



# PEOPLE STRATEGY 2022-25

[www.sbha.org.uk](http://www.sbha.org.uk)

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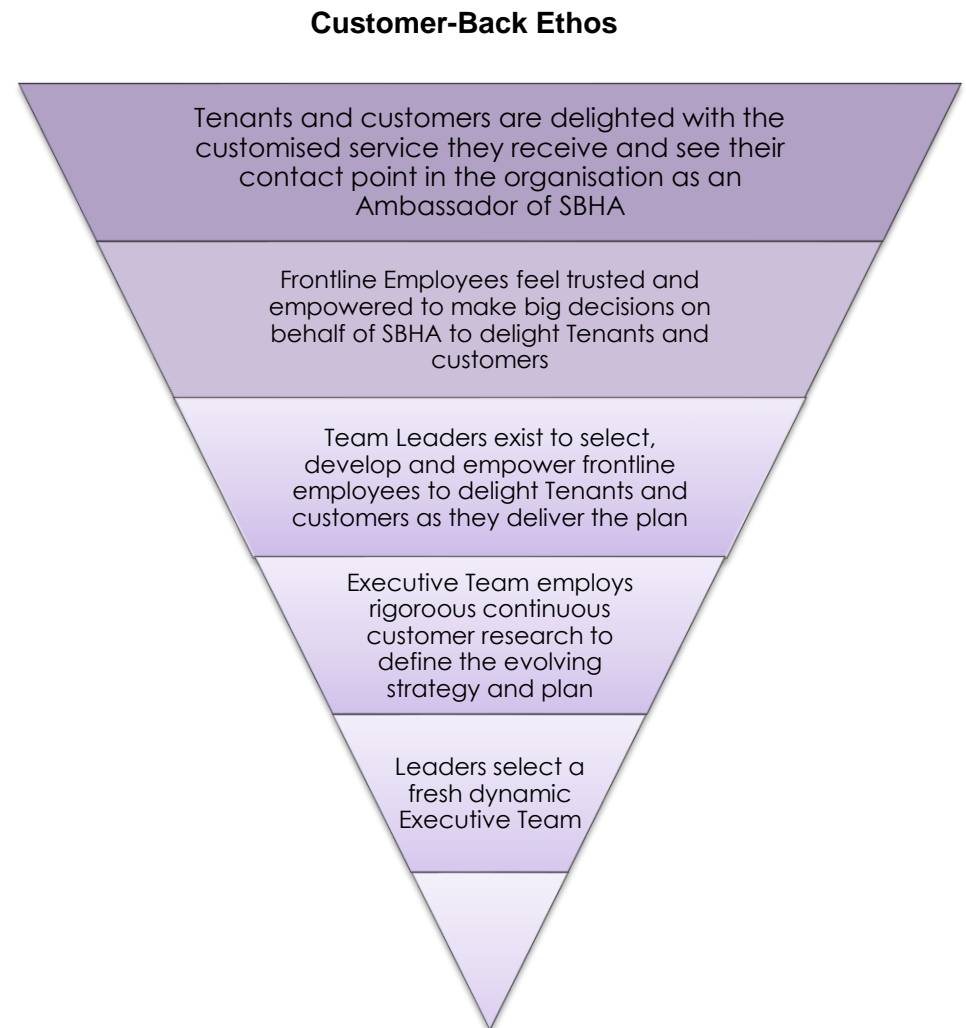
# 1 Introduction

This People Strategy 2022-2025 underpins the delivery of SBHA's Strategic & Business Plan 2020-2025. It sets our plans, ambitions, and key priorities to strengthen our approach to people management and development over the next 3 years, strengthening our position as an employer of choice and a top performing housing organisation.

This Strategy builds on our customer-back ethos, putting outcomes for Tenants and customers at the fore and recognising that our people drive our business. It is through our people that we can make a positive difference to the lives of Tenants and the communities we serve. Their knowledge, commitment, motivation, and enthusiasm are key to us achieving our vision, mission, and strategic goals.

To deliver excellent services and achieve high performance, we recognise the need to offer modern employment practices, engaging and developing our people to give and be the best they can be. The strategic themes within this Strategy have been linked to SBHA's Values to ensure that the outcomes have a direct impact on SBHA's aspirations and success.

This Strategy acknowledges the challenges and opportunities facing the housing sector, both now and in the future, recognising the need to be enterprising and innovative to meet new and changing demands. It emphasises our commitment to the investment in and nurturing of our people and recognises that organisational success depends on all our people playing their part and performing in their role through understanding, being committed to and taking responsibility for the actions and expectations set out in the Strategy.



## 2 About SBHA

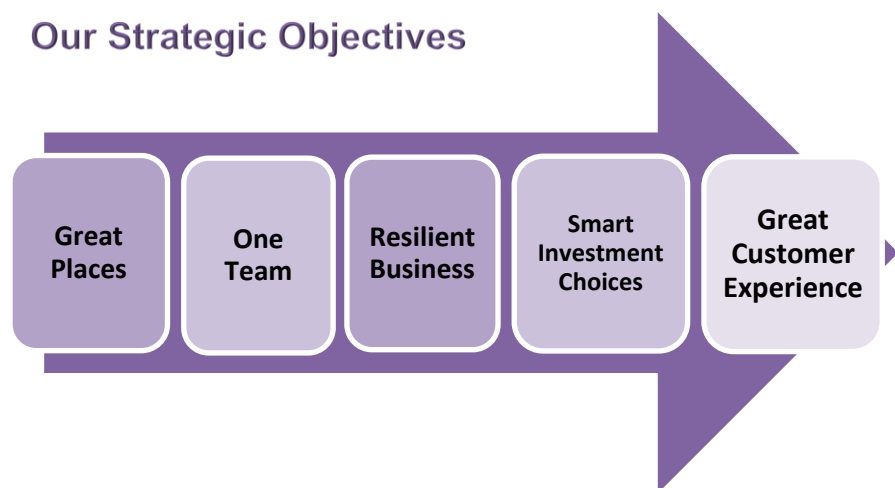
*“Created by Tenants for Tenants, we enhance lives and communities across the Scottish Borders.  
We shape our homes and services to meet changing needs and expectations.”*

SBHA's Mission Statement

Scottish Borders Housing Association (SBHA) was established in 2003 and is a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and Scottish Charity registered under the Co-operative & Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. We provide 5611 homes and services across 49 settlements in the Scottish Borders with an Annual Turnover of over £22million, and our main concentrations of stock are in Hawick, Galashiels, Peebles, Selkirk, Kelso, and Jedburgh.

We are governed by our Board of Management comprising of 4 Tenant Elected members, 4 non-Tenant Elected members and 4 Appointed members responsible. The Board set the strategic direction of SBHA, and our Customer Board oversees the customer experience, service development and policy.

### Our Strategic Objectives



Our Strategic & Business Plan sets out our direction and commitments over the next 5 years, including our aims and strategic objectives. These objectives provide the basis for driving forward both the strategic direction and culture of SBHA and are underpinned by our Values. SBHA's Values seek to ensure Tenants remain at the heart of the SBHA.



The “One Team” objective seeks to maximise our people’s contribution, driving and embedding our customer-focused approach. The People Strategy is central to SBHA’s strategic and operational planning and is fundamental in developing an employment framework and organisational environment in which SBHA’s strategic aims and objectives are achieved.

### 3 Development of the Strategy

This People Strategy has been developed with business engagement and considered in conjunction with SBHA's key strategies and feedback from our 2021 People Survey. It builds on the progress made on the 2017-21 People Strategy. This Strategy is a 'live' and dynamic plan, responding to changes in trends, employment legislation, and to HR best practice. It seeks to meet SBHA's future needs and maximise the potential of our people who play an integral, enabler role to achieve our aims and success.

### 4 Purpose and Context

The People Strategy is central to the delivery of SBHA's Strategic & Business Plan 2020-25, with particular focus on achieving the 'One Team' objective and maximising our contribution towards the regional economic strategy, supporting the vision of the South of Scotland to "*be a region of opportunity*".

The purpose of this People Strategy is to strengthen our people, culture, and social impact as "One Team", achieving high performance and delivering excellent services to Tenants and Customers.

It sets out the direction of how we will achieve this and build on our commitment to fair work practices over the next 3 years. It outlines our ambitions for our workforce, embracing the opportunities that the future will bring and recognising the challenges that we faced during 2020 and early 2021 as we responded to COVID-19.

Moving forward, we will continue to develop an organisation and workforce that is sustainable, resilient, and effective. Equipping our people, supporting their wellbeing, and empowering them to deliver will be essential in embedding our culture and developing the agile and diverse workforce required for the future.

This Strategy is supported by a suite of people policy and procedures covering key employment practice areas and links to other SBHA plans and policies, including:

- Strategic & Business Plan 2020-2025
- Ageing Well Strategy 2021
- Asset Management Strategy 2021-26
- IT & Digital Strategy 2022-27
- Customer Service Standards
- Employee Code of Conduct

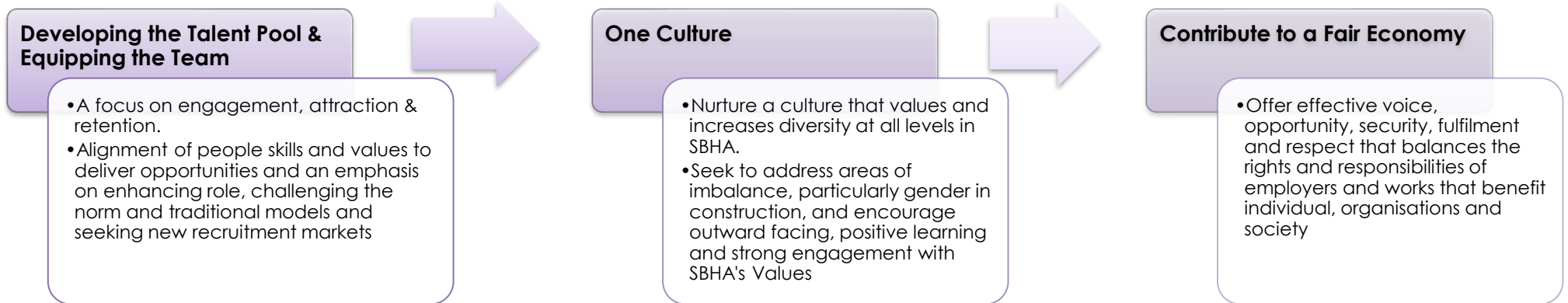


## 5 Aims and Objectives of the Strategy

The vision for this 2022-25 People Strategy is:

*'SBHA is an employer of choice, providing a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best to deliver excellent services for Tenants & Customers as One Team.'*

SBHA's Strategic & Business Plan 2020-25 sets out our commitments to the "One Team" objective and aligned to this, the following strategic themes will be a focus in this People Strategy:

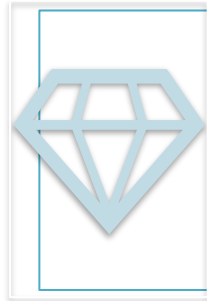


The objectives of this Strategy are aligned to the Fair Work Framework:

Fulfilment	We will nurture capability by motivating and engaging our people with their learning and development for all required skills and the agility for change.
Effective Voice	We will engage with our people to create a culture of ownership and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for Tenants, customers, and their communities.
Opportunity	We will promote an inclusive modern workplace where our team values diversity, working together to reduce inequalities and provide inclusive services for all.
Security	We will have an organisational structure which is fit for the future, with the right people, in the right places with the right skills, to deliver excellent services and achieve high performance.
Respect	We will support the health and wellbeing of our people giving them access to tools they need as we adjust to new ways of working

## 6 Building On Success - Key Achievements

SBHA has made considerable progress since 2017, inspiring and developing our people to make change happen. The emphasis has been on developing and embedding our customer back approach to drive the transformation of services. This includes:



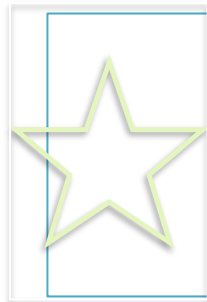
### Value-based Culture

- Revised our Values
- Customer Service programme
- Employee Strategy Group
- Investors in People Accredited



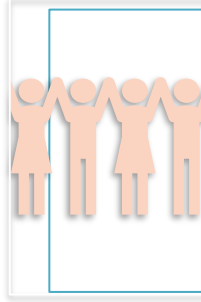
### Healthy and Motivated Workforce

- Healthy Working Lives Accredited
- Established Health Working Lives Group
- Occupational Health services
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Disability Confident Employer
- Keeping You Safe campaign



### Flexible Working Practices & Reward

- Living Wage employer
- Implemented Flexible Working & Modernising Pay Model
- Agile working
- Governance On-line Portal
- New flexible working options - hybrid working



### Right People in Right Place At The Right Time

- Increased talent pipeline & Succession Planning
- Leadership Programme
- Apprenticeships & Placements
- Skills based Board

## The Next 3 Years... Challenges:

- Developing skills in new areas of work and preparing our people for change, including the digital transformation, and the transition to net zero carbon and nature positive
- Sustained COVID-19 recovery and new economic opportunities and changes in the way we work; -
- Maintaining ability to attract and retain high performing people in increasingly competitive local markets; -
- An ageing workforce and succession risks with the need to attract and retain younger people; -
- Diversity in the workforce in some areas and creating a more developed understanding of equalities impact
- Shift in employee expectations from traditional working patterns to more flexible options
- The shift in the employee–manager relationship, with employees wanting managers not simply to manage but to demonstrate strong aspirational leadership and vision to support them to achieve their full potential

## 7

## Fulfilment

**Objective:** *We will nurture capability by motivating and engaging our people with their learning and development for all required skills and the agility for change.*

We know that when we invest in developing and growing our people their job satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty to the organisation increases. Having a learning culture is therefore key to attracting, developing, and retaining great people.

We are Investors in People silver accredited which signals our commitment to the growth and development of our people to achieve their full potential.

We invest in our people's professional development to achieve the organisation's goals, offering a range of opportunities. All our people undertake a personal development planning annually and this, alongside statutory and mandatory training, informs our Annual Learning & Development Plan. Decisions around investment in our people's development take account of how such development fits with the achievement of SBHA's objectives and individuals' preferred learning styles where possible.

We have also provided leadership skills development activities such as a comprehensive Leadership Programme, coaching and mentoring, 360 feedback and action learning set workshops to equip our leaders to support and promote excellent performance and manage change effectively.

We remain committed to continue to equip our people with necessary skills and foster behaviours to ensure great customer experiences. We will continue to support our people's learning and development, as we evolve to embrace new ways of working, developing a future skills development programme with emphasis on digital, low carbon, diversity, and new build.

We will use effective talent management and succession planning to identify and nurture talented, high-performing individuals. We will create clear career pathways for each job role, ensuring transparency, support, and investment for our people to excel in their roles and in readiness for progression where desired.

Our people will be supported through our performance management system, establishing our 'My Contribution' performance framework. We will refresh our leadership behaviour framework to set clear and accountable expectations of how we will work to make sure our values and behaviours are modelled throughout the organisation, helping to strengthen our value-based culture.

Always Improving

### ACTION

We will:

- Develop recruitment and attraction campaigns that **showcase the opportunities** to develop careers at SBHA.
- Introduce a revised **Performance Management framework** aligned to the Strategic Plan priorities
- Establish **future skills development programme** with an emphasis on low carbon, new build, digital and diversity
- Upskill and build into the **competency-based framework**
- Build on flexible **career pathways** and ensure all our people are offered career development conversations
- Launch the **Customer 1st Programme**
- Refresh our **leadership behaviour framework** and continue to provide targeted **leadership development programmes**

## Outcome

*SBHA will have a committed workforce, who feel valued, involved and recognised for their efforts for delivering excellent performance and a Great Customer Experience*

## 8

**Effective Voice**

**Objective:** *We will engage with our people to create a culture of ownership and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for Tenants, customers, and their communities.*

Employee engagement is at the heart of an inclusive workplace, not only building relationship between employer and employee but inspiring our people to work collaboratively to achieve shared outcomes as ‘One Team.’

Enhancing employee engagement is key to empowering our people and inspiring them to achieve continuous improvement and is recognised to improving productivity, motivation, attendance, retention, and overall performance.

We aim to create a collaborative workplace where our people approach to engagement creates an environment whereby our people want to offer more of their capability and potential, increasing organisational and individual performance and productivity. Our People Survey and pulse surveys enable our people to have their say on how they feel about working at SBHA and the key business topics and issues that affect them. The aim of this is to enhance our understanding of the employee experience so we can develop our offer and improve our business together.

We encourage transparent and collaborative two-way dialogue between leaders and team members in decision-making. Team meetings offer opportunities for this, and our Employee Strategy Group (ESG) and our Healthy Living Group are forums which enable our people to voice their

opinions and ideas, helping to shape SBHA. We encourage a collaborative culture where leaders actively listen, reflect and openly feedback answers to questions raised.

Build a strong engagement culture where our people feel they are listened to, are engaged, and empowered to make decisions in line with their responsibilities.

Achieving Excellence Together

**ACTION**

We will:

- continue to develop the role of **ESG** and expand the annual **Team Conference**
- set up **Community of Excellence focus groups** to explore shared issues and creative solutions
- continue to measure employee engagement through our **People Survey** and explore other opportunities to garner data
- develop and embed SBHA **InfoCentre** and Teams as digital channel for team engagement and collaboration space
- expand the range of creative ways for our people to engage with us
- maintain a constructive and positive working relationship with the recognised Trade Unions

**Outcome**

*SBHA will have a highly engaged workforce, who are committed to going the extra mile, and everyone contributes towards achieving SBHA's 'One Team' objective.*

**Objective:** *We will promote an inclusive modern workplace where our team values diversity, working together to reduce inequalities and provide inclusive services for all.*

We are a value-based organisation and ensuring a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is everyone's responsibility. All our people have a role to play, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 to:

- ❖ Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- ❖ Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- ❖ Foster good relations between different groups

To help achieve this, we aim to ensure our workforce and governing body understand and reflect the diverse needs of Tenants and communities we serve. We use data we collect to help inform our practices and decision making to ensure these are fair and equitable, without discrimination or bias.

The role of our leaders is to model our Values and facilitate an inclusive environment. We recognise that leaders who model inclusion and a focus on improvement are key to creating a culture where diversity is valued, people feel they belong and are empowered to be at their best to deliver great customer services.

We are proud to be an accredited Disability Confident Employer, demonstrating our commitment to ensuring we provide inclusive and accessible recruitment processes; and offering reasonable adjustments, and supporting existing employees. We have worked with partners to provide people with disabilities with work experience and work trials.

Over recent years, we have strengthened our approach to equalities: identified a cohort of Equalities Champions from a cross-section of SBHA; delivered awareness sessions; provided greater equitable terms of employment across the organisation and introduced hybrid working,

expanding on our flexible working offer. We have also run governing body recruitment campaigns to reach under-represented groups and engaged with local education providers to provide career opportunities for young people.

As a major employer in the Scottish Borders, we recognise the contribution we make to the regional economy and developing the future workforce. We remain committed to providing workplace learning and job opportunities for young people.

### Everybody Matters

#### ACTION

We will:

- Develop our 3-year **EDI Strategy**, aligned to this People Strategy and our Values
- Enhance our equalities and diversity data collection
- Expand SBHA's contribution to the **Young Person's Guarantee**
- Embed **inclusive employment pathways** to increase social impact, working with partners and equalities & inclusion groups
- Prepare for and seek accredited **Disability Confident Leader** level
- Develop our **gender pay gap report** to understand the impact of our diversity and inclusion initiatives on our workforce
- Continue to provide a **flexible working environment** which reflects a modern workforce and promote these in recruitment
- Launch the **Equal Voices campaign** – focussed on equalities and diverse needs of Tenants and customers.

## Outcome

*SBHA will have a diverse talented workforce and governing body, representative of the Tenants and communities we serve, promoting accessible, inclusive services that meet the diverse needs of all.*

## 10

**Security**

**Objective:** *We will have an organisational structure which is fit for the future, with the right people, in the right places with the right skills, to deliver excellent services and achieve high performance.*

As a social housing provider and responsible employer, SBHA must remain responsive and resilient to our external environment to continue to deliver excellent outcomes for Tenants, customers, and communities.

Like many businesses, the Covid-19 pandemic brought a dramatic change in the way we deliver our services and in how our people work – digital services accelerated, and homeworking increased (although was not possible for some roles which require physical presence and not preferred by others). Service recovery post-pandemic provides us with an opportunity to embed those workforce transformations and build on our achievements and ideas.

Embracing the need for change, we will review the way we are organised, how we are structured and where and how we carry out our work, including the way work is allocated, to ensure that this optimises our efficiency and effectiveness. We will seek to attract the best people through continuous improvement in recruitment and selection, and reward and recognise high performance and will support our people to achieve their potential.

We are refining our flexible working offer, using lessons from the response to the pandemic to inform our future approach. We have rolled out new technology to all our people to enable them to stay connected wherever they work. Aligned to business and customer requirements, this will enable flexibility and support the retention and attraction of talent. It will also enable us to tap into a more diverse talent pool.

**Outcome**

*SBHA will have create a high-performance culture, ensuring that we have capable people who are appropriately incentivised, rewarded and motivated to achieve our Strategic Objectives*

We want to create and maintain a high-performance culture across all teams, ensuring the visible demonstration of the SBHA's Values in all day-to-day activities. We will ensure that our pay, rewards, and other benefits (both financial and non-financial) are aligned to SBHA's strategic priorities, remaining affordable yet competitive with the markets in which we seek to compete for the recruitment, motivation, and retention of talent. In doing this, we must ensure that SBHA gets good value from the investment in rewards and employee benefits. Excellent performance will be celebrated and rewarded, both individually and as teams, while poor performance will be identified and appropriately addressed.

We are proud to be one of Scotland's accredited Living Wage employers and we want to build on this to become Living Hours accredited, demonstrating our commitment to fair work, providing secure contracts, guaranteed minimum hours, and continuing to pay the real Living Wage.

**ACTION**

We will:

- Implement the **Strategic Review** organisational outcomes & Property Services outcomes and prepare future models
- Establish the **pathway for future models** for Property Services
- Produce **total reward statements** for all team members
- Review the range of **reward** options available
- Continue to benchmark our pay and rewards (financial and non-financial)
- Achieve **Living Hours** accreditation

Being Responsible

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## Respect

**Objective:** *We will support the health and wellbeing of our people giving them access to tools they need as we adjust to new ways of working*

Respect at work enhances individual health, safety and wellbeing is a two-way process. The health and wellbeing of our people is of paramount importance, and we recognise that maintaining a healthy workplace environment that actively promotes and supports good health and wellbeing is key to helping our people to flourish and reach their potential.

We have invested in a range of health and wellbeing initiatives available to all our people, providing choice and flexibility, to support their physical and mental health, and we are proud to be an accredited Healthy Working Lives employer.

We offer a range of sources of help to our team including, access to specialist support and online resources, such as flu vaccinations, health screening and surveillance, counselling, occupational health services and an employee assistance programme. Our established Healthy Living Group has introduced programmes and activities to promote the health and wellbeing of our people.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought people's health and wellbeing to the fore. Our people's response to the everchanging demands of the pandemic was outstanding, pulling together as a team to continue to deliver our social responsibility, providing essential services and providing additional support to Tenants and customers. This reflects the teams outstanding commitment to keeping Tenants, communities, and places safe. To protect them from risk of infection, we implemented stringent safety measures such as enhanced PPE and supported people

### Outcome

*SBHA will have healthy and productive team members who understand and work towards the achievement of SBHA's objectives and attendance levels are above the national sector average.*

Being Responsible

to work from home where possible. Our people told us that they valued the regular wellbeing conversations with their leaders and the support and guidance they received from our HR team during the pandemic.

Whilst all our people have a responsibility for looking after their own health and wellbeing, we will ensure that our leaders have the ongoing guidance needed to support their teams, hold sensitive conversations with individuals and signpost to expert help where needed. We will encourage employees' involvement by communicating how they can access the support and benefits available to them.

### ACTION

We will:

- Refresh our **Team Charter**
- Constantly review our **wellbeing offer** including new initiatives, wellbeing programmes and events
- Continue individual **wellbeing conversations**
- Focus on proactive and preventative approaches to **absence management**
- Continuing to **offer flexible working** options
- Build capability with people managers to support their team members who are experiencing impact on their wellbeing
- Ensure safe working environment is maintained
- Achieve **Healthy Working Lives Silver** and **Health & Safety accreditation**

## 12 Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed for all recommendations that arise from this Strategy, to check there is no potential adverse impact on any team member and/or customer.

## 13 Resourcing the Delivery

Funding for the delivery of this People Strategy will be incorporated into SBHA's Business Plan and staffing related budgets will be set annually to reflect the operational and strategic actions detailed in Appendix 1.

## 14 Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing this Strategy

This Strategy is supported by the Action Plan, developed to ensure that we are meeting the Strategy aims and objectives. Delivery of this Strategy is the responsibility of the Chief Operating Officer with support from the HR Team, and the Executive Team will receive 6 monthly reports on progress against the Action Plan and outcomes achieved.

This People Strategy will be reviewed in 3 years or in conjunction with any review of the SBHA's Strategic & Business Plan and will also take cognisance of changing or evolving legislation, regulatory requirements, and good practice.

Achievement of the objectives of the Strategy through a suite of key performance indicators including:

% turnover	% gender pay gap
% employee engagement	Workforce profile
% Total days lost to sickness absence	Governing body profile
RIDDOR reportable events	No. Flexible working requests
Employee relation cases	Bradford scores
% employee satisfaction with learning opportunities	People survey results
% of employees with personal learning plans and annual development reviews completed	Accreditations