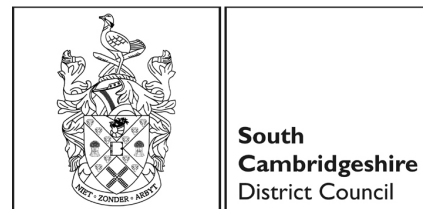


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8 September 2008

To: Councillor MP Howell - Staffing Portfolio Holder
Councillors RB Martlew and RT Summerfield – Opposition Spokesmen
Councillor Miss JA Dipple – Scrutiny and Overview Committee Monitor

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next **STAFFING PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S MEETING**, which will be held in the **MONKFIELD ROOM** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **TUESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2008 at 4:00 p.m.**

Yours faithfully
GJ HARLOCK
Chief Executive

The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
 2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** **1 - 6**
To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2008.
 3. **Declarations of Interest**
- DECISION ITEM**
4. **Review of the Workforce Plan** **7 - 40**
To consider a report on a review of the Workforce Plan.
 5. **Fuel Reimbursement for Contract Hire Users** **41 - 46**
To consider a report on the fuel reimbursement rate and mileage claim payment method for Contract Hire users
- INFORMATION ITEM**
6. **Schools Work Experience Programme** **47 - 58**
To consider a report of the Human Resources Manager.
 7. **Forward Plan**
At the June meeting, the Portfolio Holder identified the following items for consideration within his portfolio during this municipal year:
 - i) Car Leases
 - ii) Equal Pay – update
 - iii) Succession Planning
 - iv) Absentee Action Plans
 - v) Officer Member Relationships
 - vi) Schools Work Experience

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No member of the public shall be allowed to bring into or display at any Council meeting any banner, placard, poster or other similar item. The Chairman may require any such item to be removed.

Disturbance by Public

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

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Since 1 July 2008, the Council has operated a new Smoke Free Policy. Visitors are not allowed to smoke at any time within the Council offices, or in the car park or other grounds forming part of those offices.

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Staffing Portfolio Holder's meeting held on
Tuesday, 17 June 2008 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor MP Howell – Staffing Portfolio Holder

Councillor: RT Summerfield

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:
Susan Gardner Craig (Human Resources Manager)

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Portfolio Holder noted the minutes of the meeting of Staffing and Communications Portfolio Holder held on the 1 April 2008 but was unable to confirm that they were a correct record of that meeting as he had not been in attendance.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Portfolio Holder declared personal interests in two items on the agenda:

- i) item on the 'Amendment to the Council Smoke Free Policy' as a smoker, and
- ii) item on 'Service Continuity Arrangements for December and January Holiday Period' as a member of Unison.

3. SERVICE CONTINUITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR DECEMBER AND JANUARY HOLIDAY PERIOD

The Portfolio Holder considered a report which set out proposals for public access and service continuity during the Christmas holiday period (December 2008) and the New Year holiday period (January 2009).

For many years the adopted practice at South Cambridgeshire District Council has been to close the main offices and depot for the duration of the Christmas and New Year holiday period. This has meant that the offices have been closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Years Day and depending on how those dates fell in the working week, certain week-days between the 27 and 31 December were also days on which the offices were closed. This has been achieved by utilising the extra two statutory holidays as agreed and included in most contracts of employment, and by the grant of one day as a concessionary holiday. If the Council needed to be closed for an extra day over this holiday period an extra concessionary day could be granted. Entitlement to Concessionary holidays was within the grant of the authority, therefore non-contractual, and capable of being withdrawn.

Concerns were raised following a number of complaints from the public during the Christmas and New Year holiday period 2007-08, which were focused on the refuse collection service. Elected Members, having considered the service delivery arrangements for the Christmas and New Year holiday period 2007-08, have expressed a wish to provide improved service coverage for that holiday period in 2008-09, to include access to the main offices at Cambourne. Elected Members have indicated that they would like to see a 'skeleton' staffing of the Cambourne office over the Christmas period

with volunteers from 'public facing'/'business critical' service areas, these include:

- Homelessness
- Housing including Sheltered Housing
- Reception
- Benefits
- Revenues
- Environmental services
- Planning & Building Control

The services would need to be supported by appropriate levels of ICT, caretaking, communications and facilities support. Health and safety considerations would include the need to have an identified fire warden in case of emergency. There would be costs associated with opening/ running the building (heating, electricity, refreshments facilities) for a very low number of employees.

The Portfolio Holder considered the feedback from Unison members, which was wholeheartedly against any proposals to open over the Christmas holiday period, and heard representations from the Unison Branch Secretary, Mr Patrick Adams, who enforced the message that any decision to change past practice would be very unpopular amongst staff. Mr Adams pointed out that many staff had already taken on firm commitments based on expected closure over the coming Christmas holiday period.

The Staffing Portfolio Holder **AGREED** that for this year volunteers would be sought from service areas to provide a skeleton service during the Christmas period. The extra statutory days would be added to employee leave entitlement. The concessionary day would be used to close the office on Friday 2 January 2009. For future Christmas periods the office should be open as normal and application of the concessionary day shall be decided annually by the Staffing Portfolio Holder.

4. SMOKE FREE POLICY (URGENT ITEM)

The Portfolio Holder had agreed to take as an urgent item a report on the amendment to the Council's smoke free policy, as the proposed implementation date was to be 1 July and the policy required the approval of the Staffing Portfolio Holder prior to implementation.

The report considered the Council's aspiration to attain to the National Clean Air Gold Standard, which would require the removal of the smoking shelters and a total ban on smoking within Council site boundaries. The amended policy also addressed the inequality surrounding breaks and time off work between employees who smoke and their non-smoking colleagues. The policy aim was to provide equality for all employees by banning smoking breaks during core hours as well as on all Council sites.

The amended Policy also gave clarification to smoking arrangements for employees who might work in any non-restricted area. Employees might smoke in their cars as they travelled between sites, but smoking in cars parked within the staff car park is prohibited. The Policy Holder wished enquiries to be made to ascertain if future leasing agreements might contain a smoking ban.

Unison and the GMB unions had been consulted and feedback from them was that the Council should go further to discourage smoking than it previously had done. Mr P Adams, Unison Branch Secretary commented that numerically speaking it was quite a small problem, yet a very large problem for the few employees who still smoked.

Accepting this point the Portfolio Holder wished to assure all employees affected by this Policy of the Council's continuing support.

The Staffing Portfolio Holder **AGREED** to amend the Smoke Free Policy as follows:

- i. The smoking shelters be removed.
- ii. The Council implements a total site ban on smoking and applies for the National Clean Air Gold Standard
- iii. To prohibit employees from taking a break during core hours to smoke. Line managers and supervisors will be looked upon to regulate this new requirement to ensure it is not abused to the detriment of non-smoking staff.

5. **EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEY**

The Portfolio Holder considered a report on the recent Staff Satisfaction Survey and expressed his disappointment with the results. It had been four years since the previous full employee satisfaction survey and many areas, when compared to those 2004 results, showed a decrease in satisfaction levels.

The Staffing Portfolio Holder considered the 2008 Staff Satisfaction Survey Report, noted the communication process in line with the suggested action plan and timetable and **AGREED** to:

- i) the approach of referring the results to local management team forums for consideration and for Corporate and Service Managers to be responsible for identifying local actions and 'quick fixes' and for developing action plans
- ii) undertake the staff satisfaction survey, in its current format, in March 2009 and annually thereafter

6. **SICKNESS ABSENCE APRIL 2007 – MARCH 2008**

The Portfolio Holder considered a report of the Chief Executive that provided an analysis of the sickness absence figures for the period April 2007 to March 2008. A monitoring function of the Portfolio Holder.

The sickness performance indicator for the period 1 April 2007– 31 March 2008 was 10.15 days per full time equivalent against a target figure of 10.25. The Human Resources - Payroll team had active involvement with the management of 50 cases of sickness absence during 2007/ 08, the majority of which involved long term sickness or disability issues.

The report suggested that South Cambridgeshire District Council's sickness policy, was fit for purpose, and long-term sickness absences were managed effectively but repeated short-term absences appeared to be tolerated, and that Corporate Managers needed to discuss with their management teams the issues concerning the managing of attendance and what help was required. Attendance management needed to be seen as a performance indicator for all levels of management. Anecdotal evidence suggested some managers found the conversations required for effective attendance management difficult, and would prefer not to have them. Under the Disability Discrimination Act the Council was obliged to make reasonable adjustments as a good employer.

The Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the sickness performance indicator for the period 1 April 2007– 31 March 2008 was 10.15 days per full time equivalent and stressed that attendance management needed to be seen as a performance indicator for all levels of management.

7. LEAVERS APRIL 2007 – MARCH 2008

The Staffing Portfolio Holder considered the leavers report for 2007 – 2008 which showed a performance indicator value at 9.54 % against a target for voluntary leavers of 11.0 %. The figure was lower than estimated because of an increase in headcount over the year. Voluntary leavers did not include; redundancies, ill health retirements, ending of fixed term contracts, or people opting to leave at 65, or internal transfers. The rate of leavers taking into account all leavers was 11.45 %.

The information was recorded from Leavers Forms forwarded to HR/Payroll for processing after exit interviews. During the period HR/ Payroll had received 22 exit interview forms.

The Staffing Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the report

8. OVERVIEW OF TRAINING 2007/ 2008

The Staffing Portfolio Holder considered a report of the HR Manager which gave an overview of staff training within the authority for 2007 -2008.

In total 283 days of training had been delivered through the corporate training programme during 2007 - 08.

Corporate areas were responsible for producing Personal Development Plans through the appraisal process and for addressing specific training needs. Copies of Personal Development Plans were sent to HR to allow better planning of corporate training. Some managers had not made best use of the training provided through the corporate training programme, having arranged for employees to attend external courses, where internal courses were offered. The Council does not have a dedicated learning and development officer and the HR Manager and HR Officer provides such support. The HR Officer had just completed a qualification in management development and was working with the Management Development Project Group to improve management development within the Council.

The Staffing Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the report and congratulated officers on the results.

9. FORWARD PLAN

The Portfolio Holder identified the following items for consideration within his portfolio during this municipal year:

- i) Car Leases
- ii) Equal Pay – update
- iii) Succession Planning
- iv) Absentee Action Plans
- v) Officer Member Relationships
- vi) Schools Work Experience

10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Unable to set a precise date, the Portfolio Holder suggested that the next meeting should be arranged for a date at or near to the end of September 2008.

The Meeting ended at 11:05am

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Staffing Portfolio Holder16th September 2008**AUTHOR/S:** HR Manager / Policy and Performance Manager

REVIEW OF THE WORKFORCE PLAN**Purpose**

1. The workforce plan was last approved by Cabinet in December 2006 and by Council in February 2007. The plan (which is attached to this report) has now been refreshed to take into account of developments in the last year; new challenges facing the Council; and updated statistics. The revised plan takes into account the Corporate Objectives of the Council and the workforce issues included in service plans, hence supporting the golden thread. The Action Plan has been completely updated. The Workforce Plan will be reviewed again in March 2009 to bring it into line with the service planning cycle.
2. The purpose of this report is to enable the Portfolio Holder to consider and approve the attached Workforce Plan.

Background

3. The purpose of a Workforce Plan is to ensure that the Council **has the right people, with the right skills, in the right jobs, at the right time** to deliver its priorities and to continue to improve services. This means not only that the Council has an appropriate number of staff in each service, but also that the Council maintains an environment in which staff can maximise the contribution they make. This includes issues such as increasing leadership and management capacity; support in developing customer service and partnership skills and a more diverse workforce reflecting the community and bringing a mix of skills and perspectives.
4. Since the adoption of the current plan last year, a great deal has happened which will impact on the Council's workforce capacity and requirements. The CGI Inspection and the subsequent development and implementation of the Improvement Plan have led to stronger corporate capacity; improved leadership; clearer objectives; and better internal communication. The Council has now committed itself to achieving Investors In People accreditation and to improve its performance on Equalities. A greater focus on partnership working has improved the Council's capacity to tackle the growth areas.
5. The recent CGI Follow Up report also highlights areas which are relevant to the Workforce Plan – for example -
 - the need for arrangements to manage future change;
 - the need to review and strengthen the council's approach to corporate and service area succession planning;
 - the importance of ensuring that improvement is about lasting cultural change
 - the requirement for HR capacity to be commensurate with the demands placed upon it.

6. Other future issues which the Workforce Plan has to take into account are the continuing financial pressure on the Council; the growth areas; and the potential impacts of the Housing Futures project.
7. A great deal has been achieved since the approval of the current Plan. For example, the Council has completed the transition to the new senior management structure of two chief officers and five corporate managers. Work has been carried out to improve management through support of the corporate managers; the development of management competencies; work on a pilot management development programme; and training in key skills such as project management, service planning and absence management. Internal communication has been much improved. Induction has been improved and flexible working strengthened. The Council has received support in much of this improvement activity from the IDeA and Building Capacity East.
8. The revised Workforce Plan also takes account of the issues highlighted in service plans – in particular continuing issues of recruitment for some services; the need for succession planning; the challenges of planning for the growth areas; skills gaps in areas such as risk; decision making structures; and contract management.

Key Issues for the Workforce Plan

9. Taking into account the needs identified in service plans; the areas in the current Workforce Plan which remain to be addressed; and other recent developments, the main areas to be addressed in 2008/09 and reflected in the revised plan are: -
 - a) **Management Development.** Building on the work carried out to develop competencies and the pilot being undertaken with the support of IDeA and BCE, to develop a programme using the £20,000 budget provision.
 - b) **Investors in People.** To put in place the processes and capacities required to meet the Council's objective to achieve IIP status in 2009.
 - c) **Job Evaluation and Equal Pay.** To carry out a job evaluation process in order to give assurance that the Council is meeting equal pay requirements as set out in legislation and its own equality policies
 - d) **Equality and Diversity.** In meeting level 1 of the Equalities Standard the Council gave a number of commitments to actions to promote equality and diversity in its workforce – including:
 - review of recruitment procedures, forms and advertising
 - staff training in equalities
 - an employment equality assessment of the local labour market
 - equal pay policy
 - e) **Supporting services in addressing HR needs arising from service plans** through the development of plans to address recruitment and retention, planning for growth and other matters affecting their capacity for continuing service delivery.

- f) **Succession Planning.** Consideration has been given to more structured approach to resource planning to prepare officers to take over senior or specialised posts, which become vacant.

Following comments in the CGI re-inspection report, succession planning both at senior management level and within services will be an important issue to be tackled. Currently the Council has an informal approach to succession planning with service managers taking a localised approach to developing potential within their services. There is a need to develop a more robust Corporate Policy to ensure the organisation will have the individuals with the drive, knowledge and experience needed to provide strategic direction and handle changes in service delivery.

The Council will undertake a review of current workforce issues and risks and recommend a medium term approach to address the potential lack of managerial and professional successors. Service plans will include an element of workforce and succession planning.

Succession Planning also needs to take account of the potential outcome following a tenant vote on housing transfer. A vote in favour of a transfer would result in the transfer of approximately one third of the workforce. In this scenario, valuable skills, knowledge and experience and management capacity will be lost from the Council.

The age profile of the Council suggests that many of the experienced technical/professional officers and managers will reach normal retirement within the next few years, this is of particular concern in areas such as accountancy. Modern Apprenticeships and sponsored internships should be considered as an effective way to replenish the organisation with new talent.

- g) **Housing Futures.** Significant input is anticipated from all support services as the project gathers momentum.
- h) **Service reviews.** To address the implications of the programme of service reviews, in particular a scheduled review of the HR service. With the pace of change and the improvement programme the Council requires more input and support from its HR section than it can realistically deliver. Increasing demands on the team to support restructuring and corporate initiatives as well as 'business as usual' support to operational managers means that HR resources are stretched. A service review of the HR section will take place during the next year with a view to identifying clearer direction and resource requirements. Part of this review needs to take account of the ongoing HR systems support and development requirements in order to maximise potential of the Resourcelink system.
- i) **Growth Areas.** Working with partners and using external resources as far as possible, to ensure the necessary skills for the planning and development of the growth areas and future service planning to match workforce requirements with the service needs of the growing population

Implications

10. There are new financial implications arising from the revised plan. Plans to undertake a review and to strengthen succession planning will have financial consequences. The introduction of an apprenticeship scheme would initially incur additional expenditure but once a programme has been established it could be cost neutral. Staffing implications are addressed throughout.
11. The delivery of the Action Plan will very much rely on the capacity of the HR team, Corporate Managers and other senior officers and managers. An additional post has been approved for the HR team and a new member of staff started in August. Progress on the delivery of the plan will be kept under review with the Portfolio Holder.

Consultations

12. Policy Development Committee was consulted at the outset of the revision of the plan and drew attention to the need to address succession planning. The Committee has also been consulted on the attached revised plan and its comments will be reported at the meeting.

Effect on the Corporate Objectives

13. The purpose of the plan is to ensure capacity to deliver the Corporate Objectives and this is specifically addressed in Section 4 of the Plan.

Recommendations

14. Cabinet is recommended to approve the attached revised Workforce Plan and to request the Action Plan to be built into service plans and implemented by the officers concerned. In particular, a review of the workforce and succession planning to ensure a corporate approach to this issue.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Workforce Plan
- Local Government-the place to be, the place to work (LGA, LGE, I&DeA)
- CIPD – Succession Planning

Contact Officers:

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Paul Swift, Policy and Performance Manager: Telephone: (01954) 713017

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Workforce Plan

2008/9 to 2010/11

(Version 3 – 1st April 2008)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The last twelve months have seen significant change and challenges for this Council, most of which has impacted on the current workforce and the development of future resources. In this context it is appropriate to review the original Workforce Plan, developed in November 2006, and to re-evaluate the Council's position and future workforce needs.

Purpose – Why a Workforce Plan?

1.2 Workforce planning is about looking to the future, being proactive and ensuring that the Council is fully staffed by appropriately skilled and qualified people now and in the longer term. The key purpose of South Cambridgeshire District Council's Workforce Plan is to draw together strategically all that the Council does to recruit, retain, support and develop employees, managers and elected Members. The plan must support the evolution of the Council as it undergoes considerable change to ensure that the services it provides and the influence it has within Cambridgeshire and the 'Growth Agenda' - and more increasingly within a wider regional and sub-regional context – are effective and responsive.

1.3 In order to meet the challenges over the next four years, it is critical that the Council **has the right people, with the right skills, in the right jobs, at the right time** to deliver its priorities and continuously improving services. The Council's current priorities for 2008/2009 are to:-

- Work in Partnership to manage growth to benefit everyone in South Cambridgeshire now and in the future
- Deliver high quality services that represent best value and are accessible to all our community
- Enhance quality of life and build a sustainable South Cambridgeshire where everyone is proud to live and work

1.4 The Council must be able to attract and retain talent in a highly competitive employment market place and must develop and re-skill staff to respond effectively to the Growth Area agenda, Corporate Governance Inspection recommendations and Housing Futures project in particular. New ways of working, especially within partnerships, have reinforced the need for local community leadership skills for Councillors and stronger partnership skills for staff.

1.5 The Workforce Plan reflects the nature of the Council, the services it delivers, the results and recommendations following inspections and the culture of the organisation.

1.6 The plan covers the short and medium term and it will be reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure that it remains 'fit for purpose' and that the issues it covers and the priorities it sets are the right ones for the Council, its elected Members, its senior management, its employees and most importantly the communities of South Cambridgeshire

2.0 Context - Workforce Size and Composition

2.1 The workforce profile was produced by extracting data from the HR and Payroll system. This data provides an overview of the whole Council. Appendix 1 gives statistics about the Council's current workforce.

2.2 South Cambridgeshire District Council employs 500 employees. For the purpose of this plan, the authority has been divided into 5 corporate service areas and Chief Executive's direct reports.

Table 1: South Cambs District Council, service areas

<p>Chief Executive Chief Executive's direct reports Elections and Support Services Legal Services Human Resources and Payroll Communications Policy & Performance</p>	<p>Executive Director Planning and Sustainable Communities Building Control, Design and Conservation Development Control</p>	<p>Health and Environmental Services Environmental inspection and enforcement Health & Safety Waste Management Street Cleaning Water courses</p>
<p>Finance and Support Services Accountancy Revenues and Benefits Democratic Services ICT</p>	<p>New Communities Community Development Growth Major Developments Economic Development</p>	<p>Affordable Homes Supported Housing Homelessness Housing repairs and asset management Choice Based Lettings</p>

2.3 We do not have direct comparisons to enable us to assess how the distribution of our workforce between services compares with other councils. Audit Commission spending comparisons show that the Council is in the lowest quartile of district councils for spending for all services except for planning (Development Services) and general fund housing. Our overall workforce is lower per head of population than neighbouring councils. We are carrying out service reviews for all major services and this will give us a more objective base for assessing the adequacy of our workforce to deliver the service standards required.

2.4 The key statistics and findings are:-

- a) In 2006, 60% of the Council's workforce was over 40 years; this has increased slightly to 61.2%. The ageing workforce is an issue for all service areas and greater emphasis on succession planning is required particularly at senior management and professional officer levels.
- b) 8.2% of the workforce has less than 1 years service, 24.8 % has between 1 and 5 years service. 51.6% of the total workforce has service between 5 and 20 years, so we have a good record of retaining staff in terms of skills and experience, but we do have a profile of an ageing workforce (see Appendix 1). This may result in a sudden loss of skills and experience in the next few years unless we start to succession plan for the future need for professional, technical and managerial staff. There are a number of specific areas where the Council is likely to lose senior officers in the next 2-3 years – e.g.: senior management; Development Services; Environmental Health; Accountancy
- c) Several categories of staff are in short supply (environmental health, planning, accountancy, trades). The Planning service is addressing this issue successfully by a policy of "grow your own". Environmental Health teams have adopted a similar approach (student placements). There is also the issue of career progression for younger staff and this could be seen as a key reason for leaving. The introduction of a 'Duty to Consider' Policy in line with age legislation requirements is seen as a positive step in managing turnover and loss of experience and skills at the point of normal retirement age.
- d) The age profile of the workforce is not representative of the wider demography but is typical of local government generally. In respect of regional trends there is an 'Age Bulge' in the 40 – 64 age bands but an under-representation in the 16 – 30 age groupings.

- e) The district council is fairly equally balanced in terms of gender composition with 50.2% being male and 49.8% female employees. There are predominantly more female part time employees than male, although there has been an increase in the numbers of male part time workers. The top quartile of earners is dominated by males with only 33% of the top 5% of earners being female.
- f) Although there are 20% more females in the pay range scp 25 – 28 there are 30% less females than male in the pay range scp 29 – 36. This would indicate that although females are progressing their careers to supervisory levels they are less likely to progress into management roles.
- g) The percentage of disabled employees is fairly representative of the wider community being 3% compared with 3.5% who are economically active in Cambridgeshire.
- h) Ethnic minority representation, currently at 3%, within the workforce is slightly lower than the census figure for Cambridgeshire.
- i) There are concerns about lack of diversity in the workforce in some services. Diversity is valuable because it enables individual services and the organisation as a whole to benefit from the different perspectives and ideas that diversity brings to the provision of services. In many cases traditional stereotypes strongly influence the composition of the workforce in certain services and professions.

3.0 Context – Workforce Issues

3.1 The issues in the following paragraphs have been identified as a result of:-

- a) Discussions with SMT, Corporate Managers, Heads of Service.
- b) The results of the recent staff surveys.
- c) Information giving the composition of staff
- d) Service planning processes
- e) Information from the East of England Regional Assembly and DCLG

External Factors

3.2 The Workforce Plan needs to take into account factors such as:-

- a) The Council's medium term financial position, and the future pressure on its resources.
- b) Planning for, and meeting the needs of, new communities at Northstowe and other growth areas both in terms of the skills required to ensure appropriate development and to meet the increased service provision needs of the new population.
- c) Responding to rising expectations about the quality of services provided by the Council – for example in seeking to improve satisfaction levels.
- d) The changing nature of local government and different range of skill sets required – including: a greater range of service provision and management models; more project based; more partnership; community leadership; more cross-cutting work; mobile working and working from home.
- e) The national agenda on pay, pensions, retirement, work-life balance, health and child friendly policies.
- f) The continuing need to address recruitment and retention
- g) The need to improve succession planning and in particular, to prepare for the retirement of senior managers or others with specialist skills, knowledge or experience.
- h) The Council was subject to a Corporate Governance Inspection in October 2006 and an Improvement Plan, under the banner of Inspire, has been followed through during 2007.

Re-inspection took place in January 2008 and the report was published on 20th March 2008. The main points relevant to this plan are –

- The need to improve succession planning
 - Ensuring that improvement at the Council is about lasting cultural change
 - Achieving a match between the resourcing and expectations on the HR service
 - Making sure that recent investment in capacity results in further improvement.
- i) The decision of the Council to develop a proposal to transfer its housing stock.

Succession Planning

- 3.3 Succession planning can be broadly defined as identifying future potential leaders and professionals to fill key positions. The Council has an ageing workforce profile and it is likely that a number of senior managers and professional officers will retire over the course of the next five years. A further issue is the trend towards flatter organisational structures. This means fewer employees are gaining strategic skills and exposure to the political skills needed for senior positions.
- 3.4 Consideration has been given to more structured approach to resource planning to prepare officers to take over senior or specialised posts, which become vacant. Following comments in the CGI re-inspection report, succession planning both at senior management level and within services will be an important issue to be tackled. Currently the Council has an informal approach to succession planning with service managers taking a localised approach to developing potential within their services. There is a need to develop a more robust Corporate Policy to ensure the organisation will have the individuals with the drive, knowledge and experience needed to provide strategic direction and handle changes in service delivery.
- 3.5 The Council will undertake a review of current workforce issues and risks and recommend a medium term approach to address the potential lack of managerial and professional successors. In the next year the Council will commission a review of its workforce and succession planning needs in order to draw up its future approach to succession planning. Service plans will include an element of workforce and succession planning.
- 3.6 Succession planning also needs to take account of the potential outcome following a tenant vote on housing transfer. A vote in favour of a transfer would result in the transfer of approximately one third of the workforce. In this scenario, valuable skills, knowledge and experience and management capacity will be lost from the Council.
- 3.7 The age profile of the Council suggests that many of the experienced technical/professional officers and managers will reach normal retirement within the next few years; this is of particular concern in areas such as accountancy. Modern Apprenticeships and sponsored internships should be considered as an effective way to replenish the organisation with new talent.
- 3.8 Management and supervisory competency frameworks have been developed for the Council these will be underpinned by development programmes formulated to address generic and individual learning needs. Services will be helped to develop strategies for succession planning in their own areas. This may include Officers showing potential being identified and personal development plans being written to enable them to be in a better position to compete for posts becoming available in the Council.

Recruitment

- 3.9 Turnover rates are stable and much reduced from previous high levels (actual figure for 2006/7 was 9.40%, year to date for 2007/8 is 6.64%). Recruitment, into entry/junior level posts, is generally not the problem it was and local recruitment campaigns for this level of job role have produced a good number of applications. Difficulties previously experienced in retaining street cleaning operatives has settled down as a result of reviewing and re-evaluating job roles. Initiatives to 'Grow our Own' (HGV driver training) have proved to be very successful in the waste management operations area. Further initiatives, such as using Train to Gain funding, will be investigated with a view to raising qualification levels.
- 3.10 Some problems remain in a limited number of areas – such as senior or experienced professional technical roles, for example urban design (see workforce composition above), and experienced managers. Over the medium to long term recruitment is likely to continue to be an issue which the Council needs to keep under review because of:-
- National shortages in some technical/professional work areas are contributing to recruitment problems.
 - High housing costs in the area and the fact that key worker definitions do not apply to this Council.
 - Competition from other employers in the area in particular for Growth Agenda posts – e.g. from housing associations; other Councils; health sector etc.
 - The possible impact from financial pressure (MTFS) and Audit Commission inspections.
 - Recruitment of officers into more senior positions, where we are looking for sufficient skills to undertake more complex work.

The Council will continue to monitor recruitment and retention closely and review the pay scale and indexing arrangements on a regular basis.

- 3.11 Reliance upon Planning Delivery Grant and other external funding to support posts required to meet the extensive growth agenda creates a risk around the future of funding and the ability to deliver the Council's aspirations in this area.
- 3.12 Another issue linked to recruitment difficulties, particularly in respect of recruiting more young people to Local Government, is the profile/image of local government. We are not generally attracting young people into the Council – we have little in the way of training/internship opportunities and apprenticeships. The reputation of the Council also has an impact on recruitment.

Services facing service peaks

- 3.13 A limited number of services are under pressure at certain times of the year – e.g. Elections; Accountancy and Revenues. The introduction of a more flexible workforce, certainly at administrative levels, is being considered. Greater use of annualised hours, casual contracts and other forms of flexibility is being encouraged.
- 3.14 An area of concern, highlighted by the CGI re-inspection, was the capacity of the HR team. With the Council asking more of its limited HR section than it can realistically deliver, placing increasing demands on the team to support restructuring and corporate initiatives as well as 'business as usual' support to operational managers. A service review of the HR section will take place during the next year with a view to identifying clearer direction and resource requirements. Part of this review needs to take account of the ongoing HR systems support and development requirements in order to maximise potential of the Resourcelink system.

Skills identified for the Local Government Workforce

- 3.15 The Local Government Employers have identified, nationally, the key skills areas, which, need to be developed or acquired in the wider local government workforce:
- a) Organisational development and change management
 - b) Business Process analysis
 - c) Performance, productivity and people management
 - d) Customer relations management
 - e) Project and financial management
 - f) Partnership working and community development
 - g) Managing and promoting diversity
 - h) Maximising the use of technology

Training and Skills

3.13 The Council spends a considerable amount on training:

	£ per employee	Total spend across all services
2004/2005	£ 347	£178,278
2005/2006	£ 250	£158,037
2006/2007	£ 385	£176,095
2007/2008	£448	£226,692

Training budgets have been under pressure and there will need to be greater scrutiny and evaluation of the effectiveness and value for money. All corporate training budgets were reduced by 15% to achieve the overall £50,000 reduction on annual training/seminars and courses budgets, which was agreed in the budget savings for 2007/08.

- 3.14 The Council has a corporate training budget, to cover cross cutting, generic skills and ICT training requirements, and also service-controlled training budgets. The corporate budget has been successfully utilised to deliver absence management training, project management ICT and basic supervisory/team leader training.
- 3.15 The Council has been successful in gaining Building Capacity East funding for “Top Team” development and for mentoring and leadership training for Members. Building Capacity East are supporting a project to address management development needs. However, a sum of £20,000 has been included in the budget for 2008/9, with further budgets for future years, to deliver management skills training
- 3.16 Difficulty in recruiting experienced staff in some professional areas has also led to increased training needs. It has, in some cases, been necessary to employ officers who do not meet the full experience requirements for the job. In these cases additional development needs will be identified and extra burden will be placed on training budgets in service areas. Pressure will also be placed on existing staff who will be required to coach the new team member and cover for their shortfall in skills.

- 3.17 The areas where skills development is most needed relate closely to the skills needs identified by the Local Government Employers and include:-
- a) General management skills – for example performance management; coaching and mentoring; service analysis and review.
 - b) Customer care – for example in terms of establishing a culture of customer care; development of customer care standards; identifying customer needs; dealing with their complaints and concerns and communicating with customers.
 - c) Financial skills among service managers.
 - d) Project management
 - e) Partnership skills
 - f) Procurement skills
 - g) ICT skills – skills need to continue to improve to maximise the benefits of ICT investment and continue to improve productivity – both at the level of the individual officer and the understanding of managers on how ICT can help achieve their business aims.
 - h) Skills and understanding in relation to equality and diversity.
 - i) Some specialist skills - particularly in relation to the new settlements – e.g. urban design; landscape design; affordable housing; which the Council is trying to develop.

Capability

- 3.18 The Capability policy and procedure have been reviewed and improved to provide greater clarity and guidance to managers and staff. The processes within the policy are currently being used where staff are unable to perform to the required level or they have difficulty in changing or adapting if the nature of their job has changed. It must be emphasised that this applies to a very small number of staff; however, these few capacity or capability issues can have a disproportionate impact on relatively small teams and can be a major distraction for their managers. Stronger emphasis has been placed on utilising the performance management and appraisal route to ensure early identification of capability issues.

Appraisals

- 3.19 The Council has made considerable progress in developing its staff appraisal process and extending it to all employees. Links between service planning and individual objective setting have been improved. A review of the appraisal scheme is planned for 2008 and will be linked to Investor in People improvements. Progress is still required to improve the coverage, quality and timing of appraisals.

Management

- 3.20 A key focus for the organisation is to raise management capacity at corporate and at service management levels to meet the challenges facing the Council in the years ahead. Areas to be addressed include improvements in service planning; performance; productivity and people management; working effectively in partnerships; management of financial resources; project management; and customer care.

A number of areas have been identified which could be addressed to improve management capacity to tackle the future agenda of the Council:-

- a) Robustness of current management structures.
- b) Providing greater clarity about the role of managers and what they are expected to deliver.
- c) Identifying key competencies and improving management skills.
- d) Reviewing the amount of time taken up with meetings and the democratic process.
- e) Achieving greater clarity of strategic direction and service outcomes.
- f) Applying a more consistent approach to performance management.

- g) Reviewing the balance between the roles of support services (such as finance; communications, HR and policy) and the roles of service managers. Some concerns have been voiced that service managers are being asked to take on too many of these support roles and address cross cutting issues or corporate issues.

Many of these are already being addressed. In particular, a management competency framework is being developed to cover all levels, it is planned to roll this out during 2008 followed by a management development framework. Improving management capacity is addressed in the Action Plan.

Investor in People

- 3.21 Investor in People re-accreditation has been achieved for the Health and Environmental Service area. The CGI Action Plan includes a commitment to put in place arrangements, which will prepare the rest of the Council for achieving the IIP standard during 2009.

Staff Survey

- 3.22 The Council regularly undertakes a survey of its staff (a full satisfaction survey every two years). The results of the last survey (2006) were discussed with a panel of staff. There were many encouraging results from the survey. The following have been identified as the most important issues to be addressed and are included in the Action Plan:-
 - a) Improving two-way communication between staff and management.
 - b) Ensuring greater consistency of the application of HR and management policies through the improvement of management capacity
 - c) An improved and consistent approach to departmental induction for new starters.
 - d) Bring forward a review of flexible working options
 - e) Review and re-launch the lunchtime seminars to improve their effectiveness in addressing corporate issues and sharing ideas.

Progress has been made in the last year resulting in improvements in the above areas. It was been decided that 'mini surveys' will be carried out to focus on key satisfaction areas such as communication. The first mini survey was undertaken in September 2006. The results are encouraging in that they indicate a positive direction of travel.

A new survey was carried out in March 2008 and there has been a significant increase in the number of staff responses to 75%. The overall results and findings have been presented to all staff. Corporate Managers have been discussing the results with their teams and service area action plans are being developed. The Staffing Portfolio Holder has agreed the principle of conducting the survey on an annual basis.

4.0 Council's Priorities and Workforce Requirements

- 4.1 The Council has committed to three Corporate Objectives. These are underpinned by service priorities for 2008/09 onwards

Objective 1. To work in partnership to manage growth to benefit everyone in South Cambridgeshire now and in the future by -

- a) Developing effective working arrangements with major partners to deliver the growth agenda
- b) Effective project planning and management; maximising S106 gains; and developing and implementing LDF policies to achieve new communities and protect rural life
- c) Working with partners to deliver affordable housing for local people
- d) Promoting low carbon living and delivering low carbon growth
- e) Extending and encouraging the use of recycling opportunities

Objective 2. To deliver high quality services that represent best value and are accessible to all our community by -

- a) Ensuring the best value for money options for service delivery
- b) Strong management and prioritisation of resources, resulting in improved audit assessments
- c) Achieving improved customer satisfaction with our services
- d) A commitment to improvement and good quality services, demonstrated by performance against national, local and Direction of Travel indicators.
- e) Improving access to services through our Contact Centre
- f) Working towards level 2 of the equalities standard
- g) Taking account of climate change in all the services we deliver

Objective 3. To enhance quality of life and build a sustainable South Cambridgeshire where everyone is proud to live and work by -

- a) Listening to and engaging with the local community
- b) Working effectively with voluntary organisations and parish councils to improve services through partnership
- c) Taking an active role in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and working with the police and other partners to reduce crime and fear of crime and tackle anti social behaviour.
- d) Protecting and enhancing the environment and maintaining the cleanliness of our villages
- e) Promoting sustainability for the benefit of the local and global environment
- f) Supporting schemes to improve rural transport and access to services.
- g) Promoting participation in sport and active recreation to improve the health of all
- h) Working with local people to promote community cohesion and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in the community
- i) Promoting economic development consistent with our sustainability and environmental aims.

4.2 The achievement of these objectives will depend on many of the same skills and capabilities mentioned in the previous section. Particular workforce issues are discussed below.

- a) There will continue to be a need for a wide range of skills required to plan, develop and project manage the growth areas. Work will continue with partners, taking advantage of external funding opportunities, to ensure that we have the requisite skills in areas such as planning, urban and landscape design and the development of community buildings.
- b) Our workforce will need to grow in order to provide services to an expanding and changing population. This will not happen evenly and is a process, which will require careful management. Services may have to absorb some additional service demands until additional staff resource can be justified. The Growth Areas Project Team will provide growth area population projections to service managers to enable them to manage their response to growth.
- c) In order to improve service provision the Council will continue to foster an awareness of customer care in various ways e.g. through training and induction; the embedding of Council values; management and leadership; communications; and performance management.

- d) As part of the aim to achieve level 2 of the equalities standard in 2008/09, the Council will implement a programme of training in 2008/09 consisting of introductory or equalities awareness training for all staff, with appropriate enhanced training for managers, team leaders and those involved in equality impact assessments.
- e) The ability to work effectively in partnerships is a key skill in delivering the Council's objectives. This will be an important part of any management development.
- f) Other key skills in delivering the Council's objectives and cost effective services include procurement; engagement; project management; financial management; and sustainability.

5.0 Current initiatives to address the workforce needs of the Council

- 5.1 In the last year the Council completed a restructuring of its senior management tiers, based on five Corporate Managers reporting to the Chief Executive and Executive Director. Along with the Chief Executive and Executive Director, the new Corporate Managers plus the Principal Solicitor and HR Manager will form the Executive Management Team. A further restructure has recently taken place to bring together the planning, design and community development elements of the Growth Agenda. The creation of the New Communities Team will strengthen the links in these services to meet the challenges of the major new township of Northstowe.
- 5.2 A personal development and team building programme for the Executive Management Team is being delivered. This has focussed on personal effectiveness, leadership and strategic team working.
- 5.3 Development for managers below 2nd tier level is being addressed through the development of a competency framework and a management development programme; a pilot scheme with IDeA for 2008/2009 centred on strategic partnerships; and the investment of £20K for other development centred on the competency framework.
- 5.4 A programme of service reviews is being carried out for all service areas to identify efficiencies and improve customer service. ICT and HR have been identified as early reviews in order to improve corporate capacity.
- 5.5 To respond to the CGI inspection, the Council made resources available to strengthen corporate capacity in a number of areas – for example in
 - Scrutiny support
 - Strategic partnerships (support for LSP and LAA)
 - Performance management
 - Equalities and diversity
- 5.6 Improved communications – a number of initiatives have been introduced to improve employee communication and engagement:
 - Weekly email bulletins from the Chief Executive to all staff
 - Monthly core staff briefing from SMT
 - Team meetings
 - Re-launch the staff newsletter
 - Chief Executive and Leader Q & A Roadshows
 - Inspire project updates

- 5.7 The development of customer service standards with staff and the launch of those standards by the Service First team.
- 5.8 The completion of a review of Sheltered Housing has resulted in a successful new partnership arrangement with the PCT.
- 5.9 Re-launching the schools work experience programme with the local Connexions Service to encourage young people to look at local government as a career option. Production of a student guide and more varied work placements to enable the student to gain a wider appreciation of the Council's service areas.
- 5.10 Forging links with universities to provide environmental health students gap year placements.
- 5.11 Joint Growth agenda recruitment initiatives with Cambridge City, Cambridgeshire County and Horizons to attract good quality planning, urban design and community development staff. The formation of a joint Urban Design Team between South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Councils.
- 5.12 Shared Services initiative to look at possible partnership with other local authorities, in particular payroll and back office accountancy functions are being explored.
- 5.13 Introduction of a more robust service planning regime. Procurement of a new performance management system
- 5.14 The development of plans to achieve Investor in People accreditation during 2009 and use the IIP standards to drive improvement, change culture and introduce measurement in relation to the effectiveness of training and development.
- 5.15 The adoption of the following Council Values, following a series of staff workshops and a "Vote for Values" day.
- Professionalism
 - Mutual Respect
 - A commitment to improvement
 - Customer service
 - Trust
- 5.16 Work will continue in 2008/09 to embed the values, starting with workshops to identify appropriate behaviours and action plans.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 5.17 The Council continues to face a challenging financial position. An unfavourable financial settlement and an unsuccessful appeal to the Local Government Minister has required the Council to make savings in relation to Northstowe in its budget plans. Nevertheless, the Council has been able to include in the budget for 2008/09 additional posts to improve capacity in some key areas – such as:-
- Revenues and Benefits
 - Planning (to provide a duty desk service)
 - ICT
 - Economic Development
 - Growth areas (Section 106 monitoring and negotiating capacity)

- 5.18 The most pressing financial challenge facing the Council is the need to achieve the Gershon Efficiency savings. This will be a difficult problem for the Council given the efficiency savings already made and the already lean Council budget. However, the target will have to be met not only to meet Government targets but also to balance the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The achievement of the savings is likely to impact upon the workforce in a range of ways. Staff will be encouraged to be more challenging about how things are done. There will need to be a willingness to change. There is likely to be greater pressure on HR and managers to find and implement solutions. Communications and change management skills will be important.
- 5.19 The Council will continue to seek to redirect its resources to ensure that the workforce reflects changing requirements, and in particular the growth areas.

6.0 Principles Underlying the Plan

Importance of staff to the organisation

- 6.1 The Council recognises the heavy reliance placed on its employees in delivering services to the people of South Cambridgeshire. It appreciates the valuable contribution made by staff – and the appreciation of their skills – to the success and stature of the authority. The plan recognises that staff who develop our long-term plans and those who provide the frontline services to our customers will help to shape the future of our communities. It is essential that the plan underpins and facilitates the achievement of the Council's corporate objectives and service priorities.
- 6.2 There must be strong links to :-
- Service plans, personal objective setting and personal development plans set by the appraisal process so that every employee can recognise how they can contribute to the achievement of the Council's objectives
 - Medium term financial strategy
 - Performance management framework
 - Training activity leading to improved performance outcomes

Driving cultural change

- 6.3 We recognise that changes to the way we work need to be supported by cultural change across and through the organisation. The first steps to cultural change have taken place with the formation of the new senior management team and executive management team structures. This has been supported through the development and communication of Council objectives and values and through the greater involvement of staff in service planning and development of "golden threads" between the Corporate Objectives, service plans and personal objectives.

Smarter Working

- 6.4 The Council will need to investigate, consider and implement 'smarter' ways of working which will bring improvements in terms of service delivery, or greater efficiency, or cost benefits, taking every opportunity to secure staff involvement, motivation and encouragement for change, and a greater focus on the Council's priorities and objectives. We recognise that to be successful we need to must not make the change to people – change will only be successful by involving and working with people.

- 6.5 We recognise that partnership working is the way forward delivering key improvement to services for local communities. To do this we will need to identify skill gaps and develop employees to maximise opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations. This can be achieved by:-
- a) discussion with our partners (Cambridgeshire County Council; other County authorities; voluntary sector; public sector organisations) to identify potential areas of joint procurement and partnership working
 - b) ensuring that the process is managed in such a way to ensure that relevant staff are fully involved and that managers and elected members have the necessary leadership skills to drive the change
 - c) 'One Council' approach with an end to narrow silo behaviour at departmental and portfolio level.
 - d) an inclusive Council where all staff and Members feel that they can contribute. In particular, involving 2nd and 3rd tier officers in strategy and policy development.

Achieving flexibility

- 6.6 The Council has recognised that it needs to be flexible and adaptable to enable it to be responsive to the change agenda. Our personnel policies, procedures and practices must support and facilitate flexibility in resourcing the Council's service areas.
- 6.7 The HR team, staff representatives and senior management will need to consider reviews to personnel policies to ensure that they encourage and enable the Council to be responsive to both the needs of its employees and customers. A policy review programme has been agreed with auditors.
- 6.8 Job roles should be reviewed as they become vacant to ensure that future service needs are considered. Job descriptions and person specifications will be revised to include skills and competencies required for the role.
- 6.9 Appropriate use will be made of temporary and fixed term contracts, partnership working and shared service initiatives. Greater emphasis placed on monitoring and review of job descriptions and person specifications, through the appraisal process, to ensure that they accurately reflect organisational needs.

Developing staff, Building capacity

- 6.10 Continued focus on the Council's commitment to developing staff with particular emphasis on ensuring that managers and staff have the necessary skills to manage change, manage projects, meet new roles, provide effective leadership and deliver high performance.

Focussing on:

- Assessing and addressing current and future skills needs
- Succession planning
- Introducing management and supervisory training and development based around core competencies
- Delivering project management training
- Arranging training awareness on cross crossing issues such as Equality/Diversity, ICT and Stress Management
- Effective monitoring of Personal Development Plans set under appraisals
- Continually reviewing our job roles and focussing our job profiles on competencies

Barriers

- 6.11 The main barriers to achieving the workforce for the future include:
- a) Financial pressures – affecting the Council’s ability to be an employer of choice in terms of salary and benefits
 - b) Financial pressures – affecting the Council’s ability to deliver technical and managerial development programmes to ensure that staff have the right skills
 - c) Financial pressures – affecting the Council’s ability to take advantage of apprenticeship initiatives to ‘Grow Your Own’
 - d) Marketing/Branding/Media publicity – the Council’s standing in the local government and employment market place could be adversely affected by continuing ‘Bad News’ stories.

Ensuring that the Council is ‘fit for purpose’

- 6.12 The Council recognises that it is not a static organisation but one, which must continue to evolve and develop in line with external and internal influences. This evolution means that it must ensure that it is organised and structured in the best way to meet both the strategic and service demands generated or influenced by:
- a) The local community – which influences the Council’s overall priorities and objectives. The consultation strategy and public involvement provides the framework for continuous review
 - b) New legislation and central government requirements
 - c) ‘Best practice’ and innovation
 - d) Audit and inspection
 - e) Corporate governance arrangements to reflect the needs, and be supportive of the organisation
 - f) Delegations scheme appropriate to the needs of the organisation

Pay and Reward

- 6.13 The Council commissioned Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) to review its pay and reward structures in 2003, the emphasis being on addressing significant recruitment and retention issues. PWC recommended a new job evaluation and pay and grading structure, which were implemented in 2003/2004.
- 6.14 The introduction of new equalities legislation and increase in equal pay claims and the change employment marketplace mean that the job evaluation scheme and pay structure are no longer fit for purpose. The Council has commenced a major project to undertake a full job evaluation review during 2008/2009 with a view to introducing the NJC scheme for local government. A new pay and grading structure will be developed and introduced in order to meet the requirements of Single Status.

7.0 The objectives of the Plan

The most important issues to be addressed by the Plan

7.1 In summary, the most important issues, which the Plan must address, are: -

- a) The development of effective leadership and clarity of vision, together with communication and cultural change. This and the development of a whole Council approach around agreed values are essential if the Council is to remain focused on improving services and meeting future challenges such as the growth areas within limited resources.
- b) Skills development – particularly generic and management skills such as project management, performance management, customer relations and partnership working. Supporting the development of effective management, particularly at the second and third tiers, is essential to achieving the Council's aims. However, a learning and developing approach across the whole workforce will be important in a changing work environment. It is the skills and abilities of the workforce on which the Council's future depends.
- c) Addressing retention and recruitment and ensuring succession arrangements will continue to be key workforce issues. The Council's ability to keep and attract employees through competing on salary levels alone is limited because of the Medium Term Financial position. The Council's approach must therefore be one of training, development and making the Council an attractive place to work through the full package of working conditions and work satisfaction.
- d) A workforce, which matches the demands upon it. This is particularly important in the context of the growth agenda, where a range of skills will be required for the planning and development of the new settlements and the workforce will need to grow in a planned and co-ordinated manner to provide services for the new residents.

The Objectives of the Plan

7.2 In the light of the foregoing paragraphs, the following objectives reflect the needs of the Council in adapting to external pressures and meeting its objectives in the medium term:-

Workforce Plan Objectives:

To enable the Council to achieve a workforce to deliver its objectives by:-

- **Enhancing leadership and management**
- **Enhancing the skills and motivation of staff to meet the changing work environment and maximise performance**
- **Flexibility and the ability to achieve organisational change to reflect changing needs**
- **Working towards a staffing complement and structure which reflects the Council's objectives and future needs**

7.3 These objectives reflect best practice guidance from the Government that workforce plans should address the following issues:-

- a) Organisational development and transformation
- b) Leadership capacity
- c) Workforce skills and capacity
- d) Recruitment and retention
- e) Pay and rewards

Delivering the Objectives – Action Plan

7.4 The Council will deliver the above objectives through the **Action Plan** set out in Appendix 2. The plan responds to the issues set out in 3.0 above.

Measures of Progress

7.5 How will we know we are making progress? The principal means will be through the achievement of the Action Plan. The contents of the Action Plan will be included within the Council's normal performance management framework – i.e. in Service Plans, appraisals and the Performance Plan and major actions included in the quarterly monitoring reports to Management Team and Cabinet.

7.6 Ultimately, the success of the workforce plan is measured by the effectiveness of the Council in delivering its objectives and performance in relation to performance indicators relating to service performance and service quality.

7.7 The Council already has a number of national and local performance indicators, which relate to this plan and are valuable in measuring progress on key matters relating to workforce matters:

- Training
- Turnover
- Sickness
- Retirements
- Satisfaction of employees with the Council as an employer

7.8 These and other appropriate workforce measures will be built into the Health Card with progress reported on a quarterly basis to EMT and portfolio holders, as part of the Council's improved performance management arrangements.

7.9 The regular staff survey is also a key indicator of workforce views and satisfaction.

Reviewing the Plan

7.10 The Workforce Plan will be revised annually in the period January to March to enable:-

- the review to take into account the views of Members on priorities and budget setting, service planning and service areas on their individual workforce needs
- the outcome of the review to feed into the annual update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy
- the outcome and recommendations from any inspections and audits to be incorporated.

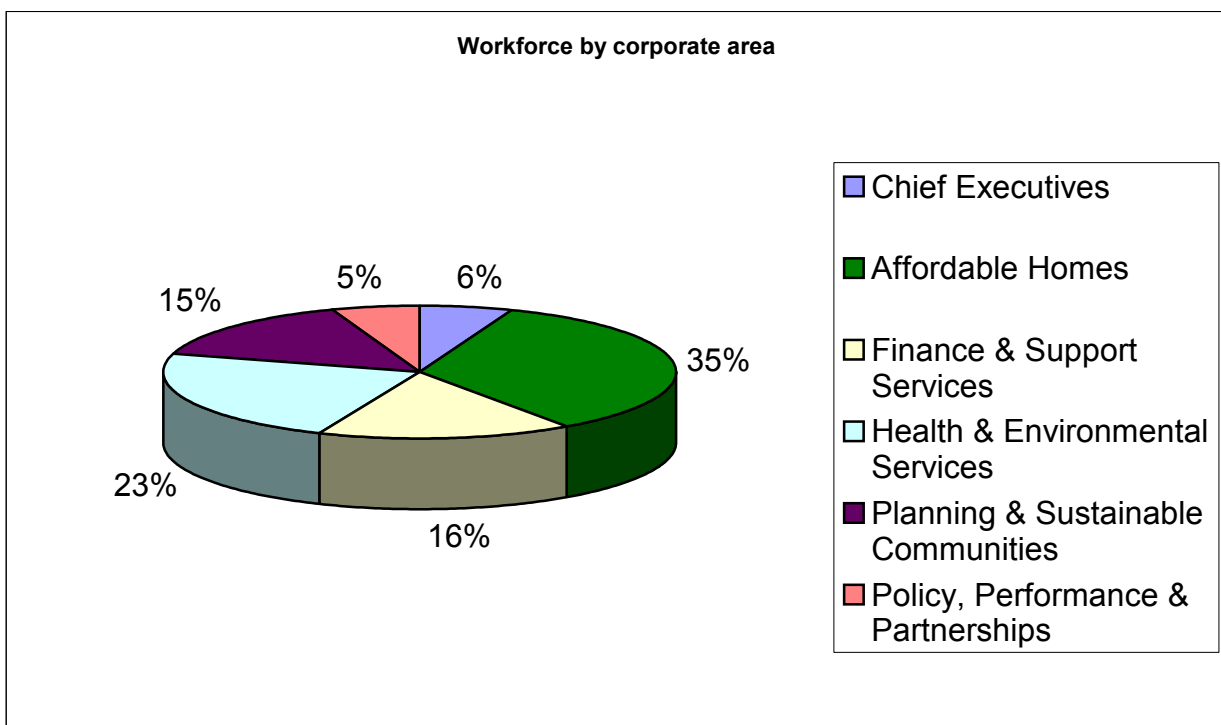
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KEY WORKFORCE STATISTICS

Employee Numbers

The Council employs 500 people across a wide range of service areas. This figure excludes any casual employees. Department sizes show that almost half of the workforce is located within Environmental and Housing service areas and one fifth of staff are located in Planning. A future decision to transfer the housing service would significantly reduce the Council's employee numbers.

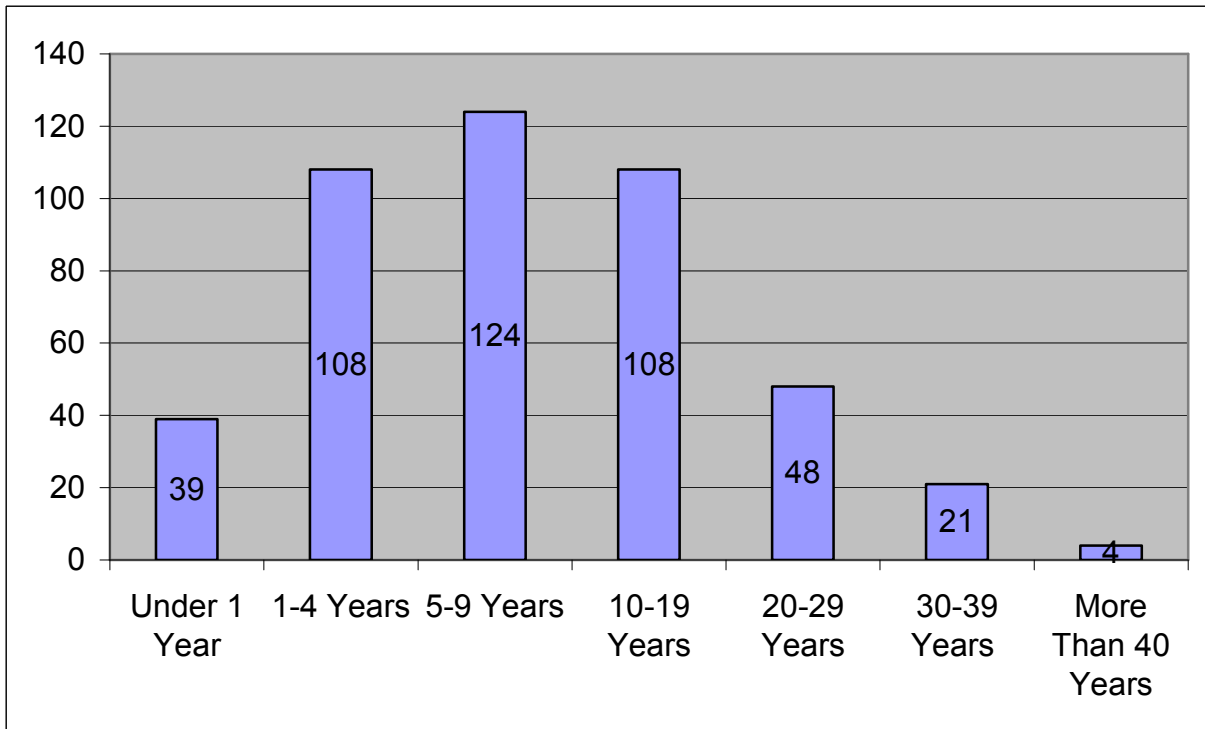
Department sizes



(as at 31 March 2008)

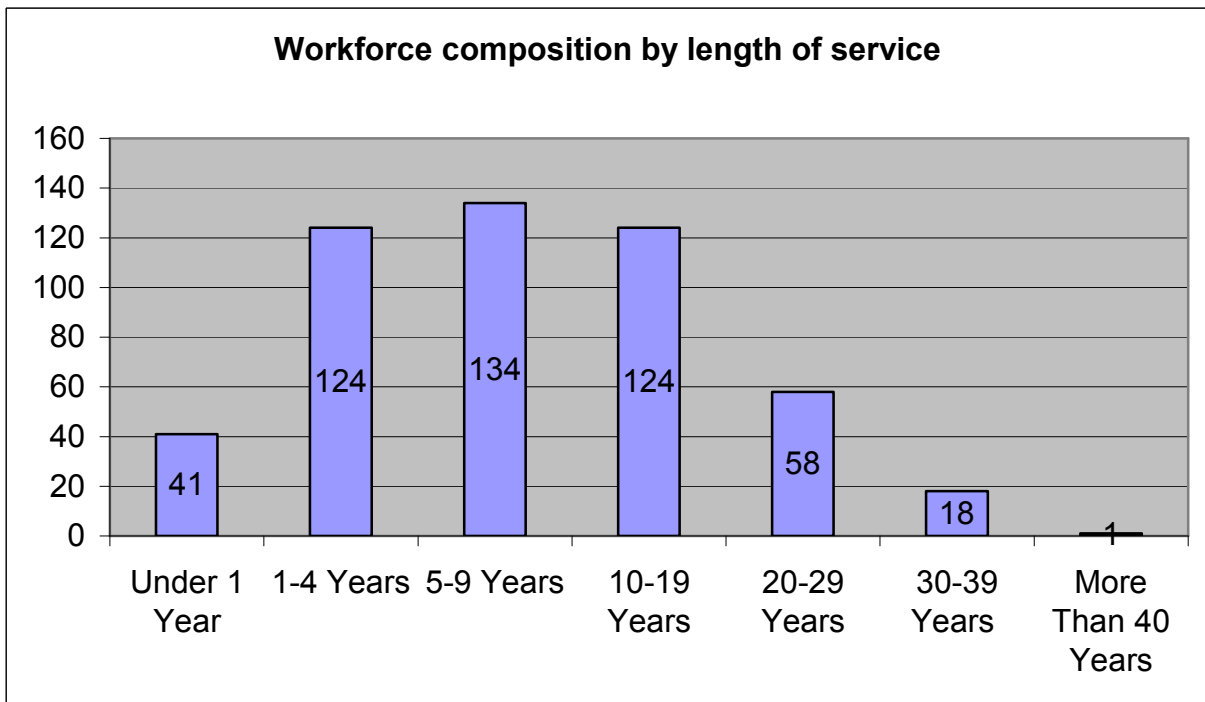
Since the last WfP, the Council has restructured into 5 Corporate service areas. The Chief Executive has a number of direct reports including legal, elections and HR/Payroll. The largest department is Housing Services, with 35% of the workforce; this includes Sheltered Housing, Housing Options and property services and maintenance. The second largest is Environmental Services, which provides front line services such as street cleansing, refuse collection and public environmental health.

Length of service of employees



(Sept 2006)

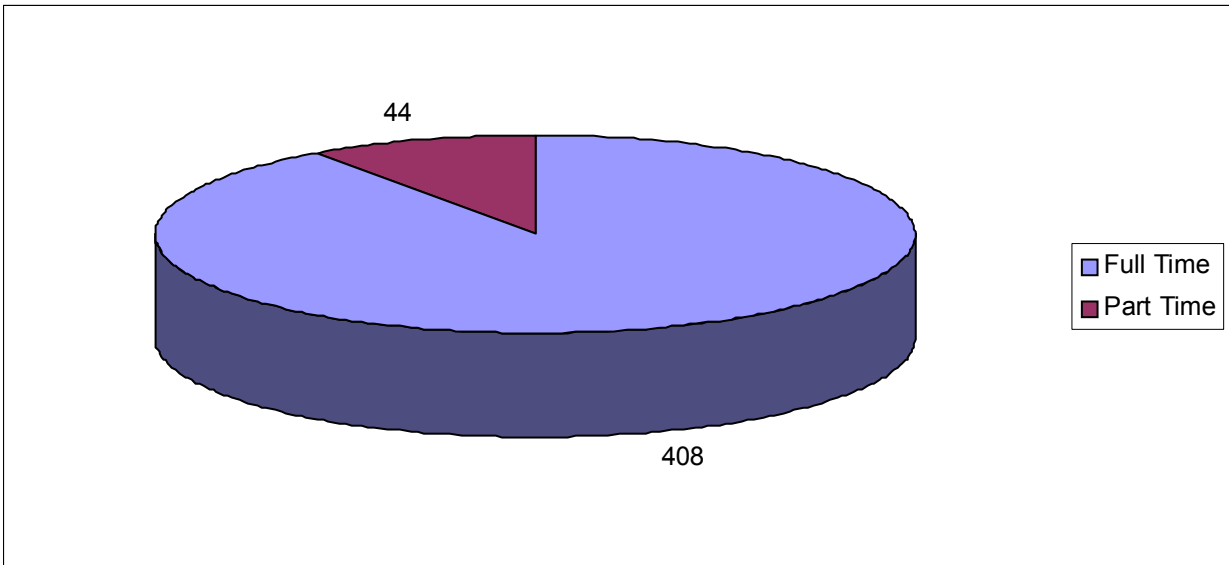
Workforce composition by length of service



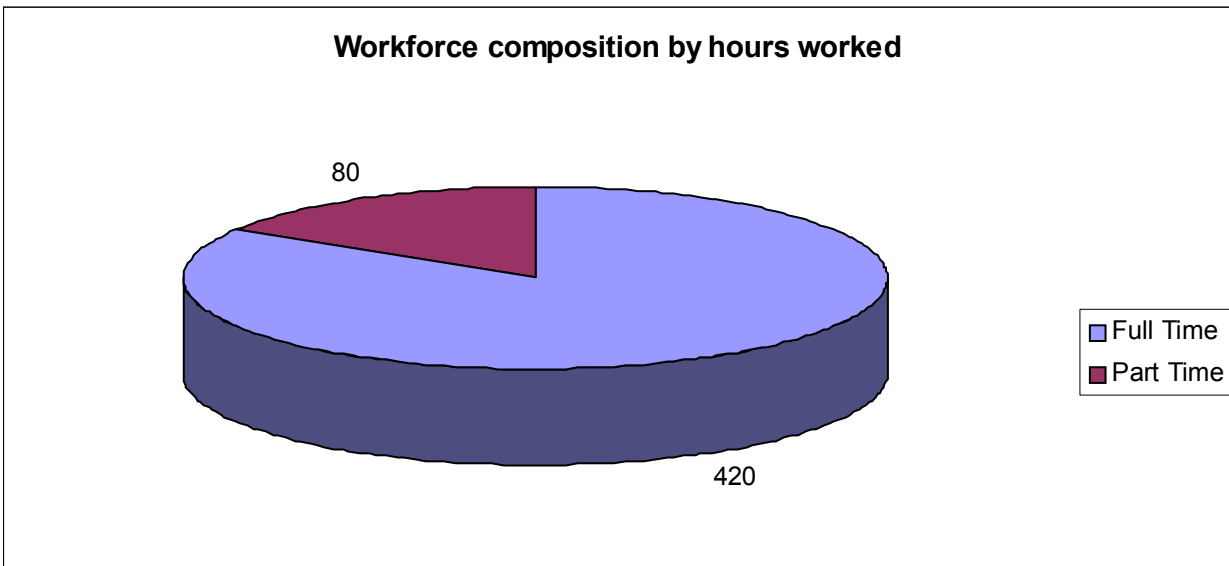
(as at 31 March 2008)

Breakdown of Full and Part time employees

There has been a significant increase in the number of employees working part time hours, and in particular the number of male part time workers (12 part time men and 68 part time women) employed by the Council. Reasons for this include, the inclusion of the sheltered housing cleaning staff and the number of requests to work part time following maternity leave.



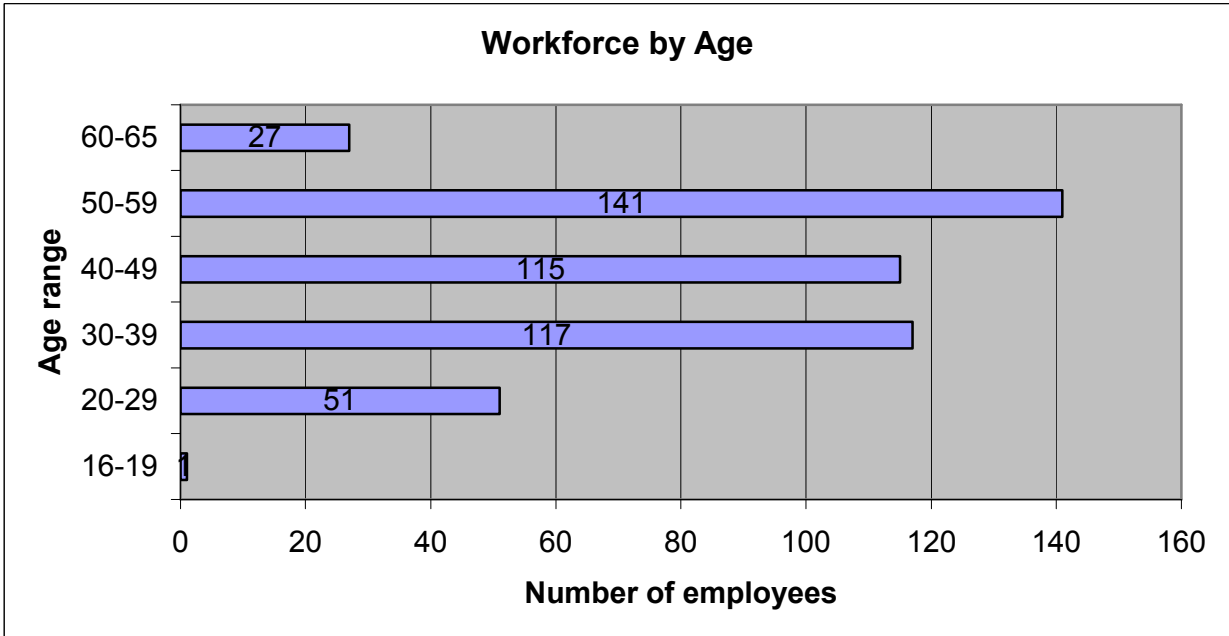
(Sept 2006)



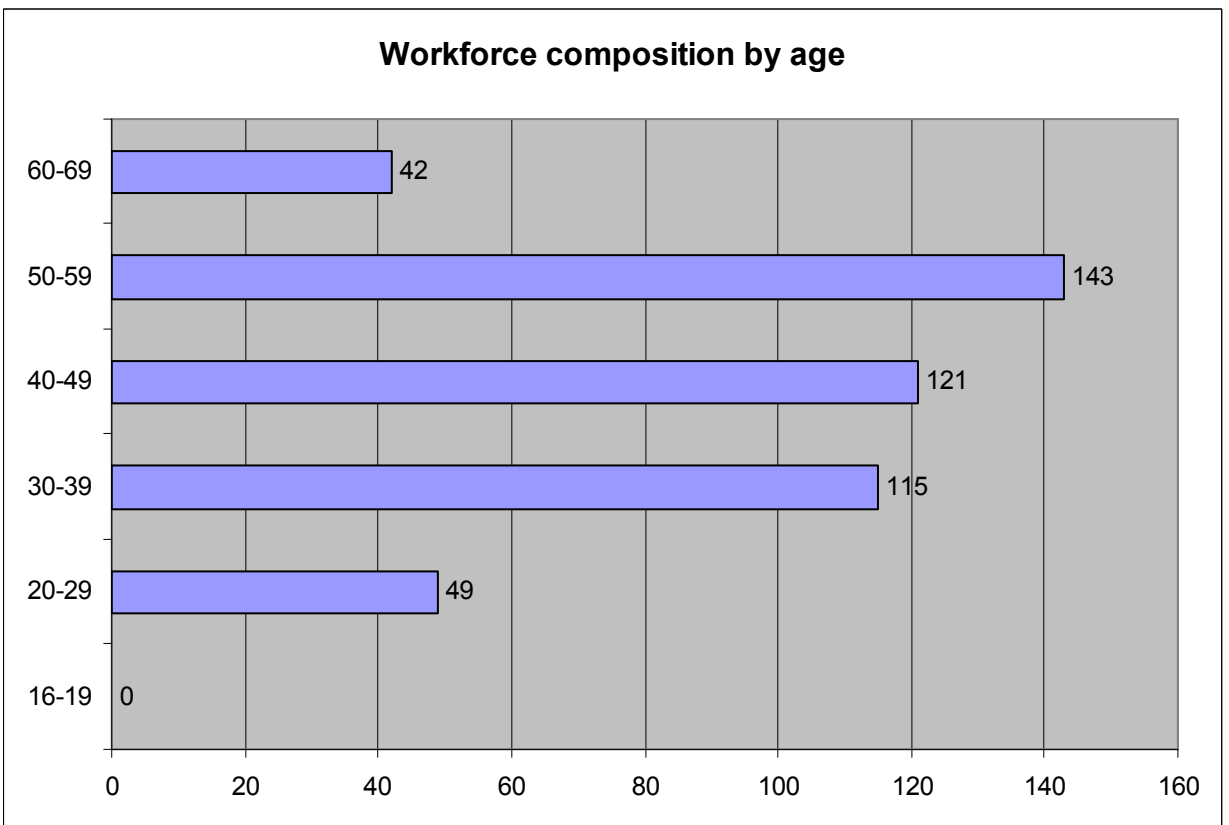
(as at 31 March 2008)

Breakdown of current workforce by age

The tables below show the breakdown of employees by age. The highest category being in the 50 years plus group where this represents 28.6% of the workforce. Only 10% of the workforce are below 29 years. And there are no employees below 20 years of age. There has been an increase in the 60 – 69 age range from 5% to 8.4%. The Council has 13 employees working who are aged 65 and over. A high number of retirements are predicted in the next 5 to 8 years.



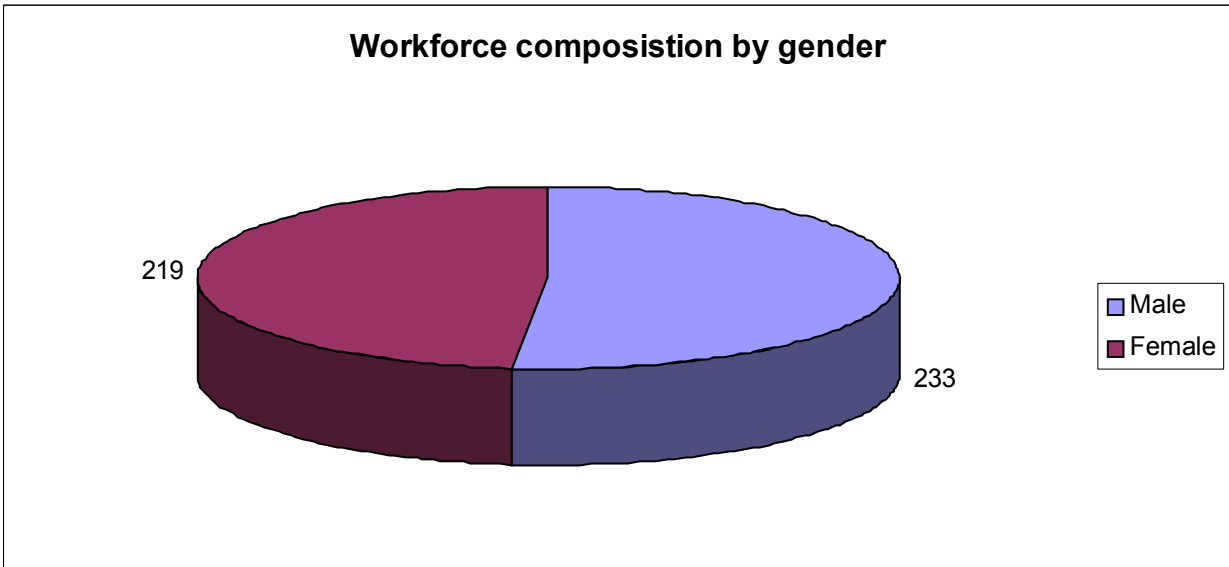
(Sept 2006)



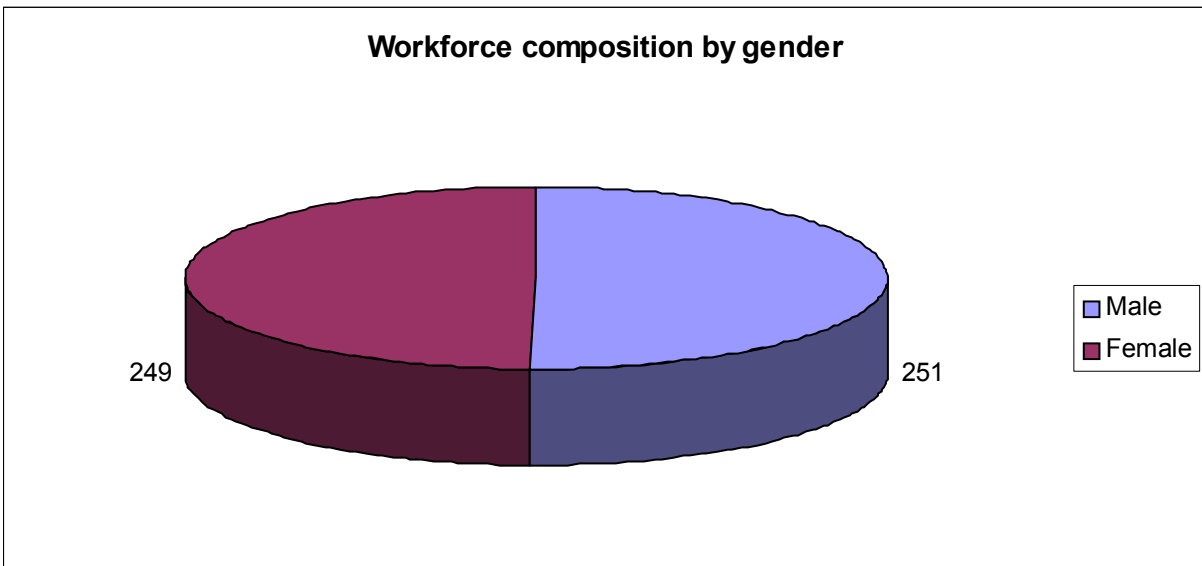
(as at 31 March 2008)

Gender composition

The total workforce is fairly evenly split in terms of gender (50.2% male and 49.8% female). There are predominantly more men in the following service areas: ICT, Housing Repairs, Environmental Health and Waste management. Women represent a higher proportion of the workforce than men in Revenues and Benefits, general administration and Sheltered Housing service areas. This is a normal trend in these occupational areas.



(Sept 2006)



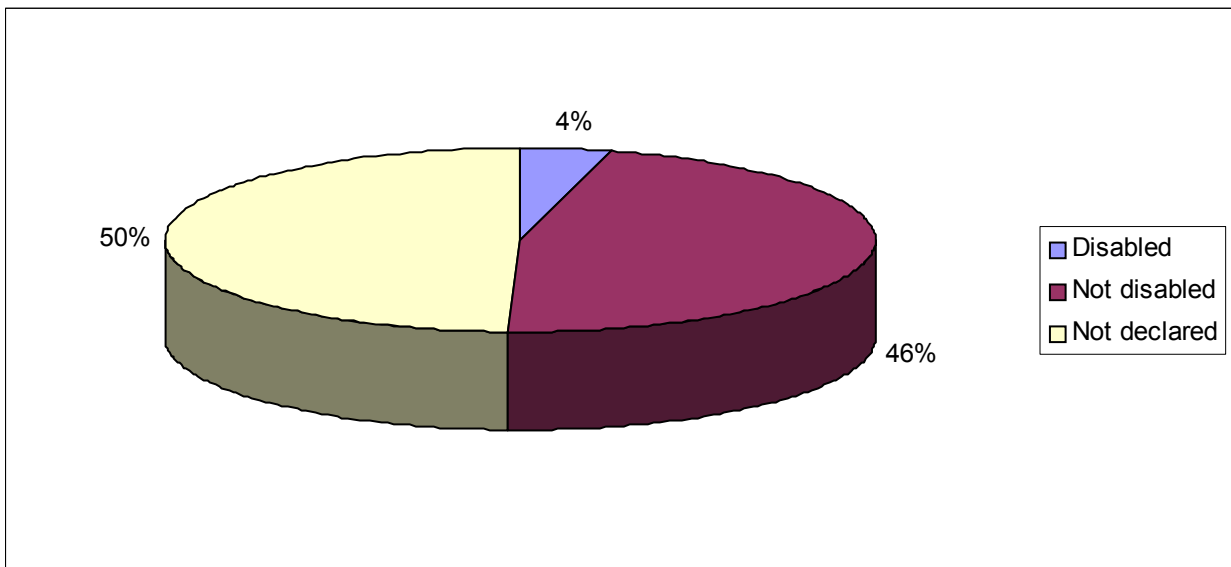
(as at 31 March 2008)

Percentage of staff declaring that they have a Disability

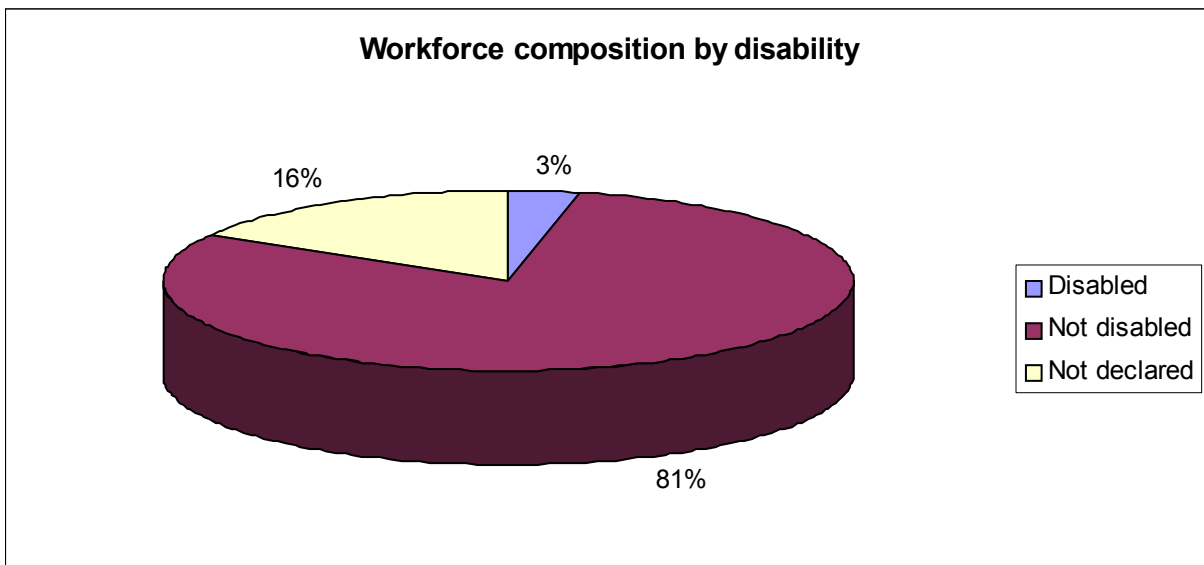
Employees are asked to declare whether they consider themselves to have a disability as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995,

“a person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

In 2007, the HR/Payroll team undertook a full review of the personal details held on HR/Payroll systems. Every employee was asked to check their personal details including disability equal opportunities monitoring information. 16 Employees declared that they consider themselves to have a disability, 402 employees did not consider that they had a disability and 82 did not declare.



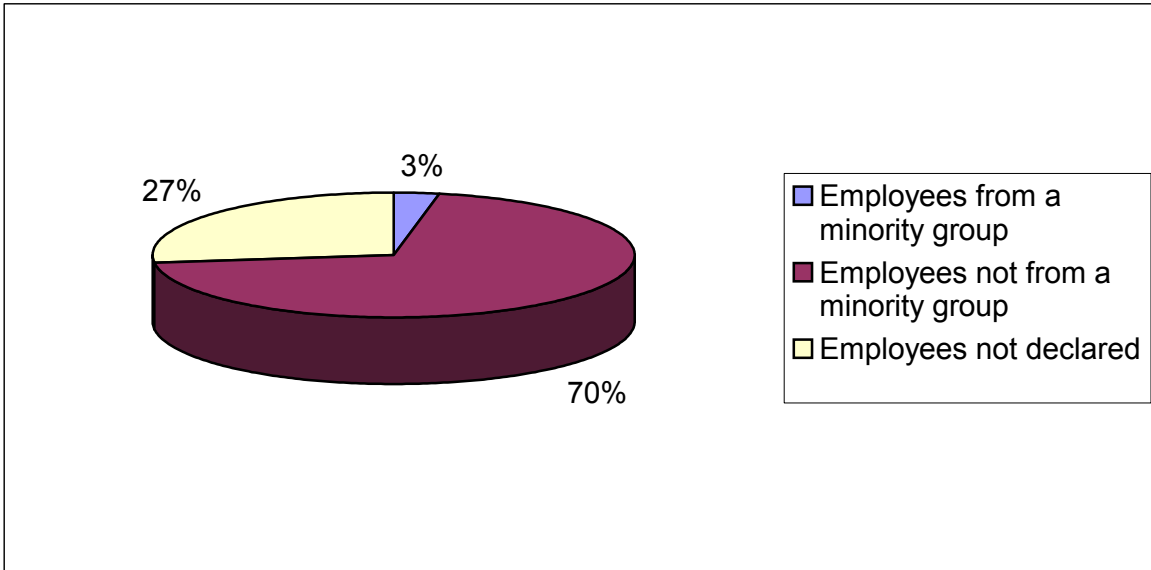
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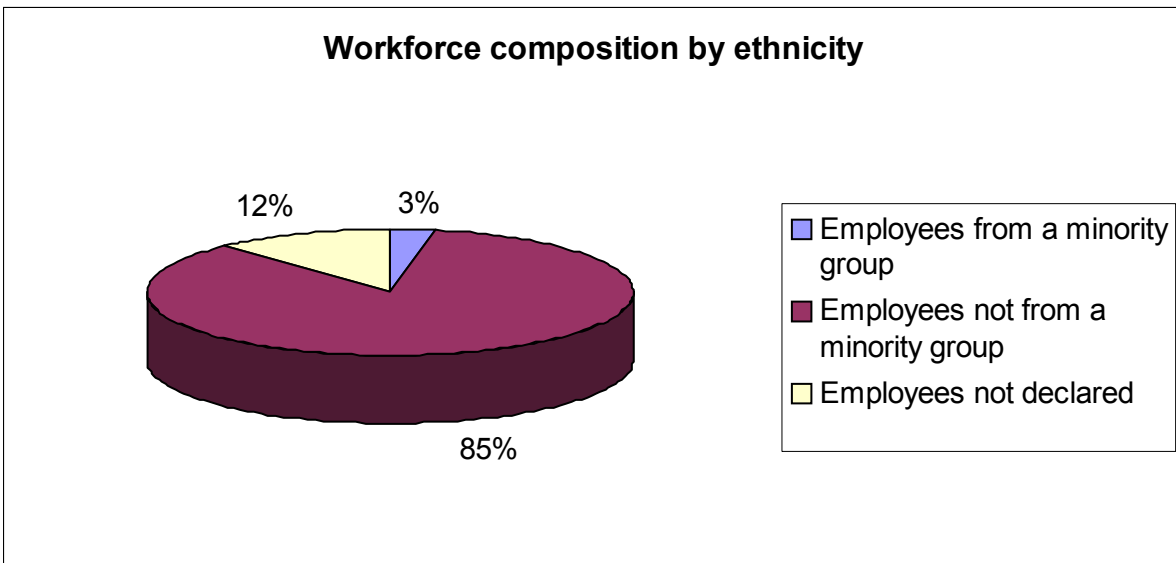
(as at 31 March 2008)

Ethnicity

The Council collects data on employee breakdown by ethnic group as defined by the census. In 2007, the HR/Payroll team undertook a full review of the personal details held on HR/Payroll systems. Every employee was asked to check their personal details including equal opportunities monitoring information. Currently 16 employees have declared that they consider themselves to be from a minority ethnic group. 60 employees did not declare.



(Sept 2006)



(as at 31 March 2008)

Turnover

Staff turnover (voluntary leavers) is fairly stable at around 10% per annum. There are no particular trends for reasons for leaving. Voluntary leavers have, in the main, cited 'Career development' and 'personal reasons' for leaving.

Year		Year end target
2006/2007 (year end)	9.40%	10.00%
2007/2008 1 st qtr	2.88%	11.00%
2007/2008 2 nd qtr	5.75%	11.00%
2007/2008 3 rd qtr	6.64%	11.00%
2007/2008 (year end)	Not yet available	11.00%

Revised Workforce Plan 2006/7 to 2008/9 - Action Plan

	Action	Who	When			Resources
			8/9	9/10	10/11	
	Objective 1: Enhance leadership and management					
1	Continue programme of Member mentoring and leadership courses	RM	✓	✓	✓	Current budget/Improvement East funding
2	Continue development for Corporate Managers	JM	✓			Current budget/Improvement East funding
3	Pilot IDeA management development programme focusing on strategic partnership skills	SGC/PS	✓			Improvement East funding
4	Develop and deliver development for managers below Corporate Manager level, based on competency scheme.	JM	✓	✓	✓	£20,000 included in budget
5	Supervisor/Team Leader development programme based on competency scheme.	JM	✓	✓	✓	£20,000 included in budget
6	Embed service planning and staff involvement in the process	PS	✓			Within existing resources
7	Embed corporate briefing and the feedback mechanism	GH	✓			Within existing resources
8	Develop a programme to embed Council values	PS/GJH/G J				
			✓			
	Objective 2: Enhance skills and motivation to meet the changing work environment and maximise performance					
9	Achieve Investors in People accreditation for the whole organisation	SGC	✓	✓		Within existing resources
10	Develop a training policy to ensure a consistent approach to the allocation of training and value for money (to be addressed as part of IIP accreditation)	JM	✓			New HR officer
11	Actions to address commitments made to achieve level 1 of the Equalities Standard the Council to promote equality and diversity in the workforce – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of recruitment procedures, forms and advertising • staff training in equalities 	JM	✓	✓		Within existing resources

	Action	Who	When			Resources
			8/9	9/10	10/11	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an employment equality assessment of the local labour market 					
12	Carry out job evaluation scheme and new pay structure with a view to meeting Equal Pay requirements	SGC	✓	✓		Resources identified in MTFS?
13	Continue Improvement to induction for new starters, including introduction of e-induction	JM	✓	✓		Within existing resources
14	Staff survey – complete survey; publicise results and planned actions to address the findings	MB/SGC	✓	✓	✓	Subject to outcome of survey
15	Continue review of flexible working practices to aid diversity and support retention and recruitment	SGC	✓	✓		Within existing resources
	Objective 3: Flexibility and the ability to achieve organisational change					
16	Continue to improve HR reporting/monitoring data – eg on sickness and equalities	SGC	✓	✓	✓	Resources unknown but will be part of response to CGI
17	Develop competency framework:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Framework of management competencies being developed Extend framework to other posts Include competencies in appraisal process 	JM	✓	✓	✓	Within existing resources
18	Continue to develop change management procedures, policy and capacity	SGC	✓	✓		Within existing resources
19	Service review of HR service to identify future resourcing needs and to include IT system support requirements	PS/SGC	✓			
	Objective 4 – work towards a staffing complement and structure which reflects the Council’s objectives and future needs (including recruitment and retention)					
20	Commission a review of succession planning requirements	SGC/SMT	✓	✓		Potential resource issues
21	Strengthen the workforce planning element of service planning including supporting services in developing succession plans.	PS/ Corporate Managers	✓	✓		Additional financial resource will be required for the use of consultants
22	Identify service staffing requirements and structures through continuing the programme of service reviews	PS/SGC	✓	✓		Within existing resources
23	Housing Futures:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate resources of Housing Futures project Plan for impact of transfer of housing stock on workforce 	DL DL	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓	Potential significant resources

	Action	Who	When			Resources
			8/9	9/10	10/11	
24	Planning for growth – Growth Area Project Team to ensure that services have up to date growth projections to enable them to plan impact on services and future workforce requirements.	TB	✓	✓	✓	
25	Continue to develop a structured approach to career development (grow your own etc), drawing on secondments, mentoring, plus establishment of career grades, applying to services where recruitment/ retention has been a problem	SGC/CM	✓	✓	✓	
26	Continue to adopt a proactive approach to absence management, including support for managers; improved trigger reporting; and support for active lifestyles.	SGC/JM	✓	✓	✓	
	Other					
27	Annual review of Workforce Plan to fit in with service planning cycle	SGC/PS	✓	✓	✓	

SGC = Susan Gardner Craig
PS = Paul Swift
DL = Denise Lewis
JM = Jill Mellors
RM = Richard May
MB = Margaret Bird
CM = Corporate Managers
SMT=Senior Management Team
GJ= Gareth Jones
TB= Tom Barrance

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Appendix 1

LEASE CAR MILEAGE COST COMPARISON

Driver	Petrol or Diesel	SCDC Rates	HMRC Rates	Diff +/-	Para 8	Diff +/-	Para 9	Diff +/-
1	D	£389.91	£415.48	£25.57	604.04	0.189	354.76	
2	P	£1,196.25	£1,470.80	£274.55	1686.52	0.172	1343.33	
3	D	£1,105.16	£1,177.63	£72.47	1712.09	0.189	1005.51	
4	D	£718.01	£765.09	£47.08	1112.33	0.189	653.27	
5	P	£682.55	£671.36	-£11.19	962.28	0.172	766.47	
6	D	£323.87	£451.29	£127.42	501.73	0.189	294.67	
7	D	£213.26	£227.24	£13.98	330.37	0.189	194.03	
8	P	£197.31	£242.60	£45.29	278.18	0.172	221.57	
9	D	£999.18	£1,064.70	£65.52	1547.91	0.189	909.09	
10	D	£210.57	£224.38	£13.81	326.21	0.189	191.59	
11	D	£1,338.10	£1,425.84	£87.74	2072.95	0.189	1217.45	
12	P	£1,089.22	£1,339.20	£249.98	1535.62	0.172	1223.14	
13	D	£860.51	£916.93	£56.43	1333.08	0.189	782.92	
14	P	£363.62	£447.08	£83.45	512.65	0.172	408.33	
15	D	£766.49	£816.75	£50.26	1187.42	0.189	697.38	
16	D	£690.68	£735.97	£45.29	1069.99	0.189	628.41	
17	D	£1,225.53	£1,305.89	£80.36	1898.57	0.189	1115.03	
18	D	£936.15	£997.53	£61.39	1450.26	0.189	851.74	
19	P	£193.98	£333.90	£139.92	273.48	0.172	217.83	
		£13,500.34	£15,029.67	£1,529.33	20395.69		13076.51	-£423.83
								£6,895.35

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Staffing Portfolio Holder

16th September 2008

AUTHOR/S: Payroll Assistant

**FUEL REIMBURSEMENT AND MILEAGE CLAIM PAYMENT METHOD
FOR CONTRACT HIRE USERS**

Purpose

1. To review the fuel reimbursement rate and mileage claim payment method for Contract Hire users with effect from 1st April 2008.

Background

2. The Council's Contract Hire users, currently numbering 21 staff (7 x Petrol & 14 x diesel), receive fuel reimbursement for official mileage. The current payment is a flat rate of 12.2p per mile irrespective of size of engine or type of fuel.
3. Since the Contract Hire Scheme commenced periodic surveys have been undertaken to keep the rate up to date.
4. There is no national agreement or process to determine the contract hire mileage rate to be used by local authorities. Under the Scheme of Delegation for Executive functions, the Portfolio Holder for Staffing is empowered to agree the fuel reimbursement rate.
5. Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) have advisory fuel rates that are based on engine size and type of fuel. Payments in excess of these rates are treated as a taxable profit and as earnings for Class 1 National Insurance contribution purposes. These rates are revised from time to time by HMRC as fuel prices fluctuate. Current HMRC rates are above our current rates, with the exception of the rate for petrol for 1400cc vehicles. This is demonstrated in the following chart of HMRC rates which are applicable from 1 July 2008:

Engine size (cc)	Petrol	Diesel	SCDC rate
1400cc or less	12p	13p	12.2p
1401cc to 2000cc	15p	13p	12.2p
Over 2000cc	21p	17p	12.2p

Based on the contract hire users current vehicle type and annual business mileage, if the above HMRC advisory rates were applied at SCDC one member of staff would receive a lesser amount and 19 would receive more, and there would be an overall annual financial cost to SCDC of £1529.33 See Appendix 1 for details.

Mileage claim payment method

6. The current method of paying contract hire car users business mileage is a fixed rate per month via their salary. This is calculated by the agreed annual business mileage x mileage rate and divided in to equal monthly payments. At the end of each financial year the contract hire car administrator has to calculate any under or over payments made to each user and then make the necessary pay adjustments. This is an extremely time consuming activity and adds to the payroll administration resourcing costs, at an already overloaded time of the year in the payroll section. An alternative method, of requiring contract hire car drivers to submit monthly mileage returns, would ensure that accurate

payments are made (eliminating over payments and under payments). This would mean that end of year adjustments would not be required.

Considerations

7. A recent survey of local garages has again been undertaken and the following pump prices identified for unleaded petrol:

Price per litre	Petrol	Diesel
Tesco, Ely	115.9p	125.9p
Morrisons Cambourne	111.9p	123.9p
Shell, Trumpington, Cambridge	112.9p	123.9p
Average price per litre	113.6p	124.6p
Equivalent price per gallon	£5.16	£5.66

8. Historically, the council has used an assumed average of 30 miles per gallon, regardless of car type, this equates to a 'fuel only' amount of 17.2p (Petrol) & 18.9p (Diesel) per mile. This results in payments of 5.0p (Petrol) and 6.7p (Diesel) above the current payment of 12.2p.
9. Statistical information has been obtained from carfueldata.org.uk and the average Imperial Combined Fuel consumption for a Ford Focus, Skoda Octavia, Peugeot 307 & Renault Megane is 37.6 mpg for Petrol cars and 51.0 mpg for Diesel cars. This equates to a 'fuel only' amount of 13.7p (Petrol) & 11.1p (Diesel) per mile, which is 1.5p (Petrol) below and 1.1p (Diesel) above the current payment of 12.2p.

Options

10. **Mileage Rates:** The following are possible options in respect of the fuel reimbursement rate:
- SCDC rate to remain unchanged at 12.2p this is not an acceptable option given the fluctuating price of fuel and could leave the contract hire drivers 'out of pocket'.
 - Apply rates as calculated in paragraph 8 above of 17.2p petrol & 18.9p diesel, this would equate to a substantial increase in the rate and an additional cost to the council of £6,895.35 per annum.
 - Apply rates as calculated in paragraph 9 above of 13.7p petrol & 11.1p diesel, these rates would still be out of line with HMRC and the issue of taxable profit and Class 1 NICs (see paragraph 5) would still apply.
 - Apply HMRC advisory fuel rates as detailed in paragraph 5 above. This would provide a nationally accepted rate which could be applied as the HMRC issue updated rates, normally on an annual basis but could be more frequent as the HMRC have uplifted rates three times in 2007/2008.
11. **Mileage Claim Payment Method**
- Continue method of lease car mileage payments as described in paragraph 6 above based on monthly fixed rates. This would not address the administrative pressure as outlined in paragraph 6.
 - Change payment method to actual business mileage claimed and then paid in the subsequent month similar to Essential Car users.

Implications

12. Financial
- (a) None if Option 10 (a) is adopted
 - (b) Based on current annual business miles paid, the additional cost would be £6895 if Option 10 (b) is adopted. The payments in excess of the HMRC rates will have taxable implications for employees.
 - (c) Based on current annual business miles paid, there would be saving of £423 if Option 10 (c) is adopted. The payments in excess of the HMRC rates will have taxable implications for some employees.
 - (d) Based on current (2007/2008) annual business miles paid the additional cost would be in the region of £1600 if Option 10 (d) is adopted. The implementation date would need to be 1st April 2008 in line with the start of the financial year. Payroll staff would ensure that 2008/2009 mileage payments were adjusted accordingly and this would result in some additional work. However, in the long term this option would give some administration staffing benefits for HR/Payroll as outlined in paragraph 6.
 - (e) There are no implications in terms of the contract agreement for contract hire vehicles and any change to the current fuel reimbursement rates will be applied unilaterally to all current drivers.

13. Financial	As 12 above
Legal	None
Staffing	Paying fair and equitable mileage rates.
Risk Management	None
Equal Opportunities	None

Consultations

14. No formal staff consultation has taken place to date. However a copy of this report has been circulated to UNISON and GMB representatives

Effect on Annual Priorities and Corporate Objectives

15. Affordable Homes	None
Customer Service	None
Northstowe and other growth areas	None
Quality, Accessible Services	None
Village Life	None
Sustainability	None
Partnership	None

Conclusions/Summary

16. **Mileage Rate:** The current payment of 12.2p is below the HMRC advisory rates. Any payments that the employer makes that are in excess of HMRC advisory fuel rates are treated as a taxable profit and as earnings for Class 1 National Insurance contribution purposes. It would therefore be more equitable for each contract hire car user and easier to manage the mileage rate payments if SCDC adopted the HMRC advisory fuel rates and that payments are increased/reduced in line with HMRC periodic recommendations.

17. **Mileage Payments:** The current payment method requires continual monitoring and upkeep. Additionally the current method requires a large number of end of year calculations and adjustments to take place to reflect the actual payments to that paid by the standard monthly payment. The standard payment per month does not always reflect actual business mileage payments to staff if the event of high fluctuations in business mileage travel. Payroll adjustments have to be made to either claw back overpayments or to make an additional payment, this is resource intensive requiring manual intervention.

Recommendations

18. That the Portfolio Holder for Staffing agrees:
- (a) **Mileage Rate:** that mileage fuel rates move in line with the advisory fuel rates as recommended by HMRC and in future the rates are adjusted annually in line with HMRC rates,
 - (b) and that the rate for 2008/2009 is increased to current HMRC rates with effect from 1st April 2008.
 - (c) **Mileage Payments:** that the standard monthly mileage payments are ceased and are paid monthly in arrears supported by a claim based on actual business mileage, and the Staff Car Scheme Terms & Conditions paragraph 5.7 to reflect this change with effect from 1st April 2008.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

File on Fuel Reimbursement for Contract Hire vehicles
Staff Car Scheme Terms & Conditions.

Contact Officer: Michel Scarff – HR/Payroll
Telephone: (01954) 713455

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Staffing Portfolio Holder16th September 2008**AUTHOR/S:** HR Manager

SCHOOLS WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME**Purpose**

1. To provide information to the Portfolio holder in respect of the Council's involvement in the Cambridgeshire schools work experience programme.
2. This is not a key decision, the report is for information only.

Executive Summary

3. South Cambridgeshire District Council has, for several years, provided local schools with work experience placements. The placements are co-ordinated through Cambridgeshire Connexions service and are aimed at year 10 students (15 – 16 years).

Background

4. Providing school age, young people with opportunities to try work based experience has been an important part of preparing them for the transition from school to work. The aim of work experience is to:
 - Provide a link to make education and work more related
 - Develop appropriate skills and attitudes required for work
 - Enhance employability
 - Develop links between schools, colleges and local employers
5. Young people under 16 are less likely to have any experience of the world of work beyond a paper-round; babysitting; or a visit to a parent's work place. The work experience programme helps to provide young people with a real insight into working conditions, job opportunities and career options. Across Cambridgeshire approximately 8000 work experience placements take place per year.
6. South Cambridgeshire District Council has, in the past, offered a selection of opportunities to local schools. The placements are normally for a two-week period and provide a worthwhile experience that will help young people prepare for working life. The Council has been able to offer a range of opportunities including Sport Development, ICT, Graphics, Revenues and Benefits, Housing and Environmental Health.
7. The Council works with Cambridgeshire Connexions Service to ensure that placements are appropriate for young people. This includes checks on the Council's health & safety policy, liability insurance and safe guarding children procedures. The placements can only be made as part of a student's education as defined by the Local Education Authority and must be in accordance with the School Standards & Framework Act 1998.

2008 Work Experience placements

8. In January 2008 the HR Manager met with the Connexions Work Experience co-ordinator to discuss the forthcoming Summer programme for local schools. The Council confirmed that it had the required level of liability insurance and appropriate safeguarding policies in place. It was agreed that placements would be offered to Bassingbourn, Comberton and Melbourn Schools. In addition, the Council will consider private applications from other schools and direct approaches from parents.
9. A work experience guidance booklet, aimed at young people, was produced, this covers frequently asked questions and general information about the Council and its services. The booklet is given to students prior to them starting their two weeks experience. Appendix A
10. Students who have applied to the Council normally attend a brief 'interview' before commencing the placement. This is to provide the student with an initial contact opportunity and to give them an insight into the organisation so that they can ask questions before the actual work experience starts. A teacher from the student's school or college visits the Council during the placement to speak to both the student and workplace supervisor. The Council has hosted seven student placements during the summer 2008 school term.
11. The feedback from schools and students has been very positive. Students have enjoyed the experience, in particular the variety of working areas and activities that they have been able to work in. The Council aims to give students not only experience of the workplace but also an insight into the range of services that the Council delivers to communities. These young people will be voters in the near future and the work experience also helps them to understand the democratic processes behind the decisions the Council makes.
12. Work placements during 2008 have included, Revenues and Benefits, Sports Development, Reception, Housing and ICT. Students have been able to experience, first hand, the customers and the range of enquiries that the Council receives. Some students have accompanied our officers on site visits and have subsequently commented on how interesting this has been. We have received a number of 'Thank You' letters and cards from students, an example is at Appendix B.
13. The Council has recently been approach by Long Road Sixth Form College to explore work experience placements for Year 13 students. This would be a different programme to the Connexions scheme and would provide an essential part of the National Diploma in Sports programme. Through a number of coursework tasks students will be required to demonstrate an understanding of workplace organisation, it's purpose, roles, Health and Safety procedures and agreed standards. They will be required to carry out a project that may benefit your organisation demonstrating appropriate work-based skills. Discussions are underway to see if the Council could provide a suitable placement.

Considerations

14. **Benefits to the organisation**
The work experience programme offers the Council a useful access route to schools and young people. It provides an opportunity to promote the work of the Council and to increase awareness of the democratic process with young people.

15. In terms of recruitment and the future workforce needs of the Council it promotes job opportunities and the broad range of career opportunities that local government can offer. It promotes the Council as a local employer and highlights the importance that the Council places on training and development.
16. **Benefits to students**
Work placement provides young people with an opportunity to experience the work environment; to work alongside professional officers and managers; to try a range of tasks and to be part of a team. Students gain a valuable insight into customer service, team working and health and safety.
17. Students can identify and understand the importance of developing key skills such as communication, for letter writing and talking to customers; Information Technology, for using systems and producing documents; and numeracy skills, for analysis of data. The work experience helps to embed the classroom learning into real life skills.

Implications

Financial	None
Legal	None
Staffing	None
Risk Management	None
Equal Opportunities	None – the scheme is open to all students

Effect on Corporate Objectives and Service Priorities

17.	Work in partnership to manage growth to benefit everyone in South Cambridgeshire now and in the future
	Working in partnership with Connexions service and local schools to offer opportunities to the young people of South Cambridgeshire
	Deliver high quality services that represent best value and are accessible to all our community
	Promotion of the Council as a good employer to potential job candidate of the future
	Enhance quality of life and build a sustainable South Cambridgeshire where everyone is proud to live and work
	None

Conclusions/ summary

18. The work experience programme offered by the Council is a positive experience for young people. Feedback from schools and students has been very good and the Council has received ‘Thank You’ letters from a number of students. Comments have indicated that the Council is regarded as a model of good practice in the way that it organises the programme for young people in that it offers a such a broad range of learning opportunities.

Recommendations

The Portfolio Holder is recommended to;

- a) note the content of the report, and
- b) support the Council's continued participation in the Cambridgeshire work experience programme.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

None

Contact Officer: Susan Gardner-Craig – Human Resources Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713285



Work Experience with the Council

working with Cambridgeshire Connexions



Welcome to South Cambridgeshire District Council

What do we do?

The Council provides a range of services to residents and visitors in our district:

- Refuse collection, recycling, street cleaning
- Planning – both big housing developments and small extensions
- Housing and sheltered accommodation and a repairs service
- Council tax collection and payment of housing benefits
- Leisure, Sports and Arts

.....and these are only a few of the services we provide. The Council also has a range of support services such as its own legal team, accountants, human resources, ICT and communications.

Because the Council exists in a political environment, there are also elections staff and democratic services staff who support elections and committee processes.

What are Councillors/Elected Members?

Councillors are representatives who are chosen by their communities to represent the views of residents. The district area that the Council covers is divided up into smaller areas called Wards or Parishes. Each Ward holds elections, normally every four years to elect a Councillor – you may remember polling stations in your own village, perhaps someone that you know has been to cast their vote.

Once a Councillor has been elected they will represent the views of their residents and they will take part in committees and meetings to discuss issues and decisions in relation to matters which affect the district.

How are decisions made?

Decisions are made by the Council. Councillors consider issues and policies and, through the democratic processes and open debate at meetings, they make decisions by voting for the option that they consider to be in the best interests of our residents.

What sort of job opportunities are there?

The Council offers a range of career options such as administration, environmental health officers, planners, housing officers and accountants, just to name a few. All of our job vacancies are advertised on our website and in newspapers and professional magazines. If you are interested in working for the Council in the future please ask your supervisor or a member of the HR team.

We hope that you have an enjoyable and interesting time with us.

What will I do during work experience?

Spend time in a variety of work areas – you will visit a number of different service areas during the work placement.

Meet lots of different people – we employ over 450 staff, some work in the Cambourne office, some at our depot at Waterbeach and some at our sheltered housing schemes. During your time with us you will meet managers, professional officers and support staff.

Have a go at different tasks – we hope to offer you the chance to do general office tasks including computer work, photocopying and filing. From time to time we can offer other activities such as accompanying one of our officers on a visit to another work locations.

Learn about democratic processes – this is a great opportunity to learn about political decision making, you can ask questions and find out what will happen when you reach voting age.

What should I expect?

This is a real experience of work, although there may be some activities that you are not permitted to do if they pose a risk to young people

You will be treated as an adult – you are responsible for your own actions and for your own health and safety in the work place

Work normal office hours – usually 9am to 5pm.

You must ask lots of questions – find out as much as possible. We may have some helpful leaflets that you can take for any school project that you might be working on.

You will be expected to complete a work book which will be issued to you by your school – please ask us to help you with this.

What should I wear?

If you are working in the offices at Cambourne you should wear smart clothes and shoes. You do not have to wear a jacket or tie but you should aim to look presentable and businesslike. You shouldn't wear jeans, trainers or t-shirts.

If you are working at another site you should check with your supervisor beforehand and they will advise you of what clothing/footwear will be suitable.

What about lunch and refreshments?

In our Cambourne office, we have a small café area where you can buy sandwiches/rolls, hot food like jacket potatoes. There is a vending machine for chocolate and crisps. We also have fridges if you want to bring your own packed lunch. There is tea/coffee making facilities, drinks machines on each floor and a vending machine with cold, canned drinks.

Alternatively, Morrison's supermarket and a few small shops are a short walk from our Cambourne office.

At other sites there will be drink making facilities and small kitchen areas but no café facilities.

Will someone from my school visit me?

It is normal practice for your school teacher or work experience co-ordinator to visit you during your work experience.

Confidential Information

While you are with us you may see information about people who live in the district, they may even be people that you know. You must treat this information as confidential and you should not

discuss it with anyone outside of the Council. This information is covered by the Data Protection Act and it is an offence to repeat information or share details with others.

Likewise, you must not take or copy any written documents unless you are instructed to do so by your work supervisor.

What should I do if I am unhappy or concerned about anything?

Your work experience programme has been discussed and agreed with the Cambridgeshire Connexions advisor and your school however if you feel unhappy, worried or anxious about anything whilst you are with the Council please discuss this with your work supervisor or a member of the HR team on the 2nd floor.

Getting to work

You may have arranged to get a lift or to cycle or use the bus. A number 4 Citi bus does stop outside the Council offices and you should check timetables for information on services.

What should I do if I am unable to come to work?

You must telephone the HR team on 01954 713299 or 01954 713291.

Emergency Contact details

We will need the contact details for your parents/guardians in the case of an emergency. Please fill in the attached form and hand it to a member of the HR team.

My Emergency Contact details

My parent/guardians name.....

You can contact them:

.....daytime number (work/home)

.....mobile number

Home address:.....

.....

My doctor's name and address:

.....

.....

.....

Do you have a medical condition or disability YES/NO (if Yes, give details)

Is there anything that will affect your ability to undertake any aspect of this work placement? YES/NO (If yes give details)

I am take medication regularly YES/NO

If yes, what medication are you taking?.....

South Cambridgeshire
Cambourne business park
Cambourne,
Cambridge,
CB3 6EA



21/07/08

Dear Dawn Graham,
+
Susan self

I am writing to thank you and your colleagues, once again, for allowing me to take up my work experience placement within your organisation.

I particularly enjoyed learning about the Council and what happens within it. I have learnt a great deal and I found the experience particularly useful.

I feel that the experience has given me greater confidence when dealing with new people and using my initiative to complete tasks. The placement has given me greater insight into the world of work and it has helped me to think about my future plans and career.

Thank you once again for giving me this opportunity. Please pass my gratitude to your colleagues.

yours sincerely

Haojie Xu

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