

# REPORT

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**Cllr Mrs Warrander : Cabinet Member for Resources**

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## **RECRUITMENT & RETENTION**

### **1. Executive Summary:**

- 1.1 Funding was approved by Cabinet in May 2002 to employ additional resource in the role of a Recruitment & Retention Advisor for 12 months in the PP&T unit to enable an evaluation to be conducted with a view to:-
  - Streamlining the recruitment & selection process
  - To recommend a package of measures which will aid staff retention
  - To develop and implement measures to reduce costs
- 1.2 The aim of the one year post was to achieve some significant progress in these areas and to quantify what other tasks would need to be undertaken in order that those tasks could be prioritised and resourced effectively.
- 1.3 The report outlines the activities undertaken and the major achievements during the past year. It concentrates on a continuing programme which will ensure that further improvements in the service level of the recruitment and retention team are made which in turn will lead to savings and benefits throughout the council. This will be demonstrated in a reduced turnover rate thereby decreasing related costs such as advertising, downtime, re-training and ultimately with a higher morale, a much lower sick absence rate.
- 1.4 The conclusions drawn have considered both national and local issues in respect of recruitment and retention. The recommendations made will provide a reliable and responsive recruitment service to managers and improve the retention of key skills within the council through the implementation of enhanced benefits. Whilst initial costs will be incurred, the investment will ensure savings on staff costs will be achievable in the longer term.
- 1.5 In order that the good work already completed is built upon and the remaining needs that have been identified are prioritised according to the business needs, the report recommends and seeks approval for a re-structure of the recruitment team within PP&T to enable delivery of the continuation programme at an annual cost of £21,599 (£12,599 pro rata for 2003/04).

## **2. Introduction and background:**

The 2002 Best Value Review of recruitment and retention highlighted the need for significant improvements to deliver a more reliable and responsive service to both internal and external customers.

A subsequent audit of SUH's by the Recruitment & Retention Advisor confirmed that the recruitment service had a number of shortfalls. These centred on the professional advice given, the timeliness of applications and issue of contracts and the perceived quality of our application packs.

Whilst there was a perception that significant numbers of staff were leaving SDC, there was very little data available to justify this assumption.

The report outlines the action taken to-date and in order to take this work forward, provides a recruitment and retention programme to further improve both the service delivery of recruitment and the retention of staff. The main objectives are:-

- to provide a professional recruitment and retention service
- effective support to managers by placement of appropriately trained staff
- reliable and responsive
- cost effective solutions
- raise staff morale and improve retention

## **3. The Recruitment & Retention programme**

The proposed programme is attached as Appendix A and covers guidance on the following:-

- 3.1 The national recruitment scene
- 3.2 Attracting applicants
- 3.3 Selection methods
- 3.4 Diversity
- 3.5 The recruitment scene in Salisbury
- 3.6 Main recruitment achievements
- 3.7 Retention – the national scene
- 3.8 Salisbury setting the scene
- 3.9 Stress
- 3.10 Main retention achievements

## **4. Conclusions:**

The programme is predicted to achieve considerable savings through increased efficiencies and morale. To maintain the current recruitment service level will mean a small increase in ongoing resource costs. Projected costs are £21,599 per annum; these are detailed in Appendix B.

Projected costs to improve staff retention through the proposed benefit enhancements are detailed in Appendices E and F.

## 5. Consultation:

Whilst initial discussions based around this report will be held as part of the JCF process, the R&R ongoing programme will require further consultation with the Unions on the detail of proposals. Quarterly consultation through JCF has continued throughout the last year as the recruitment & retention review has progressed and been implemented.

## 6. Recommendations

- (1) that the recommendations relating to the Recruitment and Retention needs set out in section 6 of Appendix A be approved in principle. (resources identified in appendix B)
- (2) to recognise that implementation of the recommendations is subject to the finance being made available.
- (3) that the financial implications be reviewed as part of the Corporate Planning Process 2004/05.

The recommendations will deliver a range of benefits to the customer and SDC employees by:

- more efficient use of council resources
- a skilled and motivated workforce

Whilst there will be costs associated with a number of the proposals, the costs incurred will lead to qualitative savings. Where there are cost implications, Cabinet permission will be sought via separate papers when the issues and funding have been more closely considered.

### Background papers

Recruitment & retention BV report 2002

CIPD Annual Recruitment Survey 2003

The Employers Organisation Survey 2002

The Audit Commission recruitment & retention report 2002

## 7. Implications:

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>8.1 Financial</b>             | : see Cost Analysis, Appendices B, E & F  |
| <b>8.2 Legal</b>                 | : none at the moment  |
| <b>8.3 Personnel</b>             | : These proposals will have impact on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• staff costs</li><li>• roles performed</li><li>• skills and competencies required</li><li>• possible redeployment</li></ul>   |
| <b>8.4 Human Rights</b>          | : None  |
| <b>8.5 Environmental</b>         | : None  |
| <b>8.6 Council's Core Values</b> | : Supports the core values of being a progressive employer by enabling staff engagement with the change process, including opportunities for developing the skill sets of council employees. Supports the core value of improving the delivery of services by using new technology. |
| <b>8.7 Community Safety</b>      | : None  |
| <b>8.8 Wards(s) Affected</b>     | : All   |

# **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A : The Recruitment & Retention Programme**

**Appendix B : Restructure Costs**

**Appendix C : Recruitment & Retention Officer Job Description**

**Appendix D : Recruitment Admin Assistant Job Description**

**Appendix E : Healthcare Benefits - Costs**

**Appendix F : Childcare Vouchers – Costs**

### **3. Recruitment**

#### **3.1.1 Background – the National Scene**

With the push for the public sector to modernise, led by both government and public pressure, and with scrutiny of every move, it is harder to hide poor performance. The pressure is on for Personnel departments to recruit the right staff to push through the government changes. We must consider how we keep key workers in their jobs while demands are ever increasing. Many public organisations are going on record and setting out plans to actively source quality people from the private sector – this is a significant and positive change in attitude. The Personnel unit must endeavour to make their service as transparent and tangible as possible.

#### **Recruitment Surveys**

- 3.1.2 The Employers Organisation 2002 survey indicates that candidates tend to have a poor reception of the public sector, perceiving it to be bureaucratic, slow and unchallenging. Whilst there is a commitment to advertise all vacancies, the application processes can be lengthy and less candidate-friendly than for other organisations. Recruiters are a crucial point of contact.
- 3.1.3 According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD) recruitment & retention survey for 2003, 93% of organisations attempting to fill their vacancies experienced recruitment difficulties. When asked for probable reasons, organisations indicate some outside their control such as the local cost of living - a particular problem for the public services – and others arising from their own standards, such as lack of specialist skills, which is the most significant reason identified in 2003.
- 3.1.4 Organisations appear to be motivated by a desire to predict future job performance more effectively by increasing the use of competency based interviews, assessment centres and work sampling. There is also a small increase in the use of psychometric tests. The most effective selections methods for managerial and professional staff are given as structured panel interviews and competency based interviews.
- 3.1.5 Whilst most organisations can accept email enquiries and are planning to increase electronic application procedures, only half can provide application forms by e-mail or via their websites, to be returned in hard copy, and only a third are able to accept completed application forms by email.
- 3.1.6 79% of public services plan additional use of electronic systems in the coming year. SDC are planning shortly to introduce the new application form for completion on line.
- 3.1.7 A number of public services organisations had found that ethnically diverse professionals applying for posts have become reluctant to complete application forms, despite understanding the equal opportunities policies of the organisation.

### **3.2 Attracting Applicants**

- 3.2.1. The single most used method across all sectors for attracting applicants still remains local newspaper advertisements, 95% of public services make extensive use of local advertisements.

- 3.2.2 Vacancies and information on own websites now account for 85% of the public sector source of attracting applicants.
- 3.2.3 Salisbury's own vacancy website went live in May 2003 and now accounts for 20% of current applications confirming this as a fast growing method of receiving applications.
- 3.2.4 Many organisation use additional positive action schemes during their normal recruitment campaigns in order to improve workforce diversity by offering a reward (£300 to £500) to staff who recommend a friend. Payments were made if that friend improved the diversity of the workforce, was recruited and remained in the organisation for a minimum of time.
- 3.2.5 27% of organisations have improved their relocation expenses for recruits in 2003 and 26% have improved their flexible benefits/lifestyle options.

### **3.3 Selection Methods**

- 3.3.1 Organisations appear to want to predict future job performance more effectively and are increasingly using 'competency-based interviews' and assessment centres.
- 3.3.2 Structured panel interviews within the public services are used 100% as a selection method, with the application form being the basis of selection for interview.
- 3.3.3 53% of all organisations now offer selection training which includes diversity training for interviewers and observers.

### **3.4 Diversity**

- 3.4.1 In less than seven years, diverse workforces will be the norm. By 2010, only 20% of the UK's working population will be white, able bodied and under 40. By then it will be dangerous and almost untenable for organisations to employ line managers without the relevant skills to manage this dynamic asset.
- 3.4.2 Local government workforce is relatively old (30% of staff are aged 50 or more) and we need to attract people of all ages into local government to replace those who will retire. (SDC is 28.7%)
- 3.4.3 Women comprise the majority of local authority employees, at just under three quarters of the workforce. (SDC women comprise 45% of the workforce). In contrast, ethnic minority employees are, on average, under-represented in local authority workforces relative to their population size in England. Both women and ethnic minority local authority employees report more barriers in climbing the career ladder, compared to men and white colleagues.
- 3.4.4 The CIPD 2003 survey highlighted the need to appoint people who have potential to grow, but might not currently have all you require, as a method of promoting diversity in practice. It was noted that account should be taken of a broader range of qualities, such as personal skills instead of qualifications, when considering candidates.
- 3.4.5 Line managers are undoubtedly the catalysts for change. Getting them engaged in mainstreaming diversity, and changing behaviour and attitudes, requires serious commitment all round. Diversity policies and practices must be built into the business plan, and embedded in performance management systems and recruitment and retention.

### **3.5 The recruitment scene in Salisbury**

- 3.5.1 Although Salisbury is fast approaching full employment, we are fortunate that SDC does not have too many difficulties in recruiting to most jobs at the lower end of the pay scale, indeed occasionally we find ourselves overwhelmed with applications at this level! Whilst recruitment in several professions, notably accountancy, IT and the law have eased over the last year, we have however, identified a number of key technical and professional roles that continue to cause consternation. This is in the area of public protection, i.e. building control, planning and environmental health. These roles between them cover 20% of our employees. 62% of local authorities also reported recruitment difficulties in these areas.
- 3.5.2 The main area cited by authorities in relation to difficulties with these posts was the shortage of applicants. This is a problem where local government is a monopoly or major employer. The specific difficulties include the failure to train sufficient staff in recent years, the fact that workforce planning fell out of fashion and demographic change. A further common factor that has affected the local government professions is the image of the sector. Unfortunately some of the responses to poor public image may have had the unintended effect of worsening recruitment problems. For example an insistence of qualifications for those undertaking certain tasks limits the supply of people available for those tasks. As a result of the insufficient supply we find ourselves competing amongst other local authorities for suitably qualified recruits. SDC has responded to this by introducing career grades and training and development to enhance knowledge and skills.
- 3.5.3 In recent years a particularly powerful regional influence on recruitment problems has been the housing market, the divergence in house prices between the south east and the rest of the UK has had the effect of reducing occupational mobility. Those outside the south east are unable to afford to move in, and those inside reluctant to move out for fear of not getting back in. With the trend of recent years of the increase in a number of dual-professional households, the trend has had the effect of reducing geographical mobility, as one household earner is unlikely to relocate unless a job is also available for the other.
- 3.5.4 Whilst one obvious solution is to increase pay, SDC has in recent years introduced market supplements as a time-limited solution. We also conducted a pay benchmarking exercise which has indicated that only a small minority of positions were outside the market pay rate. We need to monitor this on a regular basis to ensure we remain competitive but equally are not paying excessive salaries for jobs that fluctuate under market conditions.

### **3.6 Main recruitment achievements**

- 3.6.1 During the past 9 months we have concentrated on improving our service to SDC managers whilst at the same time implementing initiatives to improve both the quantity and quality of our applicants. Progress reports have been presented at regular JCF meetings.
- 3.6.2 In order to provide the management team with reliable management information, key to this was the initial focus on the Recruitment system provided by Selven which was not being used. Concentrated effort has gone into inputting candidate data to supply the information necessary. Whilst it was seen to be time consuming we are now beginning to see the benefit of having reliable and accurate information easily to hand.

- 3.6.3 We have adopted a clear authority brand in line with the corporate theme “be inspired”. This has resulted in a new application pack, providing a friendly and inviting style to candidates.
- 3.6.4 We have designed our own website to link with the new style which offers a job spot for applicants to peruse for information about SDC and details of the jobs available. The intranet reflects the same image for internal applicants.
- 3.6.5 We have improved the time from application to appointment by accepting c.v.’s as part of the application. We respond to applicants by both e-mail and post.
- 3.6.6 We have analysed market supplements to ensure we remain competitive and on several occasions have implemented a revised job on the basis of a career grade. This has encouraged applicants to apply for jobs that we have identified as being difficult to recruit to due to the shortage of skilled applicants.
- 3.6.7 In conjunction with this approach we have implemented training and development programmes to ensure individuals move through the career grades as their skills and qualifications are achieved.
- 3.6.8 The recruitment team has been actively involved in the selection process. When resources are available, we have designed and implemented a range of selection centres to suit the appropriate level of the job. We have participated in selection interviewing and now regularly provide psychometric testing to both internal and external candidates. A typical recruitment exercise involving selection advice and feedback would cost in the region of £1,000 if resourced externally. With the introduction of new corporate competencies we will need to ensure these are embedded into the selection process in order to link with the training and development of individuals as part of their performance objectives.
- 3.6.9 We have negotiated a 3% discount with our advertising agency and this together with our advice to managers on appropriate media to use will result in savings in the region of £5,000. We have also emphasised the benefits we provide in our adverts, e.g. relocation assistance. Further savings will be forthcoming as our website continues to reduce the need for the extensive use of advertising in local press.
- 3.6.10 Training has been offered in recruitment selection to ensure a consistent approach across the council. Further courses should be planned to incorporate the new competencies and the training of newly appointed managers/supervisors.
- 3.6.11 We have significantly improved the induction process and now offer a full day’s induction to every new employee within their first month of joining. Further work needs to be developed in this area with regard to the management of the probation period in the department.

## **3.7 Retention**

### **Background – The National Scene**

- 3.7.1 Many of the problems which affect recruitment also affect retention. The key difference is that retention problems concern those who have experienced local government employment. Their perspective is therefore different.
- 3.7.2 According to research by the Audit Commission, a major cause of retention difficulties in local government is paperwork and bureaucracy associated with inspection regimes.



Employees complain they are not able to get on and do the job that they are paid to do. This is given as a reason for leaving by 68% of leavers.

3.7.3 One of the attractions of local government employment has been the relative security it has offered.

3.7.4 The quality of local government services is based on the commitment and performance of its employees. We need to identify therefore, what specific skills are being lost.

#### Retention Measures

3.7.5 Three types of measures can be used to establish retention problems:-

1. The distribution of length of service of the workforce - SDC stats indicate we have a higher proportion of long-serving employees than the wider economy
2. The severity of retention difficulties – as compared to recruitment difficulties
3. Turnover rate – The CIPD's 2003 survey shows that the turnover rate for local government of 16% is less than the national average of 18%. SDC is currently indicating a rolling 12 month t/o rate excluding casuals and members of 17%. (t/o figures provided to JCF exclude also ill-health retirements, ill health, redundancy and dismissals)

#### Retention Surveys

3.7.6 Some degree of turnover is healthy; indeed it is a positive asset that individuals can progress by moving from one authority to another.

3.7.7. 71.8% of organisations report retention difficulties compared to 49% in the 2002 survey.

3.7.8 The largest increase in methods for improving retention is in offering coaching/mentoring/buddy systems to help new recruits adjust as quickly as possible. Increasing pay to improve retention is not as popular as in previous years. The current most popular methods are assisting recruits to develop through improved training and development and improved induction processes. Half of public services organisation offer more flexible hours of work.

3.7.9 A total of 74% of the organisations monitor their findings from exit interviews and 59% monitor staff opinion through attitude surveys.

3.7.10 The survey highlighted a main reason for public services losing applicants' was the consequence of slow recruitment processes through reference checking and security clearances.

3.7.11 29% of public sector employees leave within 2 years of service and 13.6% under six months service, it was felt that mis-match accounted for a large proportion of those under six months.

3.7.12 The survey also indicated that organisation find that two years is now becoming the service length of choice for new recruits who would rather apply for another job to gain a pay increase than request one in their current role.

### **3.8 Retention Issues Locally**

- 3.8.1 In order to first establish if SDC had any retention problems, we had to seek out data on turnover and reasons for leaving to understand the issues. Although reasonable turnover statistics were available, due to the small percentage return rate of exit questionnaires, there was scant information relating to reasons for leaving. Whilst some exit interviews had been conducted and some questionnaires completed, due to lack of resource there had been no analysis of the paperwork available containing these details.
- 3.8.3 The initial analysis identified a number of key issues that had prompted people to leave SDC. The number one reason for leaving was shown to be lack of career/promotion prospects followed closely by difficulties encountered with some managers.

### **3.9 Stress**

Whilst legal judgements have established that employers will have discharged their duty of care relating to stress by taking reasonable steps to protect employees from its impact, and guidelines that by reducing work demands will alleviate stress, - the assumption is often made that failure to cope with demanding events or situations causes stress – however, it can often be found that stress is up to 10 times greater in traditionally less demanding roles. A much more meaningful measure is job satisfaction and reward, which reflects the nature of stress and related illness across different occupations.

### **3.10 Main retention achievements**

- 3.10.1 In order to address the lack of data, we therefore promptly designed and implemented a simplified and friendly exit questionnaire in an effort to gain a better completion return rate. This was introduced in October 2002 and by the end of the year there was a considerable improvement in return rate and a more detailed explanation of reasons for leaving.
- 3.10.2 When resource permits, we take the opportunity of interviewing leavers who have highlighted issues of concern in their exit questionnaires.
- 3.10.3 In an effort to address some of the issues relating to new employees leaving within their first year, we have invested resource in designing an improved induction process. Where possible we have encouraged employees who are experiencing difficulties in adapting to a new organisation to seek help from their managers.
- 3.10.4 We now regularly monitor exit questionnaires and record actual reasons for leaving and report to the appropriate committees.
- 3.10.5 We encourage career progression from internal applicants via the job board on the intranet. We advertise all vacancies and secondments and regularly report on internal promotions through "People Matter".
- 3.10.6 Considerable investment has been made in management training to develop coaching skills.
- 3.10.7 We are also in the process of conducting a staff opinion survey which will provide us with information where we may be able to concentrate efforts to improve staff retention.

## **4. Conclusions**

### **Recruitment**

- 4.1 Historically, public sector recruitment has tended to be a fragmented process with every department and line manager having responsibility for the recruitment of its own staff – with recruitment now centralised, it allows greater scrutiny of costs and value on all sides. Personnel's role should also encapsulate the direction in terms of recruitment interviewing and selection to ensure consistency throughout SDC particularly with regard to diversity
- 4.2 As a key local employer, it is imperative that a dedicated focus on recruitment is maintained. How well we recruit, is an important factor in determining the future retention rates. It is therefore not advisable to supply only minimal administrative support to this key function. As a progressive employer we must ensure we have the qualified resource to provide a professional recruitment practice to ensure we employ the best suited person for each job.
- 4.3 Professional support from qualified staff is therefore essential to support managers in the selection process. If the recruitment process is wrong, then retention will suffer dramatically as turnover of newly appointed staff create shortfalls in our workforce with a huge cost implication, i.e. downturn, training & development and other staff's time.

### **Retention**

- 4.4 How do we recruit the right staff to push through government changes – how do we keep key workers in their jobs while the demands are ever increasing and how do we develop workable strategies for the future? It is now well established that many employees suffer a '2 year itch' and may well consider moving on rather than address issues they have with their current employer. We need to effectively re-recruit our own staff and continue to do so throughout their careers to retain their motivation.
- 4.5 We have to work hard to improve our image as an employer of choice and show positive examples of our willingness to take on board innovative ways of working. The recruitment and retention policies must align with our personnel policies such as redeployment, relocation, market supplement allowances, diversity, reward strategies and work-life balance policies.
- 4.6 In retaining our staff and to secure future improvement, there are a number of best practice policies that we can consider implementing.

## **5. Consultation**

Consultation through JCF has been ongoing as work has been developed and implemented throughout the year. Future consultation will be required as and when proposals are prioritised.

## **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 With the contract termination of the Recruitment and Retention advisor imminent, the structure of the recruitment and retention staff within the personnel team needs to be reviewed. We have to re-organise ourselves to ensure we are making the best use of our resources to deliver the change agenda. For the future we need to ensure we resource the personnel team with at least one suitably full-time qualified Recruitment & Retention Officer. A suggested job description is attached in Appendix B.

6.2 The introduction of the Selven recruitment system means that administration efficiencies have and will continue to improve. Although the volume of responses to advertisements has increased directly as a result of our improved image and efficiencies, it is envisaged that one full time administration assistant could manage the process. A suggested job description is attached in Appendix C.

6.3 The current structure consists of 1 f/t Recruitment Advisor, 1 f/t Personnel Assistant and 1 p/t administration assistant. To operate the suggested manning levels after the departure of the recruitment advisor which has been funded for one year, would mean an increase in staff costs within PP&T of £21,599 per annum, Appendix A. Some of these costs can be offset against the savings expected as a result of savings in expenditure on advertising, selection testing and quicker application processes.

#### 6.4 Recruitment Continuation Programme

6.4.1 With the proposed structure in place the following initiatives could be then be considered as resource/funding is available.

6.4.2 Firstly, we need to throw off the mantle of the old district council way of doing things and adopt a customer-focused approach, with greater creativity and flexibility. Image is important to attract quality candidates. The new application forms and website with the brand theme of 'be inspired' and our equalities statement 'culturally aware – positively fair' demonstrate our commitment to diversity.

6.4.3 Whilst I do not deny that imaginative solutions to recruitment or retention issues in some spheres may also work in others, I suggest that decisions are best made locally as to which solutions are best suited to our particular problems.

6.4.4 One of the initiatives that have produced measurable results is the introduction of our own vacancy website. To enable better use of our website we should plan for:-

- \* on-line completion of our application form
- \* access for managers to c.v.'s/application forms on line

There are several Recruitment packages in the market place that could enhance our current system. One such package is HR Director which has been adopted by several Councils in the last year.

6.4.5 To broaden our selection base further initiatives should be planned ie

- \* Create temporary register of potential recruits
- \* Pro-active recruitment via radio etc.

6.4.6 Alter selection criteria to give greater weight to abilities and competencies rather than length of experience/qualifications/specialist knowledge. Selection centres should become the norm for supervisory and management positions. There is a high cost of getting selection wrong.

- \* design and implement competency based interview process
- \* consider other skills candidates may have, ie voluntary work

- 6.4.7 Forge links with local universities and those offering courses for scarce skills ie Environmental Health etc.
- \* advertise in Universities job booklets/fairs
  - \* consider summer work experience for prospective candidates
- 6.4.8 Adopt modern apprenticeships
- \* introduce modern apprenticeship scheme – link with Salisbury College
- 6.4.9 Consider opening a recruitment centre - offer a single point of contact for managers and applicants alike.
- \* discuss with other local authorities who have adopted this method
  - \* implement Recruitment Centre database
- 6.4.10 Provide useful management information for more effective recruitment targeting.
- \* enhance recruitment system statistics
- 6.4.11 Recruitment drives could include 'recruit a friend', advertising on radio and in universities.
- \* adopt scheme to award payment for diversity recruitment
- 6.4.12 Adopt a graduate – promote our image. The Employers' Organisation national graduate development programme will provide the sector with the equivalent of the Civil services fast stream recruitment. An indicator of success after the first year of implementation was in a recent Guardian poll which ranked local government as the fifth most popular choice for graduates. In many cases funding will be available. These graduates could be our managers of the future.
- \* appoint a graduate from the next pool in March 2004.
  - \* Identify business areas that could benefit
- 6.4.13 Recruitment agencies can provide additional resources such as salary benchmarking, psychometric testing etc. – all of which will free up the recruitment team to play a more strategic role within SDC.
- \* Appoint local agency to resource psychometric testing
- 6.4.14 Anticipated savings of £40,000 by reducing the number of temporary staffing agencies used and adopting preferred supplier.
- \* adopt Agency Management Supplier agreement (planned implementation autumn 2003)
- 6.4.15 Address skill shortages i.e. Building Control – employ former student placements on a supernumerary basis until an established post becomes available.

6.4.16 Another remedy could be to streamline functions by sharing resources with other authorities i.e. cover of specific staff shortages, providing staff to cover elections.

- \* initiate discussions with local authorities

6.4.17 Offer bursaries to environmental health and planning officers with guaranteed jobs at the end.

- \* offer bursary for 2004/05 student

6.4.18 Consider forming an advertising consortium with other local authorities to use the combined purchasing power to reduce advertising costs further.

- \* initiate discussions with local authorities

## **6.5 Diversity**

We need to raise our profile of being an employer of choice for minority groups.

- \* target under represented groups within the local ethnic communities
- \* advertise in ethnic press/websites
- \* link with local employers to promote diversity
- \* consider work permits – overseas workers

## **6.6 Retention**

To retain staff and the key skills they offer there are a number of best practice policies that we can consider implementing.

### **6.6.1 Benefits - Healthcare**

To improve the high sickness absence within the council a number of benefits relating to healthcare could be implemented i.e. A programme to stay healthy – this could include a healthcare scheme and healthy eating options.

- \* introduce a private medical scheme (see appendix E)
- \* introduce healthy options vending machines until office centralisation
- \* re-evaluate smoking policy-address passive smoking issues

Monitor sick absence before and after implementation of any new initiatives with a view to reducing the current turnover and staff sickness absence rate.

### **6.6.2 Work-life balance**

Improve further our flexible working options – to allow the council to plan for a call centre handling customer queries from 8-8. Introduce a range of benefits for staff with children or dependant adults. Work-life balance gives the opportunity to work particular hours and means that staff can save on childcare costs. Some funding may be possible from the Department of Education and Skills' Work-Life Balance Fund.

- \* consider compressed hours (i.e. 4 day week, 9 day fortnight)
- \* benefits can be saved on travel and costs
- \* regular and planned time off for other commitments

- \* day off every week or fortnight!

Career Breaks – allow time off for longer term commitments, ie to care for family/children or to study or voluntary work. Our Exit questionnaires indicate people have been leaving due to the need to care for dependants.

- \* at least 2 years service
- \* can last from 3 months to 1 year

Crèche facilities

- \* link up with Salisbury College to arrange guaranteed spaces in their crèche
- \* join WCC in their discussions with local suppliers to consider opening a local government crèche

As an alternative to a crèche, look at offering a

- \* Childcare nursery voucher scheme to use at external nurseries, (Appendix F)

Promoting our enhanced flexible benefits

#### 6.6.3 Stress Initiatives

Look into offering individuals the opportunity of job rotation out of particularly stressful front-line roles.

Continue with further corporate stress management initiatives, i.e. training on handling stress.

Offer long service annual leave.

- \* compressed annual leave

#### 6.6.4 Career Development

Promotion of career paths,

- \* publicise careers streams in operation
- \* consider new career streams
- \* outline skills/knowledge/experience to be gained

By creating the rights skills mix in the organisation through growing our own talent, we should see increased productivity in our current workforce.

- \* consider what skills do people have that are not being used?
- \* training needs audit from recent appraisals

Potential Managers Programme -

Whilst we have trained and developed many of our managers in the past couple of years, we have not as yet, initiated a fast stream or high fliers potential programme for those who will be our managers of the future. It is imperative we consider this soon with the fast approaching office centralisation project – we will need change managers to push this through and influence the behaviours.

- \* design and implement fast track management potential programme

#### 6.6.5 Monitoring and Surveys

Careful analysis of exit questionnaires and regular reporting of statistics on exit interviews.

Staff Opinion Survey – being conducted August 2003. Consider the analysis from the survey and what affect the introduction of certain initiatives will have on morale.

We need to provide a congenial working environment. By harnessing individual talent and the contribution of all employees we can create greater capacity for change and innovation - aim to become an organisation that people aspire to work for.

**Our aim should be for a more engaged, high performing and healthier workforce.**



## Appendix B

### Re-structure Cost

### Recruitment & Retention

#### 1. Current Structure August 2003

Recruitment & Retention Advisor F/T

(1 year funding)

Salary £25,000

Add on costs £ 6,250

Total £31,250

Personnel Assistant F/T

Salary £14,196

Add on costs £ 3,549

Total £17,745

Administration Assistant P/T

Salary £12,950

Add on costs £ 3,237 (16,187)

Pro rata 50%

Total £ 8,093

**2002/03**

**Total Cost**

**FTE 2.5**

**£57,088**

#### 2. Revert to Previous Structure

Personnel Assistant f/t

Total £17,745

Administration Asst p/t

Total £ 8,093

**01/2002 Total Cost**

**FTE 1.5**

**£25,838**

#### 3. Proposed Structure 09/03-03/04

Recruitment Officer f/t

Salary £25,000

Add on costs £ 6,250

Total £31,250

Recruitment Admin Assistant f/t

Salary £12,950

Add on costs £ 3,237

Total £16,187

**£47,437**

**2003/04**

**Total Increased Cost for FTE 2.0**

per annum £47,437 –

£25,838 = **£21,599 per annum**

£21,599 (pro rata /12x7mths)

**TOTAL**

**= £12,599**

## JOB DESCRIPTION

## Appendix C

This job description is intended as a working document only, giving a guideline to the major tasks to be performed. It is anticipated that the post will develop and working practices change in order to meet the demands of the service, new legislation or policies of the Council. It is expected that the post holder will contribute to and assist with the development of such changes.

SERVICE UNIT: PP&T	EFFECTIVE DATE: Aug 2003
POST TITLE: Recruitment & Retention Officer	GRADE: I
	POST NO: PPT008

### SPECIAL CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO POST:

- Exempt/Not Exempt Under Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- Car Allowance Category: Nil/Casual/Essential User Allowance

PREFERRED QUALIFICATION: Educated to Degree level and preferably with a CIPD qualification

### JOB PURPOSE

- \* To provide an operational recruitment and retention service to meet the Council's current and future resourcing needs.
- \* To manage the Council's contract arrangements for recruitment advertising and employment agencies.

Reports to Head of Personnel & Training

### 2. JOB ACTIVITIES:

#### Recruitment

- To develop, co-ordinate and implement initiatives and projects to help the Council meet its recruitment needs.
- To advise the Council and its Service Units in meeting resourcing needs, providing professional personnel leadership and advice on all recruitment and selection matters.
- To take responsibility for the collation and provision of management information in relation to recruitment including statistical/monitoring information to ensure SUH's receive appropriate and accurate briefing on recruitment activities and the performance of the recruitment service.

- To ensure the quality of recruitment services and decisions are made in accordance with good recruitment and employment practice and legislative requirements.
- To ensure the best use of appropriate technology is used, i.e. continue to develop the (Team Spirit) personnel system to enable accurate monitoring of diversity.
- Manage employment expenditure by anticipating changes.
- To manage the contract with the Council's advertising agency.
- To promote the Council's diversity agenda and represent them as appropriate on outside groups and bodies.
- To participate in selection process by advising managers on interview procedures and legislation, providing assessment techniques, i.e. psychometric testing.
- To design appropriate competency based interview selection criteria
- To provide clear and effective management, support and guidance to the Recruitment Administration Assistant, ensuring they fulfill their responsibility for service delivery.

## **Retention**

- Monitor and report on exit interviews to ensure we do not lose the people we need to keep
- Enabling staff to fulfill their potential within SDC to the benefit of the council and the community, by developing 'progressive employer'
- Reducing the costs arising from staff turnover
- Achieving a level of turnover which balances high retention with the need to constantly refresh the organisation

## **Measures of success and reporting mechanisms**

- To devise qualitative and quantitative measures to ensure quality and cost effectiveness of service
- To produce statistical reports on recruitment services and diversity issues for JCF meetings for consideration

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

**SERVICE UNIT:** Personnel & Training Services

**POST TITLE:** Recruitment and Retention Adviser

**GRADE:** I

ATTRIBUTES	CRITERIA	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
EXPERIENCE	5+ years work experience in the Human Resources field. At least two of those years will, ideally, have been spent specialising in recruitment and retention strategy development and implementation.	Application form Interview Assessment work Presentation
QUALIFICATIONS/ TRAINING	Degree or equivalent + Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development membership (pref. MIPD)	Application form + qualifications check
APTITUDES AND ABILITIES	Effective communicator able to work under pressure to strict deadlines	Interview Assessment work Presentation Application form References
KNOWLEDGE	Specialist Recruitment and Retention knowledge gained via professional examination and work experience	Interview Assessment work Presentation Application form References
ATTITUDE MOTIVATION	Highly motivated Self starter Staying power Good influencing skills Ability to relate to people at all levels	Interview Assessment work Presentation Application form References
OTHER FACTORS	A need for complete confidentiality. Mobility to visit other SDC offices.	Interview Assessment work Presentation Application form References

## JOB DESCRIPTION

## Appendix D

This job description is intended as a working document only, giving a guideline to the major tasks to be performed. It is anticipated that the post will develop and working practices change in order to meet the demands of the service, new legislation or policies of the Council. It is expected that the post holder will contribute to and assist with the development of such changes.

SERVICE UNIT: PP&T	EFFECTIVE DATE: August 2003
POST TITLE: Recruitment Administration Assistant	GRADE: C
	POST NO:

### SPECIAL CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO POST:

- Exempt/Not Exempt Under Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- Car Allowance Category: Nil/Casual/Essential User Allowance

PREFERRED QUALIFICATION: Certificate in Personnel Practice

### 1. JOB PURPOSE (State the main aims and objectives of the post including title of Supervisor or manager where appropriate):

To provide administrative support to the Recruitment & Retention Officer

### 2. JOB ACTIVITIES:

#### **Recruitment**

- To assist in the preparation and placement of job advertisements both internal and external.
- To process advertising invoices within agreed deadlines.
- To input vacancies to associated websites.
- To produce the employment contract letters for authorization by the Recruitment & Retention Officer.
- To produce regular vacancy source reports for analysis
- To input all candidate details to the 'Team Spirit' recruitment database and generate interview letters and associated paperwork.

- To produce recruitment reports from the recruitment system on a regular basis.
- To assist the Recruitment & Retention Officer when required with administration for selection centres.

**Retention**

- To produce leaver letters and exit questionnaires to employees
- To collate exit questionnaires and input data to Team Spirit
- To generate equality statistics

**General Administration**

- To undertake general administration, filing and photocopying to support the Recruitment & Retention Officer
- Any other duties as requested by the Recruitment & Retention Officer commensurate with the concept and grading of the post.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

**SERVICE UNIT: PP&T**

**POST TITLE: Recruitment Administration Assistant POST NO: GRADE: C**

<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>METHOD OF ASSESSMENT</b>
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>Min 6 months in a personnel dept</b>  <b>IT skills</b>	<b>Application form</b> <b>Interview</b>
<b>QUALIFICATIONS/ TRAINING</b>	<b>Certificate in Personnel Practice or NVQ 3 business administration</b>	<b>Application form</b>
<b>APTITUDES AND ABILITIES</b>	<b>Work under pressure and meet strict deadlines</b> <b>Effective communicator</b> <b>People Skills</b>	<b>Application form</b> <b>References</b> <b>Interview</b>
<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>Knowledge of recruitment administration and Personnel Databases</b> <b>Word/Excel</b>	<b>IT test at interview</b>
<b>ATTITUDE MOTIVATION</b>	<b>Team Player</b> <b>Commitment to accuracy</b>	<b>Interview</b> <b>References</b>
<b>OTHER FACTORS</b>	<b>A need for complete confidentiality</b>	<b>Interview</b>

## HEALTH CARE

The majority of absence is caused by illness and short-term illness accounts for 95% of absences cases, but only 69% of work time. Health benefits can help reduce the effect of short and long term sickness absence on performance and are considered 1 of the top 10 employee benefits. With absence levels still worryingly high, and an ageing workforce, being able to offer health benefits can be a useful, and not overly expensive, retention tool.

I have reviewed several versions of varying health benefits and outline 2 possible solutions below, first with CS Healthcare and secondly HSBC.

### 1. CS HEALTH CARE

A recognised specialist provider to people who work in the public sector, providing voluntary private medical insurance, CSH is a not for profit friendly society.

- Quality private insurance to all employed staff and families at **no** cost to SDC.
- All administration handled by CSH – no tax liability
- Fast access to in-patient, day-patient and out-patient
- Affordability
- Flexible choice of cover options
- No medical check up
- Extensive network of national hospitals
- Free health advice line
- Direct settlement of claims
- Family friendly cover – only pay for 1 child under 18

There are 2 covers available, Core which will pay for all hospital bills and Core Plus which in addition pays for out-patients.

If a scheme is initiated with CSH prior to 30 September, 2003, two months free cover will be available.

An intranet version is available to operate on line quotations for staff.

A cost analysis of monthly premiums against other providers is given as:-

	Core	BUPA	NU	PPP
Age 30	£24.95	£38.28	£42.00	£26.00
	Core Plus	BUPA	NU	PPP
Age 30	£39.81	£67.15	£79.00	£71.36



## 2. HSBC EMPLOYER SPONSORED SCHEME

HSBC (SDC's own bank) provides a Health Cash Plan, a valuable tax efficient additional benefit with premiums that can be offset against Corporate tax. The scheme is employer sponsored and provides for preventive routine healthcare for a small monthly premium for each employee, i.e. dental, sight tests, chiropodists etc.

- 100% reimbursement of costs up to a set predetermined annual limit
- 24 hour helpline
- company paid covers all pre-existing conditions
- not age related

The minimum contribution is a base rate of £10 per month per employee = £120.00 pa

There are various options as to how this premium is made up i.e. SDC £5/ employee £5 or SDC £1/ employee £9. SDC could increase their contribution sum for different levels of staff or on attainment of years of service.

If 250 employees join the scheme HSBC will give a 5% discount on the total cost.

The scheme could be promoted as a service related scheme to improve retention and reduce our sick absence levels i.e. all staff with a minimum of 2 years service may join, i.e.

approx 400 staff	@ £5.00 employee /£5.00 employer	= £24,000 pa
	@ £9.00 employee /£1.00 employer	= £ 4,800 pa

The scheme can be operated on a 1 year trial basis to monitor if it secures a decrease in sick absence levels.

Two local Councils have recently introduced the HSBC Health Cash Plan providing access to healthcare for various categories of staff.

## CHILD CARE VOUCHERS

The average annual childcare costs per child are estimated at £6,000 per year. Two in 10 employers help their staff with childcare vouchers. Vouchers have the advantage that they can be offered to all parents, and can be used to pay for a variety of services including nurseries, childminders, after-school classes and even grandparents who undertake childcare duties.

Employees chose to reduce their salary, e.g. by £100 per month. In return the employer arranges to give them £100 in vouchers. Both the employer and the employee would have paid NI on the £100 if it was salary – but vouchers are NI free creating a saving for both, i.e.

NI	11% for staff	12.8% employer
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For every £100, employee saves £11.00, employer saves £12.80. For each year of childcare vouchers at £100 per month, an employee effectively receives 1 month's free childcare. Even very high earners will now make modest savings as a result of the increase in NI in April 2003, e.g.

Salary £18,000, monthly voucher £400, employee saves up to £528 pa and the employer £302 after costs for administration etc. The employer NI saving can be used to benefit staff.

Whilst there are start up costs and admin charges, the Council will receive a 0.5% discount which will equate to an employers NI saving of at least 9.3% which easily covers the commission. Councils currently using childcare vouchers include, Kent, Devon, Hertfordshire and Derby CC.

As this is a salary sacrifice scheme and involves alterations to an employee's contract, consultation with the Unions will be required.

Whilst income tax is still payable for employees, employers may qualify for tax relief on providing or subsidising childcare, including the scheme's running costs.

Certain childcare organisations will offer a further 5% discount on group nurseries.