

Our people plan: Maximising capability

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To deliver our strategy, we need to work with and through others as effectively as possible. We must nurture our existing strengths, such as our scientific and analytical capability, our reputation with the public, our expertise on and passion for food, and our technical working relationships with local authorities and with the food industry, whilst further developing key skills that we know we'll need more of in the future, such as leadership, incident management, use of data to inform decision making and drive performance, more confident external stakeholder engagement and general data and digital capability. We will also need to grow competence in professional fields such as in policy making, science specialisms, operational delivery and the veterinary profession.

We'll carry out a strategic skills and capability forecast to ensure our development and recruitment priorities over the coming years align to strategic requirements whilst nurturing the strong set of knowledge, skills and experience we already have, and support your learning and career progression through continued professional development in line with this. We'll introduce an enhanced centralised talent management approach to alert people to suitable upcoming development opportunities and create a surge capacity response so we're ready to meet business needs.

We want to ensure that someone's background or protected characteristics are never a limiting factor in the FSA, but rather an asset that can help improve policy making and service delivery. We'll work towards becoming the best in class for inclusion, improving representation and access to opportunities for people from under-represented groups continuing the positive trajectory of recent years whilst aligning to the Civil Service inclusion strategy.

We'll continue working to a 50/50 model for Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHIs) and Contract Meat Hygiene Inspectors (CMHIs) with our service delivery partner, building consistent competence and on-going positive collaborative relationships within frontline teams to ensure effective delivery.

Through our culture enquiry, people survey and frontline engagement, our people and leaders alike have also identified a need for a more consistent standard of people management to enhance people's day-to-day experience at work and ensure we are effectively, consistently and inclusively managing workload, resources, performance, accessibility, career progression and much more. We'll develop visible and approachable leaders and managers who make a positive difference to your experiences and place as much emphasis on people management as they do on delivery.

"I have been a meat inspector for over 25 years and, in that time, I have seen an organisational cultural change. I have seen many of my colleagues take on new roles such dairy inspectors, wine inspectors and assessors. I have taken advantage of the diverse work we do as an organisation by becoming an NVQ assessor for the FSA training school. What better way to train the next generation of meat inspectors by placing them in a team of experienced colleagues so the knowledge they have can be passed on organically?"

Jeremy Dawson, Meat Hygiene Inspector, North of England

Table 2: planned activities for maximising capability

In year one we will...

We'll know it's worked with...

5. Focus on fair, supportive, inclusive and consistent people management

Develop mandatory management induction modules for all newly promoted/recruited managers

Implement our FSA leadership and management development framework which defines standards and expectations at each level, and organisational expectations around involvement in wider corporate activity.

Articulating the core skills required for people management in recruitment materials for all management roles as well as any technical criteria.

Introduce mandatory management objectives on performance management and talent reporting to build an evidence base for future talent management and succession planning. These will be nuanced by grade to reflect individual responsibility as a manager and leadership responsibility for the quality and consistency of performance management within business areas.

Better people and pulse survey scores relating to managers and quality performance conversations.

Increase in performance ratings and 9 box grid positions recorded on the system.

All new managers (newly promoted or new to the FSA) to complete manager induction within 3 months of starting.

In year one we will...

We'll know it's worked with...

6. Conduct a strategic capability and skills forecast

Work with senior leaders and Heads of Profession to understand strategic skill requirements and produce an action plan articulating how best to address these through a range of solutions i.e. training, refocussing, job design, recruitment, apprenticeships, internships, graduate placements or buying in. This will include:

- briefing skills and written communications
- project and programme management
- leadership skills
- evidence-based decision making
- stakeholder engagement
- incidents handling
- general data and digital capability

Work with our Heads of Profession to map FSA roles to civil service professional frameworks to inform professional development and succession planning. This will include developing competence in the following professions:

- operational delivery
- policy making and analysis
- science specialisms
- veterinary

Improved understanding of strategic skills required and any associated skill gaps.

Organisational level action plan to address any skills gaps identified.

Improved recruitment forecasting.

Compliance with government functional standards.

In year one we will...	We'll know it's worked with...
<p>7. Maintain momentum on inclusion</p> <p>Create inclusion champion-chaired action groups to evolve inclusion governance and support strategic and corporate delivery.</p> <p>Complete assurance framework, accreditation and audit activities to form an evidence base that guide inclusion actions for the next 3 years (including disability confidence leader level and carers' accreditation level 2).</p> <p>Provide enhanced interviewer training for recruitment panellists, empowering them to actively encourage and support candidates to provide their best evidence.</p> <p>Continue and complete reviews in each plant to ensure effective cohesion between MHIs and CMHIs in the undertaking of duties within plants, supporting the one team approach.</p> <p>Continue to offer a range of engagement channels and networking opportunities to our colleagues on the front line to help them feel more included, with additional support for groups who are under-represented in Field Operations.</p>	<p>Achievement of disability confidence leader level and carers accreditation level 2.</p> <p>Increased declaration of protected characteristics (including socio-economic background) and progress towards an even more representative workforce, particularly in Operations and at management grades.</p> <p>More consistent people survey results across protected characteristics.</p> <p>Maintain our position in the top 75 employers for social mobility.</p> <p>Better people survey results and regional engagement day polls/feedback relating to frontline team relationships and engagement.</p>

In years 2 and 3 we will...	We'll know it's worked with...
<p>8. Enhance people management capability</p> <p>Implement mandatory core modules which all managers will need to refresh periodically.</p>	<p>Longer-term drop in B&H reports related to managers/leaders.</p> <p>Reduced under- and overspend budgets.</p> <p>Continued improvement in people and pulse survey scores relating to managers and quality performance conversations</p>

In years 2 and 3 we will...	We'll know it's worked with...
<p>9. Introduce annual corporate development planning</p> <p>Work with senior leaders/ Heads of Profession to confirm the yearly corporate development plan to progress us towards our strategic capability requirements and maintain professional standards across all parts of the FSA.</p>	<p>Improved understanding of our year-on-year progress towards building/acquiring the skills required to deliver our strategy.</p> <p>Reduction in skills gap.</p> <p>Up-to-date, meaningful development plans on record for all our people.</p>
<p>10. Evolve our succession planning and talent management</p> <p>Design and introduce a new centralised talent management and succession planning approach based on the evidence base built throughout year 1.</p> <p>Formally identify pivotal or business critical roles within directorates to inform succession planning.</p> <p>Targeted communications about ringfenced places on talent programmes (such as Beyond Boundaries) to people from under-represented groups in our talent pool.</p>	<p>A strong internal talent pipeline to support business continuity, surge capacity and prioritisation evidenced by at least one reported 9-box grid position in any 12-month period for our people of Grade 7 to SCS.</p> <p>Better People Survey scores around development and career opportunities.</p> <p>'Living' succession plans for pivotal roles in all business areas.</p> <p>Improved understanding and transparency of internal moves, talent movement metrics and external attrition.</p>
<p>11. Become best in class for inclusion</p> <p>Explore a sponsorship offer in line with positive action principles.</p> <p>Complete the voluntary evidenced framework for improving race equality and progression.</p> <p>Achieve carers accreditation level 3.</p> <p>Report on ethnicity pay gap.</p> <p>Support our staff networks' evolution to align with the civil service inclusion strategy and contribute to strategy/policy whilst continuing to support staff.</p>	<p>Achievement of carers' accreditation level 3.</p> <p>Rise in the People Survey scores related to ethnicity and progression.</p> <p>Improve on our 2023 position in the social mobility employers' list.</p>

In years 2 and 3 we will...	We'll know it's worked with...
<p>12. Contribute to the development of a Government Veterinary Profession Graduate Scheme</p> <p>Work with the Government Veterinary Service and other government departments to develop a Civil Service Veterinary Graduate Scheme.</p>	<p>Increased awareness of an an improved talent pipeline for our veterinarianian roles.</p>