# NICS PEOPLE
# STRATEGY 2018–21

## 2018–21

NICSHR
ADSTÉ

# WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION BY THE NICS BOARD

**WE URGE YOU TO TAKE THE TIME TO READ THE STRATEGY AND WE WELCOME YOUR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN CREATING THE NICS WE ALL WANT.**

This document has been written for you. Along with your colleagues across the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) you are at the centre of the People Strategy which is set out in this document.

Our people, above everything else, are the most important part of the NICS. You are making a difference, often in difficult circumstances, by developing policies and delivering services across NI that affect everyone who lives here.

Unprecedented challenges mean that we need new and innovative ways of working and the outcomes-based approach underpinning the outcomes based Programme for Government (PFG), means we must work across functional, organisational and sectoral boundaries to deliver change.

This strategy will further enable that work and support improved approaches to people management and collective leadership at all levels of the NICS to ensure every civil servant reaches their potential and performs to the highest levels.

We want you to read this strategy and to take ownership of it. We have taken on board the responses we received in the 2017 NICS People Survey where people expressed their views about how they are currently being managed and led to deliver high quality public services. We also heard some big messages about this through engagement with colleagues across the NICS as we developed this People Strategy.

We have listened to those views. We know that we need to improve how we lead and manage all our people and how we manage the process of change. We believe that the NICS is a great place to work where diversity and inclusion is valued and where we can positively affect people's lives by working together.

This strategy sets out the process of how we will achieve that vision over the next few years. There are actions for all of us and only by everyone working together will we achieve our vision of a well-led, high-performing, outcome-focused NICS.

Our People Strategy places diversity and inclusion at its centre. It includes a range of actions that will help accelerate our ambition to have a truly inclusive workplace culture and to be a service that reflects the society we serve.

**The NICS Board**

# SUMMARY

WE WILL HAVE TO WORK AND BEHAVE DIFFERENTLY ACROSS THE NICS TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION OF A WELL-LED, HIGH-PERFORMING, OUTCOME-FOCUSED AND INCLUSIVE NICS IN WHICH DIVERSITY IS TRULY VALUED.

# SUMMARY

## YOU WILL KNOW THAT MANY OF THE ISSUES WE ARE TRYING TO ADDRESS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PEOPLE STRATEGY ARE COMPLEX AND LONGSTANDING.

The work through which we will deliver the strategy will be overseen by the NICS Board and enabling projects and actions will be developed by NICSHR but long-term change will only happen if it is owned, adopted and embraced by all staff.

There are many actions that we will pursue over the next three years and beyond to achieve this vision and these are set out in full at pages 12 to 19. The priorities set out below describe where we will concentrate our efforts to achieve the NICS we all strive for.

## WE WILL FOCUS ON

Strengthening leadership and line management at all levels of the NICS.

Building the capacity of all line managers to effectively manage and lead people at every level of the NICS to support every civil servant to reach their potential and perform to the highest level.

Ensuring line managers and leaders have the right tools (policies, procedures, and guidance), skills (through effective learning, development and training) and expert support (through added-value HR advice and assistance) to lead people and manage change effectively.

# SUMMARY

## OUR PRIORITY ACTIONS ARE

**EVERY DEPARTMENT, LEADER, LINE MANAGER AND INDIVIDUAL WILL HAVE A PART TO PLAY IN DELIVERING THESE PRIORITIES.**

### A well-led NICS

> Improve how we engage and communicate with people across the service about issues that affect them.

> Build the capacity of line managers and leaders across the service.

> Provide effective tools for line managers and leaders including streamlined and practical people policies, processes, guidance and training.

01

### An outcome-focused NICS

> Build career paths that develop breadth of experience and depth of expertise.

> Improve how we engage with staff and communicate with them about their contribution to delivery of outcomes.

03

### A high-performing NICS

> Improve how we manage performance through regular and timely feedback mechanisms and appropriate guidance.

> Deliver an NICS-wide approach to strategic workforce planning and improve recruitment and vacancy management.

> Increase the use of new and flexible ways of working.

02

### An inclusive NICS in which diversity is truly valued – a great place to work

> Deliver evidence-based interventions and targeted action to drive balance and inclusion in terms of gender, LGB&T, ethnic minority, and disability.

> Ensure our people have working environments that are conducive to them performing at their best.

04

# SUMMARY

## NICSHR AS AN ENABLER

NICSHR will have an enabling role; it will deliver, review, promote and improve key policies, processes, development and guidance. This work will include:

**NICSHR will work with other central functions and stakeholders on this enabling agenda and progress will be measured by the NICS Board against delivery of a programme of work to implement this strategy; the people survey areas set out alongside the actions in pages 12 to 19; and our employee engagement scores.**

> Revising people policies and processes to ensure they are fit for purpose. Defining the line manager role in these policies and processes and developing guidance and training.

> Delivering improved performance management processes and guidance for staff.

> Implementing an NICS-wide approach to strategic workforce planning and improving recruitment and vacancy management.

> Supporting line managers to improve attendance across the NICS.

> Developing new skills in the NICS (e.g. commercial and data science) and rolling out outcomes-based accountability training and development.

> Delivering mentoring programmes, secondments and a more consistent and transparent approach to staff mobility.

> Implementing a mandatory approach to induction and knowledge transfer.

> Reviewing NICS approach to professions including heads of profession roles.

> Delivering more apprenticeships in the NICS.

> Building on our health and wellbeing framework with particular emphasis on mental health and support for colleagues facing life challenging events.

> Including diversity and inclusion standards within our performance and capability frameworks.

> Delivering our Gender Action Plan; engaging on Stonewall Index; developing and communicating transgender guidance; delivering an NICS-wide outreach programme focusing on disability and ethnic minority groups.

> Promoting the positive behaviours we expect of all our people for an inclusive culture which is intolerant of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

NICS PEOPLE
STRATEGY 2018–21

MAKING A
DIFFERENCE

NICSHR
ADSTÉ

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**THE AIM OF THE OUTCOMES BASED PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT IS IMPROVED WELL-BEING FOR ALL BY TACKLING DISADVANTAGED AND DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH**

This strategy is about ensuring we all have the capabilities needed to improve the things people told us matter to them

Working in a way that keeps the focus on outcomes, not processes will require different approaches, new thinking and changes to how we work with one another and with those who deliver, use and care about our public services. Now more than ever we require people who understand people. We need to understand what people value; we need colleagues who listen and who can represent people's needs and translate those needs into actions; and we need skills that enable us to build new partnerships to deliver better outcomes for all.

That's why this People Strategy flows from and is a key enabler for a new outcomes-based approach to government.

Our vision is for an NICS where everyone plays a part in improving the lives of people in NI. A well-led, high-performing and outcomes-focused NICS. A great place to work, where everyone can reach their full potential. An inclusive workplace in which diversity is truly valued.

Our ambition is long-term, but to achieve the outcomes we want we have identified priorities (goals and work streams) for the next three years which we will act on now. These are set out at pages 12 to 19 under the following themes:

> Well-led

> High-performing

> Outcomes-focused

> A great place to work with a diverse and inclusive culture

# OUR VISION FOR THE NICS

Our vision for the NICS of the future is one where everyone in the Civil Service plays a part in improving the lives of people in NI. A well-led, high-performing and outcomes-focused NICS. A great place to work, where everyone can reach their full potential. An inclusive workplace in which diversity is truly valued.

## OUR OUTCOMES

### Outcomes-Focused
Successfully delivering outcomes together in an NICS where

Collaborating across departments and sectors is the norm, not the exception.

Our people know how they are helping to deliver better outcomes for citizens.

Our processes allow us to direct resources to priorities quickly and flexibly.

### Well-Led
We will be outstanding and confident leaders in an NICS where

Leadership is shared across the NICS with everyone taking responsibility for the success of the service as a whole - not just their own areas.

All staff and teams know what is expected of them and the behaviours they are required to display.

Performance and behaviour discussions are regular and focus on building improvement, problem solving and addressing root concerns.

Success is recognised and celebrated and underperformance is managed.

Talent is developed and innovation encouraged through a constant focus on nurturing leadership and culture.

Risk is appropriately and consistently managed.
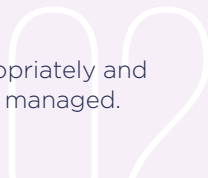
### High-Performing
Successfully delivering outcomes together in an NICS where

Everyone can benefit from learning and development.

We make optimal use of technology.

We have excellent, modern accommodation.

We have flexible people policies and working practices that support our cultural ambitions.

People management is valued and managers have high quality tools and support to effectively manage individuals and teams.

Excellence is encouraged and promoted.

**UNDERPINNING THESE OUTCOMES IS AN ORGANISATION WHICH IS A GREAT PLACE TO WORK, WITH A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE**

# OUR AMBITION

Through this People Strategy we want to encourage greater collaboration and new thinking to achieve our vision for a well-led, outcomes-focused and high-performing organisation to ensure successful delivery of services across NI.

We need effective people management and leadership across all levels in a diverse and inclusive NICS to ensure every civil servant reaches their potential and performs to the highest levels.

**We must therefore put in place actions and systems to strengthen:**

> Leadership and line management.

> How we manage change.

> The NICS as a place to work.

# THE OPPORTUNITY

## Goals and workstreams

Our vision, ambition and outcomes are long-term, but to achieve them we have identified priorities for the next three years and beyond, which we will act on from May 2018.

This People Strategy focuses on outcomes - things that will significantly change the Service and its culture and will require long-term commitment from a range of people across the NICS. Many of the issues we are trying to address in this People Strategy are complex and longstanding, but these shared outcomes provide strong motivation to take an integrated and collaborative approach across the NICS.

We believe they will provide the energy and enthusiasm to drive our People Strategy forward and we intend to make steady progress on them over the three year period of this People Strategy.

**The response to our recent People Survey showed that people want to make a difference with 64% saying they understand how their work contributes to improving wellbeing for people who live here and 70% saying they understand how their work contributes to departmental objectives. Within departments, scores for questions relating to teamwork were high with 78% saying they can rely on their team for help when things get difficult in their job. 84% feel they are trusted to carry out their job effectively.**

The results also show a need to work on the areas of learning, development, leadership and managing change to help people make the difference they want to make to people's lives. People will be supported by learning and development opportunities that help increase personal and team impact; reinforced by seeing the values of the NICS modelled by leaders at all levels with performance being effectively managed.

We have listened to what you told us and developed an ambitious and substantial People Strategy for long term cultural change, the successful delivery of which will depend on shared ownership and delivery across the NICS.

Through this strategy we have developed actions to build the capacity of the NICS - our people policies, processes and actions will support our cultural ambition. We have placed diversity and inclusion at the core of our People Strategy to help accelerate our ambition to have a truly inclusive workplace culture and to be a Service that reflects the society we serve.

# WELL-LED

## ✓ WE WILL HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL WHEN...

**We will be outstanding and confident leaders in an NICS where:**

> Leadership is shared across the NICS with everyone taking responsibility for the success of the Service, not just their own areas.

> All staff and teams know what is expected of them and the behaviours they are required to display.

> Performance and behaviour discussions are regular and focus on improvement, problem solving and addressing root concerns.

> Success is recognised and celebrated, and underperformance is managed effectively.

> Talent is developed, and innovation encouraged through a constant focus on nurturing leadership and culture.

> Risk is consistently managed in an appropriate way.

## THIS MEANS WE NEED TO BE BETTER AT

> Creating and communicating a more compelling vision of the future NICS.

> Owning the People Strategy - shared accountability.

> Having visible top leadership - with consistent messages on all channels.

> Defining desired leadership behaviours.

> Being more assertive in the face of criticism.

> Giving regular feedback.

# WELL-LED

## ACTIONS WE WILL TAKE TO SUPPORT US GETTING THERE...

> Improve how we manage change, particularly how we engage with staff and communicate across the Service about issues that affect them and how everyone in the NICS contributes to the delivery.

> Improve our performance management systems and guidance to ensure regular timely and ongoing feedback that recognises good performance and manages poor.

> Deliver a coherent and consistent approach to talent management.

> Deliver staff development programmes, building on existing initiatives, such as FastStream and SCS leadership programmes.

> Deliver an NICS approach to mentoring, secondments, coaching and action learning as well as development and skills programmes.

> Review our competency framework with a focus on associated behaviours to model, support and recognise effective leadership and management behaviour.

> Set out the people manager role at all levels, reflect this in people policies and processes and deliver associated guidance and development.

> Build on and promote staff recognition schemes across the NICS.

## KEY AREAS IN THE NICS PEOPLE SURVEY

> Questions on my organisational objectives and purpose.

> Questions on my line manager.

> Questions on leadership and vision within my organisation.

# HIGH-PERFORMING

## WE WILL HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL WHEN...

**We equip our people to do their best and fulfil their potential in an NICS where:**

> Everyone has access to learning and development.

> Good performance is recognised and underperformance is effectively managed.

> We make optimal use of technology.

> We have flexible people policies and working practices that support our cultural ambitions.

> People management is valued and line managers have high quality tools and support to effectively manage individuals and teams.

> Excellence is encouraged and promoted for all staff.

## THIS MEANS WE NEED TO BE BETTER AT

> Investing in excellence and skills.

> Making development an essential component of work programmes.

> Investing in management and leadership at all levels through a variety of means.

> Ensuring core skills are tested thoroughly and objectively in selection processes.

> Managing talent.

# HIGH-PERFORMING

## ACTIONS WE WILL TAKE TO SUPPORT US GETTING THERE...

> Deliver an NICS-wide approach to strategic workforce planning and strengthen strategic workforce planning in departments, aligning talent management and mobility.

> Deliver a rolling three-year an NICS-wide workforce plan.

> Deliver a rolling three-year aggregated NICS recruitment plan to ensure we attract people of talent and experience from a range of sectors and all walks of life.

> Improve attendance - establish a task force on attendance management.

> Conduct annual comprehensive NICS skills audits, actual and projected, to inform learning and development strategies and workforce plans.

> Develop our HR data analytics to support and inform evidence based HR policy decisions and assist with decisions relating to people management.

> Streamline HR policies and processes to ensure they are fit for purpose, consistent, legally compliant and reflect best practice.

> Implement more flexible and innovative ways of working, including use of emerging technology and agile working.

> Deliver a variety of tools to improve people management across the NICS including pragmatic guidance and training for line managers.

> Reorganise NICSHR to ensure the HR functions deliver a strategic, pragmatic and high quality HR service.

## KEY AREAS IN THE NICS PEOPLE SURVEY

> Questions on my learning and development opportunities.

> Questions on resources and workload.

> Questions on pay and benefits in the NICS.

> Questions on my line manager.

> Questions on my team.

# OUTCOMES-FOCUSED

## WE WILL HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL WHEN...

**Outcomes are delivered together in an NICS where:**

> Our people know how they are helping to deliver better outcomes for citizens.

> Collaborating across departments and sectors is the norm, not the exception.

> We can direct resources to priorities quickly and flexibly.

## THIS MEANS WE NEED TO BE BETTER AT

> Supporting people to be enterprising, ambitious and innovative.

> Promoting interchange with other sectors.

> Promoting active collaboration with delivery partners.

> Allowing more flexible working.

> Learning through delivering for outcomes – collaborative working.

# OUTCOMES-FOCUSED

## ACTIONS WE WILL TAKE TO SUPPORT US GETTING THERE...

> Develop new skills in the NICS (e.g. commercial and data science) and behaviours (e.g. adaptability, innovation and dealing with conflict).

> Develop and deliver communications to ensure all our people understand the valuable contribution they make to achieving outcomes.

> Build on and roll out outcomes-based accountability training and development.

> Implement a more transparent and effective approach to staff mobility ensuring alignment with workforce planning and staff development.

> Introduce a mandatory approach to support our people changing job roles and enable knowledge transfer.

> Build career paths that develop breadth of experience and depth of expertise.

> Review NICS approach to professions including heads of profession roles and professional requirements to support operational delivery.

## KEY AREAS IN THE NICS PEOPLE SURVEY

> Questions on my organisational objectives and purpose.

> Questions on my line manager.

> Questions on leadership and vision in my organisation.

# A GREAT PLACE TO WORK, WITH A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

## WE WILL HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL WHEN...

> We are representative of NI society in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, religious background, sexual orientation and ability/disability.

> Diversity is genuinely valued and there is an inclusive culture.

> All our people are encouraged and supported to recognise and fulfil their potential.

> We have excellent, modern and conducive work environments.

> Our people are proud to be NI Civil Servants.

> We explain what we do and celebrate our achievements.

> We acknowledge when we don't get it right.

## THIS MEANS WE NEED TO BE BETTER AT

> Encouraging and rewarding innovation.

> Promoting and embedding the NICS values and behaviours we want to see (including collaboration skills).

> Empowering our people at all levels to be creative and take appropriately managed risks.

> Recognising and rewarding sensible and balanced risk taking.

> Demonstrating shared values.

> Explaining and promoting the role of civil servants in improving the lives of people in NI.

# A GREAT PLACE TO WORK, WITH A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORK-PLACE CULTURE

## ACTIONS WE WILL TAKE TO SUPPORT US GETTING THERE...

> Deliver evidence-based interventions and targeted actions to improve balance at all levels across the NICS including delivering our Gender Action Plan; engaging in the Stonewall Index; delivering transgender advice; and delivering an NICS outreach programme focusing on disability and relevant ethnic minority groups.

> Include diversity and inclusion standards within our performance and capability frameworks and each department and profession to set out priorities for increasing diversity and inclusion.

> Make it easier for people to record their diversity information and encourage them to do so.

> Promote and better communicate the positive behaviours we expect of all our people in an inclusive culture which is intolerant of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

> Deliver more apprenticeships in the NICS.

> Deliver a health and wellbeing framework with a focus on mental health and support for colleagues facing challenging life events.

> Establish a process to measure progress on diversity and inclusion and regularly publish a data dashboard on diversity and inclusion outcomes in departments and across the NICS.

> Ensure support for staff networks so that they can continue to play a critical role in achieving our ambitions for diversity and inclusion.

> Ensure staff have working environments that are conducive to them performing at their best.

## KEY AREAS IN THE NICS PEOPLE SURVEY

> Questions on inclusion and fair treatment.

> Questions on engagement in my department.

> Questions on my organisational structure and culture.

> Questions on discrimination.

> Questions on bullying and harassment.

> Questions on what would make the NICS a great place to work.

# MAKING IT HAPPEN

This People Strategy presents an ambitious agenda for the NICS that will require active, co-ordinated and collaborative work across the NICS. It will require new thinking in terms of collaborative planning, resourcing, data collection, performance management and programme delivery at corporate, department and business area levels and within NICSHR.

There is substantial enabling work to be done across the NICS by a variety of stakeholders to make the People Strategy a reality. This includes agreed governance structures that provide clear representation and accountability; responsive decision-making mechanisms; collective performance management arrangements that provide shared understanding of impact and the effectiveness of delivery; mechanisms to share evidence and practice; and a shared means of working together on new approaches to complex and difficult issues.

## NICS Board is committed to:

> Taking ownership.

> Overseeing clear, real and meaningful action.

> Monitoring regularly.

> Communicating effectively about what and how we are progressing.

> Leading by example.

## Departments are committed to:

> Delivering and implementing departmental people priorities.

> SCS will align, and be seen to align consistently with core messages and intent.

> Role model good behaviours.

> Encouraging effective management and leadership at every level.

> Creating better infrastructure around internal communications (within and across departments).

## NICSHR is committed to:

> Being an effective enabler by leading on actions in the People Strategy that will make a real difference and be effectively delivered.

> Building its capacity to ensure it can effectively support delivery of the People Strategy while also providing a professional centralised HR service to all departments.

# NICSHR AS AN ENABLER

A key part of this People Strategy is to ensure the HR function in NICS has the capacity to effectively support the Service's ambitious people agenda.

NICSHR was established in April 2017 to deliver a cohesive, strategic and customer-focused HR service. It is structured across six functional areas with an HR Business Partner service to provide advice and support on strategic HR issues to leadership teams in every NICS department (See Annex A).

There was no transition period in the first year of NICSHR's existence. At the same time as putting in place the fundamental elements of a new service delivery model and organisation, NICSHR ensured continuity of service, delivered a significantly increased number of recruitment and promotion exercises and led on a number of strategic people priorities including the development of this strategy.

The business case for NICSHR noted that 'the anticipated benefits will only be achieved through a focused and supported approach to people management in the business at all levels which would require a culture shift by all managers and staff resulting in more control in delivering business objectives across the NICS.'

Much work is needed before this can be delivered. A vital element of this People Strategy is to ensure NICSHR has the capacity to effectively support the ambitious people agenda while also providing a professional, centralised HR service to each department.

NICSHR is reviewing its organisation to ensure effective resource allocation and planning. This review will also examine those areas necessary to successfully bring about cultural change (such as internal communications, organisational development and diversity and inclusion) and ensure the People Strategy gets traction and makes real changes that make a difference.

NICSHR will continue to facilitate engagement with a range of staff for the development of annual prioritised and resourced plans for the areas that it will lead and to support the development and implementation of departmental people priorities for the financial years 2018/19, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021.

While there are significant challenges, there are considerable opportunities associated with implementing the People Strategy and NICSHR is committed to engaging with all staff on this work. Please contact NICSHR with your views or ideas at **NICSHRCommunications@finance-ni.gov.uk.**

# MANAGING CHANGE

We will improve and resource those areas necessary to successfully manage change, (such as effective internal communications and diversity and inclusion) to ensure the People Strategy has traction and enables change that makes a positive difference.

This is a three-year strategy, with outcomes and aligned actions set out at pages 12 to 19. Each department will have responsibility for developing and delivering its own departmental people priorities, based on its People Survey results, within the context of this overarching strategy, to improve its departmental engagement scores.

This People Strategy sets an NICS-wide strategic direction for the future of our people, including a number of workstreams to deliver shorter term priorities.

The strategy focuses on outcomes and therefore has a longer-term emphasis. The goals and workstreams identify medium term actions associated with the successful implementation of our vision and immediate priorities.

> The NICS People Strategy and its associated programme of work will be agreed, overseen and monitored by the NICS Board.

> The NICS Board may create sub-groups.

> Each department will have responsibility for developing and delivering its own departmental people priorities to improve its engagement score.  Strategic HR Business Partners will support this work.

> NICSHR will lead on the People Strategy and ensure it is delivered.

> Monitoring and evaluation will be ongoing, the key question being: "Is anyone better off as a result?"

## ANNEX A

How HR operates in NICS.

## ANNEX B

How we developed this people strategy.

# NICS PEOPLE STRATEGY 2018—21

# ANNEXES

NICSHR
ADSTÉ

# ANNEX A

# HOW HR WORKS IN NICS

This strategy's design was led by NICSHR and its implementation will be overseen by the NICS Board but long-term change will only happen if it is owned and adopted by all staff - it cannot be delivered by the HR function.

The HR function in the NICS does of course have a key role to play in leading the effective implementation of this strategy through delivering a cohesive, strategic and customer-focused HR service.

NICSHR was formed in April 2017 and is structured across six functional areas with an HR business partner service to provide advice and support on strategic HR issues to leadership teams in each NICS department.

Brief information on the key role of each team is set out on pages 25 & 26 along with information on how to contact NICSHR.

NICSHR has a huge challenge ahead to support the effective implementation of this People Strategy and to continue to improve HR services. The team is committed to engaging with all staff on this work and is keen to hear your views and ideas. Please contact NICSHR with your views or ideas at **NICSHRCommunications@finance-ni.gov.uk.**

# WHAT DOES EACH TEAM DO?

## 01.

### EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The Employee Relations team is responsible for a wide range of people policies, including Managing Attendance, Performance Management, Standards of Conduct and Grievances. The team supports employee relations processes within departments by advising on disciplinary and grievance cases and reviewing and taking appropriate action on sickness absence and inefficiency performance cases.

## 02.

### LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

This team is responsible for providing a range of training and development for the NICS. The Centre for Applied Learning (CAL) is the provider of general training to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. CAL delivers a wide range of training programmes, including administrative, finance, leadership and management, policy and legislation training. CAL offers over 100 courses across a range of categories, aligned with the NICS Core Competence Framework, which staff can access through the CAL prospectus. The team is also responsible for all generic training and associated processes previously carried out by departmental training units.

## 03.

### RESOURCING

The Resourcing team is responsible for resourcing matters and associated policy development, such as:

> Vacancy management policy and corporate competitions;

> Vacancy management operations for all departments, including internal and external recruitment and selection, temporary workers, secondments and interchange and work experience placements;

> Talent management and Initiatives including Fast Stream and career development, the competency framework and external secondments;

> Strategic workforce planning analyses what each NICS department may need in terms of size, grade/discipline which feeds into recruitment/promotion forecasting and succession planning; and

> Supports diversity and inclusion policies, plans and initiatives.

# WHAT DOES EACH TEAM DO?

## 04.

### PAY AND REWARD

The Pay and Reward team is responsible for pay and pay related terms and conditions. This includes allowances; travel & subsistence and job evaluation and grading.

## 05.

### PENSIONS, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE AND WELFARE

Pensions provides a coordinated approach across public service pensions and is responsible for the administration of NI Civil Service Pensions, Injury Benefit and Compensation Schemes on behalf of NICS departments, their agencies and NDPBs.

The Occupational Health Service provides support to departments through the promotion of psychological, physical and social wellbeing in the workplace.

Welfare Support Services provides an independent and confidential service to all staff to help them cope with and work through personal and work-related issues which may affect their ability to work effectively.

## 06.

### HR SUPPORT & SPECIALIST SERVICES

The team is responsible for supporting a wide-reaching HR transformation programme, primarily through the development of the NICS People Strategy and HR service improvement. This team is also responsible for service improvement and corporate guidance and support for NICSHR business areas, including records management, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, finance and the provision of regular, high-quality HR information to departmental senior management.

## 07.

### STRATEGIC HR BUSINESS PARTNERS

Each department has a small team of HR Business Partners, working with departmental boards and senior staff. They provide expert advice and strategic direction on HR issues for the department. Business Partners contribute to strategy development and business planning, ensuring that the HR/people agenda is integral to all plans and strategies. They also support departmental management by providing advice and, where necessary, participating in consultations with local and departmental trade union representatives.

# ANNEX B

# HOW WE DEVELOPED THIS PEOPLE STRATEGY

The 2018-2021 NICS People Strategy is a transformation programme to be delivered in three phases - a collective strategy to support the NICS to be well-led, high-performing and outcomes-focused.

### Discovery
### May 2017 to July 2017

Diagnostic to identify the culture(s) of the NICS issues, and priority areas for focus.

### Design
### August 2017 to April 2018

Develop a more compelling vision of the NICS of the future.

NICS People Strategy - a key enabler which includes tools, systems and processes that serve our cultural ambition.

The NICS People Strategy will be co-designed - it is not owned by HR.

Key pieces of work will progress in parallel to each other.

### Delivery
### May 2018 to March 2021

Implement the NICS People Strategy through delivery of a programme of work with prioritised and resourced actions.

Implement toolkit and guidance for line managers.

Provide high quality, added-value HR support.

Monitor and evaluate.

# DISCOVERY - WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

This phase took place between May and July 2017 and established the scope of the overall approach to transformation in the NICS, focusing on the development of this People Strategy, while building the NICSHR service delivery model.

> Focused engagements and analysis of outputs were used to identify the areas for improvement and to determine the degree of culture change required within the NICS.

> Recommendations and outputs from work already completed were also considered as part of this stage, including:

> OECD Review.

> Staff survey results.

> Diversity survey results.

> RHI Lessons learnt Plan.

> SCS leadership development programmes.

> 360 assessments.

> Diversity networks.

> Working groups on NICS of the Future, particularly the leadership and culture groups.

> NICS Live engagement (and questions) exercise.

> Best practice / experience assessments from a wide range of services.

# DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING OUR GOALS AND WORKSTREAMS

The second phase of the strategy development took place between August 2017 and April 2018 and involved the development of the strategic themes and associated actions through NICS-wide engagement and communication.

This phase of the process for creating this People Strategy focused on achieving buy-in, building capacity and supporting culture change. It involved proactive engagement with staff across the NICS, using focus groups and other engagement sessions. We built on this with further engagement to develop departmental priorities and a process of co-design was used to ensure effective implementation of actions.

This phase confirmed the strategic themes for the NICS People Strategy as being those agreed for NICS of the future - well-led, high-performing and outcomes-focused. So, we asked people how we could best achieve this.

The key areas of work for this People Strategy that emerged from our engagement (summarised here) were developed into goals and workstreams.

> Better management of change including improved internal communications.

> Coherent and consistent approach to talent management.

> Effective management of performance, including regular, timely and ongoing feedback that recognises good and manages poor performance.

> Strategic workforce planning and timely, responsive vacancy management and supply.

> Improved attendance management.

> HR policies and processes that meet business need.

> Transparent and effective approach to staff mobility.

> Developing new skills (e.g. commercial and data science) and behaviours (e.g. adaptability, innovation and dealing with conflict).

> Leadership and management development at all levels - mentoring, coaching and other ways to embed leadership at all levels (e.g. action learning).

> Review of competencies and behaviours.

> Agile working.

> Diversity and inclusion action plans with evidence based interventions that are aligned to and underpin all our people plans. (A Gender Action Plan was identified as a priority).

> Build the capacity of people managers across the NICS, NICSHR and HRConnect.

# DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING OUR GOALS AND WORKSTREAMS

We have had good strategies and plans in the past, but we know that we need to manage change more effectively if we are to get real traction. We asked staff what we should bear in mind when developing and delivering our plans and actions. Reflecting on what we heard we identified a number of big messages we need to remember to ensure effective delivery of our goals and workstreams. These included:

> There are positives as well as negatives and these need to be sustained.

> There is an untapped potential in our people.

> If we continue to do what we've done previously we will be having this same conversation again.

> Change is complex, but this is achievable.

> There are some elephants in the room - we talk about collaboration, but it is hard to do and requires a new knowledge and skill set. We need to acknowledge what will be difficult.

> Our departments are diverse - our values and vision are the shared and integrating elements.

> The political context and interface has an impact on us, our culture and practices.

> We can lead our people, shape a culture and establish policies and practices that work, irrespective of external challenges.

> There is a lot of commonality - we have a shared view.

> This is everyone's strategy, not the NICSHR strategy.

> Pick a few things and do them well.

# CONTACTING NICSHR

HRConnect will always be the first point of contact for everyday HR enquiries, such as access to HR policies, updates, guidance and forms. NICSHR services complement and seek to add real value to those already provided by HRConnect by way of support and advice on strategic and complex HR issues.

Experts in each of the NICSHR functional areas will work with you to resolve your query. Further information on how to contact each of the functional areas can be accessed here: **nics.intranet.nigov.net/staff-services/ nics-hr.**

Some teams are contactable via a generic e-mail address, while other teams have named direct contacts. DoJ (including NIPS) and PPS staff should note that all HR correspondence (i.e. Resourcing, Employee Relations, Pay & Reward, Travel & Subsistence, Grading Queries, Information Requests etc.) should be sent to your HR Secure mailbox.

**NICSHR
ADSTÉ**

**Department of Finance | An Roinn Airgeadais**