



## **WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2014-2016**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Council's Workforce Strategy was due to be reviewed during 2013. The review was delayed to later in 2013 to ensure that employee survey feedback was considered and incorporated into the updated Strategy.
- 1.2 The Strategy is attached as Appendix 1.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The aim of this Workforce Strategy is to set out the Council's approach and plans for people management. It is the framework which will provide the future direction of all Human Resources activity in the Council. This will be done by detailing the kind of employer the Council now needs to be and outlining its plans on how it intends to get there.
- 2.2 A presentation detailing the future workforce challenges was considered by the Industrial Relations Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> September and the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 26<sup>th</sup> September. The draft Strategy was discussed at Heads of Service meeting in October and considered by the Executive Management Team in November.
- 2.3 The Strategy was considered at Industrial Relations Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

### **3. STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The corporate objectives and the workforce context have identified a number of recurring themes which will deliver the Workforce Strategy. There are six themes and these are listed below:
  - Planning our workforce
  - Transforming our organisation
  - Developing our management and leadership capability
  - Recruiting and developing workforce, skills and capacity
  - Managing our performance
  - Developing pay and reward

The themes include a number of high level actions which will be delivered over the life of the Strategy.

3.2 The Strategy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Executive Management Team. The Human Resources Service Action Plan will provide further details to support the delivery of the high level actions.

#### **4. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS**

4.1 I support the proposed Strategy and commend it to Members for adoption.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

5.1 That Cabinet agree the Workforce Strategy 2014-16.

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#### **Background Papers:**

Published documents



# New Forest

## DISTRICT COUNCIL

### WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2014 – 2016

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## Foreword

Our vision is to enhance the quality of lives of both present and future generations within the New Forest. We will look to provide this in many ways, including through the delivery of excellent public services. Our approach to this vision relies on people who are well motivated and trained, with working conditions which help them provide services with care, quality and fairness. The Council operates in an environment where the only certainty is the need to respond to change, while also controlling and reducing costs. People, performance and continuous improvement are at the centre of the Council's response to these challenges.

At New Forest District Council we believe that employees are the most valuable resource in our organisation. We appreciate their flexibility, commitment and resilience, and without them we will not deliver the improvements needed to deliver quality services now and in the future. If we are to make the most of our employees and deliver excellent services, we must plan how we will continue to develop a well-skilled, well-motivated and high performing workforce.

This Strategy outlines our commitment to developing our employees and to ensuring we have the right people, with the right skills, to deliver customer led services.

Dave Yates  
Chief Executive

Barry Rickman  
Leader of the Council

## Introduction

The aim of this Strategy is to set out the Council's approach and plans for people management. It is the framework which will provide the future direction of all Human Resource activity in the Council. This will be done by detailing the kind of employer the Council now needs to be and outlining its plans on how it intends to get there. As such it represents a step forward in the way human resource management is to be focused, prioritised and delivered in the Council.

The document has been shaped by the views of employees, trade unions and Members, in answer to the following questions:

- What is the Strategy intended to do?
- How is it linked to the Council's objectives?
- Where are we now in terms of:
  - The profile of the workforce; and
  - The internal and external challenges which face the Council as an employer
- What kind of employer does the Council need to be in the future?
- What are our key priorities to achieve the change?
- How will we achieve these improvements and how will they be measured?

## **What is the Strategy intended to do?**

Make a direct contribution to the Council's Strategic Corporate Plan and objectives by focusing on how people management activity can achieve these goals.

Identify and set out what is important to the Council in respect of the management and development of its employees.

Translate what is important into specific human resource actions, performance measures and accountabilities which will then be tracked over time.

## **Where are we now?**

### Overview

Our workforce has continued to develop and adapt to the changes it has faced over the last 3 years. Some of the key actions taken within the Workforce Strategy are listed below:

- We have continued to re-structure services to ensure they are provided in the most efficient and effective way and our resources are used to best effect – this has included the partnership agreement for Dibden Golf Course and the ceasing of the Sheltered Housing Service. We have also set up new combined service areas i.e. Leisure and Employment. To meet both financial and service needs, services have been continuously reviewing job roles and staffing levels.
- We have modernised current workforce practices to the benefit of the council and employees – including an on-line Performance and Development Interview (PDI) process.
- We have developed our management capability by up-skilling our managers in performance management, recruitment and selection.
- Our workforce performance has continued to be a priority, with sickness levels dropping to below the 8 days per FTE target in 2011/12 and 2012/13.
- To meet the Council's single status and equal pay obligations a Pay and Reward proposal was agreed and implemented in 2010 (which included moving fixed point staff onto incremental progression). The Terms and Conditions review (which included the phasing out of lease cars and the removal of private health cover) was agreed in September 2012, with the majority of changes implemented by 1 April 2013. The final phasing out of lease cars will be completed by August 2014.
- We have continued to consult and communicate with our workforce. The employee survey 2010 and focus groups highlighted a number of key concerns – and these were translated into an action plan. The action plan included the review of the Performance Management procedure and improving internal communication. We undertook focus groups in relation to office optimisation in 2012 and a subsequent action plan was agreed by EMT. In February 2013 we conducted an updated employee survey, which was supported by focus groups in April 2013.
- We as a Council are fully committed to recruiting and developing young people. Since 2010 we have recruited 14 apprentices and a number of these young people have secured permanent posts after successfully completing their apprenticeships.

- We invested in our staffing accommodation and moved staff from Lymington Town Hall bringing together a number of services that were located at separate sites or on different floors (i.e. Public Health and Community Safety; and Planning at Appletree Court).

## **Corporate Plan**

“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” is the Councils stretching vision.

To achieve its vision, the Council has developed a corporate plan, ‘Delivering for our communities’. The vision is delivered through:

A set of values which are shared by all Members and employees. These are:

- Listening
- Being open and trusting
- Achieving value for money
- Treating everyone fairly
- Innovating
- Delivering

And through our key priorities which are:

- Improving services to the customer
- Managing all our resources efficiently
- Maintaining excellent performance in the delivery of our services
- Developing effective partnerships with other local organisations

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

The Workforce Strategy describes the Council’s approach to managing and developing people, and is key to achieving the Council’s aim ‘Delivering through People’

In accordance with the principles of equalities and diversity, the commitment to our workforce extends to everyone, regardless of their gender, race, colour, and ethnic or national origin, religion, disability, marital status, caring responsibility, trade union membership, and age, sexual orientation, working pattern or grade.

The Council is aware of the importance of workforce planning and development in an environment that requires adaptability rather than stability.

## Data for the District

The census data for 2011 states a total resident population in New Forest of 176,462. This is split as follows:

Gender	Percentage
Women	51.9
Men	48.1

Age	Percentage
Under 16	16.2
16-24	8.9
25-64	44.9
65 plus	30

Ethnicity	Percentage
White	97.6
BME	2.4

There is no official figure available on the percentage of the population that is registered disabled, but we would estimate this figure at around 8%.

## Our workforce profile

The table below details our workforce profile in 2009 and in 2013.

	2009	2013
<b>Total number of employees</b>	1565	1243
	Percentage	Percentage
<b>Disabled</b>	3	2
<b>BME</b>	0.6	1

Gender	Percentage	Percentage
<b>Women</b>	55	53
<b>Men</b>	45	47

Age	Percentage	Percentage
16-24	20	15.5
25-34	16	16
35-44	20	20
45-54	22	25
55-64	21	20
Over 65	1	3.5

## **Workforce Context**

The current workforce at New Forest District Council has a number of characteristics which present some challenges if the Council is to achieve the aim of fitting its future workforce profile to changing service delivery needs. Among these challenges are:

### **Employment of Young People**

There is a local, regional and national need to attract young people to work within local government and to address the currently poor image of a public sector career. Specifically, we need to increase the number of young people coming into the Council in order that their skills can be developed for future succession planning and career opportunities. The recruitment of young people needs to continue to be given a special focus. We will continue to make progress using apprenticeships and give greater focus to trainees and internships.

### **Hard to fill posts**

The economic situation over the last 3-5 years has eased the difficulties in recruiting, but there is still a concern that there are not enough talented employees in key occupational areas. There is also concern that, as we see growth in the Housing industry and the general employment market in the private sector, this will put pressure on the Council's ability to recruit and retain good staff.

### **Profile of local government as an employer**

The Council is aware that, in order to attract and retain employees of a variety of ages and backgrounds, we need to promote New Forest District Council as an employer of choice and to raise the profile of local government as a career. Key actions in this plan include liaison with schools and the promotion of flexible working policies.

### **Diversity of our workforce**

To ensure our services reflect the needs of our customers, we must ensure we have a workforce that reflects the community. Specifically, we need to provide an organisation that is free from all forms of discrimination and which promotes the benefits of equality and diversity.

### **Succession planning**

It is often difficult to recruit experienced local talent. While this suggests a need to attract individuals from outside the District, we also need to develop and retain talented employees in key areas. Succession planning has been highlighted as a need, especially for our management population.

### **Changing nature of work**

The nature of work and service delivery is shifting. For example, some technical work could be sourced elsewhere rather than by directly employed staff. The Council's role as a commissioner of services, rather than as a direct provider, will continue to grow. The Council therefore needs to be equipped to deliver efficient and effective services through business process redesign as well as employing staff with advanced skills in partnership and procurement. Strategic partnerships will lead to some decrease in the number of directly employed staff in some areas, while in other parts of the Council, we will continue to directly provide services on behalf of partners and this may result in some small increases in staffing levels. Any changes are likely to affect services provided directly to the public as well as support services.



## Where do we want to be and how will we get there?

The corporate objectives and the workforce context have identified a number of recurring themes, which need addressing from a people management perspective. These issues have been classified into six themes.

These are:

- Planning our workforce
- Transforming our organisation
- Developing our Management and Leadership capability
- Recruiting and developing Workforce, skills and capacity
- Managing our performance
- Developing pay and reward

The themes include a number of high level actions which will be delivered over the life of the Strategy. The high level actions have been prioritised and will be delivered by the end of the year detailed.

<b>Planning our workforce</b>	<b>Dates</b>
To develop a Council-wide approach to workforce planning that reflects strategic priorities and objectives and supports the delivery of services. The service based workforce plans will address current and future workforce needs for people and skills, and will be underpinned by fit-for-purpose information on demand for services, workforce size and profile, and systematic collection of the views of staff. The ageing profile of the workforce, the shift to more part-time working, apprenticeships and internships will all be key considerations in the workforce plans.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop service workforce plans (annually).</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To continue to develop the Council's strategy on the employment of young people including support for apprenticeships and internships.</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review the policies and procedures in place for managing and developing an ageing workforce</li> </ul>	2015

<b>Transforming our organisation</b>	<b>Dates</b>
We will effectively build workforce support for new structures and new ways of working to deliver customer focused and efficient services, in partnership. We will review organisational structures and consider these in the current and future context, taking full consideration of the Medium Term Financial Plan and the external as well as internal priorities. The Council will have a corporate approach to service delivery which includes partnerships, commissioning, and outsourcing. The delivery model will reduce cost/increase capacity or deliver a better service for our customers. We will develop a culture of innovation and continuous improvement that embraces new ways of working and continual learning to achieve customer centred services in the most efficient way possible.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review policies and procedures in light of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings) 2014</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review mobile working practices</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop a Council-wide approach to business process re-design</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop and implement changes from the Employee Survey Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review organisational development policies and procedures to support the Council's medium term service review programme</li> </ul>	2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To undertake a biennial employee survey of our workforce</li> </ul>	2015

<b>Developing Management and Leadership capability</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<p>Members play a key role in leading the Council and we will continue to deliver a Councillors Development Programme to meet current as well as future needs. We will be clear about the leadership and management qualities we require in both the short and medium term. It is clear that the role of the manager has and will continue to change considerably. We will take effective action to attract, develop and retain leaders for the future. We need to raise performance and skill levels by delivering an integrated management development programme – good people management skills will be core. We believe our workforce should reflect our community and in turn our management should reflect our diverse workforce. We will continue to monitor our diversity profile and ensure that no barriers exist to accessing management opportunities.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To continue to deliver the Councillors Development Programme</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To continue to deliver high standard Management Development Programmes which strengthen accountability and performance management skills</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review management standards and introduce leadership standards as part of the Performance and Development Interview process</li> </ul>	2015

<b>Recruiting and developing workforce skills and capacity</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<p>The Council will present itself as a good employer in the marketplace, exploiting a range of recruitment channels. When skills gaps are identified from the workforce plans the Council will need to ensure that plans are in place to address the gaps. The Council will promote its talented employees through a talent management approach and undertake effective succession planning. We will develop our workforce to ensure they have the right skills to do their jobs, both in the short and medium term. This will include ICT and partnership skills.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review the Council's recruitment and selection policies and procedures to ensure they meet the needs of the Council in the medium term</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review the Recruitment Portal to ensure it continues to enable the Council to access the right candidates for the wide variety of job roles.</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To liaise with schools and colleges on promoting the Council as an employer of choice</li> </ul>	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review the vacancy management process to ensure it is more efficient</li> </ul>	2014

<b>Managing our Performance</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<p>The Council's performance management arrangements will reflect priorities and have a strong customer focus to support new patterns of service delivery. We will improve performance management arrangements which support management in delivering services, that are fit for purpose, and action will be taken to resolve poor performance. We will continue to invest in the health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce. We will implement initiatives that will optimise health outcomes and productivity through improved attendance. We will regularly review staffing costs in service areas against other organisations and take appropriate action. We will be able to demonstrate how our staff benefit the community, including examples of staff that identify and implement efficiencies and innovation, backed by a strong constructive and improving culture.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review attendance policies and procedures to ensure attendance levels are maintained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review Capability procedure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To build resilience and capacity in a changing workforce environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2015</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to review staffing costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>

<b>Developing Pay and Reward</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<p>The Council will modernise its pay and reward frameworks to ensure they reflect the Councils priority objectives and they are able to attract, retain and motivate a high performance workforce. We will continue to keep the pay bills under control by anticipating and addressing potential equal pay risks. We will invest in training managers to appropriately and fairly manage the performance of employees (determine awards rather than rely on automatic systems). We acknowledge that there is a gap between staff expectations on pay and benefits and what the Council can deliver. We hope to improve staff understanding by providing better communication when reviewing pay, terms and conditions.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To agree and implement the Instructor Pay structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To implement the LGPS Pension changes 2014</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To introduce a total rewards approach – this approach recognises that the workforce is diverse and a wide range of tools need to be available to motivate the workforce – some financial but also others related to lifestyle choices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2015/16</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To consider performance based recognition schemes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2015/16</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review national pay arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2015</li> </ul>

## **How will we measure and monitor the Workforce Strategy?**

The high level actions will be discussed with Heads of Service. We will consult operational managers via e-mail and working groups. Trade Unions will be consulted via the Industrial Relations Committee. Some decisions will be made by Executive Management Team and changes to Terms and Conditions of Service will be considered by the General Purposes and Licensing Committee and Council.