



New Forest

DISTRICT COUNCIL

PEOPLE STRATEGY

2005 - 2008



PEOPLE STRATEGY

Why a people strategy

The Council has a stretching vision – “to be an outward looking Council, working closely with the community and in partnership with others to enhance the quality of lives of present and future generations”.

To achieve its vision, the Council has developed a corporate plan known as The Heart of the Forest. This contains 26 aims which are grouped in the following headings:

- To be an organisation of excellence
- To work with the public and partners
- To improve economic well-being
- To improve social well-being
- To improve environmental well-being

The Council will only achieve its aims and its overall vision through people – employees, Members and partners.

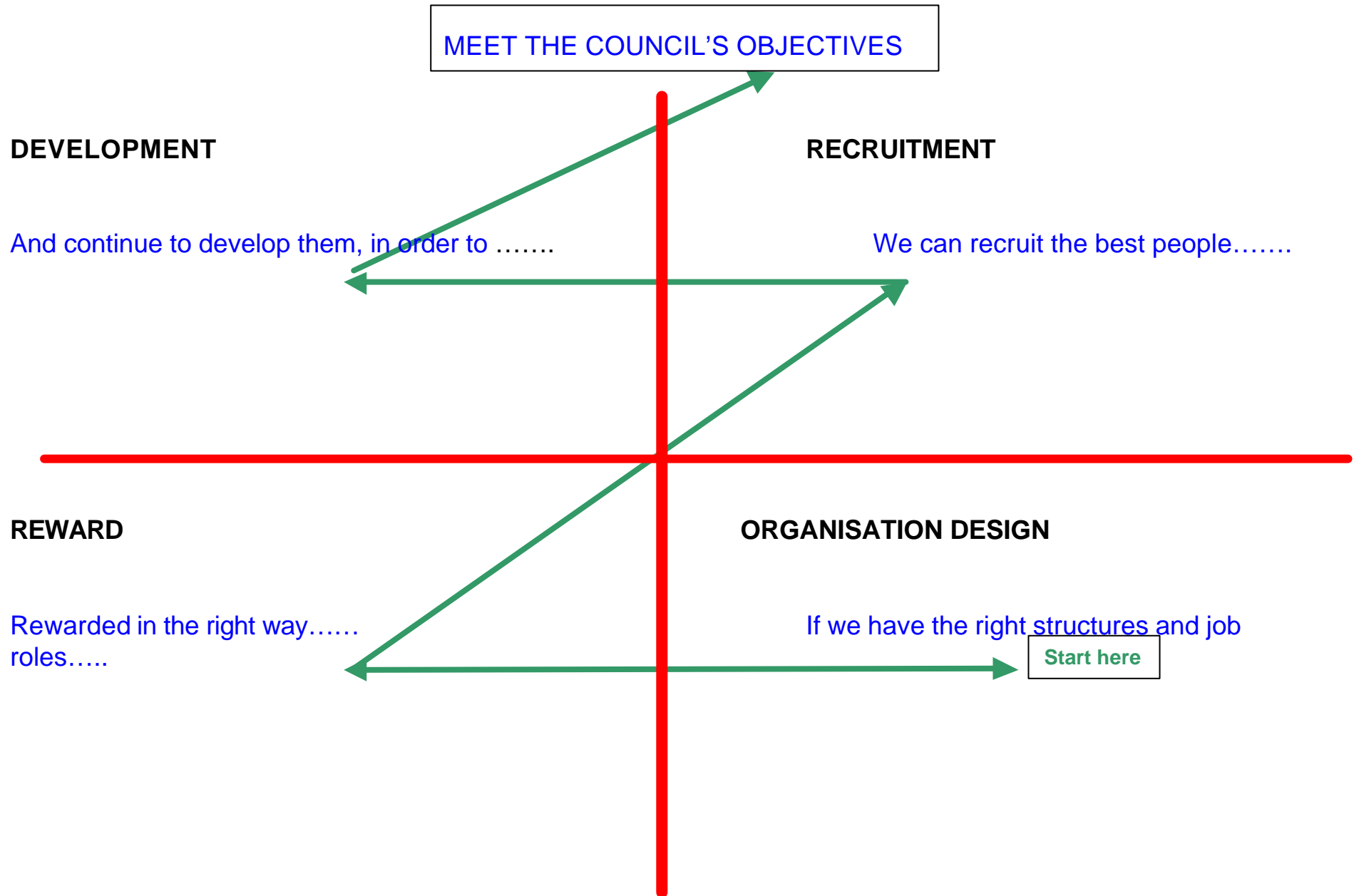
The People Strategy describes the Council's approach to managing and developing people, and is key to achieving the following Council aims under the heading of Organisation of excellence:

- Developing our employees
- Improving our performance
- Promoting equal opportunity and diversity
- Innovation in service delivery
- Making best use of technology

Our vision for managing and developing our people

New Forest District Council recognises that people are fundamental to achieving service improvements and providing maximum benefit to the residents and visitors of the New Forest. The effective organisation, reward and management of our people are critical to meet the Council's objectives now and in the future. Our commitment is to build capacity by developing new skills and capabilities, and by developing all employees to their full potential. The Human Resources team, together with Members, managers and employees, will adopt a proactive, focused approach to planning and developing future workforce requirements.

DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PEOPLE STRATEGY AS A BALANCED SCORECARD



Our Values

Our values have been in place for many years and stand the test of time:

- Openness and trust
- Communication
- Positive thinking
- Simplicity
- Working together
- Caring
- Value for money
- Quality

Managing our finances

Managing our finances is one of the Council's four **priority** aims. Employees are one of the biggest single areas of expenditure to the Council - £25 million last year. It is therefore essential that we carefully consider the best way of managing and getting the most from this valuable resource, and we see spending money on developing our people as an investment rather than a cost.

The national pay and workforce strategy – five themes

As part of the national review of local government terms and conditions in 2003 the government, trade unions and employers organisations have developed a national pay and workforce strategy (P&WS) for all local authorities. The Deputy Prime Minister recognised that in order to deliver the government's agenda, there may need to be transformational change in the way local authority employees are managed, resourced and rewarded. The P&WS sets out common objectives for all authorities, but allows individual authorities the freedom to set their own priorities for action based on their local needs. The P&WS has been revised in 2005 and includes 5 themes, with the emphasis on organisational development. The Council's people strategy mirrors the five themes in the national P&WS with one additional theme: well-being.

The themes in the Council's People Strategy

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Period covered by the People Strategy

The People Strategy covers the period 2005-2008. It will be reviewed alongside the HR service plan during the Autumn each year, and any significant changes will be reported to / agreed by Industrial Relations Committee and Cabinet.

Consultation on the People Strategy

HR team	5 August 2005
Employee Side	10 - 30 August 2005
Departmental Management Teams	23, 30 August 2005
Corporate Management Team	6 September 2005
Industrial Relations Committee	16 September 2005
Portfolio holder	8 September 2005
Lead scrutiny members	November 2005
Cabinet	4 January 2006
Publish	January 2006

Other publications related to the management of people in the Council (hyperlinks will be inserted when published on ForestNet and www.nfdc.gov.uk)

- Annual workforce development plan
- Hr service plan
- Other services' plans including their workforce planning and service training plans
- Local agreements and terms and conditions
- Management Advice Notes
- Employee handbook
- Annual employee report

Section One - Organisation Development

Objective

To plan timely interventions to bring about significant improvements in organisational effectiveness, and to manage change effectively.

Link to Heart of the Forest aims:

Innovation in service delivery
Improving our performance
Manage our physical assets
Making best use of new technology

Summary

The Council faces many changes both internally and externally. We need to ensure that all managers have a range of tools and techniques available to them to manage change. We need to develop all our HR policies to create maximum flexibility in the workforce. We need to explore ways to work in partnership with others to procure the best services for the community. We need to ensure our HR policies enable the Council to meet Level 3 of the Equality Standard. We need to consider our accommodation requirements and manage change effectively.

	Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?
Improving processes	<p>All services are required to look at their cashable and non-cashable efficiency savings. A key means of achieving this is a review of the way work is carried out, particularly front and back office services.</p> <p>As well as the tools and techniques eg process re-design, there are many people management considerations to ensuring that the change is handled effectively.</p>	<p>This is a key requirement of the national P&WS. Tools and techniques such as process mapping, job re-design, and managing change need to be available to managers.</p> <p>A pilot exercise is being undertaken during 2005 in Housing and Commercial Services to streamline services to the customer. Various tools and techniques will be used. This pilot will be evaluated and the learning shared with heads of service by December 2005.</p> <p>A decision will then be given to the best method of developing these skills and techniques in other service managers.</p>

Workforce remodelling	<p>Our organisational structures need to be examined to ensure they have the right balance of professionals, para professionals, operational employees and administrative support.</p> <p>As roles are re-defined, for example to take account of front and back office roles, it is essential that flexibility is part of the culture.</p> <p>Our current job description/job evaluation/supervision and management processes may not be sufficiently flexible to cope with fast changing demands.</p>	<p>Review organisational structures to ensure they provide the best balance – particularly where professionals (eg Planning, Environmental Health) are in short supply. Consider opportunities for partnership with other authorities to provide specialist services</p> <p>Ensure employees and trade unions understand the need for flexibility</p> <p>Review processes for reward, job evaluation etc</p>
Procurement/ partnerships	The opportunity and requirement to look at alternative methods of service delivery and procurement is likely to increase.	<p>Ensure the spirit of TUPE is applied to any transfers of staff</p> <p>Involve employee side at the earliest stage of any discussions</p>
Diversity and Equalities	<p>The Council is committed to achieving Level 3 of the Equality Standard.</p> <p>Our employment policies are fairly sound from an equalities viewpoint, however the demands of the equality standard and also new legislation on equalities should not be taken for granted</p>	<p>During 2005/06 we will review our employment policies in line with the age, religion, sexual orientation and trans -gender legislation</p> <p>Ensure employees are aware of the changes</p> <p>Monitor recruitment and management decisions</p>
Internal communication	The intranet is fast becoming the most used medium for internal communication. We need to ensure that it is organised in the most user friendly way.	<p>During 2006 we will develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topical news page of the Employment Pages to update managers and employees on new legislation, policy etc • Employee handbook will be turned into frequently asked questions (FAQ's) • Learning Zone which will include information on training and learning opportunities, and quick link to booking courses • E-learning courses • Re-launch e-Xchange as a unregulated discussion forum for employees

<p>Accommodation and working arrangements</p>	<p>The Council's office based employees are spread over two main sites in Lyndhurst and Lymington. There are other operational bases including Information Offices, Visitor Information Centres, Health and Leisure Centres, and Commercial services depots.</p> <p>Some employees work from home all or part of the time.</p> <p>Some employees are based in an administrative office, but spend the majority of their time out on site.</p>	<p>There are pressures to rationalise the accommodation for cost and efficiency reasons. Minor on-going change can be handled fairly easily, but large scale change – for example moving to one office base – will need to be managed sensitively, and a strategic approach to hot desking; home working; site based working will need to be developed.</p>
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MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Review of pilot process re-design project in Housing/Commercial services
Cashable/non-cashable efficiency savings (target 2.5% per annum)
Internal communication – surveys of employees
Achieving at least Level 3 of the Equality Standard by 2007

Section Two - Leadership

Objective:

To develop the leaders of today and tomorrow, both officers and Members, to ensure the Council's vision is achieved.

Link to Heart of the Forest aims:

- Develop our employees
- Improve our performance
- Innovation in service delivery
- Promote equal opportunities and diversity

Summary

The Council has run leadership and management development programmes for a number of years, with excellent feedback from participants and their managers. A recent survey of all past participants will be analysed and the programmes adjusted accordingly. Senior managers including CMT will shortly be agreeing their development needs. More work is needed on management competencies to make sure they are relevant to the Council's corporate objectives, and that management skills and competencies can be effectively measured. Further consideration needs to be given to a coaching/mentoring programme, possibly as part of succession planning.

	Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?
Management Development	<p>Management development programmes have been run at supervisory, middle and leadership levels over the past five years.</p> <p>The evaluation of these has shown them to be highly successful from a managers and attendees point of view.</p>	<p>A survey has been undertaken of all former participants and their managers and this will be analysed during August/September 2005. The programmes will be reviewed accordingly. Consideration will be given to providing follow-up/ongoing development for previous participants of the programme.</p>
Review of Management Competencies	<p>Management competencies were introduced as part of the competency framework, see Section Three</p>	<p>As part the review of skills measurement in Section Three, management competencies will also be reviewed to ensure they are the Council's critical success factors and reflect the priorities in the corporate plan.</p> <p>Consideration will also be given to assessment methods including 360 feedback.</p>

<p>Heads of Service / Leadership Development</p>	<p>Some development of heads of service has been undertaken in recent years, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership working skills • Leadership skills • Facilitation skills <p>Speakers have been invited to heads of service meetings on subjects including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional intelligence • Local business managers <p>However these events have been one-off rather than programmed, and attendance has therefore been patchy.</p>	<p>Heads of service, directors and the chief executive will agree on a programme of development which meets their needs following an initial workshop in August 2005.</p>
<p>Coaching/mentoring</p>	<p>A mentoring programme had been introduced a few years ago but has fallen by the wayside.</p> <p>Coaching/mentoring can be particularly useful for developing confidence and empowering individuals to move up the organisation, and can be a key component of succession planning.</p>	<p>Consider the re-introduction of a mentoring programme (internal mentors) or a coaching programme (internal or external coaches). Coaching may be one outcome from the heads of service development.</p>

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Number of managers who have undertaken management development training
Competency framework reflects the critical success factors for leaders at New Forest Council
Competency assessment improving over time

Section Three - Skills and Capacity

Objective

To analyse the skills required to meet current and future priorities for the Council, to measure employees' and members' current level of skill, and to provide appropriate learning opportunities which enable the skill gaps to be met.

Link to Heart of the Forest Aims

Develop our employees
 Manage our finance
 Improve our performance
 Promote equal opportunity and diversity
 Make best use of new technology

Summary

The Council has long had a commitment to training and development, first attaining Investors in People status in 1996. Training coordinators from each directorate meet regularly with Human Resources to agree on the Council's corporate training priorities. Generic training needs are met corporately (ie management development, health and safety, corporate priorities), whilst service specific needs are met by individual managers/employees. More work needs to be done to ensure corporate priorities are developed through the corporate training programme. There is a clear framework for training and development although this needs further publicity. More work needs to be done on systematically identifying and meeting training needs. Developing a workforce which can cope with the demands of electronically enabled services will be a priority, as will ensuring employees skills are transferable and enable succession planning.

	Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?
Our Training and Development framework	<p>We have a training and development framework which clarifies our commitment to training; roles and responsibilities, and evaluation process.</p> <p>The corporate training programme is jointly developed by HR and Training Coordinators. Corporate training events meet generic (not service specific) training needs.</p>	<p>The framework will be publicised and understood by employees and managers.</p> <p>An annual corporate training development plan will be produced and publicised, this will set out the Council's training priorities for the coming year. Consultation on the priorities will take place during February/March each year, via DMT's, CMT, and IRC. The plan will be published in April each year, and evaluated in April/May of the following year.</p> <p>The first annual PLAN will be out for consultation in August/Sept 2005, and published October 2005.</p>

	<p>The corporate programme has mostly been developed from individual training needs identified in PDI's. However, this has not necessarily addressed corporate priorities.</p>	<p>Each service plan will contain a service development plan which will set out the service's training priorities for the coming year. To be published February each year, and evaluated in May/July of the following year.</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of HR, Training Coordinators and Managers has been subject to consultation and was finalised by September 2005.</p>
Investors in People	<p>The Council originally achieved Investors in People accreditation in 1996, and is subject to reassessment every 3 years. The Council was successfully reassessed in November 2005.</p> <p>The assessor found that employees especially valued the Council's flexible working practices. Employees are clear about the Council's objectives and given the training they need to carry out their job. The assessor found that corporate and service planning are becoming embedded in the organisation.</p>	<p>A new standard has been introduced in 2005 which will require even more clarity for individuals on how their contribution helps the Council meet its overall objectives. There is more emphasis on developing leaders and managers to enable the organisation to continue to develop and change. We will need to demonstrate that employees contribute to improvements and change. We will also need to show that the impact of training and development is evaluated.</p>
Measuring the workforce skills and gaps	<p>Our annual performance and development interview (PDI) process is well embedded.</p> <p>SMART targets are agreed by the manager and employee at the start of the year, and evaluated halfway through and at the end of the year.</p> <p>Managers assess employees against a range of COMPETENCIES and highlight areas for development.</p> <p>Individual training needs are assessed and an INDIVIDUAL TRAINING PLAN produced.</p>	<p>The competency framework will be reviewed and adapted during 2006 to reflect the Council's corporate priorities.</p> <p>During 2006 the new HR system will be developed so PDI's can be completed on line.</p> <p>It is proposed that managers and HR will work together to assess the competency and skills level required in each post. During the PDI managers will assess individual's competency and skills. This will result in a skills gap/training need and an individual training plan produced automatically.</p>

	<p>Training needs are collated. Generic (ie not service specific) training needs are translated into corporate training events on the annual CORPORATE TRAINING PLAN.</p> <p>It is currently difficult to collate training needs as the descriptions given by managers does not make clear the type of development required, the method, or the level.</p>	<p>Training needs will be collated corporately to inform the corporate workforce development plan.</p> <p>Booking training courses will be developed on line using the new HR system which will build in an evaluation process for both employee and manager.</p>
<p>Electronic governance and IT skills</p>	<p>This Council is committed to the Implementing Electronic Governance statement. One of the key commitments is to enable all services to be conducted electronically. Much of our communication both internally and externally is now carried out electronically. Many of our internal systems (ordering, invoicing, HR) are now carried out electronically. It is therefore essential that all employees have adequate IT skills.</p> <p>A pilot group of 25 employees have been undertaking the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) during 2005, and the results from this will be evaluated early in 2006.</p>	<p>A project team comprising HR and ICT officers will be set up to consider the most effective way of ensuring all employees have the required level of IT skills. This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing the type and level of skills required in each post • Assessing the level of skills held by individuals • Planning the most effective way(s) of meeting the skills gap <p>The project team will publish their plan for achieving the above by March 2006.</p>
<p>Succession planning Trainees/modern apprenticeships Skills pathways</p>	<p>The age profile for the Council shows that the average age is 41 years. The average age has decreased from 43 in 2002. 42% of the workforce is over 45.</p> <p>For some professions in particular, there is a shortage of trained people nationally – including Planning, Building surveyors, environmental health.</p>	<p>During 2006/7 a research project will be undertaken to establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What opportunities exist for trainees/modern apprenticeships, and how these may meet known skills gaps • What opportunities are there for working with other local authorities, and/or regional, national organisations to influence the supply of skilled employees e.g South East Employers, Learning and Skills Councils • How the national skills framework could be used in the Council

	<p>The proportion of our workforce under 25 is 18% compared to 12% in 2002. However, if we take out Leisure Centres only 7% of our workforce is under 25 compared with 4% in 2002. A survey by the Society of Personnel Managers (SOCPO) called the Image Mirror showed that most young people would not chose to work for a local authority. Our own young persons citizens panel has a similar result. We need to think carefully about how we can encourage young people to join the Council and to develop with us.</p> <p>We also need to find ways of retaining and developing all our employees for maximum flexibility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How jobs can be designed to demonstrate skills pathways and transferable skills – this will enable employees either to move upwards in their own service, or to move sideways/upwards in a different service to meet the Council's needs. • How jobs can be re-designed to use technician skills rather than professional skills where these are in short supply (eg Planners, Environmental Health) • Whether coaching/mentoring would be useful for succession planning and talent spotting • The cost benefit analysis for these initiatives.
Essential skills	<p>The Council has facilitated essential skills training to a pilot group of employees in commercial services. Drop in sessions have been held by the provider, Brockenhurst College, and they have assessed individuals' needs. As well as numeracy and literacy skills, employees most welcomed the opportunity to develop their IT skills.</p> <p>This links to skills pathways as employees develop their skills, they are able to progress through the organisation and take on more responsibility</p>	<p>Further drop in sessions will be provided in Commercial Services and Leisure services, and Brockenhurst College will provide individual training where required.</p> <p>Managers will be encouraged to recognise where essential skills training may be required.</p>
Funding	<p>Training is funded both corporately (c£60k p.a.) and from directorate budgets (c£240k p.a.).</p> <p>Training spend as a proportion of employee costs is 1.3%, which is slightly below the average.</p> <p>Although the training budget was reduced in 2003, last year it was underspent, by £66,000 (20%) in 2004/5.</p>	<p>For further research during 2006:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there any funding from Learning and Skills Councils? • Is there any funding from ODPM Capacity Fund? • Can we link with other authorities to source joint funds? <p>For further consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the training budget sufficient to meet the identified training needs (see section 3)? • Is our method of distributing the training budget appropriate? • Should the service development plans be used to bid for training budget each year?

Partnership	There is not a great deal of joint working so far on training issues.	The Council is participating in a Hampshire wide group looking at collaboration on HR issues, to include partnership working on training and development. There may be further opportunities for partnership with the National Park and Test Valley Borough Council, and the Changing Lives Partnership.
Methods of learning	<p>The workforce development strategy recognises that different people learn in different ways, and it is important to provide a blend of learning methods.</p> <p>A resource library is available at Appletree Court which contains books, manuals, videos, CD's etc. These are classified according to competencies and the index is available on ForestNet.</p> <p>Different methods of learning including secondments, job swaps, coaching/mentoring are encouraged.</p> <p>Internal courses are usually delivered by external trainers who have demonstrated competency in the subject and value for money. When appropriate, training is delivered by internal employees on a "train the trainer basis", examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation skills • PDI training • Managing sickness absence 	<p>e-learning through ForestNet is being developed using a product known as Electrovision. This will lend itself to certain training eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health and safety awareness • IT training • Refresher training/future reference eg managing sickness absence <p>The Learning Zone – an interactive website on ForestNet – will be launched in 2006.</p>
A learning organisation	<p>The Council recognised as part of its 2003 CPA assessment that it needs to continue to develop as a learning organisation.</p> <p>Employees are encouraged to give feedback through the use of employee surveys, employee side meetings.</p>	<p>Awareness will be raised of learning and development opportunities. This will include developing a Learning Zone on ForestNet which will include details of all internal and external courses and a quick link to booking these courses.</p>

Evaluation	<p>The training and development strategy describes four levels for evaluation of training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial reaction • Learning • Behaviour • Results 	<p>Human Resources, Managers and Training Co-ordinators will ensure that training is evaluated on all four levels as appropriate.</p> <p>The new HR system will build in workflows to assist managers in undertaking evaluation at key points in time.</p>
Member training	<p>A rolling programme of training was developed after the elections in May 2003. Members were asked to identify their development needs, and officers highlighted areas which Members would benefit from briefings. The programme is divided into two parts – generic for all Members, and specific to committees or panels.</p> <p>ICT training has been a significant area of development for all members over the last two years.</p> <p>Members are offered opportunities to attend external training and development events.</p>	<p>Carry out a further survey of Members to identify their development needs, and develop an individual development programme for Members.</p> <p>Offer Members the opportunity to participate in the European Computer Driving Licence.</p>

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Training and development framework publicised and understood by employees
 Successful Investors in People assessment
 All employees have a PDI and personal development plan
 All services develop and publicise a service training plan
 Annual corporate training plan linking training provision to Council priorities
 Evaluation of training provision on four levels
 Measurement of competency and skills showing improvement over time
 Succession plans in place resulting in successful recruitment and retention
 Employee consultation showing satisfaction with training provision and methods of learning

Section Four - Resourcing, recruitment and retention

Objective

To recruit and retain the right people at the right time to meet the Council's objectives.

Link to Heart of the Forest aims

Manage our finances
Improve our performance
Innovation in service delivery
Promote equal opportunities and diversity
Make best use of new technology

Summary

The Council has developed a framework for workforce planning as part of the service planning framework. We need to ensure that the data collected and analysis is meaningful, and that the HR policies that are developed meet the needs that have been identified as part of the workforce planning. The Council has below average turnover and is usually able to recruit to vacancies with some exceptions. We need a plan to meet specific recruitment difficulties including working with regional organisations. We have already developed good use of technology including on line application forms, and will develop this further including linking with regional and national recruitment websites. We need to examine our spending on recruitment agencies, in collaboration with other local authorities. We need to develop career paths particularly to recruit younger people or career changers, and we need to develop a flexible culture in the workforce.

	Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?
Workforce planning	Data is produced for the Council as a whole and also for individual business units. This information includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age profile• Gender profile• Ethnic profile• Turnover rates• Sickness rates• Length of service	Our current workforce profile is under-represented by women managers, by ethnic minority employees and managers, by disabled employees; by younger people

	<p>This information is made available to each head of service to assist them in their service planning process. A check list is provided as part of the service planning guidance so they can develop their own service workforce plan, which includes a service training plan. In 2004 the Head of HR met with each service head to assist them in their service workforce plan.</p> <p>Recurring themes from 2004/5 service workforce planning are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment is difficult, although most vacancies are filled, at times the quality of appointment is less than hoped for • Turnover rates are manageable (less than 10%). If turnover goes up this will exacerbate the situation. • Succession planning “growing our own” is therefore a key recruitment strategy. Where this is happening, it tends to be service specific. Staff are recruited and then developed within the role, or existing staff are developed (eg Environmental Health Officers). There is a cost in terms of training investment and less productivity whilst the individual is being trained • Absence levels do vary from section to section, these are being managed • Managers are taking opportunities to redefine roles to provide services in the most efficient way 	<p>We will target recruitment in these areas:</p> <p>Careers fairs Specialist and generalist websites Schools and colleges Disability groups, local community forums and groups</p> <p>Our current recruitment difficulties are; Environmental health officers; Planners; Building surveyors. We need to develop strategies for future recruitment for each of these areas which will include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning • Lobbying and influencing regional employers organisations/universities etc • Working in partnership with others • Job redesign • Ensuring our pay and reward systems are attracting the right people • International recruitment
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Methods of recruitment. E-Recruitment	<p>An on line application form has been developed and is being used. The Council's website has a Job Shop section which is achieving a good response (Heleana to include analysis for recent vacancies)</p> <p>The Agresso HR module includes a recruitment module which will streamline the process.</p>	<p>Explore collaboration with other Hampshire/South East authorities to develop a public sector website – possibly linking to Jobs Go Public or another market leader.</p> <p>Develop “talent pool” so applicants for jobs can be considered for future vacancies.</p> <p>Develop further work flows for Recruitment team and managers. Use electronic rather than paper methods wherever possible</p>
Reduce advertising spend, increase effectiveness	Current spend on recruitment advertising is £90k per annum. Business units are responsible for own recruitment budget.	Develop more streamlined advertising which saves space/money and presents a more modern image of the Council. Use website(s) to provide detail on vacancies.
Reduce spending on recruitment agencies	Business units are responsible for finding a recruitment agency which supplies their service area. The cost of agencies is met from individual business units	Examine the use and cost of recruitment agencies for temporary and permanent employment. Collaborate with other local authorities and procure the best deal for an overall recruitment agency(ies) for the Council
More flexible/transferable workforce. Link to pay and reward and competencies	Exercise to review all administrative bands resulted in some generic job descriptions. Front line customer service jobs have developed generic job descriptions	Examine job families and generic competencies/skill sets. Need to develop a culture of transferable skills/flexible working.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Workforce plans within each service plan
 Reduction in cost of advertising and recruitment
 Length of time between vacancy occurring and being filled
 Vacancy and turnover rates
 Workforce profile better reflecting population profile

Section Five - Pay and Reward

Objective

To operate a pay and reward system which makes the Council an employer of choice and recognises individuals' personal development and contribution

Link to Heart of the Forest aims

Develop our employees
 Manage our finances
 Promote equal opportunity and diversity

Summary

The Council has made good progress on single status although there are still some anomalies which need to be addressed. Our pay structure is local to New Forest and was introduced some 15 years ago, and had been reviewed and fine tuned in 2003. Pay progression is through the traditional approach of incremental progression through time served, and this should be reviewed in light of current and future needs. The possibility of collaborating with neighbouring authorities on pay negotiations and/or harmonising terms and conditions should be explored. More could be made of non-pay benefits so employees are aware of the total reward package.

	Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?
Single status –	8 local agreements covering different service groups. The majority of the single status issues have been resolved (hours of work, job evaluation, holidays, sickness, bonuses). A few anomalies are outstanding including incremental progression for Leisure and Commercial Services and monthly pay.	Review all local agreements, aim for one collective agreement with special clauses for services only where justified
Pay structure and pay progression	Local pay structure introduced 15 years. Significant review and fine tuning took place in 2003, particularly for administrative, clerical grades. Pay progression based on incremental progression for time served.	Undertake a research project to evaluate whether our pay and reward strategy meets current and future business objectives. Examine the use of contribution/competency pay – is this the way forward.

	<p>Pay levels for each grade and pay award are reviewed by independent consultants against market pay.</p> <p>Recent reviews confirm that we are paying market (average) pay.</p>	<p>Review market supplements, bonus, - how are they applied and is this sufficient flexibility?</p> <p>This will require significant consultation with employees, Members, trade unions, managers.</p> <p>Job Redesign-Making sure we are rewarding the skills that we need currently and in the future</p>
Non-pay benefits	<p>Work life balance / flexible benefits is a key non pay benefits.</p> <p>There is currently no provision for employees to tailor their benefits (eg more pay/less holiday) A survey of employees indicated that many employees would be interested in finding out more</p>	<p>Consider informing employees of their total reward package by producing benefit statements including non pay benefits (include leave, sickness, pension contribution, free parking)</p> <p>Consider salary sacrifice/flexible benefits – eg for leave entitlement</p> <p>Introduce home computing initiative Child care vouchers; public sector discounts</p>
Equal Pay	<p>Requirement of the national P&WS that an equal pay review is completed by April 2007</p> <p>Job evaluation is well established and has been implemented through out the Council</p> <p>A review of all band 1-4 jobs (affecting xx employees) was carried out in 2004.</p>	<p>Agree terms of reference and carry out equal pay review by December 2006</p>
Commercial Services partnership with Test Valley Council	<p>The partnership with Test Valley has been running since 2002.</p> <p>Employees of the two authorities are on their respective authority's terms and conditions.</p>	<p>Carry out a review of terms and conditions and make a decision on the scope for harmonisation.</p>

Collaboration with other authorities	Information is shared informally with other authorities on pay levels by profession (through South East Employers). Currently local pay authorities make their own arrangements for pay reviews and pay negotiations. A Hampshire wide HR group is looking at the opportunities for collaboration	Explore the opportunities for collaboration on pay negotiations, pay levels Consider whether to harmonise terms and conditions with neighbouring/partner authorities – i.e Test Valley / National Park
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MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Review of Council's pay levels and pay system compared with the market
Achievement of Single Status
Equal Pay review carried out and any recommendations implemented
Pay system shown to drive performance improvement
Recruitment and retention information

Section Six – Health and well-being

Objective

To promote the health and well-being of our employees to enable them to be as productive as possible.

Link to Heart of the Forest aims

Develop our employees
Manage our finances
Improve our performance
Promote equal opportunity and diversity

Summary

We need to further develop our work life balance policies to ensure we remain an employer of choice and we maximise the productivity of our workforce. We need to build on our agreed package of measures to manage sickness absence, and develop our well-being policies to ensure our workforce is as productive as possible.

	Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?
Work Life Balance / Workwise	Focus groups were held in 2004 to establish employees' priorities for worklife balance issues. A project team has been working on these issues since Autumn 2004. Flexible working arrangements have been piloted and are being evaluated during August 2005.	During 2005/6 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce flexible working policy based on the experience of the pilots• Develop the Homeworking protocol to enable employees to work all or part of the time from home• Explore the options to assist with child care

Sickness management	<p>A package of measures is being developed to manage sickness absence and keep/return employees at work, this includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employee support line and counselling; • special measures to support employees with stress; • days absence without notice; • physiotherapy treatment where cost/benefit analysis supports this • guidance for managers; • robust capability procedure 	Introduce the package of measures during Autumn 2005 and review their effectiveness by April 2006.
Individual health and well-being	The employee support line and the provision of counselling service enables employees to manage their own emotional and other needs. However, employees tend to access these services when things have broken down, we need to change the emphasis from cure to prevention.	<p>Well people who are well managed = a well organisation</p> <p>To develop the health of our workforce we will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce lifestyle sessions including nutrition, stress management • Negotiate and publicise discounts to assist with wellbeing – gym membership, health food shops, spas etc • Design office space to improve employees' health and wellbeing

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Sickness absence rates
 Accident and injury statistics
 Ill health retirements
 Employee morale and well-being measures
 Flexible working protocol in place
 Turnover and vacancy rates

Section Seven – Action Plan

The action plan picks up the key areas for action and improvement over the next 3 years. This is a dynamic document and actions may be added to, removed or changed in line with the Council's priorities.

Organisational Development		
What	Who	When
Pilot tools and techniques including redesigning business processes to find efficiency gains. Share this learning with other heads of service	Heads of Service for Housing and Commercial Services	By 28/02/06
	Head of Service for Leisure	By 30/04/06
Review organisational structures, particularly in areas of professional skills shortage	Heads of Service in consultation with Head of HR	On-going
Review employment policies in line with new equalities legislation	Head of HR	By 31/12/06
Develop employee information on ForestNet including the Learning Zone	Head of HR	By 31/12/05 and ongoing
Develop homeworking protocol for permanent and occasional homeworkers	Head of HR	By 31/12/05
Leadership		
What	Who	When
Review management development programmes, and design future programmes to meet business needs	Head of HR	By 31/12/05
Review management competencies to ensure they reflect the Council's priorities	Head of HR	By 31/12/06
Carry out a further survey of Members' development needs	Head of Legal and Democratic Services	By 31/12/06

Skills and Capacity		
What	Who	When
Produce the annual corporate training development plan	Head of HR	April each year
Produce a service development plan for each service	Heads of Service	February each year (for following year)
Meet Investors in People standard and retain recognition	Head of HR	November 2005 and again within 3 years
Review employee competencies and develop a process for defining the competencies required for each post, and assessing individuals' competencies against the requirements, using the Agresso HR module	Head of HR	By 31/12/06
Devise a strategy for ensuring all employees are equipped with the appropriate level of IT skills	Head of HR and Head of ICT	Draft strategy by 31/03/06
Investigate opportunities to work with other authorities and regional skills organisations, including the use of Modern Apprentices	Head of HR	By 31/03/07
Develop role profiles/job descriptions which demonstrate transferable skills and career pathways	Head of HR	By 31/03/07
Provide further opportunities for Essential Skills training, particularly for Commercial and Leisure services	Head of HR, Unison Branch Secretary	On-going
Examine the levels and sources of funding for training and development and make recommendations for change if appropriate	Head of HR	By 30/9/06
Use e-learning where appropriate as a training method	Head of HR	On-going
Resourcing, recruitment and retention		
What	Who	When
Target recruitment to under-represented groups including attending careers fairs and using specialist websites	Head of HR	Ongoing
In collaboration with other Hampshire authorities, contribute to the development of a "Hampshire jobs" website, and use smaller adverts to "signpost" applicants to the website	Head of HR	By 31/03/06

Collaborate with other Hampshire authorities to secure the best deal for recruitment/temporary agencies	Head of HR	By 31/03/06
Pay and Reward		
What	Who	When
Review all local agreements – aiming for one local agreement for whole authority	Head of HR, CMT, Pay Panel	By 31/03/07
Considers options for pay progression for employees, carry out consultation and make a recommendation to Cabinet/Council	Head of HR	By 31/03/07
Examine non-pay benefits and salary sacrifice schemes and make recommendations to pay panel to Cabinet/Council	Head of HR	By 31/03/06
Carry out an Equal Pay Review and make recommendations for action	Head of HR	By 31/12/06
Consider options for collaborating with other Hampshire authorities in securing pay consultancy and/or sharing information	Head of HR	Ongoing
Health and well-being		
What	Who	When
Introduce flexible working policy based on experience with pilots	Head of HR	By 01/04/06
Introduce package of sickness measures	Head of HR	By 31/12/05
Start employee support line	Head of HR	By 31/12/05