



Shaping the future: Our strategic workforce plan



EVERY JOURNEY MATTERS



Contents

3 Anticipating future demand

4 Our approach

5 Our challenges and opportunities

10 Our key principles

11 Building our skills capability

15 Our roadmap

Anticipating future demand

Looking and planning ahead is crucial to ensure our business is ready for the future. This plan sets out our commitments and approach for strategic workforce planning

Our colleagues are at the heart of everything we do. They are key to delivering our vision and values, as set out in the TfL Strategy to 2030.

Our Colleague strategy outlines how we will achieve our ambition to be a great place to work where everyone can thrive. Our Recruitment approach looks at how we will attract, select and hire colleagues, whether via progression internally or through external recruitment. And our Learning and Development approach shows how we will create a learning culture that develops the skills of all colleagues.

This Strategic Workforce Plan complements the strategies above, setting out the actions we will take to ensure we have people in the right place, with the right skills and at the right time.

Artificial intelligence (AI), changes in technology and flexing to the wants and needs of different generations mean that many organisations are having to re-imagine their workforce of the future. We are no different.

We must strengthen our longer-term workforce planning practices to better anticipate the skills and resources we will need, and what and when the right blend of those resources are.

We need to consider how our current workforce may change over the next three, five and 10 years and ensure we retain the skills, knowledge and experience that are key to our success.

Crucially, we recognise the need for more horizon-scanning: to understand where the competition will be for scarce skills, and anticipate the ways in which workforce needs may be changing.

In this changing landscape, we need to take a flexible approach, continuously adapting to ensure our organisation has the skills it needs to achieve our 2030 vision.



Our approach

This strategic workforce plan looks across the whole organisation to identify the critical cross-cutting skills we'll need through to 2030

A focus on key skills will help to optimise our efforts across resourcing, learning and talent, and ensure we have the right balance of essential skills across all teams.

In addition to this, where appropriate, each area of the business will create and manage its own full workforce plan, drawing on the outputs of this plan, to ensure each function has the right workforce across all levels and skillsets.

To bring these plans to fruition, we will progress a number of wider enabling activities to embed strategic workforce planning across TfL.

This will include activities in the following areas, which are outlined in the Roadmap section at the end of this plan:

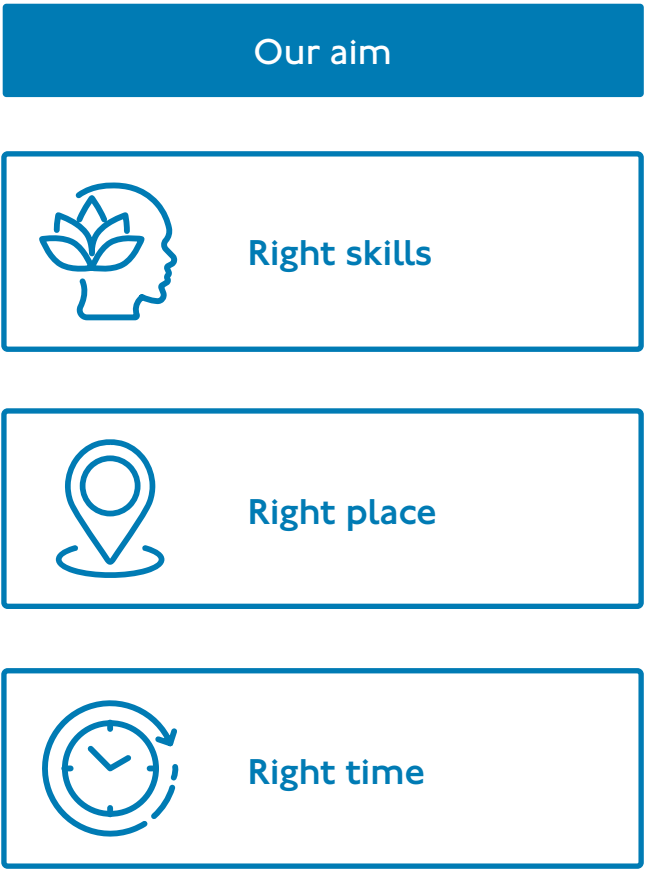
- Awareness
- Capability
- Alignment
- Integrated business processes
- Data and future skills

There are many options to fulfil our short- and long-term resourcing challenges. Our approach is grounded in the Build, Buy, Borrow, Blend framework.

Using this framework, we can identify the most effective strategy for specific resourcing challenges across the organisation, and make informed decisions on whether to develop internal talent, hire externally or bring in temporary expertise:

- **Build** A focus on developing and upskilling the existing workforce to meet capability requirements
- **Buy** Permanent recruitment for long-term skill and talent requirements, where demand outweighs supply and there is the need to fill the gap with a specific skills from external sources
- **Borrow** Using contractors and consultants* for urgent or temporary needs, where expertise exists elsewhere to support knowledge transfer
- **Blend** A mix of the above approaches that combines building internal talent with buying external expertise

This approach can offer financial benefits by optimising talent acquisition costs, reducing training expenses and enhancing workforce flexibility, which will ultimately improve organisational performance and competitiveness.



Our challenges and opportunities

We need many different skills across the business, both now and in the future, to ensure our long-term success

Supporting our colleagues to develop the skills essential to their roles and understanding the external market so that we attract those skills will help put us on a more sustainable footing for the long term.



Our key challenge areas

- ✓ Commercial
- ✓ Data
- ✓ Engineering
- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Project management
- ✓ Service control
- ✓ Signalling
- ✓ Technology

Our internal landscape Turnover

TfL has generally maintained a lower-than-average industry turnover, which can have an impact on opportunities for diversifying our workforce and creating opportunities for colleagues.

However, some areas of our business such as technology, data, engineering, procurement, commercial and project management have a higher turnover, with increased challenges to both recruit and retain skills.

Within some operational areas, internal movements have affected local retention and increased recruitment needs. There are also many scarce skills in areas such as service control and signalling that are in high demand and difficult to recruit for. These skills are critical both to operational resilience and project delivery.

In Environment, key shortage areas include drainage engineers, ecologists, energy managers, and engineers and project managers experienced in areas such as waste and water management.

Some of these skills are niche to TfL and linked to internally developed knowledge, which means that training requirements can present a challenge. So it is imperative we think about the future capabilities needed to drive our operations and our business success.

Retirement profiles over the next 10 years remain an organisational risk, and we need a focus across the business on strengthening our succession planning and managing the transfer of knowledge. This will help both to create resilient and diverse pipelines and highlight our areas of risk, allowing for early interventions.

We want to create agility so we can anticipate and respond quickly to meet changing priorities, allowing for smoother movement of resources across all chief officer areas.



Having longer-term plans in place locally will allow our recruitment teams to prepare for finding harder-to-fill skills and roles.

‘We need a focus across the business on strengthening our succession planning and managing the transfer of knowledge.’

Use of contractors and consultants

As an organisation we are committed to delivering our challenging business plan. This requires a range of skills that are scarce and in high demand.

Our strategic aim to reduce reliance on contractors and consultants needs to be balanced with financial affordability and the need to be flexible with some of our resources.

Being clear on longer-term demand, with guidance on when it is right to go to market, will help ensure value for money and the right blend of resources to achieve the best outcomes.



There are many options to fulfil our short- and long-term resourcing challenges. Our [Strategic workforce planning toolkit](#) will help to focus decision-making in this area.

Our internal market

During 2023/24, we saw internal turnover (movement of staff from one business area to another) of around 19 per cent across the organisation – in particular areas this remains higher. Creating readiness, promotion and development opportunities has helped retain knowledge and skills within our business. Increased movement can also create increased pressure on people leaders, particularly if these are short-term secondments where longer-term decisions could be made.



Create succession plans and talent pipelines to increase resilience and minimise the impact on hiring managers, colleagues and recruitment.



Identify similar and transferable skillsets, and how they can be deployed across the business, to build talent pipelines.

Workforce profile

We are privileged to have a workforce that spans five generations and the skills and experience that comes with it. However, more than a quarter of our workforce could reach TfL's average retirement age within the next six years. With the average length of service at retirement being 25 years, the potential loss of skill and crucial organisational knowledge could have a significant impact on our business.

It is imperative we are aware of our pinch points, which remain higher in certain areas such as Operations and Engineering, and continue to use the data and have open conversations to understand our risks.



Create pipelines with strong transfer actions in place to prevent the loss of knowledge and ensure we have the right operating model to grow our talent and address the areas where significant impact may be felt.

Data quality

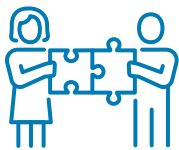
Using data to understand our workforce is essential to creating strong long-term workforce plans. A key area to support workforce planning is job role data that is accurate and accessible.



Improve the quality of this data to better understand the movements of particular job roles and skills across the organisation and aggregate larger data sets.

6-10%

of our workforce was made up of NPL colleagues over the last five years



63%

of job offers are made to internal candidates (bands 1-4)



61

is the average age of retirement from TfL



Attraction and retention

We have a wealth of internal dashboards to help us understand where our potential pain points are. Together with the evolution of our Employee Value Proposition, this will give us the information we need to focus our efforts in the right places.

Of the **40 per cent** of colleagues completing our leavers' survey:

- 35%** left for a better or new opportunity
- 20%** left for better pay and benefits
- 54%** were positive about pay and benefits at TfL
- 68%** were positive about the business
- 63%** were people leaders

Readiness and performance

Our aim, as set out in our Colleague strategy, is to ensure 'TfL is a great place to work where everyone can thrive so that we attract, retain and develop people with the skills to achieve our goals'.

A key commitment to achieving this is to enable everyone to achieve their work ambitions through:

- Supporting colleagues to find the right experiences and learning opportunities to drive their own development journey
- Using Readiness conversations to help colleagues explore what's next for them and capture the talents everyone brings
- Continuing to improve how we manage performance, with a focus on clear objectives and consistent feedback

Measures of success will include:

- Halving our gap where we are not already representative of the London population in terms of ethnicity, gender and protected characteristics
- Being recognised as one of the best companies to work for in the UK, with employee engagement better than the UK-wide benchmark



We will expand our talent intelligence by using myJourney to capture and map future skills, as well as making clearer links to relevant learning and development opportunities through the creation of clear pathway journeys.



We will further embed our identification of hard-to-fill roles, critical roles and single points of failure.

5%

turnover in staff across the business in 2023/24



17%

of people leaving had less than one year's service with us



External landscape

The rail industry is predicted to see many challenges in the future, with fewer young people coming into the industry and the population of over-55s increasing¹.

Between 2017 and 2022, skills shortages in this country doubled to more than half a million, and now account for 36 per cent of job vacancies².

The demand for both specialist and generalist skills in areas such as engineering, project management, technology and data are set to increase. We need to ensure that we monitor, attract and retain these skills.

In the construction industry, which makes up a large part of our capital projects, the skills shortage between 2017 and 2022 reached more than half a million.

Within both these industries the pressure to recruit and widen the appeal to a broader demographic is also a struggle.

UK projects are in the midst of a skills gap. Since the pandemic, project-based work has increased due to a shift to remote and hybrid models, the continued rush of technology and the need to get products and services to a broader marketplace quicker.

According to the Project Management Institute, the world will need a massive 88 million project professionals by 2027 – and 25 million more by 2030 than it currently has³.

Industry action

The National Skills Academy for Railway offers valuable industry insights across the sector, highlighting demographic, skill and talent shortages. This data is helping us understand where the current and future workforce gaps are to aid informed decision-making.

Analysis by the National Foundation for Educational Research⁴ has shown that the demand for digital and computer skills in the labour market will increase significantly over the next 10 years.

Skills England has been launched to meet the skills needs across the UK for the next decade. They will be creating more flexibility for levy funding on training for the skills we need and working with employers to assess their future skills needs.

In 2023 we joined a national programme of employer-led skills strategy reviews, Local London. Their skills improvement programme highlights the priorities for skills development across the Local London economic sub-regions, with a plan to better match employer demands with the training provision available. The programme is backed by the Department for Education and gives us great insight into what current and future priority skills needs are.

We actively engage with the Careers Hub, which supports careers education in schools. The Careers Enterprise Council provides an employer standards framework that assesses how effective engagement is with education. TfL scored 85 per cent in the inspiration category and a collaboration score of 83 per cent.



Activities and engagement across the business with London Transport Museum, Places for London, Schools outreach and STEM ambassadors remain key to attracting and inspiring a younger generation.

50%

of Londoners aged 16-25 want to pursue a green career



27%

of employers in the capital report a green skills shortage



88%

of young people aged 16-24 think that digital skills will be essential to their careers



1 National Skills Academy for Rail (2023), [Annual Rail Workforce Survey 2023](#)
2 Department for Education (2024), [Press release: Skills England to transform opportunities and drive growth](#)
3 PMI (2017), [Project Management Job Growth and Talent Gap 2017-2027](#)
4 National Foundation for Educational Research (2023), [An analysis of the demand for skills in the labour market in 2035](#)

Digital and data transformation

We need to be data-driven and actively harness the opportunities (and safeguard against threats) from technology, including AI and cyber. This is linked to improved business outcomes, including enhanced operating efficiency and increased revenue.

Being part of the ongoing digital transformation is essential to our future success. Across our organisation, we must be prepared for the continuing rapid changes in technology, simultaneously considering how we attract and retain specialist talent as well as upskilling our existing workforce.

In 2023 we measured our baseline data maturity using the [Data Maturity Assessment for Government](#) as a framework. The overall findings have shaped our strategic vision and principles for data, and our target maturity level.

While data protection and security awareness is embedded across the organisation, data literacy within teams is highly variable, with an inconsistent and locally based approach, both to the responsibility for data and to the management of upskilling initiatives.

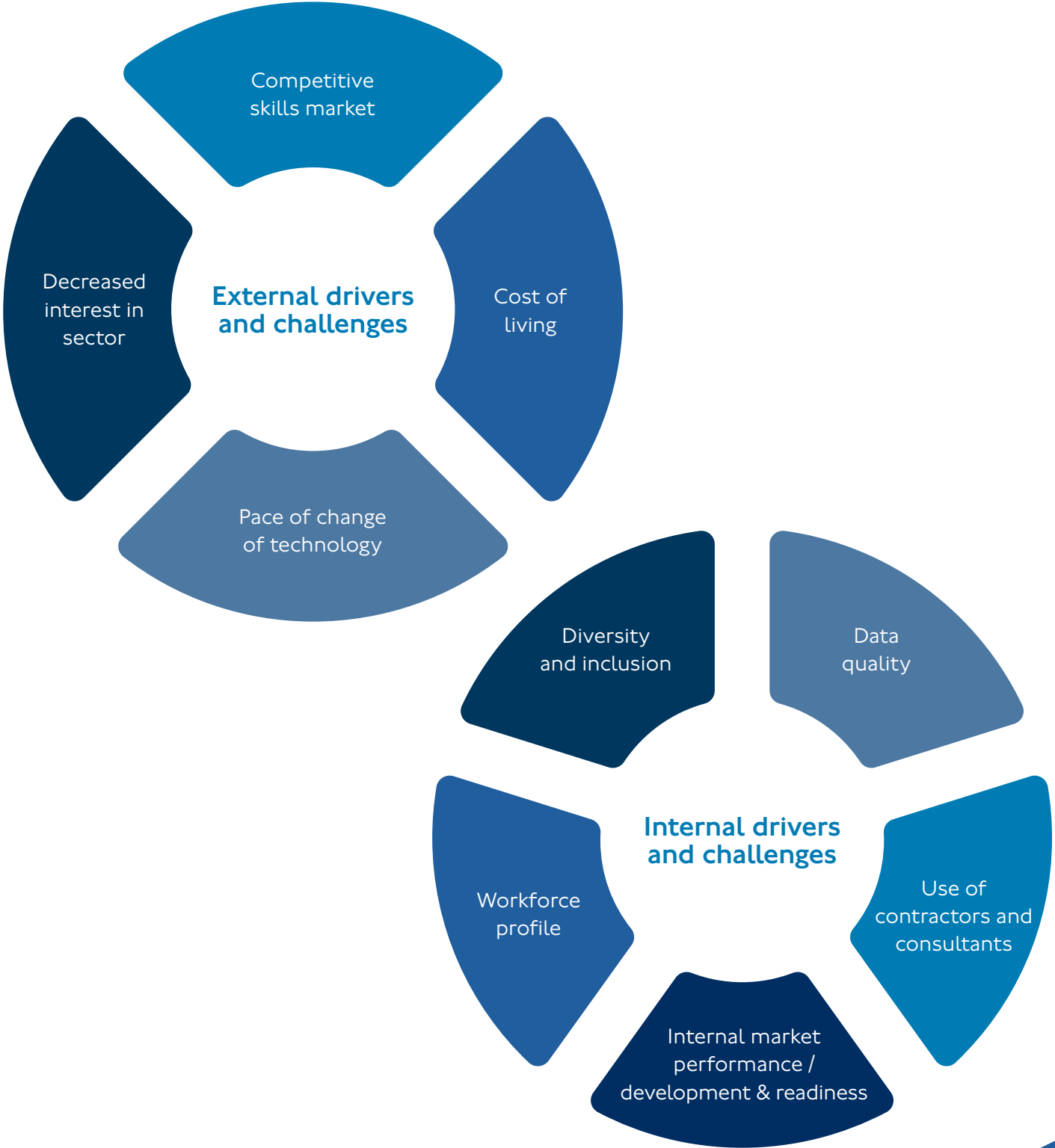
There is heavy reliance on data specialists for basic tasks, while specialist skills are often under-utilised. An active and informal community supports collaboration and sharing of best practice and resources, but skills gaps are often filled by contractors and consultants or are self-taught.



Improve our foundational data capabilities to ensure every colleague is able to access and interpret data confidently to make evidence-based decisions.

‘Organisations with an insights-driven culture are nearly three times more likely to have double-digit growth.’

Forrester.com⁵



5 Forrester.com, [Data-Driven Insights and AI](#)

Our key principles

We have four key principles that underpin our approach to strategic workforce planning



Evidence-based

We will continuously review and improve the data we use to support evidenced-based decision-making in line with our strategic priorities.

We will continue to use external market data to monitor market trends, understand external skills demand and identify potential risks to attraction and retention.



Inclusive

Our Action on Inclusion strategy sets out our long-term commitment to creating an inclusive organisation that reflects the city we serve.

Together with our Recruitment and Learning and development approaches, we will ensure we are creating a pipeline of diverse talent, with access to the skills development needed to allow our colleagues to thrive.



Alignment

Our Strategic workforce plan will align with our 2030 Business Plan commitments and be integrated into our business processes.

It will also align with wider industry priorities to maintain a position of 'best in class' across all relevant industries.



Review

We will review the Strategic workforce plan and actions every six months to ensure it remains relevant and achievable, and can be further developed as our practices improve.



Building our skills capability

A strong culture of continuous learning will support all our colleagues in their careers and ensure we are able to respond to a changing and complex environment

Through critical and hard-to-fill role analysis, external research and engagement we have identified five skills that support our ambitions to be future ready:

- Data
- Digital and cyber
- Green
- Leadership
- Project management

Data

Making the most effective use of data is essential to inform our operations and future planning.

Data literacy is ‘the ability to read, write and communicate data in context, with an understanding of the data sources and constructs, analytical methods and techniques applied.

Data-literate individuals have the ability to identify, understand, interpret and act data within business context and influence the resulting business value or outcomes⁶.

Sources of organisational data include dashboards for strategic workforce planning, diversity and inclusion, recruitment and succession planning, as well as retirement modelling and readiness and performance data.



Ensure our technical teams have the skills required to develop the associated data platforms, and our colleagues have the skills to interpret our data and take appropriate action.



Take a structured approach to improving general data literacy across TfL, in the development of specialist data talent who support our operational business and in the design of our talent pipeline for the future.



Success measures

We will achieve this by:

- Establishing data as a professional route – reskilling and nurturing our existing talent through defined career pathways and learning journeys
- Developing a strong pipeline for data talent through early career schemes
- Measuring data literacy within each business area and acting to close gaps through a range of interventions

We will measure our progress by:

- Developing literacy measurement metrics to track progress across the business
- Measuring how learning is embedded and shared (to encourage cultural shift) and the number of requests to specialist staff
- Monitoring levels of staff morale and retention

6 Gartner.com (2024), [Data Literacy](#)

Digital and cyber

With thousands of job roles available across the business, we need a manageable approach to designing each individual’s learning journey, equipping them with the necessary skills to navigate the digital workplace and access more job-specific content via learning paths.

Technology will continue to underpin our services across the organisation, and every colleague will need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to use technology to its full potential.

In a rapidly and ever-evolving field such as technology, we also need to consider a robust and long-term approach to ensuring our technology and data workforce remain at the forefront of advancements and their skills and knowledge develop accordingly, through certifications where appropriate.

The need for specific IT skills, such as cyber security skills, is likely to grow as the technology threat landscape continues to broaden.



Map digital career pathways and enable existing IT staff to gain specialist skills or transition into specialist roles pipeline for the future.



Success measures

We will achieve this by:

- Creating a digital skills framework that is accessible for all and supports decision-making processes

We will measure our progress by:

- Assessments to understand if colleagues have seen an improvement in skills as well as participant satisfaction on their learning experience
- Monitoring levels of staff retention

Green

Green skills are defined as the knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes needed to protect and improve the environment.

We need to attract new talent at every career stage with strong competencies that include key elements of sustainability to ensure the right mix of skills, knowledge and practical experience.

Many of our green skills gaps could be filled by adapting current roles to the changing needs of the business and creating opportunities for our workforce to upskill in specialist areas.



Translate specialist experience into more effective in-house talent by encouraging training and development opportunities for colleagues and incorporate best practice in collaboration with suppliers and key stakeholders.



Where specialist talent is required to complement our core competencies, we will continue recruit in a strategic and timely fashion.



Success measures

We will achieve this by:

- Including sustainability principles in our leadership competency framework
- Considering how we can improve our offer to attract and mature the best talent at every career stage
- Using green knowledge resources such as environment digital/online learning and in-person resources such as carbon literacy, adaptation, green infrastructure and biodiversity training

We will measure our progress by:

- Tracking responses to competency-based questions on principles of sustainability
- Tracking improvements at every career stage, from attracting, recruiting and onboarding new talent to developing and retaining existing talent to retirement
- Delivery of environment aims in our strategy roadmaps, scorecard and core plans and reporting

Leadership

Achieving our objectives relies on a strong culture of good people leadership across the whole business that supports our vision to make TfL a great place to work.

We require our people leaders to be agile in meeting the future needs of the organisation. People leaders, particularly those in senior roles, need to help prepare the organisation and their teams to meet the challenges of the future workplace.

Ensuring continued development of our current people leaders, as well as developing a strong pipeline of future leaders, is a priority if we are to meet our strategic objectives and be resilient and adaptable in future years.

Our people leaders are expected to be role models for our values and practices across the organisation, demonstrating the expectations set out in our Leadership framework, including the key data, digital and cyber, green, leadership and project management skills.



Develop and upskill our people leaders to create a culture aligned with our purpose, vision and values, and make TfL a great place to work for everyone.



Success measures

We will achieve this by:

- Embedding the competencies in our Leadership frameworks to ensure they remain relevant to our future needs and are reflected in our recruitment, selection, performance management and development processes
- Investing in our people leaders’ development at different levels and stages in their leadership journey (see right)

We will measure our progress by:

- Viewpoint engagement scores
- Monitoring turnover and reasons for leaving
- Evaluation and impact of development interventions

Our Leadership development framework

Our framework looks at development within our leadership at all levels.

Executive level	Supporting our chief officers and Board members to ensure we are continuing to make strategic impact on being the strong green heartbeat for London Examples: Senior leadership strengths
Senior level leadership	Building on our senior leadership strengths, we want to ensure our programmes continue to drive success for our senior leaders and their teams from the top down Examples: Getting ready for senior leadership 2024 cohort / succession planning
Mid-level leadership	Continued development of our mid-level people leaders is fundamental to achieving a great place to work, including supporting those aspiring to move into senior leadership Examples: Leading the future group coaching programme
First people leader role	We will support colleagues and new starters in their first people leadership role with initiatives to support development of fundamental leadership skills Examples: Our people leader foundation/ mentoring / secondments
Development opportunities for all	Examples: Leading Together online learning, Our people leader self-reflection tool and toolkits, GLA mentoring programme, opportunities to sponsor and/or manage placement of graduate, apprentice or intern / Our people leader foundation

Project management

With demand for project management on the increase, we must continue to grow our skills in-house.

Aspects of project management are increasingly needed across all our roles – skills such as tracking progress towards goals, balancing priorities and managing stakeholders.

We recently became an APM corporate partner, extending our contacts with other organisations, both within and beyond the transport sector, and improving the flow of project expertise.



Transform our TfL project management community, with a focus on project managers’ agility, opening access to all areas of our organisation to broaden their base of skills.



Success measures

We will achieve this by:

- Encouraging our project professionals to pursue APM qualifications and chartership
- Developing a skills and capability workstream to enable fully agile resourcing
- Aligning our graduate and apprenticeship demand to future skills needs, and engaging with employability programmes to ensure we bring in new and diverse talent
- Aligning our competency framework to the APM to ensure we are in line with industry standards and enable easier benchmarking for us and our project professionals

We will measure our progress by:

- Monitoring retention of project managers
- Developing a retention plan for our project management graduates and apprentices



Our road map

The timeline below brings together our core principles with a series of actions to ensure strategic workforce planning (SWP) is embedded across the business over the next two years

Integrated business process

Q1 2025 onwards

Pilot SWP toolkit

Toolkit to be piloted in three business areas to support the development of local strategic workforce plans.

Q1 2025 onwards

Integrate SWP process with business processes

Better oversight and control of workforce numbers to align with business needs. Improved prediction of future demand, leading to more accurate budgeting and forecasting, increasing potential savings on recruitment.

Q2 2025 onwards

Work with procurement to identify the right resourcing model

Optimised resource allocation through clear workforce and resourcing strategies.

Q3 2025 onwards

Work with recruitment and resource planning teams to support the business in managing use of contractors and consultants

Reduced reliance on contractors and consultants through better internal resource planning and management.



Data

Q4 2024 – Q4 2025

Create a clear understanding of insights on our current workforce makeup. Use these insights to develop actions

Proactive workforce planning informed by data-led insights will enable a more agile and accurate response to business needs.

Q1 2025 – Q4 2025

Enhance data quality by optimising existing data, consolidating information on contractors and consultants and incorporating supply market data

Improved data-driven decision-making, identifying workforce gaps and surpluses. Enhanced data quality and accessibility, enabling more accurate workforce reporting, forecasting, and analysis.

Q1 2025 – Q4 2025

Integrate work with the Reward team and Organisational Design to improve job role data and explore opportunities with job families

Enhanced reporting abilities to understand the skills and roles that sit across the business. Improved data quality and agility and movement of similar skillsets across the value chains.

Awareness

Q1 2025 – Q4 2025

Communications and engagement campaign, including a roadshow, to promote use of SWP and workforce dashboards to understand pipeline and areas of focus for each chief officer area

Enhanced understanding of SWP across the organisation, including understanding area-specific barriers by accessing the data available, thus driving stakeholder engagement and buy-in.

Q2 2025 onwards

Training and engagement in use of SWP toolkit and how to turn data insights into clear actions

Improved understanding of SWP practices, leading to refined recruitment processes, better alignment with business strategy, cost savings, and improved agility across the organisation.

Q4 2025 - ongoing

Align with the wider organisation design activity to support how SWP could feed into future role and structure design

Alignment of SWP initiatives with wider organisational transformation objectives, particularly around people processes.

Capability

Q3 2024 – Q1 2025

Toolkit finalised and shared with the business

Consistent tools and frameworks to support BPs in workforce planning and decision-making.

Alignment

Q1 2025

Create a clear narrative on the state of the workforce and use of contractors and consultants, and what the combined efforts of the recruitment, training and talent teams will achieve

Unified and consistent messaging and approach to workforce planning across all functions.

Q3 2025 – Q4 2025

Review recruitment policy to support tailoring employment efforts, focusing time on proactivity and reducing volume of contractors and consultants

Integrate the use of the SWP toolkit to support and tailor recruitment efforts and ensure the best route to market when a role needs filling.

Future skills

Q1 2026

Working with the business to create local workforce plans, making SWP part of business as usual

Clear, actionable workforce plans tailored to each business area, aligned with organisational goals.

Q4 2025 – Q2 2026

SWP integrated into the succession planning

Succession plans in place for all critical and hard-to-fill roles, as well as single points of failure. Inclusive of future skills requirements at both a discipline-specific and wider context level.

Q3 2026 - TBC

Recognising the decreased interest in the sector and lack of representation in STEM subjects, integrate SWP into school and young people outreach delivery, so future skills requirements are aligned

To increase awareness of TfL's future skills requirements, attracting early pipeline talent.

