



WORKFORCE STRATEGY

2008 – 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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Action Plan – (to be developed)

Workforce Strategy

1 Introduction

The Workforce Strategy is a key document that draws together strategically all that the Council does to attract, retain, support and develop its people to meet its priorities.

In order to meet the new challenges and opportunities ahead, it is critical that the Council has the right people, in the right jobs with the right skills at the right time. The Council must continue to attract and retain talent and must develop and re-skill, where necessary, existing staff to meet the challenges ahead.

The Workforce Strategy has been developed taking into account existing key policies and the requirements included in the national Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government. There are parts of the Strategy which are incomplete but will be developed as circumstances demand, as the national picture changes and as the Council's priorities evolve. It will be refined each year to become better integrated into Service Planning and Financial Planning.

2 Strategic Alignment

The Councils Mission Statement is:

'To improve the quality of life of those who live and work in the District'.

In fulfilling this mission the Council has seven strategic themes:-

- Putting Customers First
- Making Better Use of Resources
- Organising to Deliver
- Healthier Communities
- Promoting Prosperity
- Community Safety
- Protecting the Environment

These are supported by annual priorities, which for 2008/2009 are:-

- Clean, green and healthy environment. To assist residents to recycle more of their waste and thus reduce landfill.
- Safer and stronger communities.
- Safeguarding the interests of our community in implementing any new form of local Government structure.
- Improving the leisure/recreational offer within the District.
- Championing the reduction in greenhouses gasses, leading by example.
- Delivering a balanced and sustainable budget that meets the needs and priorities of the District.

Whilst the Corporate Plan identifies the issues facing the Authority and sets out how we intend to tackle them, delivery will only be achieved through the valuable and effective contribution of its people. The Workforce Strategy sets out how we aim to achieve our priorities through our staff and therefore, is critical to the Council in achieving its priorities.

The Strategy does not stand alone. For it to be effective it must link into other corporate strategies/plans such as:-

- State of the Area Address
- Corporate Plan
- Community Strategy
- Annual Delivery Plan
- Corporate Equality Scheme
- Financial Strategy
- Health & Safety Strategy
- Training and Development Programme
- Access to Services Strategy
- Procurement Strategy
- Service Plans
- ICT Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy

3 Current Position

The Council employs approximately 400 people organised into seven service areas working very closely together.

Set out below are details of the Council's Workforce:

As at 31 December 2007	Male	Female
Full time permanent	88	140
Full time temporary	10	14
Part time permanent	21	98
Part time temporary	2	2
Total	121	254
Total employees	375	

Age breakdown of Council as at 31 December 2007	Male	% of workforce	Female	% of workforce
16-20	8	2.1%	12	3.2%
21-30	21	5.6%	43	11.5%
31-40	20	5.3%	44	11.7%
41-50	30	8.0%	79	21.1%
51-60	29	7.7%	60	16.0%
61+	13	3.5%	16	4.3%

The Council serves a population of 76,468 as at 2001 census. Set out below is a breakdown of some of the key data relating to the make up of the population:

- Males make up 48.9% of the population, females make up 51.1%.
- Ethnic minorities make up 0.68% of the population
- 41% of the population are above 45 which is higher than the national average
- Percentage 'economically active' is 66.71% which is higher than the national average
- Unemployment rates are 2.49% (of 'economically active 16-74 year olds')
The national average is 3.35%
- 4.12% of economically active 16-74 year olds are permanently sick or disabled

The Council has been and continues to develop as an organisation in response to the demands of the modernising agenda, the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and its own desire for continuous improvement. We are committed to improving our performance to ensure quality of service, secure business continuity and enhance the reputation of the Council, and to demonstrate this with real improvements to local and statutory performance indicators.

Driving Cultural Change

We recognise that improvements to the way we work need to be supported by cultural change. This Strategy takes into account a number of key drivers for change, some of which are still evolving.

These drivers include external influences which are driving changes such as:-

- Government Policy – especially in relation to the changing role and nature of Local Authorities, including the modernisation agenda
- The drive for continuous improvement
- E-government and access to services resulting in new working arrangements
- Financial pressures
- Moving the Equalities agenda forward
- Work life/balance issues
- Recruitment and retention issues
- Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government
- Enhanced two tier working
- Compliance with National and European Legislation

Partnership Working

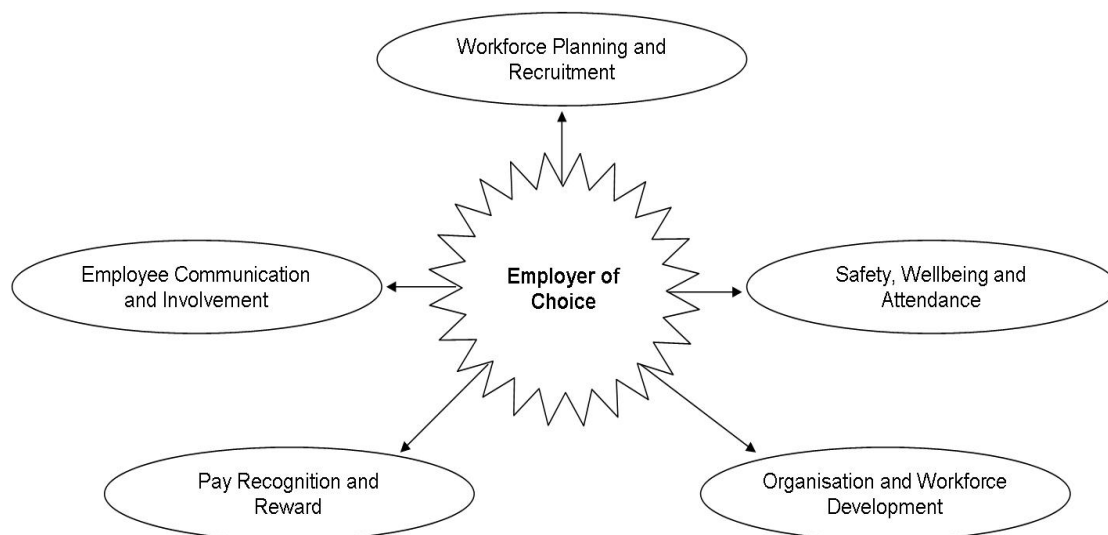
The ethos of partnership working is strong in the Authority. There has long been a recognition that as a small District Council, delivering key services to local communities can be advanced best with enhanced working with neighbouring authorities, local agencies and the voluntary sector. Partnerships are also a key element in the transformation of services. The Authority will continue to champion partnership working building on the recognised success of its existing partnerships e.g. Building Control and Audit.

4 Building Blocks of Success

Against the backdrop of the Council's vision, strategic themes and priorities, and in the context of key drivers for change, this Strategy has been designed in a way to meet and respond to the following organisational challenges:-

- 1 Workforce Planning and Recruitment
- 2 Safety and Wellbeing
- 3 Organisation & Workforce Development
- 4 Pay, Recognition and Reward
- 5 Employee Communication and Involvement

These five building blocks bring together related programmes of work to enable us to achieve our priorities as identified in the Corporate Plan. Together they help the Council establish and maintain itself as an employer of choice within the local, regional and national community.



4.1 Workforce Planning and Recruitment

What this means:-

- Aiming to be an organisation that people aspire to work for and an employer of choice
- Planning, recruiting and maintaining a workforce that meets the aims and the needs of the Council for service delivery
- Achieving a workforce profile which reflects the local community
- Recognising and addressing the many workforce issues affecting the Council e.g. age of the workforce, skills shortages in certain occupational areas, lack of diversity, recruitment and retention
- Setting the highest standards of employment practice
- Creating flexible employment
- Ensuring that employees contributions are valued and recognised

In the future there will be greater emphasis on homeworking, remote and mobile working as we aim to reduce the amount of office space required to deliver our services.

Achievements

Our achievements to date have included:

- Working with the other District Councils in North Yorkshire, the Council has procured recruitment advertising. It also uses a framework agreement for the recruitment of agency and consultancy staff. Both initiatives will result in economies of scale and savings.
- Online recruitment has been developed over the past year. The development of the SDC recruitment website has helped to improve the image of the Council as an employer and enhance awareness of the Council and the opportunities available.
- Our involvement in the development of the regional North Yorkshire Together website has increased exposure of job opportunities. The site has a dedicated section aimed at providing information in other languages and assists people moving into the area from other nationalities. It also allows the Authority to create a pool of interested applicants for future vacancies.
- Mandatory Recruitment and Selection training for all staff involved in recruitment and retention activity.
- A programme of work placements and NVQ traineeships are encouraging young people to join the Authority.
- The introduction of career grades in a number of service areas to build capacity and encourage career progression, especially in hard to recruit areas. In addition we have seen the realignment of an environmental health post, and the introduction of a traineeship to build skills internally.
- The introduction of increased flexible work patterns in areas such as benefits, which has led to staff retention.
- Working in partnership with the North Yorkshire Recruitment Group, we are promoting local government careers to schools and colleges. There is also attendance at career fairs.
- Applications are considered from staff approaching retirement for continuation in post or for flexible working after normal retirement age.

- The operation of good diversity practices to encourage employment and retention of employees of any gender, with a disability or from any ethnic minority. Regular Equalities and Diversity training is held, and is mandatory, for all staff.
- Ways of focussing on retention issues include:
 - New employees settling into the environment as quickly as possible and their development needs identified. The new Employee Handbook and Induction programme help with this. The Induction Programme now includes a 'buddy' system, giving one to one support from an existing staff member, allowing newly appointed staff to settle into the organisation as quickly as possible
 - Sound employment practices
 - Exit interview monitoring, which allows us to identify trends in turnover and address issues of concern
 - Supporting a worklife balance. The Council has policies on relocation, flexitime homeworking and job-share to assist with this

Future Activities

Activities which will form part of an agreed action plan will include the following:

- Introduction of workforce development tools as part of the service planning process
- Joint procurement for agency/consulting staff to reduce dependency on temporary workers and associated costs
- Addressing the lack of young people attracted to Local Government
- The continuation of a mentoring scheme following on from the North Yorkshire Improvement Partnership initiative
- Use of the North Yorkshire Together web portal to create a pool of possible candidates for job vacancies
- Development of the on-line recruitment site
- Development of a secondment policy and honorarium policy
- Develop e-learning induction module
- Introduction of Childcare Voucher Scheme
- Review of the flexitime policy following feedback from the staff focus group

Measures of success

Our measures of success will include:

- Workforce Development Plans in place
- Reduction in the cost of agency/consultancy staff
- Number of filled NVQ placements
- A minimum of three work related placements per annum

- Maintaining acceptable turnover figures
- Reduction in recruitment costs
- Reduction in time to fill vacancies
- Diverse and representative workforce
- Increase in satisfaction levels from staff and the public
- Reduction in absence management figures

4.2 Safety, wellbeing and attendance

What this means:

- Creating stimulating, exciting and safe and healthy environments for staff
- Developing a range of flexible working arrangements
- Developing a range of flexible working options
- Having a proactive approach to the management of absence management
- Providing challenging and satisfying work
- Enhancing the opportunities for more flexible working

Achievements

Our achievements to date have included:

- Implementation of a Health and Safety Policy
- Implementation of effective Health and Safety consultation mechanisms
- Implementation of a revised absence management policy which has seen the reduction in absence figures

Future Activities

Activities which will form part of an agreed action plan will include the following:

- Review of the occupational health provision for the Authority
- Promoting the wellbeing of staff with associated interventions

Measures of success

Our measures of success will include:

- Reduced levels of sickness related absence
- Reduced turnover
- Increased staff morale

4.3 Organisation and Workforce Development

What this means:-

- Developing a culture of high performance and systematic learning
- Staff with the right skills and knowledge to deliver the Council's aims and objectives
- Building capacity of staff
- Developing strong leadership and management skills
- Embracing cultural change to meet future needs
- Ensuring continued attainment of the Investors in People Standard
- Development of a corporate training programme to underpin learning and development activity for staff and Councillors to meet the changing needs of the organisation
- Becoming a learning organisation
- Strengthening the Joint Progress Review Process and ensuring a strong link into the Performance Management Process

Achievements

Our achievements to date have included:

- The development of a yearly Training Programme for all staff which includes mandatory in-house training modules eg Absence Management, Disciplinary procedures, Project Management and Procurement and Recruitment and Selection among others
- Introduction of a Councillor Training Programme
- Introduction of a Staff Handbook for new staff and Employee Handbook to ensure that all staff have the necessary information to carry out their jobs, as well as information about the organisation and their own future development
- Managers are encouraged to attend development training. A recent Springboard course focussed on development of women in middle management positions
- Places on a Leadership Academy have been provided for Councillors and this has been cited as being positive and appreciated by those who attended
- Through the North Yorkshire Improvement Partnership we have seen the introduction of the following:
 - ⇒ Level 5 Institute of Leadership and Management programme for middle managers.
 - ⇒ Opportunities for attendance at Development Centres, including 360 degree feedback.
 - ⇒ Development and introduction of a Management Competency Framework
 - ⇒ Series of Master Classes for Managers

- ⇒ Trained assessors
- ⇒ Development of e-learning materials

Future Activities

Activities which will form part of an agreed action plan will include the following:

- Development of the Management Competency Framework into the Joint Progress Review and recruitment processes
- A training needs assessment carried out to identify current skills and where we need to invest for future development to prepare staff to meet the challenges ahead
- Maintaining and developing Investor In People accreditation
- Talent management initiatives introduced to support success in planning
- Roll out of the 360° feedback to senior managers
- Annual Training Programme for staff and Councillors is produced and activity evaluated

Measures of success

Our measures of success will include:

- Ensure 100% of staff have a yearly JPR
- Increase staff perception of the value of their JPR
- Investor in People accreditation returned in October 2008
- Introduction of the e-learning modules
- Satisfaction levels mentioned with regard to training received

4.4 Pay, Recognition and Reward

What this means

- Having the pay systems to reflect new structures, new priorities and new ways of working and to reinforce high performance
- Integrating a competency based approach to performance management
- Recognising and rewarding good practice

Achievements

Our achievements to date have included:

- Implemented Job Evaluation and Single Status
- Introduction of a number of career graded posts
- Career progression embedded in service reviews
- Implementation of a staff recognition award – SCOOP

- Provision of a graduate placement through the National Graduate Development Programme

Future Activities

Activities which will form part of an agreed action plan will include the following:

- Carry out an Equal Pay Audit
- Developing approaches to succession planning
- Developing policies for secondment and honorarium payments in recognition of staff undertaking additional duties

Measures of success

Our measures of success will include:

- Reduced turnover
- Improved performance in the recruitment market
- Retention of staff
- Improved performance
- Improved customer satisfaction

4.5 Employee Communications and Involvement

What this means:-

- Building excellent communication and investment for all employees
- Effective communication for everyone so that we can all understand changes and be included in improvement
- Ensure we have employment policies and practices that are 'fit for purpose' for a changing organisation
- Effective staff involvement
- Good levels of staff motivation
- Be viewed as an organisation that keeps its people well informed and seeks their views by informing, listening and encouraging feedback

Achievements

Our achievements to date have included:

- The introduction of revised key policies including:-
 - ⇒ Absence Management Policy leading to reduced levels of absence
 - ⇒ Discipline and Grievance
 - ⇒ Harassment and Bullying
 - ⇒ Protocol for the management of change

- Effective methods of communication including Managers Conference, Birthday Forum, Training Hour briefings, Team briefings, Staff Newsletter
- Good relationship with Unison through regular liaison meetings
- Introduction of a Communication Strategy

Future Activities

Activities which will form part of an agreed action plan will include the following:

- Carry out a staff survey
- Review the consultation mechanism
- Review the Homeworking Policy
- Communication of the Workforce Strategy to all staff

Measures of success

Our measures of success will include:

- Increased levels in staff satisfaction with regard to levels of communication
- Increased morale
- Good understanding of the Councils Themes and Priorities
- Improved response rate to the staff survey
- Development of an agreed Action Plan after the receipt of the staff survey results
- Low number of grievances lodged

5 Implementation

The Workforce Strategy will form the overarching framework for the managing and developing people over the next three years.

The key objectives within this Strategy will ensure that the work of the Human Resources service is closely aligned to the Councils overall objectives in order to ensure the right people are achieving the right priorities at the right time.

The Strategy will be communicated to all staff and to ensure that the key issues and actions are taken forward.

A detailed Action Plan will support the Strategy, together with actions identified in the Human Resources and other relevant Service Plans to ensure widespread commitment and successful delivery.

6 Monitoring and Evaluation and Review

The success of the Workforce Strategy will be recorded against the indicators developed a part of the action plan which will be considered on a regular basis by Operational and Joint Management Teams to ensure its relevance, effectiveness and general fitness for purpose. An annual update will be submitted to Councillors. The Strategy will evidence the needs of the organisation over the next three years. It will seek to deliver a culture of shared learning, continuous improvement and challenge.

The broad objectives, and success outcomes outlined in the Strategy will have explicit targets to ensure they are achieved.

Workforce Strategy Action Plan 2008

Recruitment

What do we need to do	Measures of Success	Who will do it	By When	liP Indicator
Introduce workforce development tools as part of the service planning process	Workforce Development Plans will be in place			1
Develop joint procurement for agency/consulting staff to reduce dependency on temporary workers and associated costs	Reduction in the cost of agency/consultancy staff			1
Address the lack of young people attracted to Local Government	Number of filled NVQ placements			1 / 3 / 10
Continue the mentoring scheme following on from North Yorkshire Improvement initiative	A minimum of three work related placements per annum			2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 9
Make use of the North Yorkshire Together web portal to create a pool of possible candidates for job vacancies	Maintaining acceptable turnover figures Diverse and represented workforce			1 / 3
Develop the on-line recruitment site	Reduction in recruitment costs Reduction in time to fill vacancies			1
Develop a secondment policy and honorarium policy	Increase in staff satisfaction levels			3 / 4 / 5 / 7 / 8 / 9
Develop an e-learning induction module	Increase in staff effectiveness			2 / 3 / 8 / 9 / 10
Introduction of Childcare Voucher Scheme	Increase in satisfaction levels from staff			3
Review the flexitime policy following feedback from the staff focus group	Reduction in absence management figures Increase in staff satisfaction levels			3

Safety, Wellbeing and Attendance

What do we need to do	Measures of Success	Who will do it	By When	liP Indicator
Review the occupational Health provision for the Authority	Reduced levels of sickness related absence Reduce turnover Increase staff morale			1 / 3
Promote the wellbeing of staff with associated intervention	Reduced levels of sickness related absence Reduce turnover Increase staff morale			1 / 3 / 10

Organisation and Workforce Development

What do we need to do	Measures of Success	Who will do it	By When	liP Indicator
Develop the Management Competency Framework into the Joint Progress Review and recruitment processes	100% of staff have a yearly JPR			2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 8 / 9 / 10
Carry out a training needs assessment to identify current skills and where we need to invest for future development to prepare staff to meet challenges ahead	Increase in staff perception of the value of their JPR			2 / 3 / 8 / 9 / 10
Maintain and develop Investors in People accreditation	Investors in People is retained in 2008			
Introduce Talent Management initiatives to support success in planning	More effective succession planning Introduction of e-learning modules			2 / 3 / 4 5
Roll out 60% feedback for senior managers	Increased understanding of confidence in senior management			2 / 3 / 4
Produce and actively evaluate the Annual Training programme for staff and Councillors	Satisfaction levels increased with regard to training received			2 / 9 / 10

Pay, Recognition and Reward

What do we need to do	Measures of Success	Who will do it	By When	liP Indicator
Carry out an Equal Pay Audit	Reduced turnover Improved performance in the recruitment market Increased retention of staff			1
Develop approaches to succession planning	Improved performance Improved customer satisfaction			2 / 3 / 4 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9
Develop policies for secondment and honorarium payments in recognition of staff undertaking additional duties	Reduced turnover Improved performance in the recruitment market Increased retention of staff			2 / 3 / 4 / 6 / 7

Employee Communications and Involvement

What do we need to do	Measures of Success	Who will do it	By When	liP Indicator
Carry out staff survey	Improved response rate to staff survey Improved Morale Development of an agreed Action Plan after receipt of the staff survey results Lower number of grievances lodged			1 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7
Review the consultation mechanism	Increased morale			1 / 7
Review the Homeworking policy	Increased morale			1 / 3
Communicate the Workforce Strategy to all staff	Increased levels in staff with regard to levels of communication Good understanding of the Councils Themes and priorities			1 / 7