability by sharing of best practice and learning.	Enhanced expertise and knowledge across the HR Community. Improved collaboration with existing Networks such as the HR Managers Forum, Employee Relations and Personnel Officers Network.	Medium	2017+	   5 7 19	CSHRD OGCIO HR Managers
40	Improve access to Civil Service HR information through the enhancement of the HR website.	People managers enabled to manage and develop their staff by helping inform decisions with up to date information.	Medium	2018	   7 19	CSHRD OGCIO HR Managers



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