

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Workforce Plan

2009/10 to 2011/12

(Version 4 – to Staffing Portfolio Holder 25th August 2009)

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 staff resources.
- 1.2 Relevant developments in the last year have included the adoption of new Council priorities (the Aims, Approaches and Actions); the economic downturn; the achievement of Investors In People accreditation; the tenants' ballot on the future of the housing stock; achieving level 2 of the Equalities Standard and the adoption of Council Values.

Purpose – Why a Workforce Plan?

- 1.3 Workforce planning is about looking to the future, being proactive and ensuring that the Council has appropriate resources both now and in the longer term. The purpose of the 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 Council as it undergoes considerable change to ensure that the services it provides reflect local and national priorities and the needs of the communities we serve.
- 1.4 The Audit Commission has published a paper, *Tomorrow's People*, reviewing local authorities' uneven progress in workforce planning and recommending a way forward. Councils are encouraged to engage in strategic workforce planning, integrated with their other corporate planning mechanisms and those of partners. The report also recommends councils to take action to attract and retain the workforce needed to deliver future services through various means such as the development of the local government brand, the promotion of local government as an employer of choice; an emphasis on the development of staff; and flexible working. This Council's approach to workforce planning is well developed, but recommendations have been taken into account in reviewing this plan and the Action Plan.
- 1.5 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 has set the following Vision:

To make South Cambridgeshire a safe and healthy place where residents are proud to live and where there will be opportunities for employment, enterprise and world-leading innovation. We will be a listening Council, providing a voice for rural life and first-class services accessible to all.

- 1.6 In support of the Vision, the Council has adopted 5 Aims, which commit the Council to -
 - being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all
 - ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for you and your family
 - making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live
 - assisting provision of local jobs for you and your family
 - providing a voice for rural life
- 1.7 The Council must be able to attract and retain talent in a highly competitive employment market place and difficult economic climate. It must develop and re-skill staff to respond

effectively to new challenges, new ways of working, the need for local community leadership skills for Councillors and stronger partnership skills for staff.

- 1.9 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 490 employees. For the purpose of this plan, the authority has been divided into 6 corporate service areas.

Table 1: South Cambs District Council, service areas

<p>Community and Customer Services Elections and Support Services Partnerships Communications Policy & Performance</p>	<p>Planning and Sustainable Communities Planning Policy 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 Legal Services Human Resources and Payroll</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 The key statistics are given in Appendix 1 and summarised below:-

- a) **Length of Service Profile:** 6% of the workforce has less than 1 years' service (lower than the 8.2% last year). The majority (78%) of staff have between 1 and 19 years service, with 16% having 20 or more years service.
- b) **Age Profile:** 50-59 year olds represent the largest age group in the workforce (152 employees, equivalent to 31%) and altogether 40% of the workforce are 50 or over. Correspondingly, only 10% of the workforce are under 30. 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.
- c) **Gender Profile:** The district council is equally balanced in terms of gender composition with 51% being male and 49% 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 30.4% of the top 5% of earners being female.

- d) Payline profiling shows that although there are 20% more females than males in the pay range scp 25 – 28 (up to £30K) 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.
- e) **Employees with disabilities:** The percentage of disabled employees is fairly representative of the wider community being 3% compared with 3.5% who are economically active in Cambridgeshire. This figure may understate the case, as 18% of employees have not declared their status. Staff will be re-surveyed in the next year in order to encourage a higher response rate. 4.5% of disabled staff make up the top 5% of earners.
- f) **Ethnic minority representation:** currently at 4% (an increase from 3% last year), within the workforce is consistent with the census figure for Cambridgeshire. Again, 10% of staff have not declared their ethnic group. There are no staff from ethnic minority groups within the top 5% of earners (BVPI 11- the guidance doesn't count White minority employees).

2.4 The key characteristics of the workforce are that it has a high proportion of employees in the older age categories with relatively few staff under 30. Similarly, there is a high proportion (16%) of employees with 20 years service or more. We have a good record of retaining staff in terms of skills and experience, but we do have a profile of an ageing workforce. 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. Recruitment and succession planning are considered again later in the plan.

2.5 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. In the last year the Council has made significant progress on equalities and this is covered later again in the plan.

3.0 Context – Workforce Issues

Service and Resource Issues

3.1 Our workforce planning needs to take into account factors such as:-

- a) The Council's financial position, the future pressure on its resources and the need to set stretching targets for the achievement of savings in 2009/10 and future years. The Medium Term Financial Strategy does not include additional resources to meet new staffing pressures in 2010/11 and 2011/12. At the same time, the Council will continue to respond to rising expectations about the quality of services provided by the Council – including the achievement of stretching LAA targets. The economic downturn has placed financial pressure on the Council through the loss of income.
- 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. The slowdown in house-building resulting from the recession is creating a challenge for the Council in managing the current reduced need for development related posts while being in a position to plan for and respond to the subsequent upturn in economic conditions.

- c) In a ballot held in June 2009 Council housing tenants decided not to accept a proposal to transfer the housing stock to South Cambridgeshire Village Homes. This decision will place severe financial pressure on the Housing Revenue Account and the Housing Service, with a significant impact on employees, as the Council seeks to continue to provide a level of service to housing tenants within a very difficult national framework for housing finance.
- 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 **and engagement**; more cross-cutting work; mobile working and working from home.
- e) The national agenda on pay, equality, pensions and retirement, health, safeguarding children and flexible working. **The latter includes issues such as greater flexibility in terms of hours worked, working from home and flexible retirement.**

Succession Planning

- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Consideration has been given to a more structured approach to resource planning to prepare officers to take over senior or specialised posts, which become vacant. The practice of the Council has been to take an informal approach to succession planning with service managers taking a localised approach to developing potential within their services. Work is underway 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.
- 3.4 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. Management Competency levels will be identified through the 2009 Performance Review process to improve the level of management ability throughout the Council and create a larger pool from which future senior managers can be drawn.
- 3.5 The age profile of the Council suggests that many of the experienced technical/ professional officers and managers will reach normal retirement during 2009 – 2012, although the exact date that retirements will take place cannot be predicted. Modern Apprenticeships and sponsored internships are being considered as an effective way to replenish the organisation with new talent.
- 3.6 Management and supervisory competency frameworks have been developed for the Council these are being 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 will 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. The first cohort of individuals have successfully completed the Chartered Management Institute Certificate level 3 programme as part of a management development programme.

Recruitment

- 3.7 Nationally, there has been concern about the shortage of some professional categories of staff (environmental health officers, planning and design officers, accountants). Although the economic downturn has eased the position on recruitment, this doesn't affect the longer-term situation.
- 3.8 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. 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 retaining staff and raising qualification levels.
- 3.9 Some problems remain in a limited number of areas – such as senior professional and technical roles and experienced managers. For example, the Council has experienced difficulties in recruiting to the Executive Director (Corporate Services) post. Difficulties in recruiting to urban design posts have been addressed through setting up a joint Urban Design team with Cambridge City.
- 3.10 The Planning service is addressing recruitment successfully by a policy of “grow your own”. Environmental Health teams have adopted a similar approach (student placements). There is also the issue of the lack of career progression for younger staff and this could be seen as a key reason for leaving.
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 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.
 - Relatively 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.
 - **Greater expectations on the part of employees to get greater satisfaction from their work and enjoy a better work/life balance. The Council will need to address these issues and expectations for greater flexibility in employment in order to compete in the employment market.**
 - And, more recently, economic difficulties.
- 3.13 Turnover rates are very low, with a rate of 5.5% for 2008/09 against a generally accepted guide level of about 10%. The Council will continue to monitor recruitment and retention closely and review the pay scale and indexing arrangements on a regular basis.
- 3.14 The profile/image of local government affects recruitment. 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. Greater involvement in schemes such as work experience and attendance at school career fairs will help to promote the Council as an employer of choice.

Absence Management

- 3.15 The Council has pursued a range of measures to manage sickness absence – for example through an absence management scheme; regular reporting and management of absence levels; and addressing instances of long-term sickness. Nevertheless, the key measure, the average number of days absence per year, has increased during the last 12 months and remains above the average for district councils (8 days per employee). A review of policies and practices, supported by an audit will help to identify areas for improvement. Research into best practice and a greater focus on wellbeing are also planned for 2009.

Services facing service peaks

- 3.16 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 and the flexible working policy has been revised to reflect this.
- 3.17 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

- 3.18 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, **community development and community engagement**
 - g) Managing and promoting diversity
 - h) Maximising the use of technology

Training and Skills

- 3.19 Up to last year, the Council has spent an increasing amount on staff training:

	£ per employee	Total spend across all services
2005/2006	£ 250	£158,037
2006/2007	£ 385	£176,095
2007/2008	£448	£226,692
2008/2009	£570	£ 279,667
2009/2010		£ 258,210 – budget

Nevertheless, as external training provision costs increase, training budgets continue to be under pressure to deliver the full range of corporate training needs and deliver value for

money. Other ways of learning are being promoted, such as mentoring, e-learning, to deliver more cost effective development of staff.

- 3.20 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. This budget was also used to deliver an extensive equalities training programme during 2008.
- 3.21 The Safeguarding Children and protection of vulnerable adults (POVA) agenda has placed significant requirements on local authorities, not least in the provision of extensive training for staff and managers. A programme of training is currently being organised for employees who have contact with these groups and for managers who need to demonstrate safer recruit techniques in the selection of staff for sensitive roles.
- 3.22 In the last year the Council has introduced a management competency framework. It is anticipated that as the framework is rolled out, and managers are assessed against the criteria, further development needs will be identified. Some needs will be met by accredited training, although other forms of learning (coaching, job shadowing etc) will be utilised. The Council has a budget of £20,000 to deliver management skills training.
- 3.23 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) **Community engagement skills and techniques.**
 - g) Procurement skills
 - h) 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.
 - i) Skills and understanding in relation to equality and diversity.
 - j) 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

- 3.24 The Probation and Capability policies and procedures have been reviewed and improved to provide greater clarity and guidance to managers and staff. The processes within the policies 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 and Development Review route to ensure early identification of capability issues.

Performance and Development Reviews

- 3.25 The Council has recently reviewed and improved its staff appraisal scheme (now renamed as Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs)). Links between service planning and individual objective setting have been improved, as have links with Investors in People improvements. Progress is underway to enhance the coverage, quality and timing of appraisals, with the introduction of the “grandparent” approach.

Management

- 3.26 A key focus for the organisation is to raise management capacity to meet the challenges facing the Council in the years ahead. Areas to be addressed include service planning; performance management; working effectively in partnerships; management of financial resources; change management; and customer service.
- 3.27 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) Improved approach towards absence management
 - h) 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.
- 3.28 Many of these are already being addressed. In particular, a management competency framework approach is being developed. The competency framework was launched in 2009 and is being used to identify the competency levels required for all management posts and to provide a basis for individual development. The use of the framework for assessment and recruitment purposes will be part of its future development

Investor in People Accreditation

- 3.29 In 2009 the Council achieved Investor in People re-accreditation for the Health and Environmental Service area and first-time accreditation for the Council as a whole. Building on this success, the Council is preparing an action plan to embed and develop IIP good practice, in response to feedback from the IIP inspection team.

Staff Survey

- 3.30 The Council regularly undertakes a survey of its staff. The last survey, carried out in March 2008 resulted in 75% staff response rate. There were many encouraging results from the survey, but it also indicated that continued improvement was required in areas such as; employee engagement, communication, consistency (access to training, application of policies), and transparency/openness of decision-making.
- 3.31 Corporate Managers have discussed the results with their teams and action plans have been developed. Under the overall direction of a Staff Satisfaction Steering Group, a number of workstreams have been established to deliver improvements in response to the survey:-

- Benefit and Reward
- Staff Social Events
- Flexible Working
- Employee Engagement & Involvement
- Communication from the Top
- Succession Planning
- Values
- Management Learning and Development

3.32 The next survey is planned for the autumn of 2009 which will enable progress since 2008 to be assessed.

A Diverse Workforce

3.33 Equality and diversity play a major role in improving the skills, capacity and vitality of the workforce and the reputation of the Council. In the last year the Council has taken a range of steps to promote equality and diversity, including the adoption of a new Comprehensive Equality and Diversity Policy. This policy includes commitments to developing a culture which values difference, both in employment and service delivery; and working to ensure that equalities and diversity becomes a central and essential element of our service planning and delivery, both as an employer and provider of services. The Council has revised its Race Equality scheme; consulted on a Gender Equality scheme; become a Stonewall Champion; achieved Level 2 of the Equality Standard; carried out extensive staff training; and used communications to embed a culture which welcomes diversity.

3.34 The Council will work towards the “Achieving” level of the new equality framework and continue to implement its Comprehensive Equalities Policy, which will include continuing staff training; embedding diversity; developing management competencies; and identifying ways to make the staff more representative of the community.

4.0 Council’s Priorities and Workforce Requirements

New Priorities

4.1 The Council has committed to a Vision and new Aims, Approaches and Actions to set the overall direction for its service provision and development aspirations for 2009/10 onwards. For each of the five top-level aims there are a number of approaches:

Aim A: We Are Committed To Being A Listening Council, Providing First Class Services Accessible To All, by -

- listening to and engaging with our local community
- working with voluntary organisations, Parish Councils and Cambridgeshire County Council to improve services through partnership
- making South Cambridgeshire District Council more open and accessible
- achieving improved customer satisfaction with our services
- ensuring that the Council demonstrates value for money in the way it works

Aim B. We Are Committed to Ensuring that South Cambridgeshire Continues to be a Safe And Healthy Place for You and Your Family, by -

- working closely through our Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to reduce crime and the fear of crime
- working with partners to combat Anti Social Behaviour
- promoting active lifestyles and increasing opportunities for sport and recreation to improve the health of all age groups

- understanding where health inequalities exist and focusing on areas of need

Aim C: We are Committed to Making South Cambridgeshire a Place in which Residents can Feel Proud to Live, by -

- making affordable housing more available to local people
- ensuring that affordable housing is in balance with the community
- achieving a sustainable future for the Council's housing stock
- working with local residents to promote community cohesion and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in the community
- extending and encouraging the use of recycling opportunities
- working to improve the cleanliness of our villages
- taking account of climate change in all the services that we deliver
- promoting low carbon living and delivering low carbon growth through the planning system

Aim D: We are Committed to Assisting Provision of Local Jobs for You and Your Family, by -

- working closely with local businesses
- promoting economic development
- using cultural activities effectively to promote tourism

Aim E: We are Committed to Providing a Voice for Rural Life, by -

- protecting existing communities, villages and the countryside
- working more closely with Parish Councils and local Groups
- implementing planning policies to achieve successful new communities
- maximising planning gain for neighbouring communities
- playing our part in improving rural services including transport links

4.2 Each year the Council also sets a number of specific Council Actions to give clear political direction to managers and their staff. The Aims, Approaches and Actions form the context for service planning and PDRs.

4.3 The achievement of the Aims, Approaches and Actions will depend on many of the same skills and capabilities mentioned in the previous sections. Particular workforce issues are discussed below.

- a) The ability and capacity to work effectively in partnerships and engage with stakeholders **and communities** will be key skills in delivering the Council's objectives through the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement. This will be an important part of management development.
- b) Despite the current economic recession, there will continue to be a long term 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.
- c) 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 - not least at the present time when the economic downturn has reduced the need for development related staff, but the situation will change as the economy and house building recover. 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.

- d) 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.
- e) Other key skills in delivering the Council's objectives and cost effective services include procurement; project management; financial management; and sustainability.

Council Values

4.4 Following engagement and discussions with staff and Members, the Council has adopted four Council Values:-

- Customer Service
- Mutual Respect
- A commitment to improving services
- Trust

4.5 Work is continuing for 2009/10 to embed the values, starting with workshops to identify appropriate behaviours and action plans, with the aim that significant progress will have been made by the end of the current year in understanding of the values and how they can improve how the Council works; and in how they can guide decision making.

5.0 Current initiatives to address the workforce needs of the Council

5.1 In the last two years the Council has completed a restructuring of its senior management tiers based on -

- A Senior Management Team consisting of the Chief Executive, two Executive Directors and the joint Director of Development
- five Corporate Managers, reporting to the Chief Executive and Executive Directors, who along with the Chief Executive, Executive Directors plus the Principal Solicitor and HR Manager form the Executive Management Team

5.2 A personal development and team building programme for the Executive Management Team has been completed. This has focused 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.

5.4 A programme of service reviews is being carried out for service areas to identify efficiencies and improve customer service. **A review of the ICT has been recently completed and HR has been identified as the next review in order to improve corporate capacity.**

5.5 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 Corporate Briefings which have been significantly reviewed and developed over the last year.
 - Team meetings across all service areas
 - Re-launch of the staff newsletter
 - Chief Executive and Leader Q & A Roadshows
 - Regular displays in the Cambourne 'street area'
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 Forging links with universities to provide environmental health students gap year placements.
- 5.8 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.
- 5.9 Increasing involvement of staff in the service-planning regime. Over 200 staff were involved in service plan away days in September 2008.
- 5.10 Other current initiatives (Investor in People, Values, Equality and Diversity and response to the staff survey) have already been described earlier in this plan.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 5.11 The Council continues to face a challenging financial position through unfavourable government grant settlements; a relatively low level of Council Tax; limited opportunities for income generation; and the need to provide resources for growth. The Council has been able to include limited provision for new staff resources in the budget for 2009/10 (in ICT; Information Management; equalities; and revenues and benefits). However, there will be no scope for any new workforce resources in 2010/11 and 2011/12. In addition, the Council is committed to achieving efficiency savings and £325,000 additional savings in 2009/10 onwards in order to achieve a sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 5.12 This position on the General Fund coupled with the need to make significant savings on the Housing Revenue Account, following the Housing Futures ballot, will place pressures on managers and staff across the Council to be more challenging about how things are done. There will be pressure on HR and managers to find and implement solutions. Communications and change management skills will be important.

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 personal development review (PDR) 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 Council Objectives, service plans and personal objectives.
- 6.4 Work is also continuing through the implementation of Council Values; staff engagement work in response to the staff survey; embedding a culture of customer service through Service First; focus on performance management; and the promotion of Equality and Diversity.

Smarter Working

- 6.5 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 must not make the change to people – change will only be successful by involving and working with people.
- 6.6 We recognise that partnership working is the way forward in delivering key improvement to services for local communities. Recent legislation and national guidance has emphasised the need to work with the Local Strategic Partnership and the LAA Board (Cambridgeshire Together) to achieve improved services and quality of life outcomes. 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.
 - e) Ensuring that our staff resources are directed towards key partnerships through which we can be most effective.

Achieving flexibility

- 6.7 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.
- 6.8 The HR team, staff representatives and senior management will continue to review personnel policies to ensure that they are responsive to both the needs of its employees and customers. A policy review programme has been agreed with auditors.
- 6.9 All job roles are 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.
- 6.10 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.
- 6.11 The Council will continue to enable its staff to work more effectively and balance work and home commitments through flexible working arrangements. Policies and procedures are already in place for compressed hours; part-time working; working from home. These and other flexible working practices will continue to be supported and developed.

Developing staff, Building capacity

- 6.12 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 – ie focusing on:
- Succession planning
 - Introducing management and supervisory training and development based around core competencies
 - Delivering project/change management training
 - Arranging training awareness on cross crossing issues such as Equality/Diversity, Safeguarding and Performance/Absence management
 - Effective monitoring of Personal Development Plans set under appraisals

Barriers

- 6.13 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.
 - e) Lack of management capacity – resulting in staff resources not being focused on our priorities to ensure the most effective use of resources.

Ensuring that the Council is 'fit for purpose'

- 6.14 The Council recognises that it must continue to evolve and develop in line with external and internal influences. This evolution means that it must ensure that it is 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

Pay and Reward

- 6.15 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.
- 6.16 The new pay and grading structure will need to meet the following:
- a) Pay equality
 - b) Encourage and reward excellent performance
 - c) Affordable for the authority
 - d) Able to meet recruitment and retention needs for the future

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 within limited resources.
 - b) Skills development – particularly generic and management skills such as project and change 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 recruitment and retention issues and the introduction of succession planning arrangements to ensure that the workforce is engaged and committed to delivering excellent services. The Council's approach must therefore be one of employee engagement, training, development, flexible working and making the Council an attractive place to work through the full package of working conditions and work satisfaction.
- d) A skilled and engaged workforce which is representative of the communities in the district, and which matches the demands upon it. In the medium term, 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 and cultural 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.

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 absence
 - Retirement
 - Equalities
 - Satisfaction of employees with the Council as an employer
- 7.9 The regular staff survey is also a key indicator of workforce views, employee engagement and satisfaction.

Reviewing the Plan

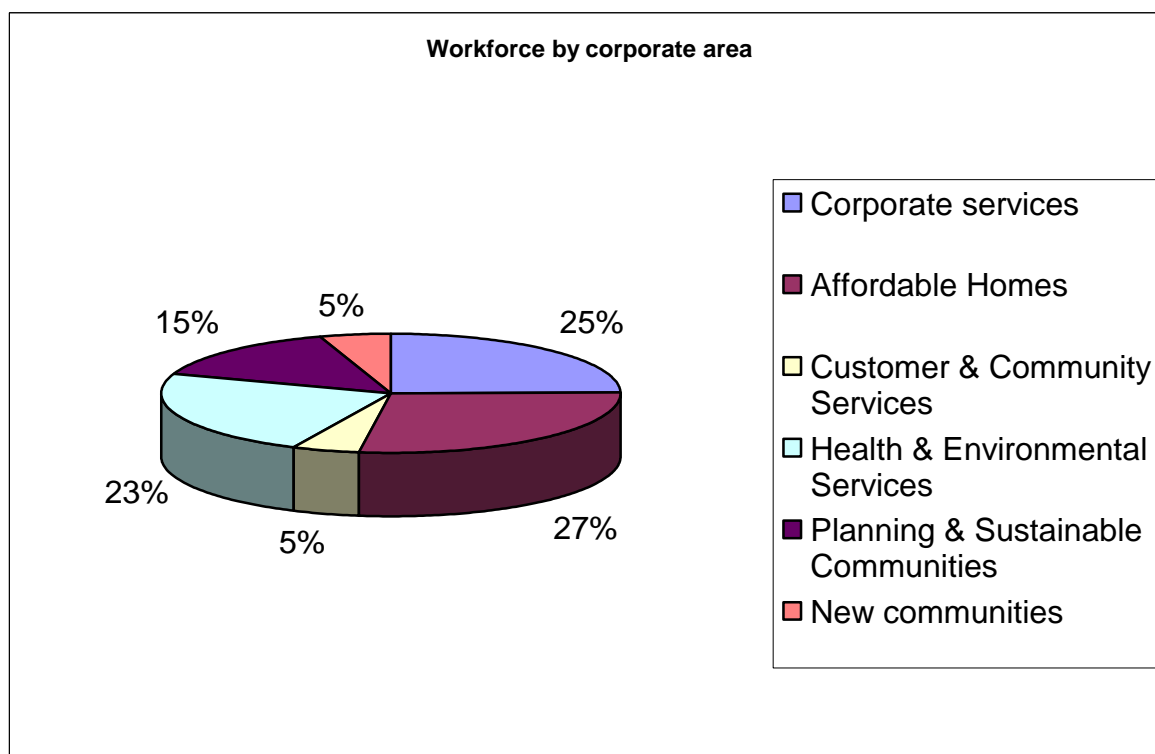
- 7.10 The Workforce Plan will be revised annually to enable:-
- the review to take into account the views of Members on priorities and budget setting, service planning and service areas on their individual workforce needs
 - the outcome of the review to feed into the annual update of the Medium Term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

KEY WORKFORCE STATISTICS

Employee Numbers

The Council employs 490 people across a wide range of service areas. This figure excludes any casual employees. Department sizes show that three quarters of the workforce are employed within Corporate, Environmental and Housing service areas and one fifth of staff are located in Planning and New Communities.

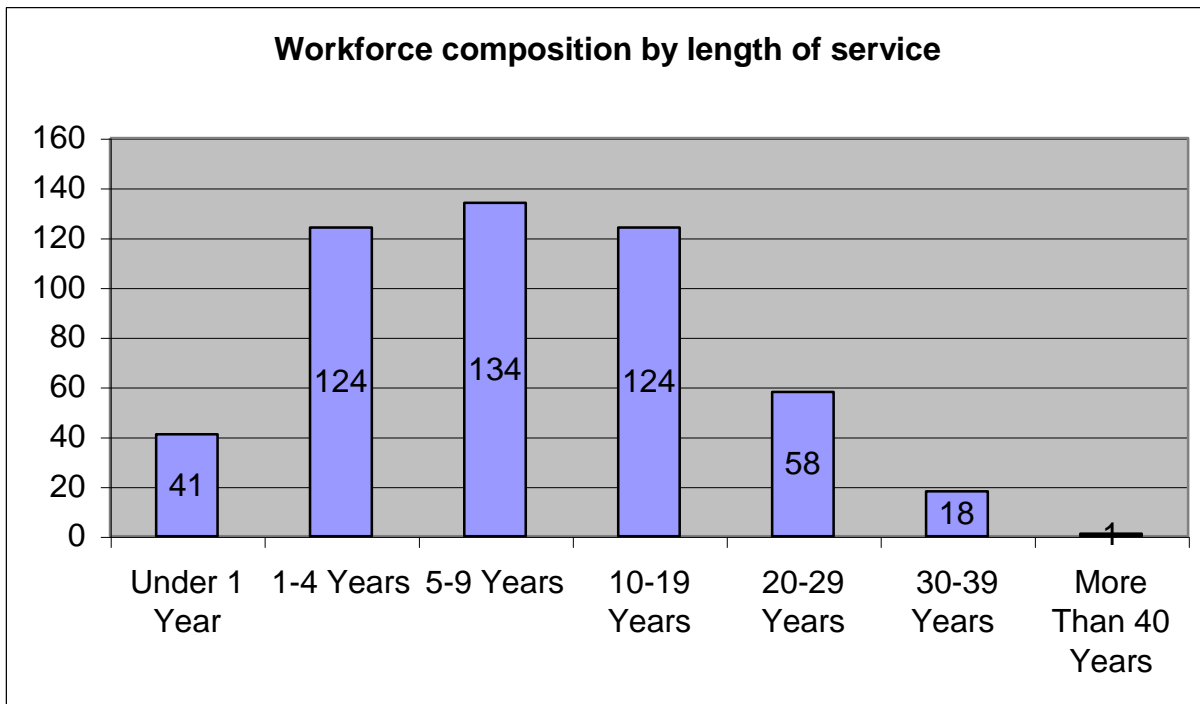
Department sizes



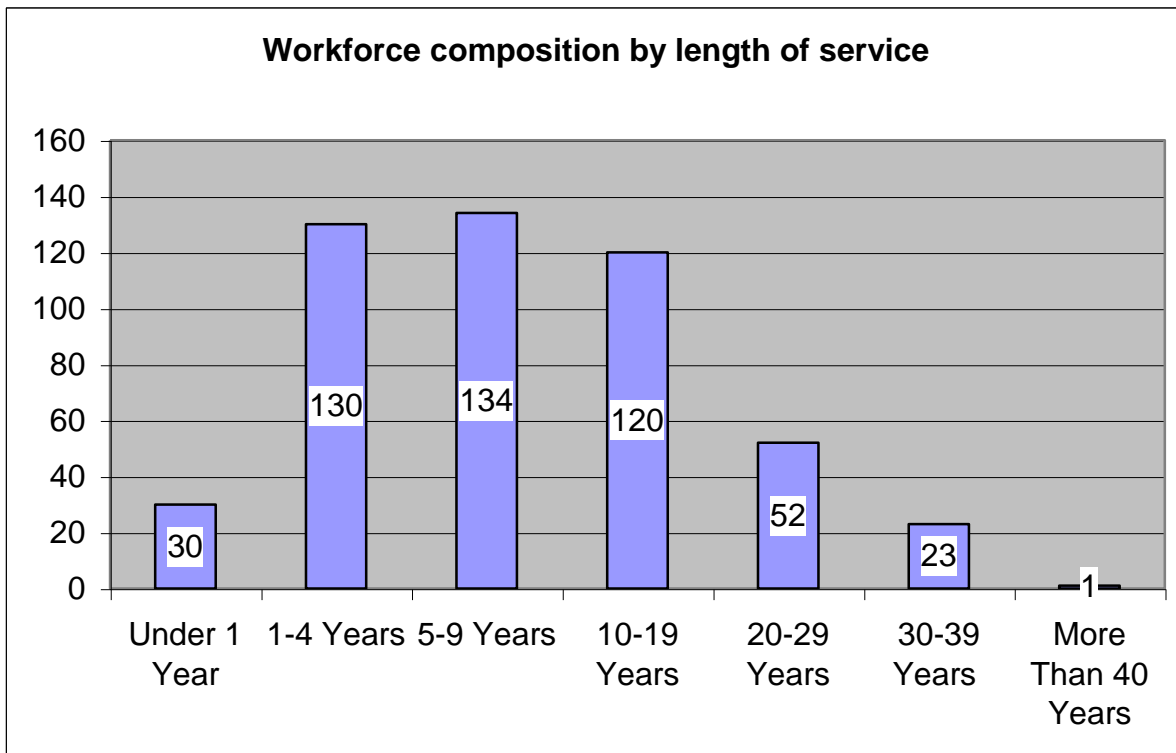
(as at 27 May 2009)

Since the last WfP, the Council has restructured into 6 Corporate service areas. The Chief Executive combined a number of direct reports including elections, policy and customer service into a new corporate area – Customer and Community Services. Legal and HR Payroll were moved into the Corporate Services area. The largest department is Housing Services, with 27% of the workforce, this includes Sheltered Housing, Housing Options and property services and maintenance.

Length of service of employees



(as at 31 March 2008)

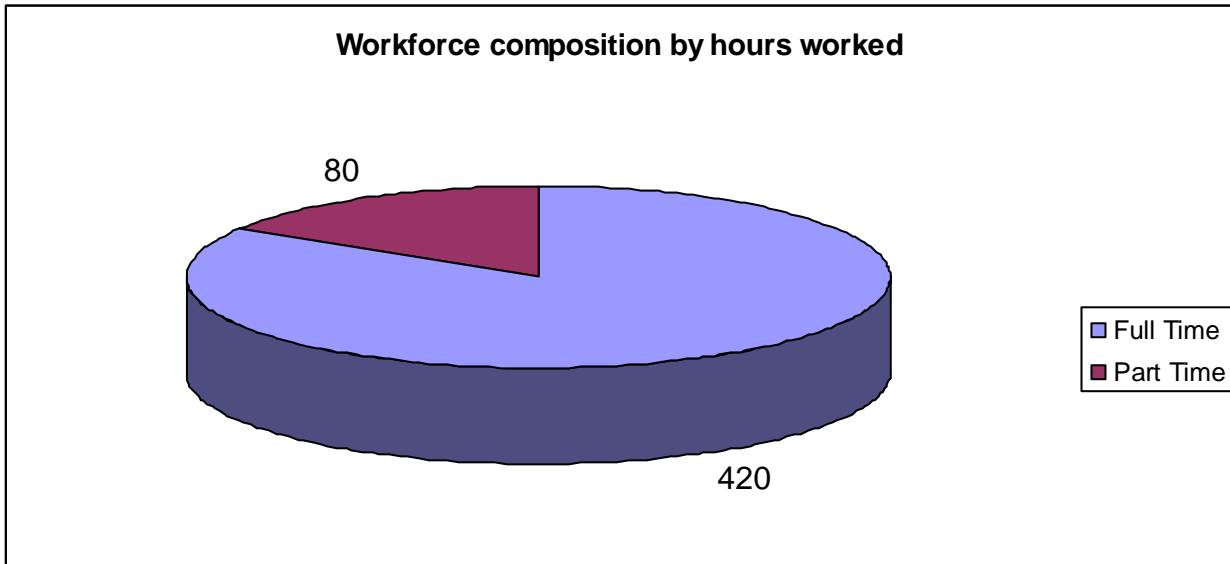


27 May 2009)

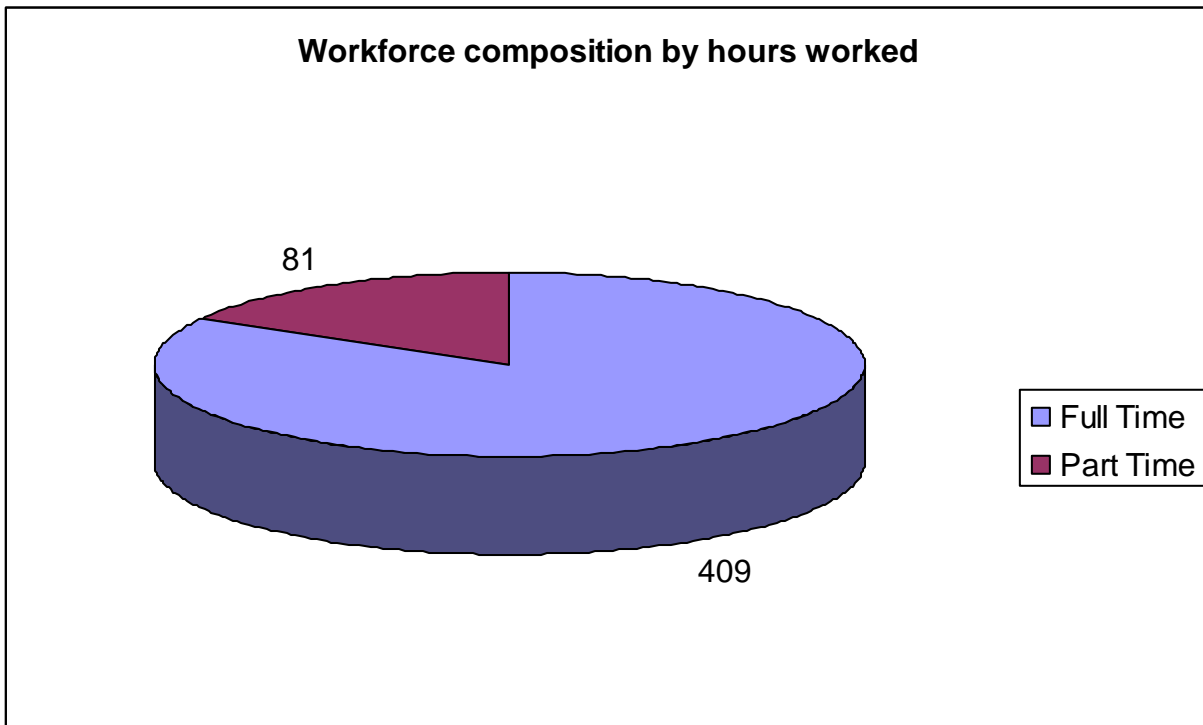
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Breakdown of Full and Part time employees

Over 16% of the Council's workforce has requested working part time hours, and in particular there has been a slight increase in 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 number of requests to work part time following maternity leave and for elder care responsibilities.



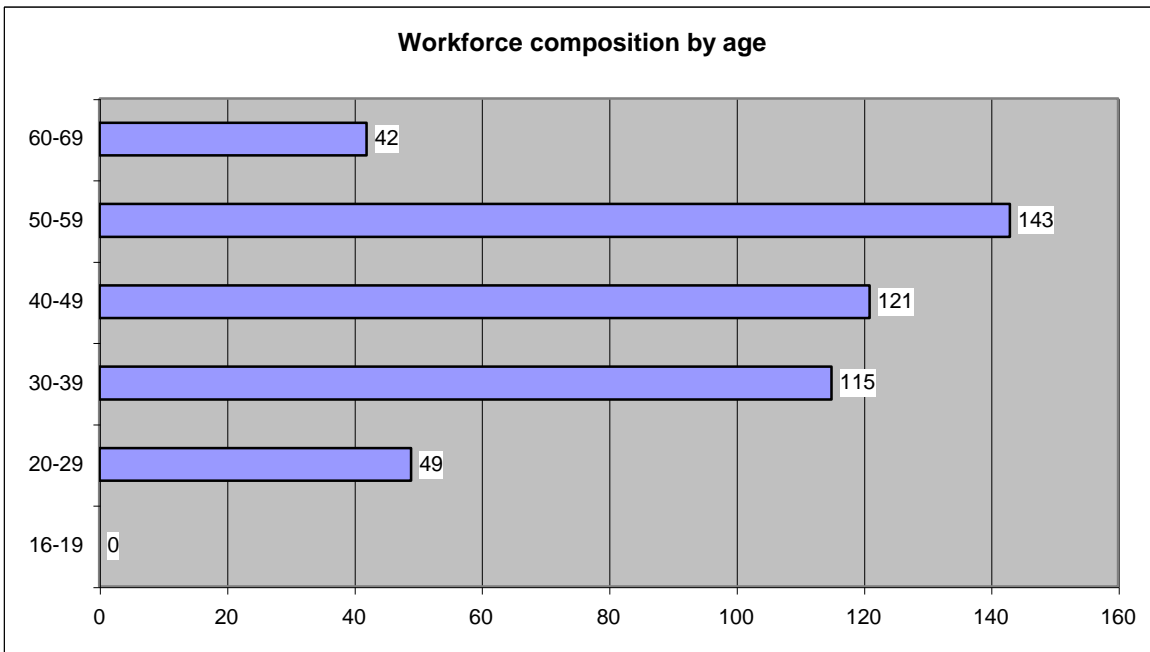
(as at 31 March 2008)



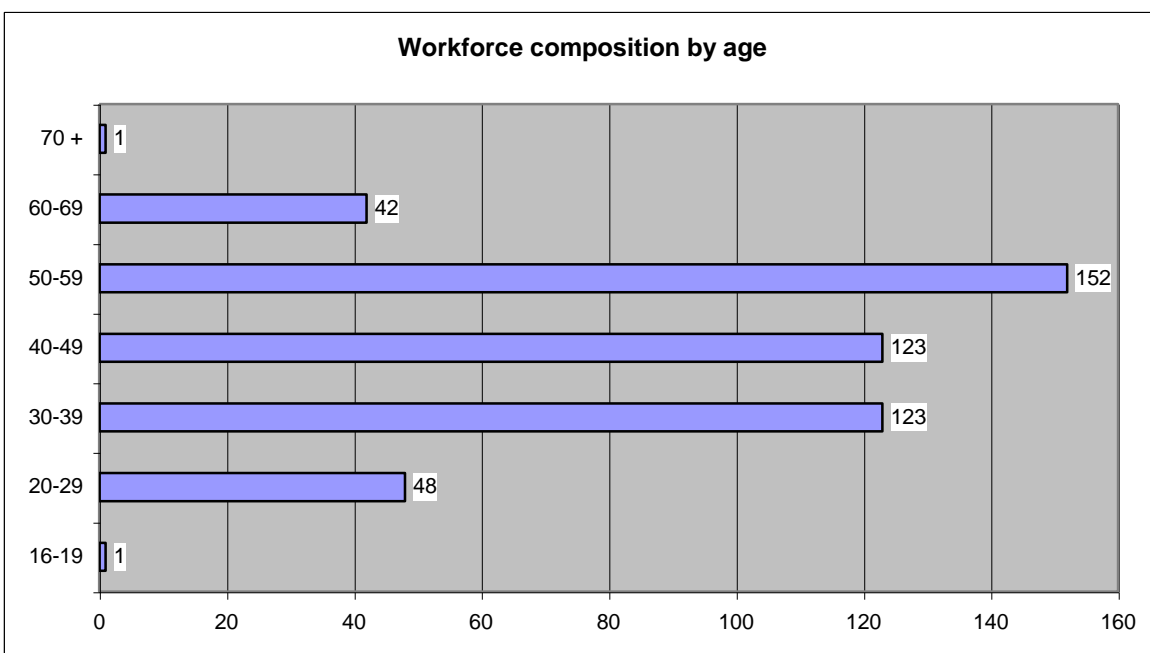
(as at 27 May 2009)

Breakdown of current workforce by age

The tables below show the breakdown of employees by age. There has been no change in the overall composition in the last 3 years. The highest category being in the 50 years plus group where this represents 31% of the workforce. Only 10% of the workforce are below 29 years. A high number of retirements are predicted in the next 5 years.



(as at 31.03.08)

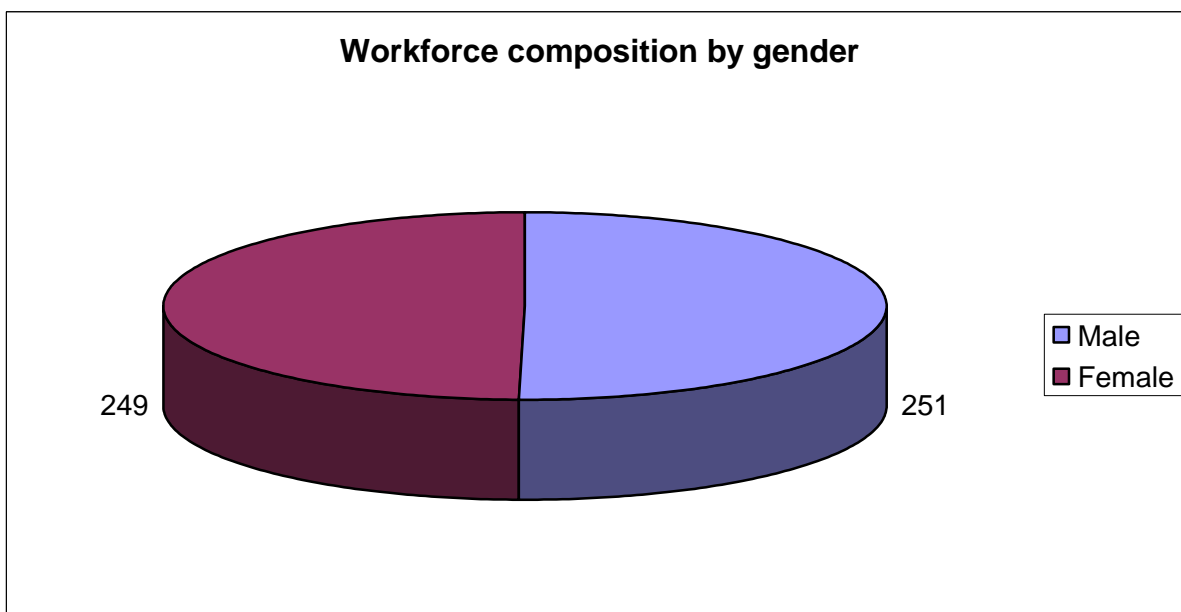


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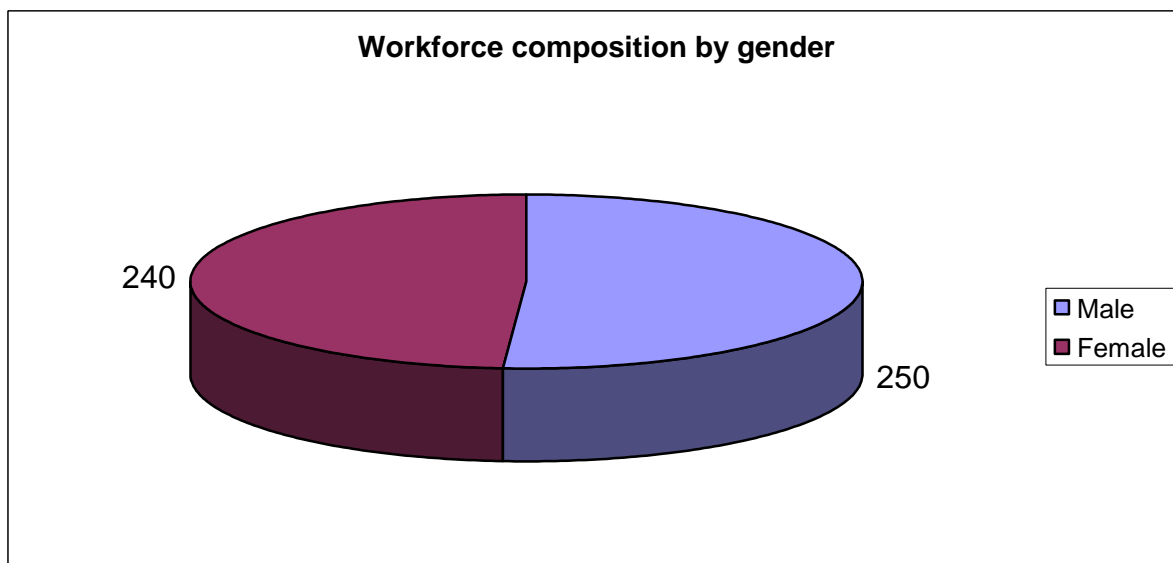
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Gender composition

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.



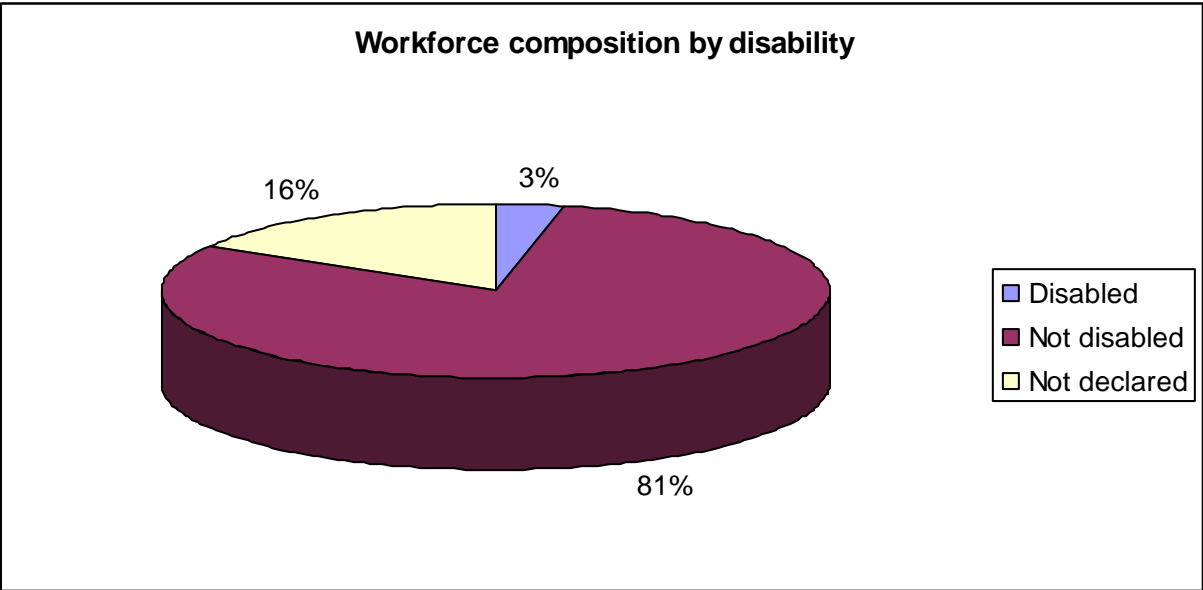
(as at 31 March 2008)



(as at 27 May 2009)

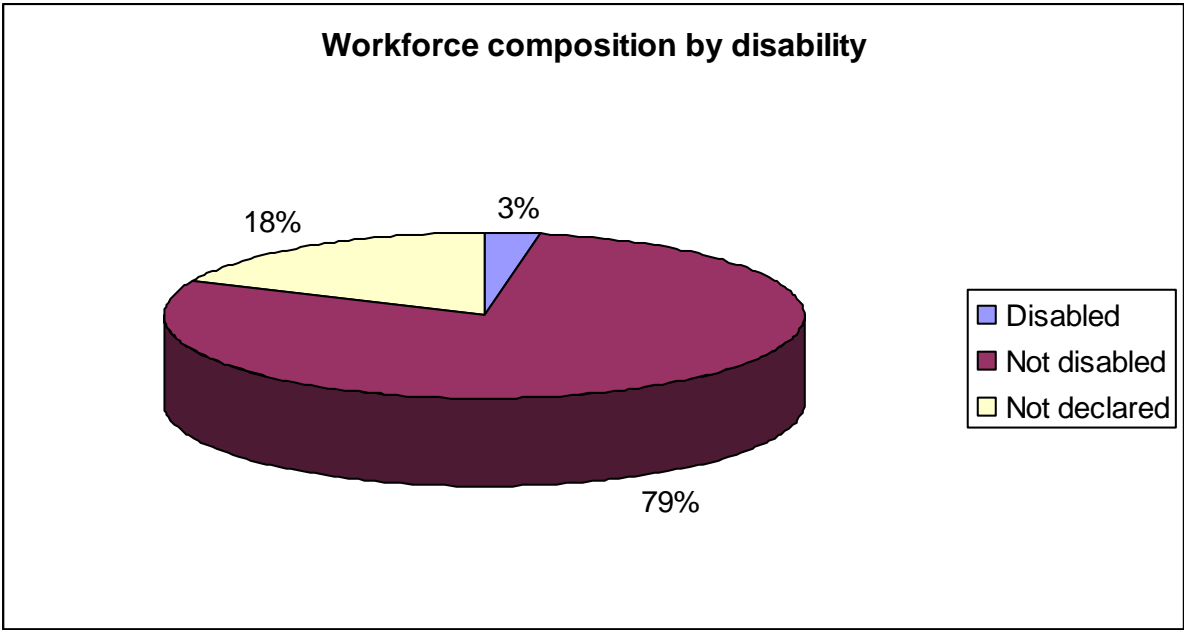
Percentage of staff declaring that they have a Disability

Employees are asked to declare whether they consider themselves to have a disability as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 for the purposes of disability equal opportunities monitoring information.



31 March 2008)

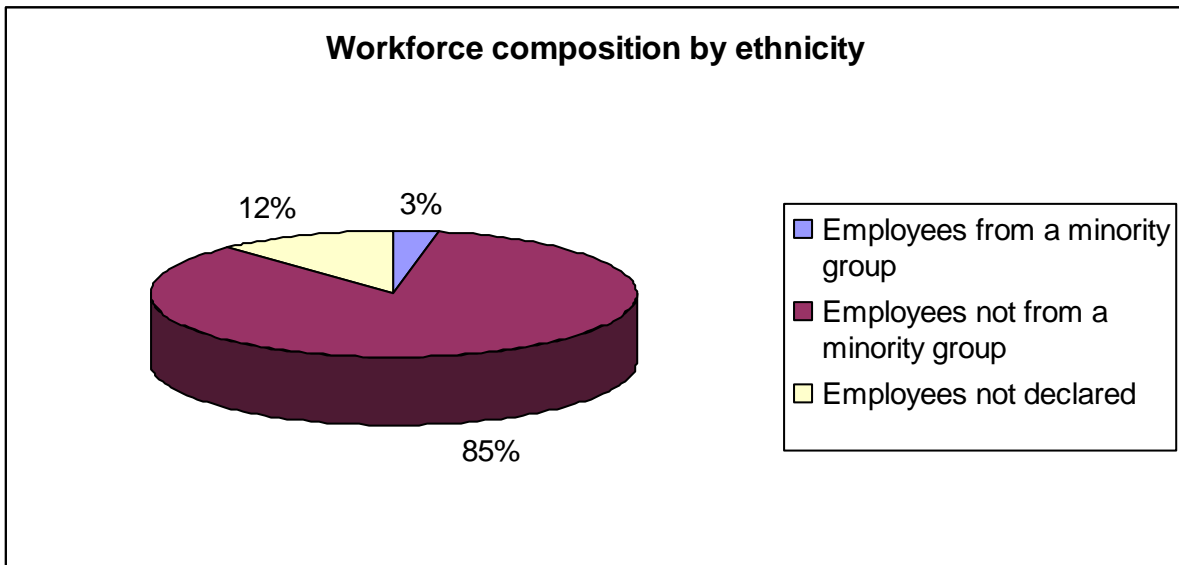
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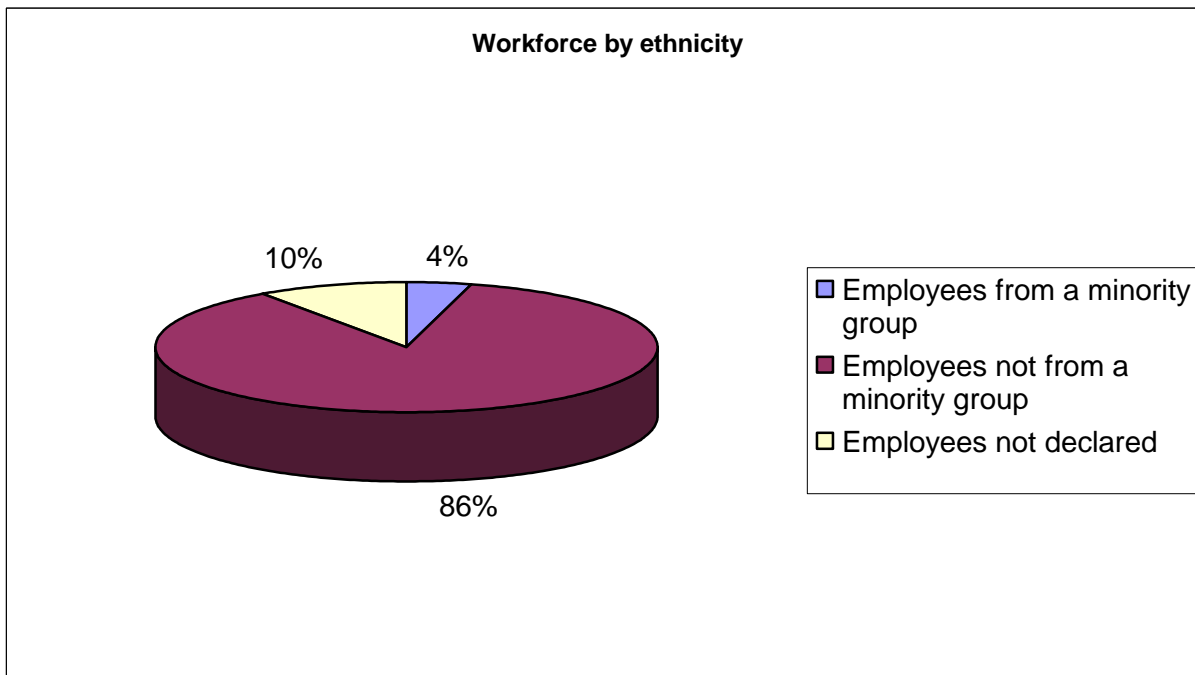
(as at 27 May 2009)

Ethnicity

The Council collects data on employee breakdown by ethnic group as defined by the census. There has been a 1% increase in the number of employees representing a minority ethnic group.



(as at 31 March 2008)



(as at 27 May 2009)

Turnover

Staff turnover (voluntary leavers) remained stable during the period 2006 to 2008 at around 10% per annum. However there has been a dramatic fall in turnover during 2008/2009, and turnover is currently at 5.5%, possibly due to the economic downturn. There are no particular trends for reasons for leaving although career progression is the reason most often recorded.

Year	Actual	Year end target
2006/2007 (year end)	9.40%	13.00%
2007/2008	9.54%	11.00%
2008/ 2009	5.5 %	11.50%

Very low turnover rates are an issue for organisations. Some staff will perceive that there will be less opportunities for promotion and progression. New ideas, skills and approaches will not flow into the organisation and it will be difficult to influence the diversity profile.

Revised Workforce Plan 2009 to 2012 - Action Plan

Action	Who	When			Resources	
		9/10	10/11	11/12		
Objective 1: Enhance leadership and management						
1	Continue programme of Member mentoring and leadership courses	RM	✓	✓	✓	Current budget/Improvement East funding
2	Continue development of Executive Management Team	SMT/PS	✓	✓	✓	Current budget/Improvement East funding
3	Develop and deliver learning options for supervisors & managers, based on competency scheme.	JM	✓	✓	✓	Management Development budget
4	Develop staff involvement in the service plan process	PS	✓	✓		Within existing resources
5	Continue to develop and improve corporate briefing and feedback process	GH	✓	✓		Within existing resources
6	Embed Council values through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops for staff, managers & Members • Involving staff in developing ways of working to the values in their services. • Communications • Induction • Reviewing corporate processes 	GHJ/SMT	✓	✓	✓	Within existing resources
Objective 2: Enhance skills and motivation to meet the changing work environment and maximise performance						
7	Develop an action plan following Investors in People assessment Deliver improvements to ensure progress towards reassessment.	SGC/IC IC/SMT	✓	✓	✓	Within existing resources
8	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	✓			
9	Actions to address commitments made to achieve level 3 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/ Equalities Steering group	✓ ✓	✓ ✓		Within existing resources

Action		Who	When			Resources
			9/10	10/11	11/12	
10	Carry out job evaluation and implement new pay structure with a view to meeting Equal Pay requirements	SGC	✓	✓		Resources identified in MTFS
11	Continue Improvement to induction for new starters, including introduction of e-induction	LS	✓	✓		Within existing resources
12	Staff survey – complete survey; publicise results and planned actions to address the findings	IC/SGC	✓		✓	Subject to outcome of survey
13	Continue review of flexible working practices to aid diversity and support retention and recruitment	SGC	✓	✓		Within existing resources
14	Improve staff engagement in performance management through the implementation of the Performance Improvement Strategy and use of CorVu.	PS	✓			Within existing resources
15	Improve employee engagement and involvement through implementation of initiatives through Staff satisfaction group	SGC/GH/SMT	✓	✓		Budget to be identified for specific projects
16	Actions to improve sickness absence rates, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improved reporting/monitoring data manager training wellbeing strategy and health promotion events reducing accidents at work 	SGC/EMT	✓	✓	✓	In conjunction with H & S advisor and Env Health - Resources unknown
Objective 3: Flexibility and the ability to achieve organisational change						
17	Continue to develop competency framework:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend framework to other posts Include competencies in recruitment & appraisal process 	JM	✓	✓ ✓	✓	In conjunction with service managers- within existing resources
18	Continue to develop change management procedures, policy and support	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	Review of succession planning requirements	EMT/IC	✓	✓		Potential resource issues
21	Embed the workforce planning element of service planning including supporting services in developing succession plans.	PS/Corporate	✓	✓		Within existing resources

	Action	Who	When			Resources
			9/10	10/11	11/12	
		Managers				
22	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	✓	✓	✓	
23	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	✓	✓	✓	
24	Continue to adopt a proactive approach to absence management, including support for managers; improved trigger reporting; and support for active lifestyles.	SGC/JM	✓	✓	✓	
25	Review and revise housing workforce in the light of the ballot to retain the Council's housing stock.	SH	✓	✓		
26	Implementation of the action and team building plan for the improvement of the ICT service following the recent review	SGC/ AC	✓			Resources approved as part of the review.
27	New Communities service review	JMi	✓			
28	Review means of attracting under represented groups in our workforce	PW/JM	✓			
Other						
29	Adopt new Workforce Plan (2010) and carry out annual reviews to fit in with service planning cycle	SGC/PS	✓	✓	✓	
30	Deliver a corporate programme of Safeguarding training to meet the requirements of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda	SGC/SHampson	✓			

AC = Alex Colyer
 CM = Corporate Managers
 GHJ= Gareth Jones
 IC= Ian Cawthra
 JM = Jill Mellors
 JMi = Jo Mills
 LS= Lindsey Smith
 MB = Margaret Bird

PS = Paul Swift
 RM = Richard May
 SGC = Susan Gardner Craig
 SH = Stephen Hills
 SMT=Senior Management Team
 TB= Tom Barrance