

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

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

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:-

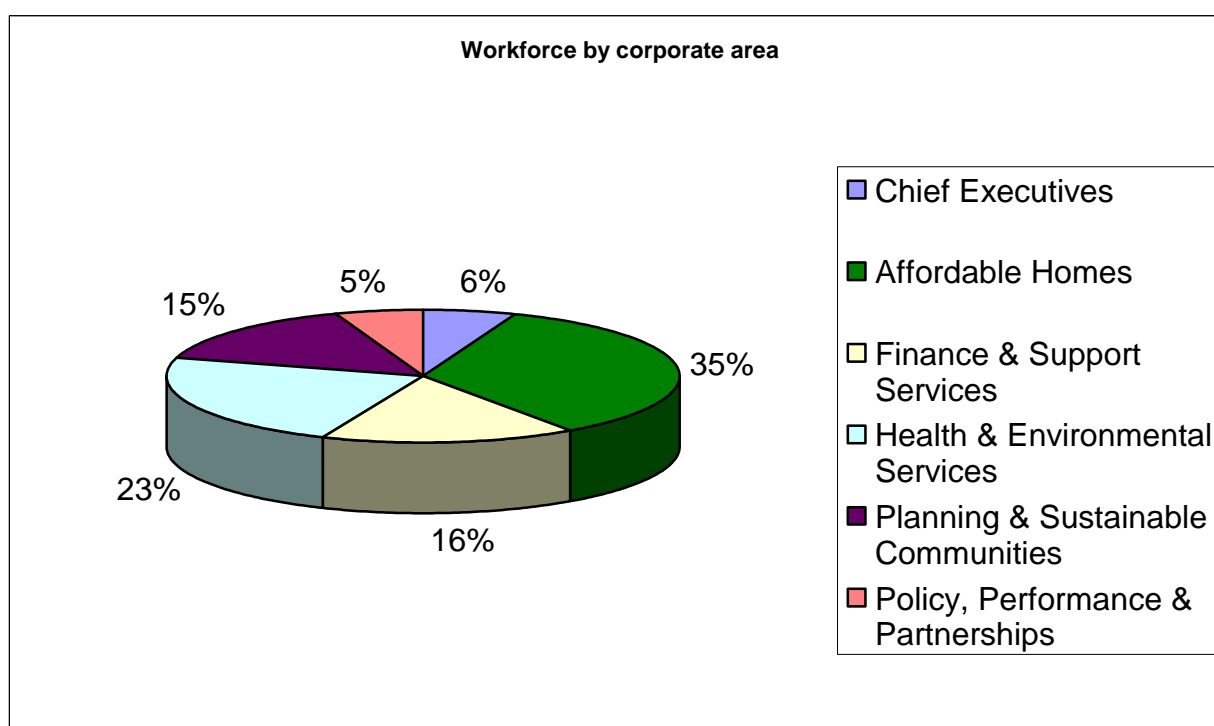
- the review to take into account the views of Members on priorities and budget setting, service planning and service areas on their individual workforce needs
- the outcome of the review to feed into the annual update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy
- the outcome and recommendations from any inspections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

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.

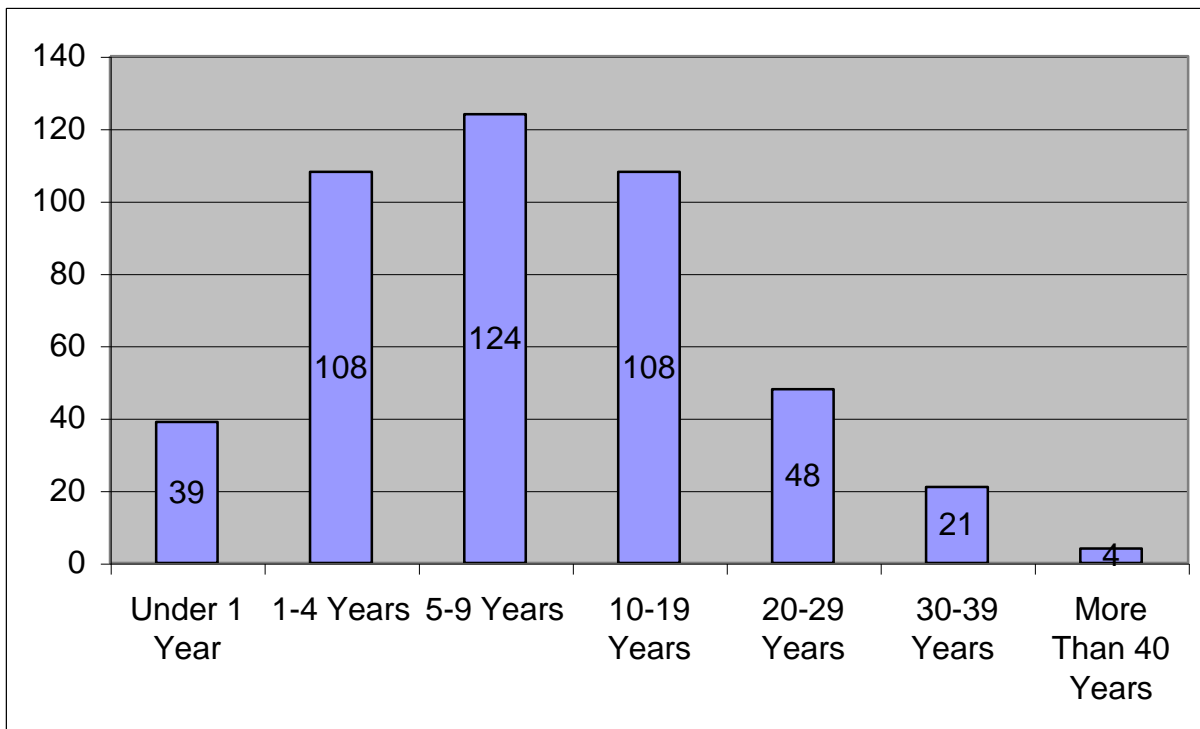
Department sizes



(as at 31 March 2008)

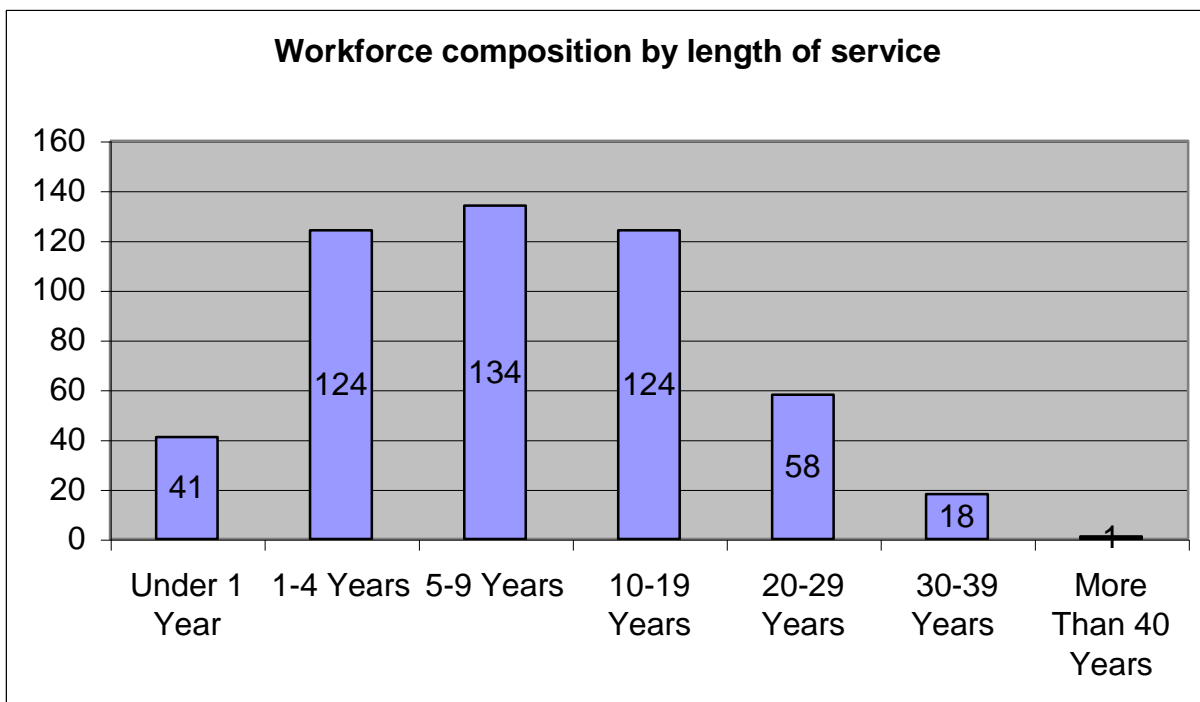
Since the last WfP, the Council has restructured into 5 Corporate service areas. The Chief Executive has a number of direct reports including legal, elections and HR/Payroll. The largest department is Housing Services, with 35% of the workforce; this includes Sheltered Housing, Housing Options and property 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)

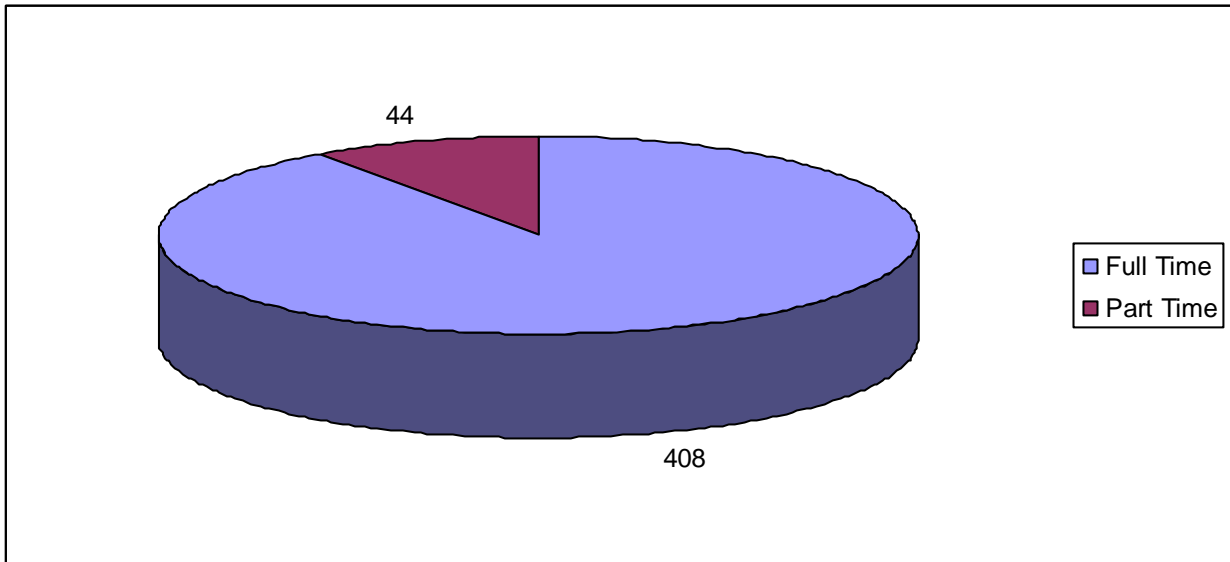
Workforce composition by length of service



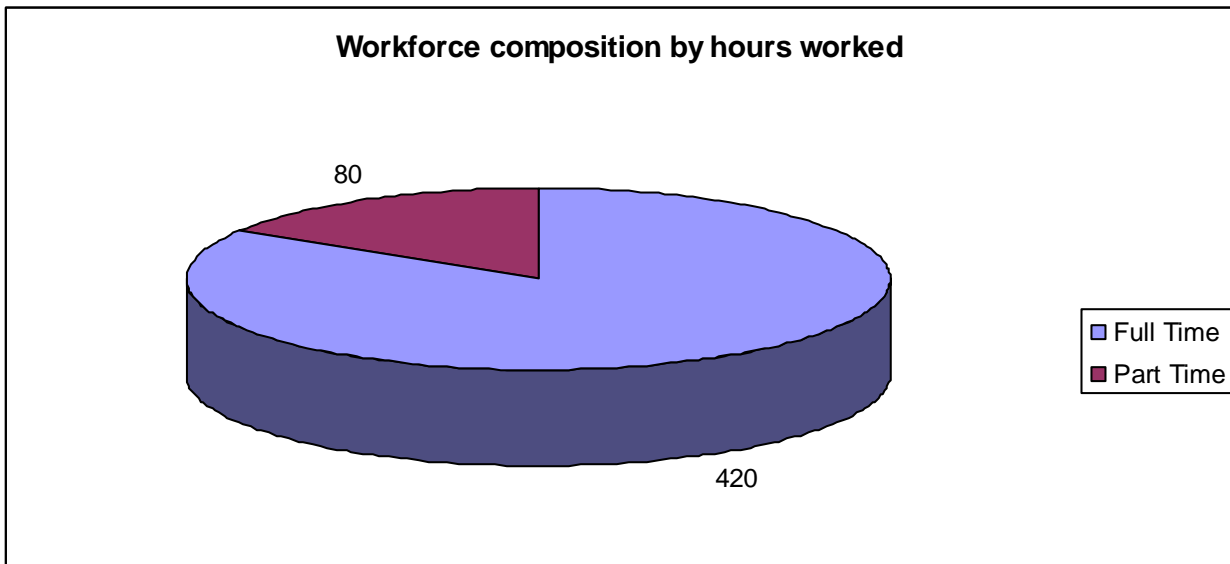
(as at 31 March 2008)

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.



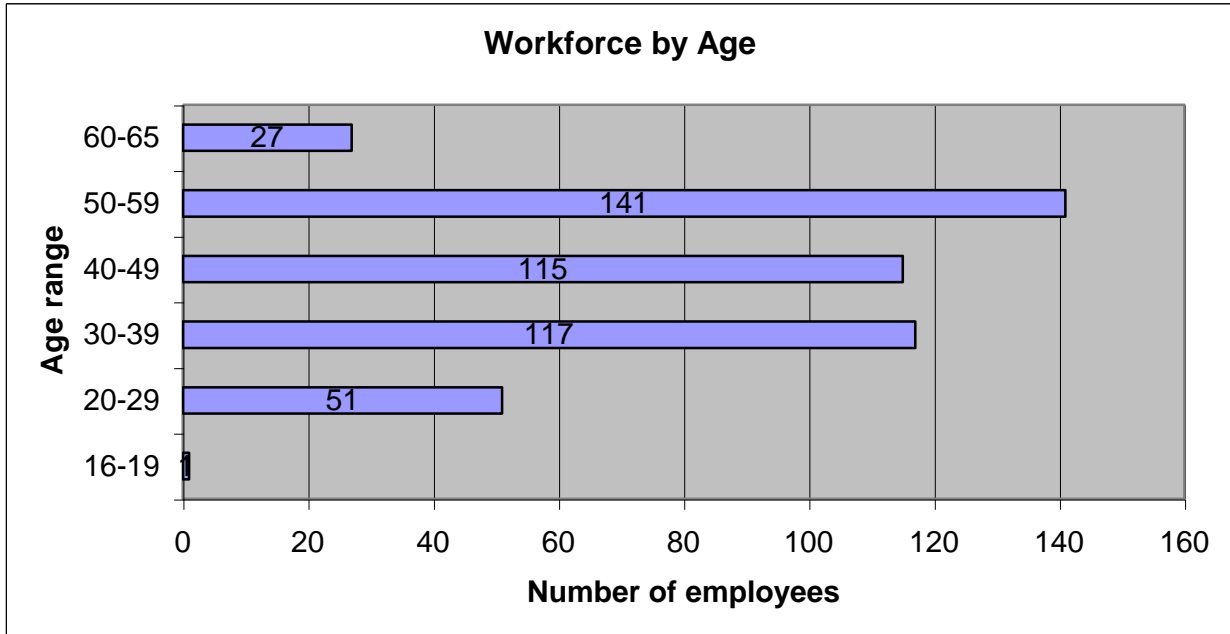
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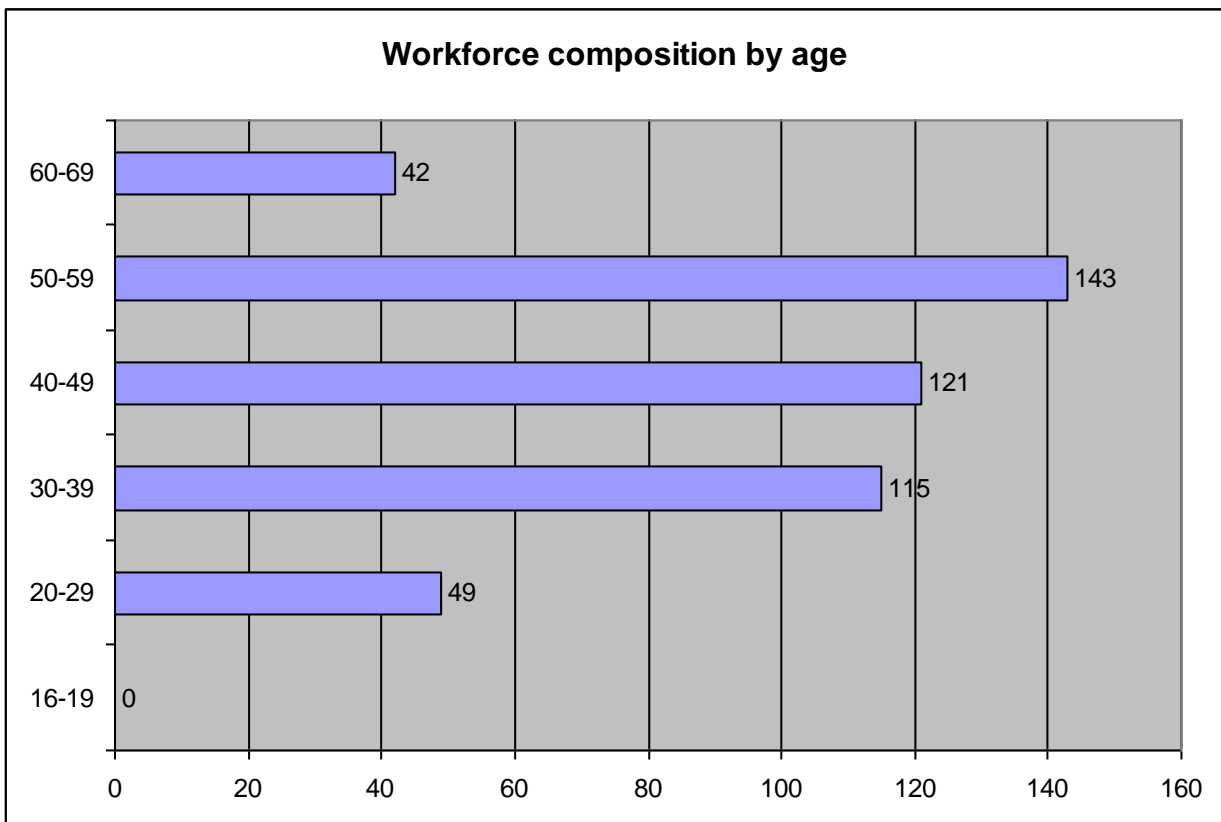
(as at 31 March 2008)

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.



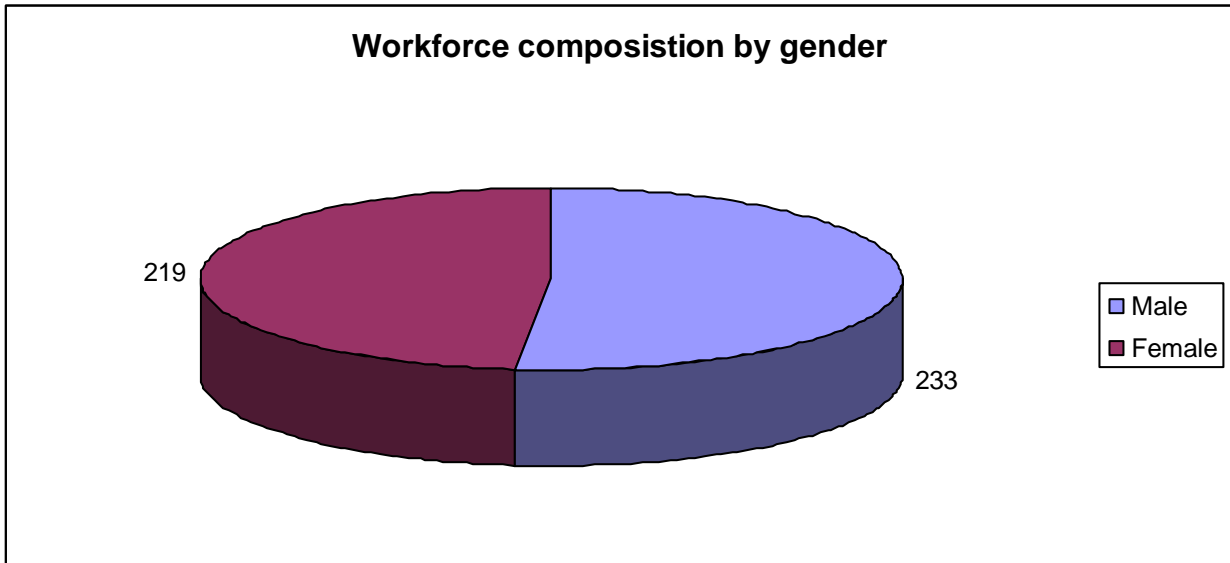
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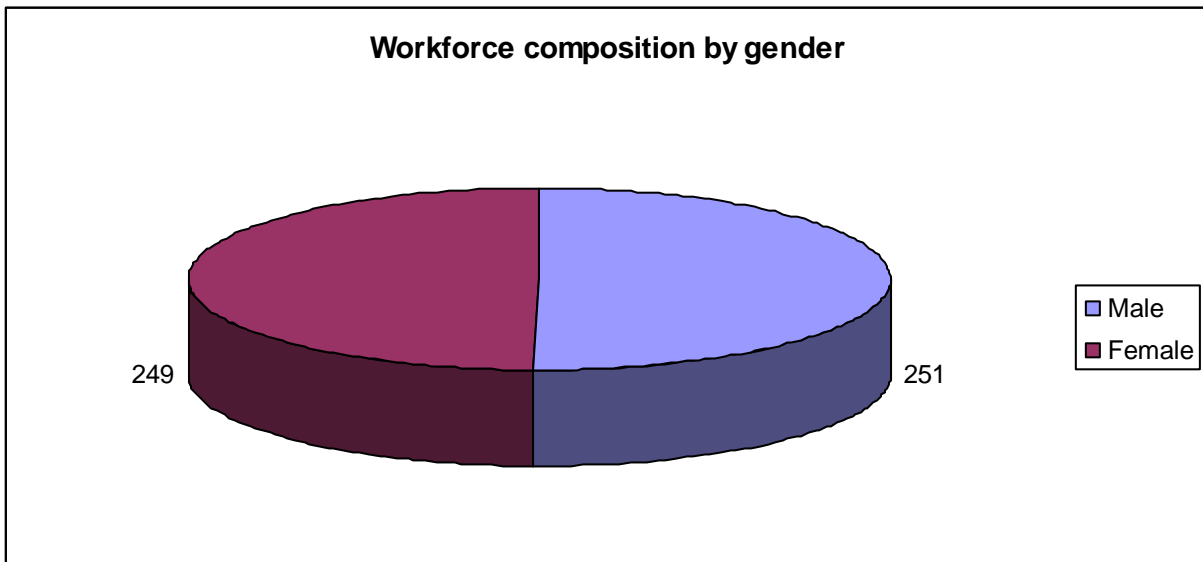
(as at 31 March 2008)

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)



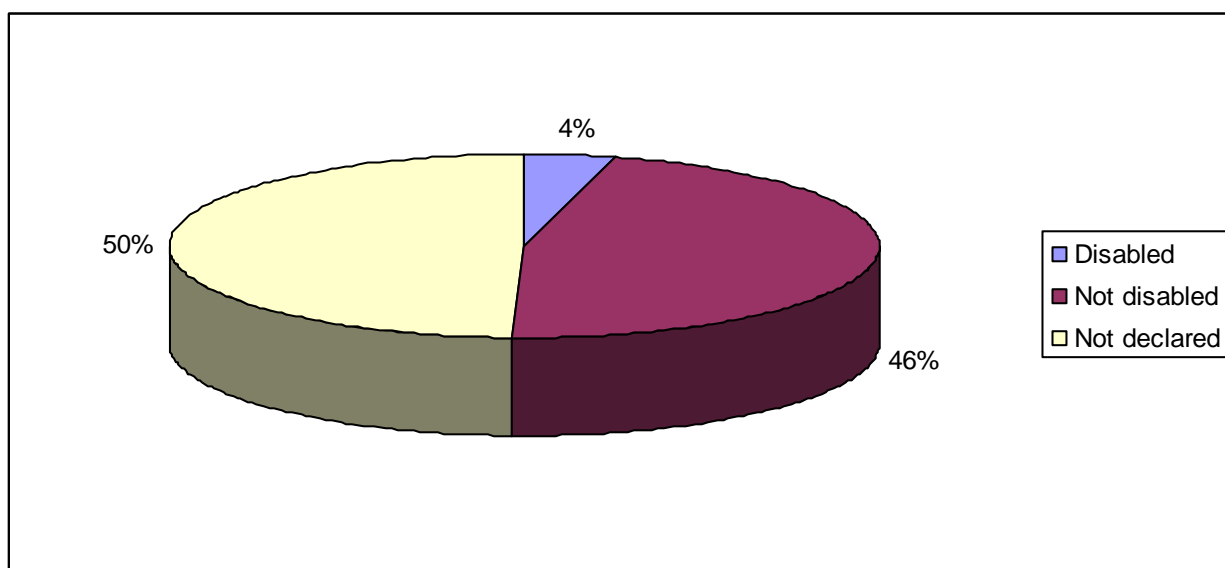
(as at 31 March 2008)

Percentage of staff declaring that they have a Disability

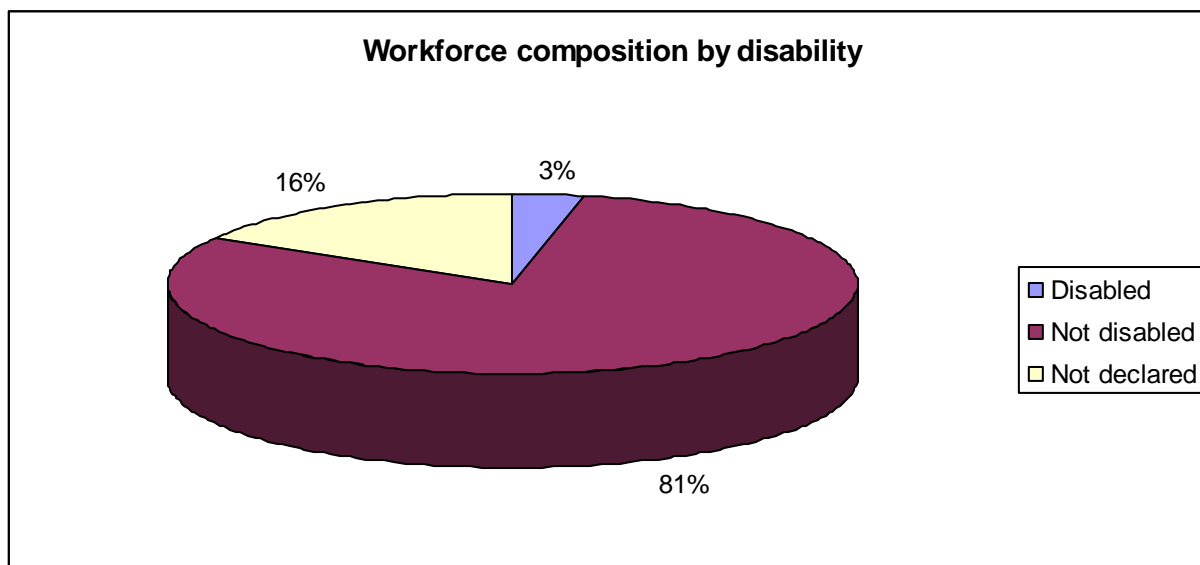
Employees are asked to declare whether they consider themselves to have a disability as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995,

“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.



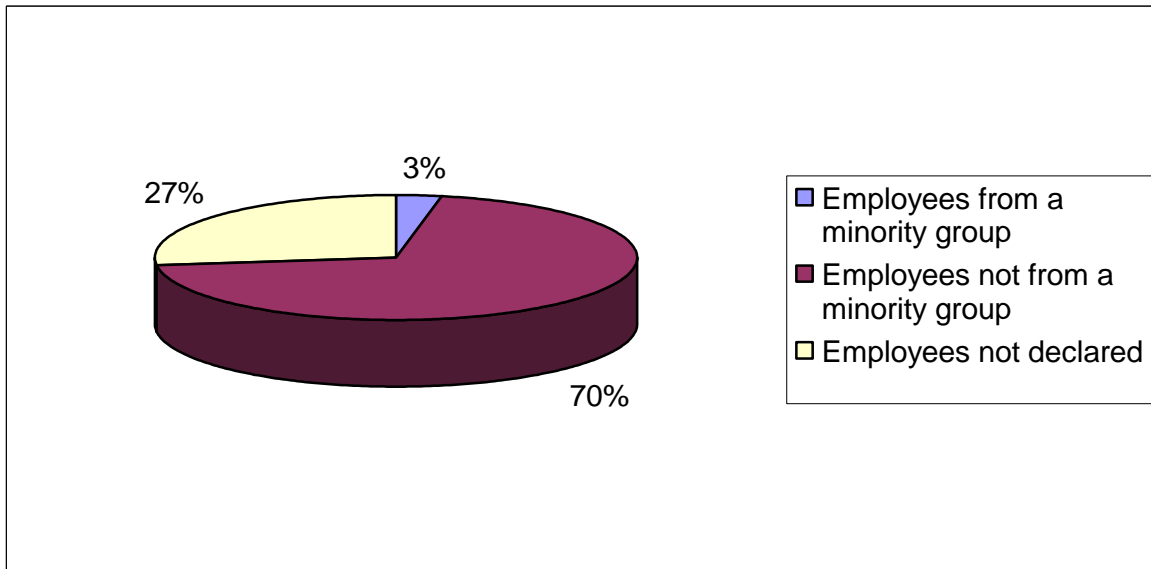
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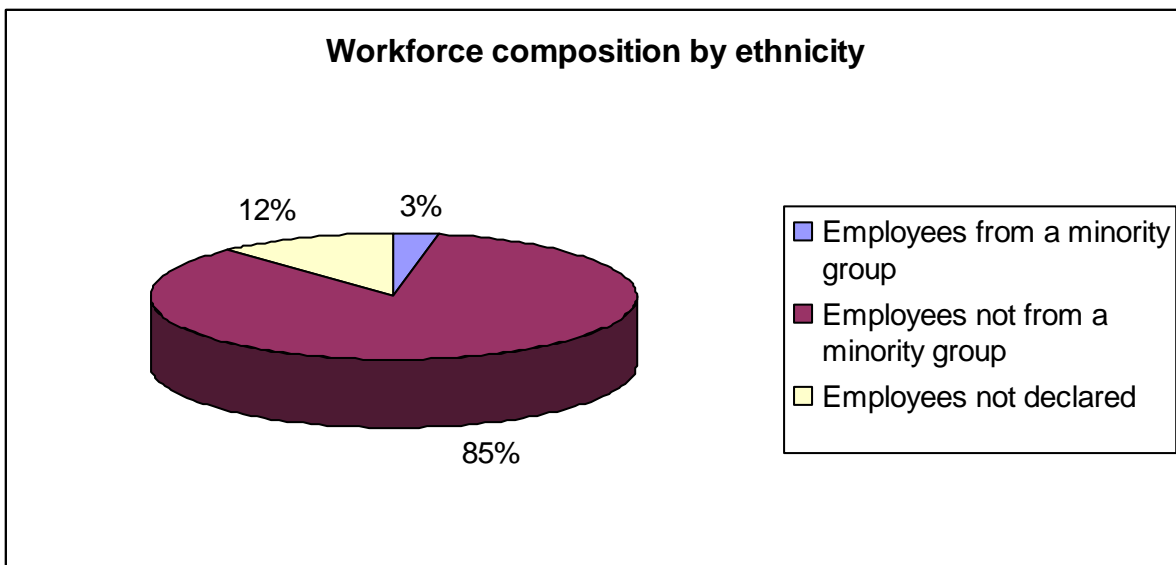
(as at 31 March 2008)

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/GJ				
			✓			
	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