

People Strategy (2016- 2019)

‘Fantastic people doing remarkable things’

Sense is a national charity that supports people who are deafblind, those with sensory impairments and those with complex needs, to enjoy more independent lives. Our expertise in supporting individuals with communication needs benefits people of all ages, as well as their families and carers. We provide information and advice, offer a wide range of flexible services and campaign passionately for the rights of the people we serve across the UK and internationally. Understandably then people are at the heart of what we do.

Our Corporate Strategy

Our corporate strategy for 2016- 2019 ‘**Growing, Stronger, Together**’ clearly articulates how we will achieve our ambitious vision to create a world in which all the people we support can be full and active members of society. To ensure we can achieve this we have identified three broad **priorities** which are to:

- Increase the awareness of Sense and the individuals and families we support.
- Support more individuals and families by expanding our income.
- Increase opportunities for individuals and families to do new activities and support each other.

These priorities are underpinned by a set of **principles** that describe the way we work with the people we support here at Sense.

- Individuals and families receive the right support at the right time.
- Personalisation is at the heart of everything we do.
- We support people to increase and maintain their independence.
- We ensure that individuals and families are fully involved, can participate fully and are central to our work.
- We deliver positive outcomes for the people we support that include: enhancing wellbeing, building relationships, staying healthy, accessing new activities, and being part of their community.

Our People Strategy

This People Strategy describes how we work together with our people to enable them to contribute to our strategy and make a real difference to the lives of the people we support. We recognize that respecting and investing in our people is vital to our success and is wholly dependent on having well trained, supported and motivated colleagues. We want to be an 'employer of choice' and to be known as a great place to work.

What we expect

As a social care charity with a great reputation it will be no surprise that our **values and behaviours** are really important to us as they underpin our fundamental culture. So we make no apologies for insisting that anyone who is involved with Sense must personally commit to them. People need to be able to identify with and live our values by being **honest, aspirational, accountable, be able to recognize** the value of others and be completely **trustworthy**.

These values are underpinned by a set **behaviours** that we call 'I' statements that again we expect all colleagues and volunteers to follow. We expect that people are **listened to, understood and respected**. We are **honest and open** and we encourage everyone to **participate and contribute**. We also ask people to consider the benefits of taking **informed risks** and to **celebrate success** when it comes. Our final 'I' statement is **no decision about me without me**, as we always seek to involve people in decisions that affect them. These values and behaviours should be incorporated into work on a daily basis and reflected upon in team meetings and at 1.1s and appraisal reviews.

We also encourage anyone who is involved with Sense to adopt these values and behaviours, including trustees, people who access our services, families and the wider Sense 'family' of partners, members and supporters.

Our People Vision

Our vision is to be recognized as an organization that is known to be where **'fantastic people do remarkable things'**. We will do this by:

- **Growing** the business through talented people.
- Developing a **Stronger** employer brand to attract and retain good people.
- Creating opportunities **Together** for people to excel.

Our inspirational leaders will be visible and will coach colleagues to be proud of what they do and to take personal responsibility for their work, always keeping the people we support at the centre of all they do. They will also ensure that they have the competence and confidence to challenge the way we do things and the freedom to innovate and improve what we do.

Team working and collaboration will ensure that our people resources are used well, their talents are recognized and they can reach their full potential, so that we can maintain the quality of services and grow them in a sustainable way. We will provide people with the tools and support to manage projects, and provide

more opportunities for people across the organisation to come together and collaborate on strategic priorities.

Our People Objectives

To help us achieve our people vision we are working towards six key objectives. They are to:

- **Increase workforce engagement.**
- **Build a progressive, collaborative and healthy organization.**
- **Attract, recruit and retain the best staff.**
- **Recognise and reward success.**
- **Invest in skills and competences.**
- **Strengthen performance and progression.**

Increase workforce engagement

Communicating, engaging and involving colleagues enables our people to influence, understand and champion the values of the Charity.

We will:

- Develop outstanding leaders and managers so that they can coach and motivate people to be the best they can be and to achieve their potential.
- Provide people with clear, timely, accurate and accessible information in a variety of ways e.g. via the intranet, newsletters, meetings.
- Work in partnership with our Staff Forum to receive the views of their constituents and involve them in our plans and priorities.
- Consult our people on changes that may affect them, either nationally or locally through their managers.
- Enable people to take responsibility for keeping themselves informed and to raise issues proactively and constructively as soon as they arise.

Build a progressive, collaborative and healthy organisation

Developing the organisations structure and workforce profile fairly and safely and in a way that embraces diversity and equality of opportunity, allows us to grow our services and reflect the communities we serve.

We will:

- Expect our people to understand diversity, to value the contributions of others and to ensure that no-one receives less favourable treatment.
- Ensure we have a healthy working environment and work/life balance.
- Adopt a collaborative approach with our people and work together across the organisation, to develop high quality, safe and efficient services.
- Develop and implement structural, contractual and policy changes that support our corporate goals and ensure that they are applied fairly and consistently and in line with our values and 'I' statement behaviours.

Attract, recruit and retain the best staff

Having the right people, in the right place, at the right time and cost enables us to deliver our strategy and plans.

We will:

- Anticipate the demand for and supply of permanent and temporary people and fill positions as efficiently and economically as possible.
- Develop innovative and accessible ways to recruit and select people from the widest possible pool, appointing those with the right values, skills motivation and competencies.
- Create opportunities for people move into different roles and be as flexible as we can to meet both theirs and the organisation's needs.
- Support people in taking opportunities to progress their personal career aspirations.

Recognise and reward success

Creating a working environment and terms and conditions that value and recognize people's contribution to the success of the organization will attract and retain the best people.

We will:

- Provide the best reward, benefits and support package we can afford, that aim to reward people fairly and motivates them to perform to the best of their ability.
- Create opportunities for people to celebrate and recognise individual and team success, sharing ideas and efficiencies.
- Take a flexible approach to rewarding and recognising people who perform above and beyond what is expected of them.

Invest in skills and competences

Investing in the skills and development of our people and creating a learning culture enables our workforce to have the competences to undertake their roles safely, be fit for the present and ready for the future.

We will:

- Provide flexible and innovative training and development solutions that meet organizational and individual needs.
- Expect people to be proactive in identifying and meeting their own and others training and development needs.
- Develop a 'commercial' external training proposition that shares our expertise, enhances our reputation and generates income.

- Create leadership, talent management, coaching/mentoring and succession planning schemes that will support organisational excellence.

Strengthen performance and progression

Managing the performance, behaviours, attendance and development of people, underpins the success of the organization and helps to maintain and protect our reputation as an excellent charity.

We will:

- Be clear on what is expected of our people coaching them to work as independently as they can, to the best of their ability.
- Expect individuals to take responsibility for their own performance and development.
- Adopt a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.
- Develop a critical friend culture that includes giving and receiving constructive 360 feedback on their performance.
- Empower managers to take accountability for managing the performance, capability, development and progression of their people.

Our Future

This People Strategy sets out how we can help make our corporate strategy 'Growing Stronger Together' a reality. By working together, we can make Sense an employer of choice, where we will be recognized as being a great place to work and where **'fantastic people do remarkable things'**.