

# GROUP CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER'S REPORT



**Jill Shedden MBE** | Group Chief People Officer

2023 has been another extraordinary year for Centrica. I am really proud of what all our colleagues have achieved together to adapt to changing business needs and to support our customers and each other throughout the year. We believe our culture is a unique one, with our 'caring' and 'delivery' values standing out.

Amongst our many successes we've donated and fundraised £4 million to make a big difference to charitable causes we all care passionately about across our local communities. We are helping colleagues and customers as much as possible with ongoing energy and cost of living issues. We continued with our returns to shareholders which will also benefit the majority of our colleagues who are or will become shareholders due to our Global Profit Share award.

## COLLEAGUE ENGAGEMENT

I am delighted that colleague engagement has continued to improve quarter on quarter improving by 0.3 points to 7.7 by the end of the year, which is just below top quartile performance for our sector. Our engaged workforce is also working alongside other business initiatives to continue improvements in our customer satisfaction journey, and we can see confidence in our products and services rising.

Our People function has made a huge contribution to Centrica as we have partnered change in the business, and our positive colleague engagement scores illustrate our colleagues' appreciation for the strong and supportive culture within Centrica.

## LISTENING TO OUR PEOPLE

The Shadow Board is a Centrica Leadership Team sponsored initiative introduced in 2021. The Shadow Board comprises ten colleagues, each with different knowledge and experience, and all from different business units and functions and at different levels across the Group. The Shadow Board provides an opportunity for the views of colleagues to positively challenge assumptions and influence decisions by offering a colleague perspective on a range of topics, including those of a strategic nature. The Shadow Board is not expected to deliver outcomes independently.

One key outcome that led from feedback from this process between the CLT and the Shadow Board is the closer relationship that has been actively developed between our networks and our British Gas Field colleagues.

## DEVELOPING NEW CAPABILITIES

During 2023 we also made some leadership appointments which will support the growth of our businesses and achieve a cleaner, greener future. The new business of 'New Business and Net Zero' will continue to build our in-home net zero offering to residential customers and ensure that all of us at Centrica continue to play a leading role in the energy transition. Our new Chief Customer Officer role will strengthen the voice of our customers, continuously pushing the team to create a customer experience that promotes loyalty and retention for new and existing customers. In the wider workforce, we continued to grow our professional capability during 2023 with over 1,000 professional colleagues joining our Group. Our award winning Graduate & Summer Placement Programme and our Ex-Forces Pathway programme supports our People Strategy and our Workforce for the Future aspirations and demands.

Career mobility and developing our internal talent is critical and we have a consistent, future-focused Talent Framework and Talent Review approach in place which enables all people managers to better understand team strengths of today and development for tomorrow.

We continue to secure our net zero commitments by investing in our customer facing teams and our training academies. This includes building skills for today and the future in purpose-built locations and driving new apprenticeship pathways, giving us the opportunity to serve our customers with up to date skills and technologies.

## COLLEAGUE NETWORKS

I am incredibly proud that we have a number of active colleague-led networks that operate across Centrica. Our networks cover areas such as gender, sexual orientation, family, community, disability, health and wellbeing and ethnicity.

We have over ten employee-led networks and we are proud of what our employee networks are achieving. They play a key role in partnering with the organisation to drive change and make our workplace a more inclusive place for our people to thrive in and be themselves.

**Centrica Forces Network** is a group of colleagues across all areas of Centrica who have either served in, or are serving reservists in the Armed Forces, or have an interest in being part of a community that supports these groups of colleagues. The objective is to create a diverse community that supports veterans and reservists within Centrica ensuring that we become an employer of choice for these groups. The network has had some great success with its Armed Forces pathway which brings talented veterans, serving reservists, those about to leave the armed forces, military spouses, and partners into our Group. We are delighted that our Forces network has recently been shortlisted for Employee Network of the Year at the British Diversity Awards.

**Our Carers Network** is a support group where colleagues are able to connect with others (who may or may not be carers) who can share ideas and information about any aspect of caring. Centrica has a long and proud history of supporting colleagues who are juggling work and care and 2024 will be the Carers Network's 20th anniversary. We were the first company to earn Carers UK's 'Carer Confident Ambassador' accreditation and we have maintained this high standard since with an industry-leading Carers Leave Policy. I am proud that Centrica's values for caring shine through in all that we do.

## LOOKING AFTER COLLEAGUES AND THEIR LOVED ONES

Health, safety and wellbeing are part of everything we do. We believe providing education, tools, resources, and benefits to support these key priorities, can lead to a healthier, happier workforce and a more prosperous workplace.

Centrica is focused on our colleagues being able to speak openly about the issues affecting their personal lives, as we know that not only is the support important to their mental and physical wellbeing, but that it is beneficial to retention and productivity. Looking after wellbeing is not about making drastic changes but rather implementing healthy habits that can help colleagues

manage everyday stressors better. We do our utmost to create an environment and culture where looking after wellbeing comes naturally and is integrated into the way we operate.

Our healthcare plan which is available to all colleagues includes many wellbeing benefits, such as nutritional advice, physical health, emotional wellbeing, menopause support, giving peace of mind to colleagues and their families.

## PROACTIVE HEALTH

We have a proactive wellbeing programme with the aim to raise awareness of difficult and taboo subjects. We have run multiple events on menopause, men's mental health, suicide and mental wellbeing with colleagues, experts and GP's attending and sharing experiences and recommending practical actions to support, which have been attended by thousands of colleagues. We have ongoing reporting across many health metrics which allows us to see any trends, concerns and improvements. These insights drive our action planning for the future.

## LOOKING AFTER OUR COLLEAGUES THROUGH THE RISING COST OF LIVING

During 2023 our colleagues have continued to face the cost of living crisis, it is important that we support our colleagues during this time. We have increased our colleague energy allowance to pay a proportion of the energy price cap. Furthermore, with inflation hitting all aspects of life, we introduced a new charitable trust 'The Colleague Support Foundation'.

This gives access to funds in time of financial need. Since our launch in July 2023, we have supported over 100 colleagues and paid out c.£100k. The payments range from supporting colleagues with the funeral cost of a loved one or covering food costs to feed their families. Colleagues do not have to pay the money back.

## SHARE IN THE COMPANY'S SUCCESS

In 2023 we granted a further Global Profit Share award to all colleagues, relating to our profits in 2022. The award was made in shares so our colleagues share in our success as we continue to grow our business. We will be making another profit share award in shares in 2024, relating to our 2023 profit.

# 100+

Colleagues supported by  
The Colleague Support Foundation

# 20,044

Colleagues who received a profit share  
payment in 2023.

## OUR PATHWAY TO PARENTHOOD & PROACTIVE HEALTH

In June 2023 we launched our biggest support package yet to help our colleagues who are struggling with fertility. Our 'Pathway to Parenthood' package, which is available to all our UK employees as part of their healthcare plan, offers comprehensive financial support towards fertility treatment. This can be used for IUI, IVF, and egg or sperm donation and storage. It can also be used to cover costs for adoption or surrogacy. Additionally, we offer colleagues five days paid leave for their fertility treatment, adoption, or surrogacy appointments per year. We are already seeing the positive impact that the package is making, helping our employees feel supported whilst they go through huge changes in their personal lives.

We have a suite of health and wellbeing resources and benefits, including our 120+ strong Mental Health First Aider Network, Wellbeing app, 24-hour access to a GP and a 24-hour emotional support line. We provide Mental Health Training for Leaders and have added two wellbeing vans to our wellbeing portfolio this year allowing us to get out and visit our remote workers to provide health and wellbeing consultations where they conduct 'Know your numbers' tests, functional movement screening and emotional signposting.

## WHAT OUR COLLEAGUES SAY ABOUT HEALTH AND WELLBEING AT CENTRICA

“ Thank you for arranging the webinar, it was truly appreciated. I felt privileged to work at Centrica and came away from the call feeling so engaged and motivated. I felt I learned strategies to help myself and others which is fantastic.”



“ I found this very interesting from various perspectives. I am a manager, a parent to a daughter who struggles with anxiety and having never suffered with anxiety myself the menopause has started to produce anxiety symptoms. It is great how much support Centrica offer around mental health.”

“ I am very grateful to Centrica for providing such an informative session on menopause and embracing the subject. This is a subject that gets brushed under the carpet in so many organisations so thank you Centrica.”



“ Really pleased to have these sessions to continue the conversations on women’s health and menopause. It helps reduce the stigma in workplace and helps to know, that as a woman, you have a support network.”



“ This topic is very close to me both professionally and personally. I found the training very useful and opened my eyes on a few aspects of life that I will be more considerate on.”