GROWING OUR OWN FRAMEWORK

Growing our workforce now and for the future

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Revision History

Version Number	Revision date	Summary of Changes	Reviser
1.0	01/09/2025		HROD
1.1	04/12/2025	Removal of reference to CYP Foundation Apprentices	Katy Grubb
1.2	30/09/2026	Clarification around target audience for summer students being in further education	Katy Grubb
1.3	02/11/2026	Change reference to Talent Link to Business Objects under 'Monitoring Activity' section	Felicity Conway

1.0 Introduction

Growing Our Own (GOO) is the council's longstanding approach to developing our own talent and attracting the workforce of the future. This framework has been developed to outline the organisation's ongoing commitment to GOO activities and how we will address business challenges and achieve the desired outcomes to address the workforce needs.

Successful delivery of framework activities is wholly dependent of the joint efforts of all parties concerned. The Organisational Development teams will coordinate many aspects however partnership working is particularly vital from key contributors (council services, Corporate Communication Team, Education and Developing the Young Workforce) as highlighted within the framework.

2.0 Framework Statement

Growing Our Own is the council's approach and commitment to developing a workforce for the future and is linked to needs identified through workforce planning.

This framework will address the council's workforce needs now and in the future by driving opportunities for employees to develop their skills and gain qualifications and experience which will empower them in their role and create opportunities to attract and retain talent.

Through school engagement it will support the development of the future workforce and promotion of the council as an employer of choice and a place for young people to start their career.

3.0 Context

There are a number of factors impacting the workforce and service delivery. These include an aging workforce, ability to attract and retain talent, reducing budgets and the impact of advancing technology.

As highlighted within the Scotland's Local Government Workforce Report 2024, there is an urgent need to attract a new generation of younger employees to local government. Our workforce is one of our greatest assets. To ensure we have a skilled workforce now and in the future all services need to commit to investing time and resources to enable successful Growing Our Own activities.

Argyll and Bute Council's Economic Strategy, 2024-2034, identifies four strategic key pillars to drive economic growth. One of these is people, with a focus on addressing the continuing decline in our economically active population, improving workforce skills and attracting key workers, promoting equal access to education opportunity, and supporting job opportunities in emerging and new industries.

The associated Economic Strategy Action Plan, 2024-2027, outlines specific actions for the council and partners to undertake in the short term to contribute to towards achieving specific outcomes by 2034. The GOO framework can support delivery of actions identified within Economic Strategy Action Plan by addressing retention and attraction of young people and investing in skills development.

Furthermore, the activities outlined within this framework align with our People Strategy commitment on attracting and keeping talented people. Most specifically redesigning our approach to recruitment, growing our own talent linked to our risk-based workforce planning, delivering actions to support our strategic workforce planning priorities and collecting and reviewing data to better understand our recruitment and retention challenges.

The GOO Framework supports Argyll and Bute's council contribution, as a local employer, to the Scottish Government's Opportunities for All commitment, which offers a place in learning or training to every 16-19 year old who is not in employment, education or training.

The objectives of the GOO framework support the principles of the Connect for success change programme in terms of how we carry out activities and engage with the future workforce and partner organisations to implement our GOO initiatives. Specifically:

One Council One Place approach
Purpose and missions focus
Employee empowerment
Data and evidence driven decision making
Learning council
Agile
Maximising opportunities that technology offers

4.0 Workforce planning

The council's workforce planning process ensures we are appropriately resourced to meet the demands of changing service delivery. This process is managed by the Departmental Support Business Partners via ongoing dialogue between Business Partners and Third Tier departmental managers.

Business Partners will use this framework to support and direct our Third Tier Managers to the appropriate initiatives to address their own workforce priorities. In return, by engaging with the framework Third Tier managers benefit from a range of initiatives to support with planning for the future of their teams and service areas. Managers whose service is considered as high or moderately high risk (red or amber) in terms of workforce planning should familiarise themselves with the framework and engage with Business Partners through workforce planning.

4.0 Framework Scope

This framework applies to the whole of Argyll and Bute Council and covers all activities detailed below. Occasionally additional activities are identified through short-term funding which the council can take advantage of that will require an additional commitment.

5.0 Framework Content

5.1 The Young Person's Guarantee

The Young Person's Guarantee is a commitment to connect every 16 to 24 year-old in Scotland to an opportunity. As an employer we have a role to create and offer opportunities for young people. By signing up to this, it provides a formal commitment to the activities in this framework. Signing up to the YPG will align to this framework and ensure the organisation has initiatives in place to help with recruitment, retention and succession planning.

5.2 School Engagement Events

Often the council will be approached to support a range of school engagement activities. This can range from attending career events to delivering workshops which provide pupils with information relating to careers within the council. These events are a great opportunity to engage with the future workforce and inform local young people about the opportunities we have as a local employer. They allow an

insight into what it is like working in local government and provides pupils with information on the range of careers. It is a good way of raising the profile of some of the professions where they are current shortages in terms of the workforce and planting the seed for those who could potentially consider a career in this area when making their choices.

5.2.1 School Careers Events

School career events are an opportunity for the council, as a local employer, to engage with the future workforce to highlight and promote jobs and careers with the council. In many cases, young people are not aware of the range of jobs and career opportunities available within the council. This method of engagement highlights the opportunities as well as the pathways into these jobs and the benefits of working in Local Government.

The Organisational Development (OD) Team's role is to coordinate and support these events in line with managers and team members who would benefit from attending a career event in a particular location. It is important to think widely about this opportunity in terms of it being about potentially inspiring a young person to consider a career in a particular field not just about promoting specific jobs based on current demand.

The hybrid nature of our workforce also means that whilst we might not have people working in jobs in particular geographical areas currently there may be the opportunity for this within the future workforce. OD have created a toolkit with promotional materials and informative resources to support school careers events. This can also include details about service specific roles we may want to promote. It is OD's responsibility to maintain this resource and work with services to help develop content. It is our experience that the young people are more engaged with employers who have resources to interact with. This could include the tools we use to carry out the roles, images of projects being completed, mock activities, quizzes or data about the impact of what we do. Services need to commit time to develop these where possible.

Services and management will engage with the OD team to arrange appropriate representation at these events. Services will also engage with the OD team to create promotional materials and highlight any opportunities or information which can be shared where teams are unable to send representation.

5.2.2 School Workshops

As a local employer we can be asked to deliver workshops within the school setting. This can be a prearranged event to target a specific profession or as part of a wider career event such as Scottish Apprenticeship week or Scottish Careers week. These are a good opportunity for teams to raise the profile of local government careers and specific professions. Managers should consider this tool when thinking about the future workforce needs and develop content for potential workshops to engage with pupils as part of these events. The OD team will work with Managers to develop sessions where required.

5.3 Work Experience

Work experience is an important Growing Our Own tool which the council supports. It is a great way to provide a young person with a taste of what the world of work is like or more specifically a field of work. Schools take a range of approaches to work experience. The traditional style of work experience is for pupils within senior phase at high school who are looking for a weeklong placement within an area they are interested in. This is generally aimed at pupils within their 4th year. The council can also be approached to support a young person within their 5th or 6th year who is looking for a placement linked to their further education choices. This is generally for a day over a period of weeks.

There can sometimes be a request to support a young person who is on a Flexible Learning Plan. This is a request for a young person to take part in an experience which can count towards their educational attainment, where traditional approaches have been deemed as not appropriate.

The Organisational Development Team, in collaboration with colleagues in Health and Safety and Education are responsible for monitoring and providing support to services to coordinate work experience which is hosted by the council. Requests from schools should come through the OD Team however, teams may be contacted directly to support a work experience. These requests should be communicated to the OD Team to ensure a consistent approach is applied and activity can be evaluated and monitored in line with work experience guidance. Guidance as part of the Growing Our Own Toolkit should be applied.

Services should consider on an annual basis how they can best support work experience in the locations where they have team members located. Where the workforce is a mix of home and office teams should make suitable arrangements for employees to come into the office to support work experience for the short period

that it will be taking place. Duties and responsibility should be divided equally between team members to reduce the obligations placed on individuals and offer a wide experience of the roles within a particular profession or work area for the young person.

5.4 Summer Students

Employing a summer student is a great way to get additional resource for a period of time to support with key pieces of work. It provides the student with a substantial period of work which allows them to gain experience in the workplace. Summer student opportunities are designed for students in further education and should, where possible, provide experience that supports their area of study and future career plans. The current guidance as part of the GOO Toolkit should be applied when considering a summer student. It is important to do this within the timeframes of the academic calendar and begin scoping out the opportunity in sufficient time to allow recruitment to take place. The attached GOO activity planner suggests scoping should begin in May to allow sufficient planning and recruitment to take place. Services should apply the normal recruitment processes when recruiting a summer student and take account of the best methods to attract candidates via social media and promotion at relevant educational establishments.

The Organisational Development Team will maintain the guidance and provide support when recruiting summer students. Services should notify the Organisational Development Team when they intend to recruit so that they can offer support to the process as well as for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Guidance as part of the Growing Our Own Toolkit should be applied.

5.5 Apprenticeships and Trainees

Apprenticeships and trainee programmes are an alternative method to bring a new employee into the organisation to provide them with training or a qualification whilst carrying out a role within the team. They are also a good tool for upskilling existing staff to support future skill needs within the team or wider organisation. Guidance on recruiting apprentices and trainees can also be found as part of the toolkit.

5.5.1 Foundation Apprenticeships

Foundation Apprenticeships are one or two year courses open to students in their senior phase of school. They help young people gain valuable, real-world work

experience and access vocational training while they're still at school. A young person will complete the qualification alongside a work placement within a relevant organisation. The council can support Foundation Apprenticeships by offering work placements when these are requested by the schools who are delivering the qualifications. By supporting Foundation Apprenticeship it will provide a young person with the experience of working for the council and may lead to them considering future employment with the council.

5.5.2 Modern Apprenticeships

Modern Apprenticeships combine a qualification with on-the-job experience, which lets people work, learn and earn at the same time. The training element of the apprenticeship is funded through Skills Development Scotland and provided by a suitable training provider. The salary costs are met by the recruiting service. They are aimed at those between 16 and 24 years of age but in some cases those out with this age bracket may be considered based on their individual circumstances. Modern Apprenticeships can be used to attract a new employee or upskill an existing member of the workforce. When considering employing a Modern Apprentice it is important to align this with workforce planning requirements. It is also important to consider the need to create a role for the apprentice on completion of their qualification so we do not lose the investment in their development or the contribution this will make to addressing future succession planning concerns.

5.5.3 Graduate Apprenticeships

Graduate Apprenticeships are an honours degree which uses work-based learning. They provide a way for people to study for a degree who are currently in employment or want to go straight into employment to work in a relevant role gaining the right experience while studying. They allow the workforce to be developed and supported to attain skills to industry and professional standards. They have been designed around the needs of industry, which means that what employees are learning at college or university will directly contribute to the success of the business. They are funded by Skills Development Scotland.

5.5.4 Trainees

Creating a trainee opportunity is about identifying the starting point and then creating a pathway to get to the desired end point.

The trainee scheme provides a flexible tool which can be used to create a pathway where an employee can work their way up to a role, achieving required qualifications and experience as they go.

A trainee opportunity can vary in length and is accessible to new and existing employees. Services will view the end pathway for the employee and create a journey for them to work towards achieving the required outcome. They learn as they go putting their learning into practice straight away.

As the trainee meets agreed milestones, they will move up increments eventually reaching the end post when all outcomes both educational and practical have been met. These milestones can include training courses, professional qualification or registration requirements for industry specific professional bodies.

Trainee schemes can provide an opportunity when services struggle to recruit to the post, or as a succession planning option if you know the post will become vacant. Services require to fund the salary of the trainee and any qualification costs including travel, provide a mentor to the trainee and allow the trainee time off for training. This is all set out by the council's trainee agreement. Trainees require to work for the council for a minimum period of time on completion of their qualification or they have to pay back the money which has been invested in them. This could range from a school leaver being trained into an entry level post, a graduate leaving university or an existing employee looking for development.

5.5.5 Senior Leadership progression programme

We are considering how the GOO framework can also be applied to support resourcing in senior management posts. We plan to review how the GOO framework can also support career progression and succession planning into Chief Officer roles taking into consideration the wide remits that these posts can comprise of. This programme would be aimed at providing the required development opportunities to allow this progression to happen more easily and in a proactive manner.

5.6 Student Sponsorship

The student sponsorship scheme is a tool which can be utilised by managers to attract qualified graduates, or those beginning their degree, into the organisation by sponsoring current students during their studies. This covers summer periods during which they can gain paid employment and gain experience which results in an agreement to return to work for the organisation for a period of time once they have

completed their qualification. It can be used to attract someone with a connection to the local area back into the area to become part of the workforce and create that future pipeline for the workforce.

5.7 Employee Development

The Organisational Development Team deliver a programme of training to support employees to meet the requirements of the organisation. This includes mandatory training, eLearning, facilitated webinars, digital skills development, management and communication to help us all work better, together. Employees are also supported to undertake training and professional qualifications which will ensure they are able to carry out their role with confidence and efficiency.

Managers and employees should utilise the quality conversations approach as a method to identify and discuss opportunities for growth and development.

By utilising their workforce planning data, services can consider future training needs and budgetary requirements for professional development and qualifications and support succession planning to develop our leaders of the future.

The council's learning agreement sets out how employees will be supported when undertaking a professional qualification and the requirements of the employee during and on completion of the qualification.

6.0 Additional Growing our Own Activity

At times there can be initiatives which the council can take advantage of to supplement our Growing Our Own activities which can be established through the employability partnership. This is where government funding can be used to address workforce concerns and challenges. In this instance it is the role of the OD team to facilitate these initiatives. Services should consider how they can make use and best support these when contacted by the OD team.

7.0 Growing our Own Toolkit

The OD team has created a GOO Toolkit to support the delivery of the framework and associated activities. This is accessible to all via MyCouncilWorks and should be utilised to provide additional information to apply the initiatives within the framework.

8.0 Communication plan

The OD team will cascade information on GOO activities via the Third Tier email distribution currently set up. Initiatives which require discussion or approval will be taken through the appropriate approval and meeting routes. Ongoing communication with the Departmental Business Partners will also take place to ensure support for initiatives through the workforce planning process. The OD team will collaborate with the Corporate Communications Team when their expertise is needed for initiatives as and when required. For example, promotion of school career events and national campaigns.

9.0 Monitoring activity

The OD team will monitor activities based on the following indicators:

Measure	**Source**	**Responsible Person**
Status of GOO actions identified as part of workforce planning. Quarterly	Workforce planning meetings	Business Partners and Third Tier Managers.
Number of Modern Apprentices completed their qualification and moved into a positive destination. Quarterly	Business Objects	HR Development / OD Project Officer
Number of Modern Apprentices completed their qualification and moved into a positive destination with Argyll and Bute Council. Quarterly	Business Objects	HR Development / OD Project Officer
Number of opportunities created for Student Sponsorship. Annually	Business Objects	HR Development / OD Project Officer
Number of opportunities created for Modern Apprenticeship, trainee and graduate posts.	Business Objects	HR Development / OD Project Officer

Annually		
Number of opportunities created for summer student posts. Annually	Business Objects	HR Development / OD Project Officer
Number of opportunities created for work experience for school pupils. Annually	OD project Team	OD Project Assistant (Resourcing)
Number of existing workforce who have completed a professional qualification. Annually	Training Centre (Learning Awards)	Training Centre

Measures will be reviewed annually and reported as part of the HOO in line with the reporting timescales already in place.

10.0 Framework Impact and Review

Impact of the Growing Our Own Framework will be monitored through the Workforce Planning process. It will be reviewed every 2 years to ensure it remains relevant and in line with legislation. Employees implementing the framework are encouraged to feedback on an ongoing basis regarding the initiatives contained within it. Those involved in complementary activities will also be consulted with to assess impact and will be involved in the review process.

11.0 Other relevant policies and documents

People Strategy

Strategic workforce plan

Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures