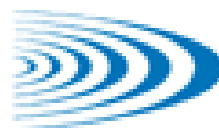


THE DRAFT PEOPLE STRATEGY

2007 – 2010

Achieving Excellence through People Management



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The People Strategy

Achieving Excellence through People Management

Stockton Council topped the national performance league for councils in 2006 as the only unitary council to be both four stars and improving strongly. Our service scores were the highest of all the councils in the top ten representing strong all round performance. We believe that not only can we can make Stockton one of the best places to live but that we can also make it one of the best places to work.

This strategy supports Cabinet priorities and its core vision for the Borough of promoting achievement and tackling disadvantage. It does this by recognising that our people are at the heart of providing excellent services. We believe our leaders, managers and employees must be given the skills and freedom to deliver within a modern and flexible working environment and that the Council needs to get better at attracting and retaining a talented and diverse workforce.

This People Strategy has been developed in consultation with managers, staff and Trade Unions. It builds on previous strategies and will be a key to empowering our people to deliver corporate goals, deliver value to customers and make Stockton an even better place to live and work.

Terry Laing
Cabinet Member for Resources

George Garlick
Chief Executive

Introduction

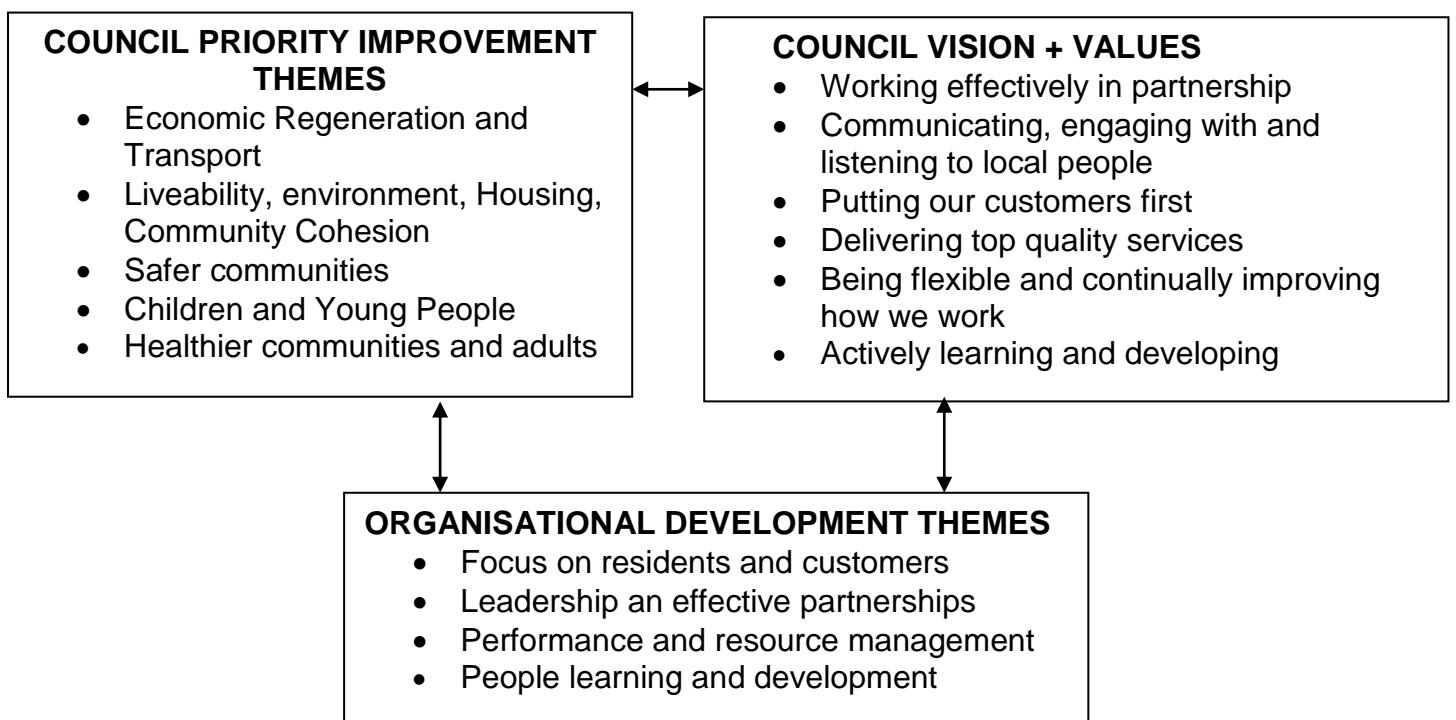
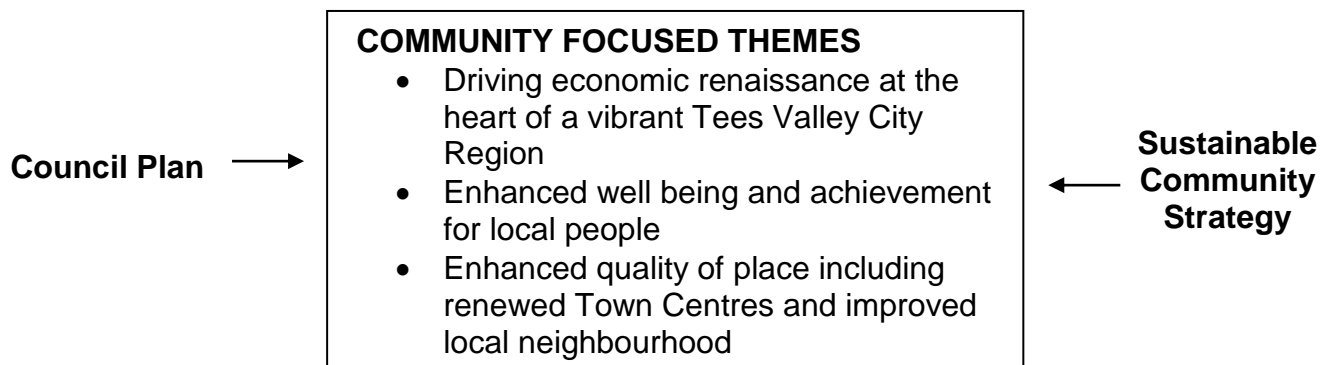
Stockton Borough Council delivers its core vision of promoting achievement and tackling disadvantage through a skilled and motivated workforce who share the Council's vision and who are committed to achieving its objectives. The Council has an excellent 4 star CPA rating and a culture of continuous improvement, which it delivers with drive and enthusiasm. HR is integral to the continued success of Stockton and this People Strategy helps the Council to achieve its challenging and ambitious programme. The strategy sets out our vision and commitments on how we will lead, manage, develop and support our people over the next 3 years.

This Strategy builds on the work that we have already done in Stockton with our employees over many years. We constantly strive for further improvement and this strategy is the formalisation of our improvement direction.

The Council Plan sets out the overarching framework for delivering The People Strategy as follows:

PROMOTING ACHIEVEMENT + TACKLING DISADVANTAGE

BOROUGH VISION



Consultation

The Council has a consultative and engaging approach to strategy development and this strategy has been put together with the help of managers, employees and Trade Unions using the following process:

- Defined the business strategy using key council documents
- Analysed the context of the organisation
- Identified the business needs to be addressed
- Identified key HR issues
- Developed the strategic framework and prioritised actions
- Developed the action plan
- Assessed HR capability and resources to deliver the strategy
- Impact assessed the strategy

Where are we now

The Council have had an HR Strategy in place since 2001. The last strategy was developed in 2004 and it is now time to refresh where we are and what we need to do to help The Council deliver its priorities. The changing local government environment, with the growth of partnership working and shared services means we must re consider future skill needs and facilitate different ways of working. Improved workforce information has helped us to focus and prioritise actions in a more strategic way.

Workforce information has been gathered and this information will be used to help shape the priorities of the Council and the HR Strategy. The Council currently has processes in train, supported by the HR service to tackle some of these issues, but this will be developed in a more strategic way. Workforce planning information will therefore be a key element of the new HR strategy.

In addition, our research into developing this strategy identified the need for a less reactive, more strategic HR service providing clear and consistent advice whilst enabling managers to take responsibility for the performance of their staff.

What will success look like?

5 high level goals have been developed from our assessment of the changing environment.

1. **Developing the Organisation**; achieving excellence in leadership and management
2. **Becoming a modern and diverse employer**, supporting flexible working practices, with the ability to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, representative of the community
3. **Developing internal effectiveness and capacity** ensuring that HR has the skills and resources to help Stockton achieve its objectives
4. **Developing workforce skills** and capacity to ensure we have employees with the right skills, qualifications and competencies at all levels of the organisation.

5. Providing a safe and healthy working environment and engaging with our employees with effective two way communication

How will we get there?

To achieve this transition, a set of high level actions has been developed under each of these key goals, prioritised over the period 2007 – 2010. The next step will be to develop detailed action plans against each of these headings using the Council's project planning guidance.

How will we know we've arrived?

The success criteria are set out against each high level action. In some cases, because benchmark data is in its early stage of development, the initial action will be to develop this data.

SECTION 1

The Context

The Council has had an HR Strategy in place since 2001. The last strategy was developed in 2004 and it is now time to refresh where we are and what we need to do to help the Council deliver its priorities.

The Council's Council Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy have also been refreshed and The People Strategy must reflect the Council's changed priorities. The HR team will ensure its own priorities fully support the Council to meet its targets.

There is no doubt that the environment in which local government now operates has changed considerably in the last few years. Local Authorities must involve themselves in a much wider, community focussed agenda, demanding new skill sets and changes to jobs, designed around citizen's needs and working across organisations, professions and traditional service boundaries.

This Strategy gives us:

- A shared sense of vision
- A tool to integrate people issues into Council strategies, plans and policies
- A framework for continuous HR improvement through action planning including HR input into the corporate equalities plan and future inspection and assessment programmes such as Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), Investors In People (IIP) etc.
- A way to measure our journey of success
- A method of achieving transformation in Human Resources
- A way of helping the Council deal with future pressures and change

SECTION 2

Drivers for Improvement

The drivers for improvement comprise external pressures from the political environment as well as the local and regional context and the current capacity of the HR Department. These drivers can be categorised under 5 headings:

Developing the Organisation; achieving excellence in leadership and management

- Pressures on funding and increasing emphasis on efficiencies leading to sharing resources with partners and jointly prioritising and delivering services with partners.
- The Governments White Paper agenda requiring new skills around community and neighbourhood engagement, multi agency working, risk and financial management skills, performance skills and the ability to cope with new forms of service delivery.
- Regional and local issues in Stockton such as partnership working around the corporate themes: Children and Young People; Healthier Communities and Older People; Community Safety, Liveability, Economic development and Transport and Corporate Health. This means that our leaders and managers require skilled and effective leadership and management with the ability to work across organisational and professional boundaries. It may also mean that in some areas, moving away from direct service provision to commissioning and outsourcing services
- Changes in inspection framework from an inspection of an authority (CPA) to an assessment of an area jointly of all the partners i.e. comprehensive area assessments (CAA)
- Working across boundaries at a regional and local level to deliver joint priorities and integrated services

2. Becoming a modern and diverse employer, supporting flexible working practices, with the ability to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, representative of the community

- Ensuring Stockton is representative of the area it serves now and in the future
- Working more closely with partners including the Trade Unions and employees to jointly agree and deliver change
- A need to redesign processes and jobs to reflect organisational changes and shared service provision
- Enhancing the accessibility of our services to customers through modern ways of working
- A flexible pay and reward system that retains and attracts the best talent
- Improving recruitment and retention in respect of hard to fill posts

- Processes and procedures, which support and empower managers to deliver the new agendas.

3. Developing internal effectiveness and capacity ensuring that HR has the skills and resources to help Stockton achieve its objectives

- The ability to anticipate where new jobs are required and where jobs will no longer be needed, coupled with the ability to deal skilfully with sensitive workforce issues.
- A system of performance management, which helps to drive service improvement.
- The ability to plan for and assimilate legal changes
- An HR Service with sufficient organisational and change management capacity to support change and continuous improvement.

4. Developing workforce skills and capacity to ensure we have employees with the right skills, qualifications and competencies at all levels of the organisation.

- Developing a more joined up approach to workforce planning
- Supporting the Governments agenda to increase the level of basic skills and vocational learning
- Implementing effective succession planning to ensure we are able to meet future demands
- Responding to the pace of change and advancement of new technology

5. Providing a safe and healthy working environment and engaging with our employees with effective two way communication

- Contributing to our priority improvement theme of healthier communities through investment in the health of our staff
- Increased opportunities for engaging with staff to build continuous improvement

To deal with these issues requires effective people management. There is a direct link between good people management and high CPA scores. This People Strategy has been developed to enable the Council to meet future challenges in a planned and effective way.

Theses 5 headings will form the 5 high level strategic goals.

SECTION 3

Stockton's People Framework

The 5 goals have been developed from the Council's Organisational Development Themes:

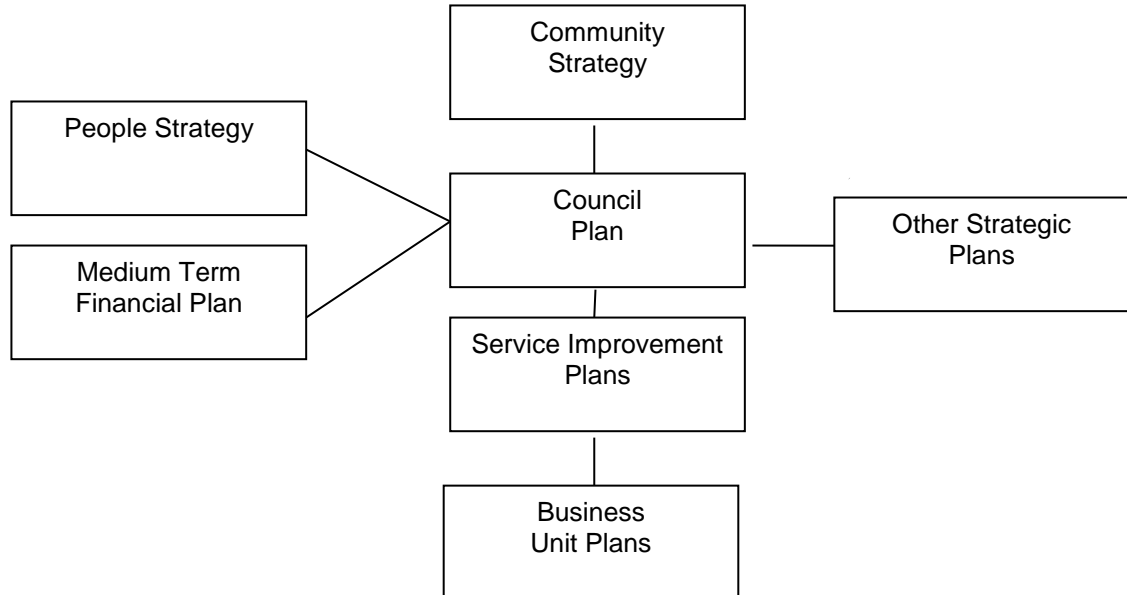
- Focus on residents and customers
- Leadership and effective partnerships
- Performance and resource management
- People learning and development

In addition, the Council's vision and values are intrinsically reflected in the 5 goals and in the way in which these 5 goals will be delivered.

These are:

- Working effectively in partnership
- Communicating, engaging with and listening to local people
- Putting our customers first
- Delivering top quality services
- Being flexible and continually improving how we work
- Actively learning and developing

Our 5 goals are also reflected in the Council's planning framework and delivered through the council's business planning processes.



Finally, our 5 goals are linked to the Competency Framework and our actions will aim to reflect and embed the agreed behavioural competencies.

Under each of the 5 goals, an assessment has been made looking at pressures for change, current workforce planning information, the context within which we operate and the current actions needed to meet current and future challenges. This assessment, under the heading 'What Will Success Look like', is attached at Annex 1. The actions needed to deliver the strategy are set out in a high-level action plan at Annex 2. A copy of the detailed workforce data is attached at Annex 3.

The timetable for delivery is also set out in the Action plan at Annex 2.

SECTION 4

Impact Assessment

An impact assessment has been undertaken on the strategy and the overall equality impact is positive. The following actions have been developed:

1. To investigate ways of reducing discrimination in respect of faith, religion and sexual orientation
2. To investigate ways of promoting good relations between groups and of promoting positive attitudes and images to different groups
3. To research a policy on collecting equality data

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

GOAL 1:

Developing the Organisation; achieving excellence in leadership and management

(i) Review Leadership Requirements (PFTF3)

'Planning for the future' reviews in 2002 & 2004 ensured Stockton's senior managers have operated corporately in a focussed, collaborative and empowered way. The next step is to ensure there is sufficient capacity and diversity at 3rd tier level to take forward this agenda so that we can build on and share the excellent examples of good practice within departments. In addition we need to develop the revised behavioural competency scheme and continue to link into the regional development programme to provide a more individual and innovative response to development needs.

There is a competitive market both regionally and nationally for senior posts and difficulties have been experienced when filling posts at Head of Service and 3rd tier level. Joint working within the sub region to market test certain posts, succession planning and a review of the development of a total reward package to aid recruitment and retention at a senior level are all areas which HR will be called on to provide support to in the future.

(ii) Supporting Organisational Change

Pressure for organisational change comes from both internal and external drivers. Efficiency targets, response to Government initiatives, major changes in Children's and Adult services and the growth of joint inspections all mean a move away from traditional organisational structures to more flexible ways of working where the focus is on results. The Customer First Programme is an example of a Corporate Initiative designed to bring about cultural change in response to an identified need to improve and modernise our approach to customer care. However, within the Council, these pressures have also led to significant numbers of organisational reviews and this has in turn meant increasing pressures on HR to support these developments.

The revised project planning and impact assessment methodologies are assisting this process and there are excellent examples of innovative approaches to organisational change such as the Stockton Darlington Partnership or the Connexions Project in which HR took the lead for the Tees Valley Authorities. However, organisational change both within and across organisations will become increasingly complex and ensuring leaders and managers are sufficiently skilled to continue

to deliver organisational change will therefore form an important element of the People Strategy.

(iii) Implementation of Job Evaluation and Single Status

In common with all large local authorities, the implementation of the 1997 Single Status Agreement has been a long, time consuming and a complex project. However, phase 1 and 2 of the project are now nearing completion and although there is still a considerable amount of work to be undertaken, it is expected that the project will be implemented by 1st April 2008 as planned. A separate project plan already exists for this project.

Phase 3 of the project will be linked to the wider Planning for the Future 3 Project detailed above. This will include a re-assessment of posts at 3 tier level and above using the Hay job evaluation scheme.

(iv) Review and Deliver a new Management Development Programme

The organisation needs strong clear leadership to build its capacity to manage effectively in order to maintain its current high performance and respond effectively to the challenges of change. A successful management development programme has been run over the last 5 years with over three hundred managers attending. The programme is being reviewed in order to create a progression framework to build the capacity and skills of managers at all levels.

The 'Investors in People' tool has long been acknowledged as a business improvement tool, which enables organisations to improve performance in support of business objectives and is a nationally recognised standard of good practice particularly with regard to training and development of employees.

The organisation will aim to maintain this award over the next 3 years, by increasing delivery through appropriate cost effective interventions, identifying alternative options for delivering training and ensuring that it maximises opportunities to access external funding opportunities to assist in meeting these needs.

An Employee Development Plan setting out how the programme will be implemented in more detail will be developed as a key action within this overall Strategy.

Goal 2: Becoming a Modern and Diverse Employer – Pay, Reward, Recruitment and Retention

(i) Implementing Modern and Fair Recruitment Processes and improving recruitment

94% of Local Authorities report recruitment difficulties, particularly where Local Government is the primary employer and Stockton is no different. Recently we have had particular problems recruiting to senior positions and to certain professional posts and competition within the region is driving up salaries. In addition we have high turnover in respect of employees with less than 2 years service and an ageing workforce with 33% of employees aged 50+. The Council has tried innovative approaches to tackling this in some areas, for instance with the Cadet scheme to recruit and develop local people into social work which has had a good success rate

The proposals relating to senior posts are detailed in the Action Plan at Annex 2. In respect of other recruitment issues The council needs to work with its neighbours to develop more innovative approaches to recruitment and succession planning, develop flexible total reward packages and improve workforce information to tackle retention issues. Finally Stockton needs to become an employer of choice, modernising its working practices and enabling managers to implement more innovative and flexible ways of working.

HR has already made excellent strides in developing E-recruitment. The SBC website now has the facility for applications to be completed and returned electronically. This system integrates with the HR and Payroll system, speeding up the process and ensuring accuracy and consistency of information. We have also improved the electronic transfer of information to managers, ensuing a much quicker recruitment cycle and minimising the use of paper. In addition the Business and Workforce Development manager is representing the Tees Valley Councils to take forward the development of a regional recruitment portal and we are getting more involved in recruitment fairs, both regionally and locally to raise awareness of the variety of careers available to young people in local government.

In common with many local authorities, however, Stockton still struggles to recruit young people and those with disabilities or from an ethnic minority background. The recruitment team attend the annual Middlesbrough Mela to publicise jobs to ethnic groups and recently participated in a 'Tell us what you think' event to discuss services offered by the Authority with ethnic groups. This has led to some useful feedback which will be incorporated into future plans. However, The Council needs to develop a more strategic approach to improving performance in reaching certain groups and take advantage of the

increasing numbers of graduates entering the workforce. It also needs to work more proactively in partnership, improve employer branding and modernise the recruitment website further.

(ii) Improving Retention in respect of Hard to Fill Posts

Stockton's target is to reach level 3 of the Equality Standard by 2009 and a number of equality related targets have been identified corporately some of which directly relate to HR. Considerable work has been undertaken within the Authority to raise awareness of diversity issues through the Customer First Programme and excellent progress has been made against the standard. The approach within Stockton has been to embed diversity in everything we do rather than create a new raft of separate policies and procedures and HR have supported this approach through its corporate training programme and policy development.

Workforce data is now collected on turnover but more detailed information on the reasons for leaving needs to be collected so policies can be targeted appropriately. Because The Council has an ageing workforce, knowledge management is also becoming a key issue and succession planning will be critical if we are not to suffer skills gaps in the future.

(iii) Improving Employee Relations

Stockton has a significant number of grievance and disciplinary issues and grievances escalate quickly to a senior level, making them time consuming and difficult to resolve. The Dignity at Work Policy has recently been reviewed in response to the Employee survey although the success of the review has not yet been evaluated. The grievance policy has also recently been reviewed and joint training with ACAS for managers implemented, but more needs to be done.

Feedback from managers shows there is still some confusion over the application of the grievance and disciplinary policies and there has been a failure to share information on the cause of grievances, lessons learned or best practice. To improve relations between managers and Trade Unions joint training needs to be considered and the possibility of compulsory mediation as a stage in the procedures.

(iv) Becoming an Employer of Choice

In order to support recruitment and retention issues, the implementation of more modern and flexible ways of working are crucial to becoming an employer of choice. The Workwise Project is taking a holistic view of modernisation with a review not only of flexible ways of working but also to a review of accommodation and the Council's Transport Plan.

Goal 3: Developing Internal Effectiveness and Capacity

(i) Developing a more Strategic approach to HR

The last 2 years have been difficult ones for HR. The Head of HR post was vacant for nearly a year and a major restructure has created a new Transactional Unit, incorporating contracts, payroll and Business Support. In addition Job Evaluation and Equal Pay issues have been extremely time consuming as have a number of major restructures and organisational reviews.

Despite this, the Transactional Unit has made tremendous progress with the establishment of a Recruitment Bureau and a dedicated Absence Management Team. In addition discussions are also continuing on an innovative partnership with Darlington Borough Council with the aim of rationalising and streamlining transactional HR services further.

Within Training and Enterprise Services and Training and Organisational Development, a project is underway to consider the benefits of amalgamating with Adult Education and as a consequence there are a number of unfilled vacancies pending completion of the review.

Health and Safety and Occupational Health are well regarded services. However, their success has led to increased demand and a review, particularly of Occupational Health is necessary. The possibility of including Health and Safety within the Stockton/Darlington partnership has been considered but there is no clear advantage in doing so at this stage. However, it is intended to revisit this decision once the partnership had become established.

Discussions with managers, trade unions and HR staff have identified the need for a less reactive, more strategic HR advisory service, providing clear and consistent advice whilst enabling managers to take responsibility for the performance of their staff. This new vision for HR will need to be clearly communicated by Directors and Heads of Service to facilitate the change.

(ii) Developing the Capacity of HR

The capacity of the HR advisory team is a significant issue as the pressure of work continues to increase.

HR Managers are well qualified and know the organisation well but within the Advisory Service, the pressure of work around disciplinarys, grievances and restructures has meant the service has become more

and more reactive. Significant levels of turnover and sickness absence above the average for the organisation, have further impacted on the capacity of HR to respond in a more strategic and proactive way.

Historically, HR has acted in a supporting role, with some managers reliant on the service to help them performance manage their staff. There is now broad agreement within the organisation that HR can no longer provide this level of service and must become more proactive, acting as business partners and strategic advisors. Organisationally and culturally there needs to be a shift to a new way of working.

Goal 4: Developing workforce Skills and Capacity

(i) Developing a Strategic Approach

The Council recognises that without a skilled and qualified workforce at all levels, it will not be able to improve productivity and as a result will not be able to achieve its objectives to improve the living standards and quality of service provision to the community. It recognises that by investing in and ensuring that staff are skilled and competent they will be able to make a full contribution to the success of the organisation.

The Council currently delivers on average 2 training days per employee. It aims to increase this to a level, which equates with other excellent employers. This, together with the Leitch report and the likelihood of our commitment to the Government's new 'Skills Pledge' would mean an increase to between 3 and 5 days per employee.

To meet all these demands a planned approach to employee development is needed, analysing the skills and experience needed against those currently held, together with a detailed look at costs and budgets, to develop a long term Workforce Development Plan. The Action Plan at Annex 2 includes this as a key action.

(iii) Improving Workforce Skills

The pace of change and the advancement of technology mean that workers find they are required to work in new roles, in new ways, with new methods and procedures, and are constantly required to update skills, knowledge and competence. In the future this is likely to continue with greater emphasis, as the attainment of new skills and competencies to support business needs will ensure the long-term employability of workers.

The increasing demand for basic skills development and vocational learning, supported and encouraged by the new Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills will increase the pressure on

Employers to meet stretching targets in relation to the achievement of qualifications.

The Training and Organisational Development Unit already supports a wide range of staff to achieve qualifications ranging from NVQ's to MBA's as well as offering a comprehensive corporate training programme. In addition the Customer First Programme has been hugely effective in improving the skills of all staff and the organisation has developed and launched its own competency framework for all roles, integrated into a development appraisal scheme to support identification of individual training needs.

To date, however, a systematic evaluation of skills gaps has not been undertaken and a framework to evaluate the benefits of training and development has only been partially established. However, in such a rapidly changing environment there will be a need to focus training, resources and activities more effectively, which will require a strategic corporate approach through the development and implementation of a Workforce Development Plan.

Goal 5: A Safe and Healthy working Environment and Engaging with our Employees

(i) Improving the Health of the workforce

The importance of a holistic approach to employee health and well being is now well recognised and there is increasing evidence of how employer support for the health and well being of its employees can benefit the organisation.

The Council has taken a proactive approach to improving employee health and reducing levels of sickness absence is a key priority. In support of this, HR has a dedicated Absence Management Team who has established electronic systems for the recording, payment and provision of management information in relation to sickness absence. The system also informs managers on a monthly basis of frequent and long term absence, with immediate referral to the appropriate HR advisor / Health and Safety Officer where the absence is due to stress or anxiety or an accident at work. The systems are therefore in place to enable managers to manage sickness proactively.

In addition Stockton has been a pilot authority for the HSE Stress Standards and the outcome of the pilot is now being rolled out across the Council. However, sickness absence although reducing is still high and stress is still a significant reason for absence. Develop a health and well being strategy to address high levels of absence and stress related illness and a review of Occupational Health Provision are therefore key actions within the Strategy.

(ii) Improving Employee Engagement

Stockton has always taken an inclusive approach to employee communication and this is evidenced in the recent IIP report which stated 'the culture is one of inclusion, innovation and empowerment and people speak passionately about being part of a team' and ' the majority feel they receive regular constructive feedback, have high levels of support, encouragement, guidance and recognition'. Within HR, communication has also been seen as an important area but if the council is to be successful in making the cultural shift to enable HR to become a more strategic and business focussed service, communication must be a key tool in achieving this.

Working more closely with partners including the Trade Unions and employees to jointly agree and deliver change has also been identified, as a key driver for change and improving communications with employees would provide staff with an alternative mechanism to raise concerns and facilitate change.

The Action Plan

GOAL 1: Developing the Organisation; achieving excellence in Leadership and Management

ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
REVIEW LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS (PFTF 3)			
Develop an Organisational Development Strategy for Directors, HoS and senior managers to include a coaching and mentoring programme and a programme to deliver identified new skills	Improvement in qualitative measures through Employee survey and IIP assessment	Head of Policy / Head of HR	2007/09
Review Training and Development Budget to ensure it is fit for purpose		Director of finance/ Head of HR	2008
Develop a Succession Planning Policy to include plans to increase the diversity of the extended management team			
To continue the work of PFTF1 and 2 to further develop the strategic contribution of Heads of Service and deliver increased capacity at 3 rd tier level	Improve recruitment to senior posts Improve BVPI and BVPI to top quartile by 2010	Head of Finance/Head of HR	2008
To develop a total reward package to aid recruitment and retention, initially to address difficulties in recruitment and retention at a senior level	Stable retention and improved recruitment to senior posts	Head of HR	2008

Work with sub regional partners to develop market testing for certain key posts			
SUPPORT ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Develop and implement a management training programme to support organisational reviews, process redesign and managing multi agency teams	Reduction in employee turnover within 1 st 12 months of employment Reduction in the number of grievances arising out of organisational reviews	TOD Manager	2007/08
Review job descriptions / job profiles / job redesign to improve flexibility and more modern ways of working.	Reduction in the number of acting up allowances Reduction in employee turnover within 1 st 12 months of employment	Head of HR	2008
Review project management guidance to include HR strand, a training plan and measures to assess impact, evaluate and plan outcomes	Reduction in the number of grievances arising out of organisational reviews Reduction in the number of restructures	Head of Finance/Head of HR	2007
IMPLEMENT JOB EVALUATION AND SINGLE STATUS			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Continue to implement the JE/Single Status Project Plan	Successful implementation of a new pay and grading structure and changes to conditions of service within the cost parameters.	Head of HR	2007/08
Develop a new project plan for the implementation of Phase 3	Minimise the number of equal pay and equal value claims		2008

REVIEW AND DELIVER A NEW MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOME	WHEN
<p>Develop and implement a Management Development Plan to address management development in a more strategic way at all levels of the organisation to include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how training is delivered - how training is resourced - improved partnership working with key stakeholders to deliver training needs - an assessment of individual levels of managerial and leadership competence - success measures to evaluate value for money and improvements in leadership and management 	<p>Improvement in qualitative measures to assess improvements in identified skills gaps</p> <p>Improvements in identified benchmark measures</p>	<p>Head of HR/Training & OD Manager</p>	<p>2007/08</p>
<p>Work with policy unit to deliver diversity training for all managers</p>		<p>Training & OD Manager Head of Democracy</p>	<p>2007</p>
<p>Support Democracy Unit to deliver joint officer/member training</p>		<p>Head of HR/Training & OD Manager</p>	<p>2008/09</p>

Goal 2: Becoming a Modern and Diverse Employer; supporting flexible working practices, with the ability to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, representative of the community

IMPLEMENTING MODERN AND FAIR RECRUITMENT PROCESSES & IMPROVING RECRUITMENT			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Develop a strategy to increase recruitment amongst hard to reach groups	Support Council targets in relation to employment of young people in care, NEET's etc	Head of HR/ TES Manager/ Head of Policy	2008 – 10
Improve partnership working internally and externally to maximise employment opportunities for hard to reach groups	Improve BVPI targets: 11b &c, 16a&b, 17a&b.	Head of HR/ CESC	2008/09
Continue to modernise the recruitment process & improve employer branding	Reduction in costs and in time to recruit	Head of HR	2007/09
Develop total reward package to include pay and non pay benefits	Increased numbers of applications	Head of HR	2008
IMPROVE RETENTION IN RESPECT OF HARD TO FILL POSTS			
ACTON	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Review recruitment process to raise standards.	Reduction in numbers of employees leaving within 1 st year of employment	Head of HR	2008
Review current exit interview process to improve information on reasons for leaving	Improve targets in relation to BV11a, b & c	Head of HR/CMT	2008

Develop a succession planning policy	Retention of knowledge in response to an ageing workforce	Head of HR	2009/10
Develop a knowledge management policy			
IMPROVING EMPLOYEE RELATIONS			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Review Employee Relations policies	Reduction in the number of grievances	Head of HR	2007/08
Link to MDP Programme – Joint TU / Management training	Reduction in turnover of employees within the first year of employment	All managers	2007/09
BECOMING AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Implement more modern and flexible ways of working	Reduction in absenteeism Improve recruitment and retention	Workwise Project Group	2008

Goal 3: Developing Internal HR Effectiveness and Capacity

Develop a more strategic approach to HR			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Develop an HR Strategy and Workforce Development Plan for 2007-10 which will drive future work programmes	A strategic, proactive HR service	Head of HR / Training and OD Manager	2007
Implement a communications strategy to communicate the corporate vision on the future delivery of the HR function	A common understanding of the function of HR and the roles and responsibilities of managers	CMT/ Heads of Service/HR	2007/08

Develop a comprehensive set of benchmark and performance measures and HR metrics jointly with partners to monitor the effectiveness of the HR function. Implement a customer satisfaction survey	Establishment of clear targets for improvement and an improved HR service	Head of HR/CMT/Trade Unions	2008
Implement customer first programme	Raise standard of customer care	Head of HR	2007/08
Devise and implement a training programme for HR staff on the new model of Business Partners	Improve effectiveness and capacity of HR to deliver improvements	Head of HR	2007/08
Develop the Capacity of HR			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Implement an organisational restructure	To free up capacity to tackle strategic issues	Head of HR	2007/08
Devise and implement a training programme to ensure HR staff have the knowledge and skills required	Skilled and knowledgeable staff, supportive of the new ways of working	Head of HR/Training and OD Manager	2007

Goal 4: Developing Workforce skills and Capacity

Developing a Strategic Approach			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Develop a strategic Workforce Development Plan to raise levels of skills and knowledge of all employees and a more joined up approach to Development. This will include a framework which reflects and complements the workforce development plans of key partners	A planned and structured approach to workforce development	Head of HR/Training and OD Manager	2007

including the PCT			
Improving Workforce Skills			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Undertake a skills and qualification audit to show (i) Existing skills and qualifications (ii) Required skills and qualifications, now and in the future, linked to competency framework and recruitment (iv) Targets in terms of basic skills and agree commitment to 'Skills Pledge' (iii) Resources required to meet needs (iv) An audit of existing provision, both corporate and service provision	A framework to assess gaps and implement a planned approach to meeting development needs Introduction of competency based recruitment and improvement in recruitment and retention Increase in the level of basic skills	Head of HR/Training and OD Manager	2008
Explore partnership working to capitalise on joint working opportunities	Increased value for money	Head of HR/Training and OD Manager	2008
Implement a comprehensive diversity training programme	Meet level 3 of the Equality Standard by 2009	Head of Policy/Head of HR/Training and OD Manager	2007/08
Develop a succession planning policy to improve recruitment and retention in respect of hard to fill posts	Improved recruitment and retention	Head of HR/Training and OD Manager	2008

Goal 5: A Safe and Healthy working Environment and Engaging with our Employees with effective 2-way communication

Improving the Health of the Workforce			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Develop a health and well being strategy to address high levels of absence and stress related illness Review Occupational Health Provision	Reduction in levels of sickness absence Reduction in absence due to work related stress	Head of HR/ Health and Safety Manager	2008/10
Improving Employee Engagement			
ACTION	OUTCOME	BY WHOM	WHEN
Develop an Employee Engagement Strategy which will investigate alternative mechanisms for employees to raise concerns and build continuous improvement	Reduction in the number of grievances	Head of HR	2008
Investigate ways to improve HR communications within the Council to managers and employees	Reduction in the number of grievances and disciplinary issues	Head of HR/ Trade Unions	2008/09