



Wiltshire Council

People Strategy

2008 to 2012

Version 5.0
27 June 2008

I. Introduction and Context

Introduction

The People Strategy is one of four cross cutting plans to support the transition to One Council for Wiltshire and the 5 year period starting 2008/09. The other three plans are the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Asset (Property) Plan, and the ICT Plan. This People Strategy should be considered alongside these plans as the document that will outline the key objectives and plans for ensuring that the new Council has an appropriate workforce in place to meet its long term objectives and priorities. This means not only the right numbers, but the right skills, competencies, structures, processes and ways of working.

This Strategy provides a framework for the key issues facing the new Council. It does not specifically reference issues surrounding the Transition Programme. It needs to be owned by the management team and Cabinet, and delivered by departments supported by HR. It should be led from the top and engage all managers across the new unitary Council.

The Strategy incorporates views from a range of stakeholders, including senior managers, members, and Human Resources managers at District Councils. From these conversations, we have identified a number of issues and concerns that will influence the Strategy, ranging from immediate skills shortages to wider policy issues around how we recruit and reward our staff. From this long list of issues we have identified a smaller number of priorities that form the basis of the Strategy. These factors are significant enough to warrant resource allocation both in terms of time and money as they are significant in meeting the combined Council's goals and objectives over the next five years.

The Local Government Workforce Strategy launched in November 2007 suggests a 'direction of travel' for councils and identifies five strategic priorities that should be considered. These are:

- Organisational Development
- Leadership Development
- Skill and Competency Development
- Recruitment and Retention
- Pay and Rewards

We have structured this document loosely around these five priorities and within each, identified the critical issues and priorities for consideration and action.

The development of this strategy is underpinned by our equality and diversity ethos. The purpose for this is not only to ensure that we are meeting obligations under the equality schemes, but we actively demonstrate, and work towards, our commitment to deliver equality and diversity outcomes.

Context

The People Strategy has been developed within the context of the County Council's submission to Government proposing the new unitary Council and ongoing discussions within various forums about the way the new Council will be structured and the values and ways of working that will be encouraged and developed. As this is an emerging picture, the Strategy will need to be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it appropriately reflects and supports the more specific changes to service provision that may emerge. In addition, the changing demographics of the existing workforce and of the external labour market need to be considered.

Vision, Values, Culture

The Strategy must support achievement of the vision of the new organisation, which is:

To create stronger and more resilient communities in Wiltshire

By delivering:

- high quality, low cost, customer focused services;*
- local ,open, honest decision-making*

and working together to support Wiltshire's communities.

The Strategy must also support the core values that have been identified:

- *One Council, One Culture*
- *Innovation – embracing change*
- *A great place to work*

Further work has also been undertaken to identify a number of Key Behaviours and Actions for staff and managers which will help to create a culture that enables strong customer focus, good communication and involvement and open and visible leadership. These will be used to provide *clarity* to individuals about the expectations around behaviours and actions that will support our stated values, and to foster *consistency* in the approach to leadership and management across the Council. All of the actions within the People Strategy will be reviewed to ensure these are embedded in people management processes in future.

II. Key Priorities

This section outlines the key priorities that form the basis of the People Strategy. These have been categorised using the five priority areas outlined in the Local Government Workforce Strategy 2007. For each of the key priorities, a 'Current Position' and a 'Desired Position' is set out. The Desired Position is a description of what success would look like.

For each key priority we have also captured work that is already ongoing towards the Desired Position, ('what is already happening') and further areas for action ('priority areas for action') that need to be taken to ensure we get there. A more detailed action plan is attached (Appendix A) with the specific actions and timescales that are required. Where additional funding over and above that already allocated in existing budgets is required this is noted on the action plan.

A. Organisation Development

Effectively building workforce support for new structures and new ways of working to deliver citizen-focused and efficient services, in partnership. This also includes staff engagement and culture change.

1. Embedding vision / values / culture – Creating alignment*Current Position:*

- Vision established for new council
- Culture and values for new council are emerging
- Need to translate vision and goals to increase understanding about the impact – what does it mean for specific services, functions, jobs, etc.
- 5 organisations coming together with different cultures

Desired Position:

- Understanding of ‘what does it mean for me?’ in terms of my job, the culture and values of the new organisation
- Desired behaviours and skills defined and embedded in all people management practices
- Linkage between redesigned services, behaviours, and the vision

What is already happening?

- One Council, one culture group formed to ensure roll out of vision, values, culture for new organisation
- Manager forums planned to engage managers in translating vision and values into actions and behaviours
- Training and awareness sessions starting in September 2008 (ref. Draft paper on ‘OD for the Transition Period’)
- CLT work on defining the vision and objectives, and cascade of this into departmental teams and across the districts
- Work ongoing in District Councils around change management

Priority areas for action

- Further work by department / service to translate vision / values / culture into specific plans for change and engaging with staff around what these changes mean for them
- Definition of behaviours and actions that will help the desired culture to emerge, and incorporate into ongoing training and development initiatives
- Link people management processes to desired culture – particularly performance management, leadership development, reward, recruitment

2. Developing a customer-focused organisation

Current Position:

- Current service delivery not seen as customer-focused / many staff remote from the customer and/or 'behaving remotely'
- Customer Focus Board established and terms of reference defined
- Key principles and implications for organisational culture defined

Desired Position:

- A culture in which the customer is at the heart of what we do and how we do it
- Recognition that working with our customers to solve their problems is everyone's job.
- Services designed around the customer

What is already happening?

- Customer Access to Services Strategy developed
- Systems Thinking (Lean) service reviews

Priority areas for action

- Provide support to ongoing service review and redesign activities to ensure structures and jobs reflect a customer centric approach
- Identify training and development, recruitment, leadership implications of strategy and implement appropriate solutions

3. Managing performance more effectively

Current Position:

- Perception that performance shortfalls are not addressed and good performance is not rewarded
- Staff appraisal process not perceived as performance focused or value adding
- Some managers lack skills in dealing with poor performance

Desired Position:

- Continuous process of performance review through 1:1's, team meetings, personal development plans, etc.
- Staff having clarity about what is expected of them and how their job contributes to the performance of the organisation
- Managers having the skill and confidence to provide staff with meaningful feedback

What is already happening?

- Appraisal process established
- Use of systems thinking (Lean) to develop system-driven approach to performance improvement

Priority areas for action

- Review and refresh our approach to performance management of people (including how / if this links to appraisal, progression, reward)
- Embed 'performance focus' within ongoing work on culture
- Deliver training for managers as needed on managing performance

4. Support to service re-design

Current Position:

- Significant agenda of service redesign over next year
- Ongoing systems thinking (Lean) reviews
- Limited organisation design expertise within County or Districts
- Historically, a reactive approach to organisational development (OD)

Desired Position:

- Increased in-house expertise in organisation design
- Consistent and pro-active approach to organisation development – development of reliable methods and systems

What is already happening?

- Systems thinking approaches being implemented (e.g. Lean reviews)
- Way of Working (WOW) strategy developed and being delivered by some services

Priority areas for action

- Upskill appropriate managers and staff so that they can support current service reviews and provide ongoing expertise and support around organisation development and design
- Agree key principles, methods and systems to underpin organisation design going forward

B. Leadership Development

Building visionary and ambitious leadership which makes the best use of both the political and managerial role, operating in a partnership context

1. Developing our leaders within a changing context*Current Position:*

- New 'operating model' for managers emerging which indicates different leadership styles and approaches will be needed
- Progress made in County's Manage2Lead development programme
- Leadership development initiatives undertaken in Districts

Desired Position:

- Leaders of new unitary council clear about leadership roles and behaviours which support the new operating model
- Sustained leadership and management development
- New competency framework for leaders

What is already happening?

- Some training & development needs identified in draft paper 'OD for the Transition Period'
- Ongoing work by CLT on leadership and change management:
 - Application of key principles for managing change (Kotter and others)
 - Application of Jim Collins models (Good to Great, Level 5 leadership)
 - Application of Lencioni's team effectiveness model
 - Self assessment (psychometric) and team coaching

Priority areas for action

- Define leadership roles and impact of new structures
- Redefine Leadership Competency Framework
- Refresh and reintroduce Manage2Lead programme in line with changes (with national accreditation if possible) – incorporating 360-degree feedback

2. Succession planning

Current Position:

- No consistent approach to succession planning
- No process to identify future leaders
- Ageing workforce indicates there will be succession issues in key professions

Desired Position:

- Process to identify people with leadership potential
- Programme to develop potential
- Corporate succession planning process across departments/services, driven and owned by CLT
- Supplemented by departmental succession planning

What is already happening?

- Ad-hoc succession planning at Service level

Priority areas for action

- Establish succession plans for key roles
- Establish wider succession planning process
- Develop process of identifying future leadership potential
- Develop programme to develop potential (e.g., leadership education / qualification, job rotation, etc.)

C. Recruitment and Retention

With partners, taking action to address key future occupational skill shortages; promote jobs and careers; identify, develop and motivate talent and address diversity issues.

1. Responding to changing demographics*Current Position:*

- Ageing population and workforce
- More ethnic diversity in labour pool
- Workforce doesn't reflect population diversity
- Competitive labour market

Desired Position:

- Attract and retain more young people
- Workforce that is more reflective of local population
- Be an 'employer of choice'

What is already happening?

- Equalities Action Plans
- Employee Well-being Strategy
- National Graduate Development Programme
- Work Experience Scheme
- Flexible Working Policy

Priority areas for action

- Develop an employer brand aimed at younger people
- Define what will make Wiltshire Council an 'employer of choice' (e.g. friendly working environment, interesting and challenging career, flexible working practices, choice of benefits, development opportunities, fairness and equality, etc.) and integrate messages into recruitment process / communications
- Consider changes to recruitment process / reward policy to increase flexibility for managers
- Define flexible retirement policies to retain experienced employees on a basis that helps both employer and employee
- Apprenticeship schemes (graduate and non-graduate)

2. Improving our workforce planning

Current Position:

- Recruitment difficulties experienced in specific areas:
 - Social care
 - Planning
 - Environmental Health
 - Other professions
- No systematic analysis of risks to service delivery

Desired Position:

- Systematic workforce planning incorporating risk analysis
- Action plans in place for 'service critical' areas where there are recruitment difficulties / skills gaps
- More options for managers re policies to recruit and retain

What is already happening?

- Development of recruitment website
- Production of regular workforce data for senior managers
- Workforce Planning in District Councils

Priority areas for action

- Put in place a workforce planning process to identify 'service critical' skills gaps and develop action plans to address
- Refresh recruitment process and documentation to emphasise total reward package (as well as internal communication to existing staff) and to address perceived rigidity in process (e.g. person specs)

3. Improving career management

Current Position:

- Current systems recognise and reward technical / professional expertise at the expense of general management skill
- Limited tools available to retain and develop staff once recruited
- No mechanism for progression once people reach top of grade
- Silo working

Desired Position:

- More defined career paths - for technical specialists AND general managers
- Pro-active management of talent pool
- More perceived flexibility on the part of managers and staff about next career step
- More staff wanting to 'step up' to broader management roles
- Staff able to respond to new requirement to work on a thematic basis

What is already happening?

- Continuing professional development well handled by the professions (e.g., CIPFA, Law Society)

Priority areas for action

- Develop job families / career paths to increase flexibility (and associated tools)
- Enhance career development opportunities with options including career rotation / work shadowing programmes / coaching / mentoring

D. Skill and Competency Development

With partners, developing employees' skills and knowledge, in an innovative, high performance, multi-agency context

1. Addressing specific skill gaps*Current Position:*

- Skill gaps emerging due to changes in the way we are delivering our services (e.g., commissioning role, personalisation agenda, systems thinking, etc)
- Broader development needs emerging linked to vision, culture, goals (customer focus, systems thinking, commercial skills, change management, performance management)

Desired Position:

- Systematic assessment of current skill base
- Corporate training & development programme driven by the needs of the Council

What is already happening?

- Training and development needs identified in draft paper 'OD for the Transition Period'
- Departmental skills programmes (e.g., case worker role in Adult Social Care)

Priority areas for action

- Identify corporate training and development needs and programme (building on recommendations already identified in draft paper 'OD for the Transition Period')

E. Pay and Rewards

Modernising pay systems to reflect new structures, new priorities and new ways of working and to reinforce high performance, including encouraging a total rewards approach.

1. Market pay positioning*Current Position:*

- Grading structure reviewed
- Policy is to pay at market median

Desired Position:

- Reward policies that are affordable and reflect an 'employer of choice'

What is already happening?

- Pay and grading review complete
- Ongoing review and development of benefits package

Priority areas for action

- Review pay policy in line with ambition to be an employer of choice, and determine where we want to be in the market

III. Next Steps

- People Strategy to go to Cabinet in July 2008;
- Refine action plan including resource needs and timescales;
- Identify accountabilities for driving forward the actions (CLT will take accountability for monitoring the plan and ensuring it is reviewed at appropriate intervals)
- Resource action plan
- Identify a process to review the Strategy in light of changing circumstances and emerging issues and trends.

