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Starfish

# Top Talent: HR & OD

Strong human resources and organisational development teams are at the heart of every high performing council. In this sixth Starfish Top Talent feature, we celebrate the people power champions of local government who are striving to innovate, drive change and promote the sector's diverse talent. Here are just some of our rising HR and OD stars who will undoubtedly help to create our workforces of the future.

**Kerry Bishop**  
**Head of Learning and Development**  
**Cambridgeshire County Council**  
Kerry began her career in the civil service, moving to local government in 2011. Kerry's passion for professional development has had a huge impact in Cambridgeshire, keeping the county council's learning offer fresh and aligned to corporate priorities. Kerry's current focus is creating a children's social care development academy where practitioners will be supported to develop their critical reflection, practice their skills, and deepen their knowledge. Learning will also be used to inspire and develop colleagues, enabling them to unlock their potential and to feel confident, competent, capable and valued.



**Matt Eccleston**  
**Strategic Workforce Partner**  
**Cornwall Council**  
Matt is an experienced and trusted strategic workforce partner and member of the people and change leadership team at Cornwall Council. Matt leads a multidisciplinary team of HR professionals responsible for leadership, organisation design and employee relations across the directorates he supports. Matt is recognised as an excellent team leader, having supported council teams through the effects of complex workforce reductions and redesign as well leading his own team which is undergoing significant change. Looking ahead, Matt's next challenge will be to work with colleagues to bring new capabilities into the council's strategic HR function.



**Chrissy Fox**  
**Head of Payroll**  
**Wiltshire Council**  
Chrissy is the HR and OD technical lead for Wiltshire's ERP implementation – a highly complex and challenging programme involving multiple stakeholders. Chrissy has really stepped up, having to learn at pace and ensure appropriate challenge at all levels to achieve positive outcomes for the organisation, while maintaining strong working relationships. Chrissy's collaborative working style, skills and innovative approach ensures the HR and OD team are supported and are able to identify solutions which meet the needs of the business. Internal and external feedback has been unanimously positive around Chrissy's impact and successes.



**Sarah Goodwin**  
**Head of Organisational Development and Learning**  
**Richmond and Wandsworth Councils**  
Sarah leads a fast-moving team, coordinating OD and L&D for the joint workforce operating across Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. Sarah is leading a programme to transform the working environment and experience of staff. Extensive flexible working arrangements have been established across the workforce and a new set of organisational values has recently been launched. Sarah is now helping to introduce a bespoke leadership and management development programme to further underpin the cultural changes taking place, alongside a wide range of other ambitious initiatives.



**Lily Hall**  
**Head of Organisational Development and Change**  
**Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**  
Lily leads the Organisational Development and Change service at Rotherham. Over the last 18 months, Lily has made a huge impact by empowering staff to take a 'One Council' approach to cross-cutting priorities, such as equalities, diversity and inclusion, social value and customer experience. This has involved designing innovative and practical approaches to learning and development, behaviour change, service design and engagement. Lily is passionate about making a difference to residents and communities and ensuring her team believes in their ability to make change happen.



**George Harris**  
**Senior HR & OD Advisor**  
**Herefordshire Council**  
George leads and supports on people related transformation within Herefordshire's children's and adult social care directorates and he plays a key part in their overall improvement journey. He has a real passion for trying out new methodologies to solve issues around recruitment and retention, particularly in the challenging market of social care. George has been instrumental in launching a new recruitment website and promoting the voice of social workers through national publications, networks and events. His focus and determination to recruit, retain and grow talent for the council stands out.



**Hiba Jangoan**  
**Strategic and Core HR Lead**  
**Liverpool City Council**  
Hiba has transformed the council's approach to workforce equalities. She has led the creation and delivery of an equalities strategy and been instrumental in the local authority becoming one of the first councils to participate in the Workforce Race Equality Standards (WRES). Her work has improved employee engagement and increased trust across the workforce during challenging times for the council. Hiba has also played a critical role in supporting the recruitment of over 40 directors. Her authentic leadership style, analytical mindset and focus on solutions makes her a strong role model to the HR Business Partnering team.



**Camellia Judge**  
**Organisational Development Team Leader**  
**Perth & Kinross Council**  
Since joining the council some 18 months ago, Camellia has helped transform the OD service. She has focused on empowering and building the team's skills and confidence which has supported them to deliver a significant cultural change programme. Camellia leads by example in all that she does and is extremely proud of the OD service's journey so far. She is committed to continually evolving the offer to the organisation and is determined to create a culture of happy, motivated and empowered staff.



**Naseir Khan**  
**Data Insight and Analytics Lead**  
**Birmingham City Council**  
Naseir's talent has seen him swiftly progress his career to lead a newly formed Data, Insight and Analytics team within People Services at Birmingham. Naseir's true passion is Power BI, where he crafts illuminating dashboards from complex data, which enables the organisation to make informed decisions, based on evidence. His journey exemplifies determination and the relentless pursuit of excellence. Having completed two apprenticeships, he is also a dedicated advocate for personal growth, inspiring young talent and emphasising that age or background doesn't limit success.



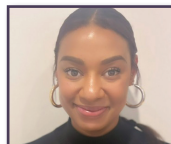
**Emma Kilpatrick**  
**Lead HR Consultant, ER and Policy**  
**City of Edinburgh Council**  
Emma joined the council in May 2022, making an immediate and positive impact. Leading the review of the council's conduct related policies, Emma took a collaborative and inclusive approach. She has delivered everything asked of her and more, championing the council's key behaviours of respect, integrity and flexibility. Emma has also played a key role in helping manage the council's response to three periods of industrial action. Emma is described as a trusted adviser, as well as a creative, solution-focused and inspiring role model.



**Adeola Lawal**  
**Head of Workforce and Resourcing**  
**City of London Corporation**  
Adeola joined City of London Corporation in January this year as Head of Workforce and Resourcing. She has hit the ground running and her outcome-focused approach to the unique complexities of City of London Corporation has seen her driving policy changes and service improvements such as inclusive recruitment initiatives. Adeola is full of fresh ideas, and she brings a wealth of HR and OD experience. She joined from the Royal Borough of Greenwich where she drove transformation projects including a new applicant tracking system. Adeola is passionate about continuous improvement and is recognised for her supportive and empowering approach.



**Rebecca Lea**  
**Senior HR & OD Business Partner**  
**Salford City Council**  
Rebecca leads organisation-wide and service specific transformation programmes at Salford, ensuring employees are at the heart of her innovative approaches to workforce initiatives. She was instrumental in developing the highly commended 'day one' welcome experience for new starters. Rebecca's drive for an inclusive organisation also saw her launch Salford's first race-focused reverse mentoring programme, breaking down racial barriers and making positive change through her delivery of the council's EDI Strategy. Rebecca is passionate about empowering people to be their best at work, and she

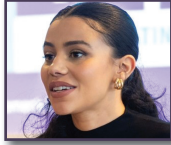


was recently recognised as joint-winner of the 2023 PPMA HR Rising Star programme.

**Lauren Margetson**  
**HR Manager – People Analytics and HR Systems**  
**Neath Port Talbot Council**  
Lauren is an experienced and dedicated HR professional, employed in the People and OD section at Neath Port Talbot Council. She started out as an apprentice and is now an HR Manager, and the council has supported many of Lauren's learning opportunities including a CIPD Level 7 qualification and more recently a qualification in data analytics. Lauren has led on a revolutionary HR project which introduced robotics to the work of NPT, as the council became the first public sector organisation in Wales to use the technology. More recently, she has been developing a new team to drive forward the council's People Analytics capabilities.



**Pagan-Lilley Phillips**  
**Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Lead**  
**London Borough of Barnet**  
Pagan-Lilley has successfully led on the creation, delivery and implementation of Barnet's EDI action plan. Her unique and holistic approach has seen the EDI landscape at Barnet mature significantly, leading to organisational change and improvement, including the doubling of representation of staff that identify as disabled, the delivery



of an EDI events calendar and the redevelopment of the EDI steering group to be an active and critical friend. Recently, Pagan-Lilley has collaborated with trade union representatives and staff networks to design and launch the council's first menopause policy.

**Edwina Quansah**  
**Employee Engagement & Talent Business Partner**  
**Coventry City Council**  
Edwina has successfully steered the implementation of a series of positive action talent development programmes for employees from underrepresented groups, to help address the structural barriers to career progression. The first programme resulted in more than 50% of the participants gaining promotions. She is also known for her enthusiasm for helping people to reach their full potential through adopting a coaching mindset. Edwina currently oversees delivery of a new employee recognition scheme, which acknowledges the contribution of colleagues who have gone above and beyond in delivering services, whilst exemplifying the council's One Coventry values.



**Maisie Roberts**  
**HR Business Partner OD**  
**Leeds City Council**  
Maisie joined the HR and OD service in 2022 and has been passionate about putting the council's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) into practice. She was instrumental in devising and delivering the council's unique and impactful five step EDI programme, delivering training and development to nearly 3,000 managers. In doing so, she has developed a clear set of actions around EDI across the organisation which are cited as an example of best practice in a recent peer review by the Local Government Association. Maisie is currently developing a positive action programme for aspiring leaders from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds.



**Dr Sabrina Robinson**  
**Wellbeing Lead, People and Transformation**  
**Essex County Council**  
Sabrina is the driving force behind employee wellbeing at the council and Co-Chair of the Ethnically Diverse Employee Network. Recognised for her strategic thinking in this space, she places wellbeing at the core of the council's culture. Currently her focus is on transforming Black History Month into an educational and inclusive platform, tackling critical wellbeing topics like Menopause Whilst Black, Diabetes and Enjoying Cultural Foods, and Black Men's Mental Health. Simultaneously, she's relaunching the council's wellbeing hour, a monthly live event open to all, where senior leaders share invaluable wellbeing insights. Sabrina is committed to ensuring Essex County Council is a workplace where employee wellbeing thrives, fostering a culture of openness and resilience.



**Mahsam Sheikh**  
**Strategy and Reward Manager**  
**Bradford Council**  
Mahsam leads on strategy and reward and is hugely passionate about ensuring Bradford Council is a great place to work for all. Since joining #teamBradford, Mahsam has delivered significant improvements to the council's employee offer, re-introduced a benefits platform now used by over 200% more users, and implemented other new benefits. Mahsam remains determined to make Bradford's offer even better with further inclusive, sustainable benefits and initiatives in the pipeline. Mahsam is collaborating widely and supporting talent attraction and retention through the use of total rewards to help Bradford be an employer of choice.



Leadership journeys, expertly navigated.

When it comes to creating leadership teams who will change our world for the better, the best course to steer is not necessarily the most obvious. We don't shy away from difficult conversations or less predictable choices; we tell it how it is and we recruit across a range of sectors to access diverse talent.

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