

# APPENDIX F

## WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 8 JULY 2008

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**Title:**

**WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL WORKFORCE PLAN**

**[Portfolio Holder for Human Resources: Cllr Ms D Le Gal  
[Wards Affected: N/A]**

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**Summary and purpose:**

The Local Government Workforce Strategy was launched in 2003 by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Employers' Organisation for local government. Following extensive consultation a 2007 edition of the strategy has now been published. This report seeks the Executives approval for the adoption of the Workforce Plan

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**Environmental implications:**

There are no environmental implications.

**Social / community implications:**

There are risks to the Council if it does not address workforce-planning issues, e.g. inability to recruit, retain staff etc.

**E-Government implications:**

There are no E-Government implications.

**Resource and legal implications:**

There may be budgetary implications for some projects but these would be identified on an individual basis.

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**Background**

1. The Local Government Workforce Strategy was launched in 2003 by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Employers' Organisation for local government. Following extensive consultation a 2007 edition of the strategy has now been published. This 2007 national strategy sets out key actions for authorities, regional bodies and national bodies over the next few years. Five strategic priorities from the predecessor strategy have been retained but the focus has been revised.
2. These five national priorities are now:

- **Organisational development** – effectively building workforce support for new structures and new ways of working to deliver citizen-focused and efficient services, in partnership
- **Leadership development** – building visionary and ambitious leadership which makes the best use of both the political and managerial role, operating in a partnership context
- **Skill development** – with partners, developing employees' skills and knowledge, in an innovative, high performance, multi-agency context
- **Recruitment and retention** – with partners, taking action to address key future occupational skill shortages; promote jobs and careers; identify, develop and motivate talent and address diversity issues
- **Pay and rewards** – modernising pay systems to reflect new structures, new priorities and new ways of working and to reinforce high performance, including encouraging a total rewards approach.

### **CPA, CAA and Workforce Planning**

3. In 2009 CPA will be replaced by CAA and as yet the CAA Key Lines of Enquiry for Corporate Assessment are not know. However the CPA 2006 Key Lines of Enquiry for Corporate Assessment is below and it is assumed there will be a similar approach in CAA;

"The Council's vision and ambitions are translated into specific short, medium and long-term priorities. These are integrated into policy objectives, service/business plans and performance targets."

"Councillors, officers and other staff know these priorities and, through effective and coordinated financial and service planning, understand the implications for how they work and what they do."

### **Workforce Planning is a key process that will be examined as part of the CPA Assessment**

#### Waverley's approach

4. A proactive approach to our Workforce strategy will extend beyond the five areas identified by the Government, and consider all aspects of human resources to avoid the need for two similar and overlapping strategies (i.e. Human Resources Strategy and Pay and Workforce Strategy).

#### Aims of the Strategy

5. The key aims of the dual purpose Strategy are as follows:-
  - to identify, as part of our service planning, current and future skills and numbers of employees required to deliver services and highlight shortages,

- surpluses and skills or competency gaps and takes measures to address these.
- To treat all employees fairly and consistently and thus become an employer of choice.
  - To apply best practice in all areas of HR management and ensure that HR policies and procedures are appropriate for an authority striving for excellence.
  - To be as efficient and cost-effective as possible in delivering the Human Resources service.

### Implementation of the Strategy

6. The Human Resources Team supported by HoST and CMT will be responsible for delivering the Strategy. Each Service area will undertake a workforce review using the workforce planning matrix attached at Annexe 1. This will lead to draft proposals for project work being submitted to the CMT for approval in principle and projects will be developed in consultation with HoST and Staffside.

### Initial Priorities

7. As this work has to be undertaken within existing budgets, projects will be risk assessed, prioritised and a timeline developed to implement the most important as quickly as possible, whilst postponing others until a later stage. The following projects were identified as initial priorities requiring immediate attention.
  - *Human Resources Team* - The focus for the Human Resources team has been to strengthen our corporate processes and develop them into a robust framework to manage staffing matters.
  - *Improving Line Management Skills* - Some issues such as high sickness absence, grievances and poor performance have been exacerbated by managers lacking confidence in tackling issues. A priority has been to clarify policy in key areas and to develop focused and convenient training for HoST and line managers on key issues and to develop a network for discussing and learning from each other. Focused hour-long sessions are being designed and will be open to all line managers on:-
    - Managing poor performance
    - Managing short-term contracts
    - Managing stress
    - Managing difficult employee situations and/or employees who become tearful
    - Managing without bullying

Further “bite-size” line management training is being developed and will either be delivered via E-learning, Tuesday Talk Time programme or as stand alone sessions, some are more in depth and will be offered via the Surrey Shared Training programme coordinated by STOG: -

- Giving effective feedback
- Investigations for disciplinary purposes
- Writing effective adverts
- Managing poor performance
- Short-listing in recruitment
- Managing sickness absence (longer in-depth course)
- Disciplinarys (longer in-depth course)
- Interviewing skills (longer in-depth course)

Action Learning (AL) is being used by HoSt and CMT(?) . These sessions focus on “live” management issues and consider how they can be approach and offer differing perspectives on solutions. AL provides senior staff with the opportunity to learn from issues arising in other areas of the Council and be prepared when faced with a similar issue in their own area. It also increases the knowledge of senior staff, which they can then use to guide their own teams.

- *Appraisals* - A revised appraisal process was introduced last year, and some aspects of the appraisal system could be improved further. Overtime we will develop core competencies to measure performance. The Appraisal paperwork although streamlined last years, still requires further refinement, with a move to an e-version in the longer tem.

The current system could be more effective if a wider, more rounded view were considered when appraising staff. In many cases, the line manager does not see all of an employee’s performance and needs to seek the views of those reporting to the employee, their customers and peers. In order to tackle this issue, a 360 feedback mechanism could be developed, which will enable a quick and efficient gathering of comments to include in the appraisal. It could take the form of an electronic programme which automatically sends an e-mail to people selected to give feedback, gathers their comments anonymously to encourage honesty and automatically compiles a results sheet which is made available to the line manager. A similar system is already used at Guildford.

There are no core competencies in the existing appraisal system. Core competencies are the key skills which the Council needs its employees to have in order to be able to do their job properly. It is usual for appraisals to evaluate these important skills in addition to progress made against specific targets. This is a major piece of work. We have the skills within the HR team to research and complete this project, but CMT need to consider the impact on provision of day-to-day HR services if this work is undertaken in house. Woking employed a project officer purely to research and development their competencies, Mole Valley seconded an HR adviser to work on their project.

- *Job Evaluation* - Waverley has an established job evaluation process and therefore, a reliable defence to legal challenge on grading and pay issues. Currently there are 5 trained staff, 3 in HR and 2 staffside reps who happen to work the same section. There is a need to strengthen the process and it is proposed that additional managers be trained so Waverley has a panel of

evaluators. This would also enable the appeals process to be strengthened and allow officer who have not been involved before to hear any appeal. It is proposed that 2 staff be trained this year and a further 2 next year.

- *Sickness Absence Management* - Sickness absence levels are a key concern for many organisations and Waverley needs to ensure that it has accurate reporting of absences so we can manage and reduce levels. Actions already taken include
  - In 2007 Waverley changed Occupational Health Provider and launched an absence management policy with training for all managers.
  - Introduction of a one day self certificate to ensure all absences are reported.
  - Initial work on an electronic recording system has commenced.
  - In 2006 a confidential 24 hour, 365 days a year Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) telephone service for staff seeking professional advice on both work related and personal issues was introduced. This type of programme can reduce the incidence of stress related illnesses by providing staff with the opportunity of early intervention in dealing with their problems.

Possible new initiatives with budgetary implications but longer term savings may be possible

- Encouraging staff to join the PMI scheme to ensure speedier treatment.
- Funding private treatment for staff who chose not to be members of the PMI scheme, set against savings made by not paying premiums for the employee
- Promote the EAP scheme as it is under used.
- Annual health screening for all staff to spot treatable and preventable illnesses before they develop and start causing absence from work.

There are costs associated with some of the above options and further work is required to assess the benefits of investing more in these areas.

- *Management Development* - The Council has a middle managers course (ILM Diploma) but has already identified the need to invest further in a Management Development Programme and the HR team are investigating possible options. Work has also commenced on individualised training programmes for all Directors. It is planned that this will cascade to Heads of Service later this year.

## **Future Plans**

8. Further work can be undertaken to strengthen and improve human resource management at the Council and additional work has been identified which will be carried out as time and resources permit, as summarised below.
  - **Organisational development**
    - Identification of career grades
    - Review of all policies, updating using plain English and setting out clearly how they inter-relate.
    - Agree process used for recent organisational reviews eg sheltered housing as the corporate process.

- Consideration of partnership working in any organisational /service reviews or when establishing new services
  - Encourage multi disciplinary, mixed grade cross-cutting working teams to provide a “joined up” approach to service delivery or corporate initiatives
  - Explore the possibility of a graduate placement from the County’s scheme
  - Achieve IIP reaccreditation
- **Leadership development**
    - Establishment of a Management Development Programme.
    - Continued use of national programmes eg SOLACE
    - Achievement of the South East Charter for Member Development.
    - Development of the shared mentor programme with Guildford BC to expand it to other local organisations so that mentors can be shared and employees can be offered a mentor who is separate from their place of work.
    - Encourage joint member/officer development where this is felt to be appropriate and cost effective (for example Equalities training)
    - Investigate options for partnering with local organisations eg the PCT, World Wildlife Fund, Probation service, Godalming College, etc on leadership training and to enable networking opportunities
- **Skill development**
    - Require staff to maintain their CPD levels and share with their managers
    - Draw on existing skills within the organisation to coach and deliver training.
    - Build on the Coaching programmes offered by the Surrey Shared training programme coaching qualifications and develop a coaching culture.
    - Further Development of e-learning and blended learning solutions.
    - Review of future retirements and consider knowledge management issues.
    - Develop training pathways and grading for professional careers
    - Research and consider introducing apprenticeships in key areas
    - Undertake a full skills analysis
    - Survey staff re training pathways for shortage areas
    - Develop links with local colleges and schools
    - Maintain a track record of encouraging staff to gain recognition of competency from professional organisations, as they develop in the workforce.
    - Development of competency framework
    - Meet the requirements of the E-Government priority by ensuring that the IT training we currently use for staff meets the criteria for the European Computer Driving Licence and that we provide a means to test staff.
- **Recruitment and retention**
    - Review of retention planning and knowledge management leading to report to CMT
    - Achieve Action plan arising from Equal Pay Audit
    - From age profile identify future occupational shortages and consider actions to address
    - Implementation of an electronic anonymous exit interview tool to gather more data on retention issues.
    - Analyse age and gender profiles, skills and employee turnover by service area with the intention of taking action to encourage development of key skills to ensure that staff in shortage areas can be replaced internally on

retirement etc. Review and consider how succession planning could be fairly utilised.

- Reflect the make-up of the local community and redress any imbalance through appropriate recruitment and retention action.
  - Develop and implement via pilots flexible working policies e including home working, hot desking and home based working to meet both customer and staff expectations and aspirations
  - Review adverts to be more consistent and attractive promoting Waverley as employer of choice.
- **Pay and rewards.**
- Achieve Action plan arising from Equal Pay Audit
  - Review of pay and grading structure, including review of how high performance is rewarded.
  - Review of total package to ensure better value for money on investment in training and recruitment.
  - Review of termination packages.
  - Consider Flexible benefits scheme.
  - Utilise the new combined payroll and personnel IT system (from Sept 08) to provide basis for workforce remodelling across the Council.

### **Drivers for workforce planning and development**

- **Environment** - Protecting and enhancing Waverley's unique mix of rural and urban communities
  - **Improving lives** - Improving the quality of life for all, particularly the more vulnerable within our society
  - **Subsidised affordable housing** - Working for more affordable housing to be built, and managing Council housing well
  - **Leisure** - Improving and supporting opportunities for all to take part in sport, recreation and culture
  - **Value for money** - Ensuring all our activities are customer focused and provide good value for money
9. The following table outlines the key workforce planning drivers relating to each of our corporate objectives:

Objective	Workforce planning drivers
<b>Environment</b> - Protecting and enhancing Waverley's unique mix of rural and urban communities	WBC has difficulty in recruiting and retaining planning staff at professional levels. In addition new technology and ways of working and the demands of the public have made performance improvement and staff development a priority in this area. Nationally, Councils are seeking to employ planners and policy staff from a small pool. This means that if WBC can train our own we would have an advantage, as long as we can retain those staff.

	<p>Staffing for Countryside staff is not so challenging, but WBC needs to be able to retain and continue to offer challenging opportunities to staff.</p>
<p><b>Improving lives -</b> Improving the quality of life for all, particularly the more vulnerable within our society</p>	<p>It can be hard to recruit and retain EHOs.</p> <p>Sheltered housing staff costs, need to keep performance and costs under review in light of supporting people grants.</p> <p>Improving performance in Housing and Council Tax Benefit - need to ensure staff have the correct level of expertise in this area</p> <p>Strong leadership and sound financial Management required to make difficult sometimes unpopular decisions on funding in high profile areas eg meals on wheels, day centres etc</p> <p>Careline – need to consider how to provide the service. Is this part of our core business</p> <p>Difficulty in recruiting care and repair staff, we have a stable workforce at the moment but face retirements in the future. Consideration of partnership working is on going.</p> <p>Housing management staff continuing need to train to keep up to date with legislation.</p> <p>Anti social behaviour - WBC has one officer; do we have provision for back up, another officer trained?</p> <p>Increasingly the population is living longer – assess impact on WBC in terms of service and consequent impact on workforce planning</p>
<p><b>Subsidised affordable housing -</b> Working for more affordable housing to be built, and managing Council housing well</p>	<p>Strong leadership required in addressing difficult and complex issue with the government – eg HRA</p> <p>A key area for partnering to achieve objectives within tight financial budgets. Staff need to have enhanced communication, marketing and influencing skills to work with partners and stakeholders.</p> <p>Consider different ways of working to achieve aims – eg options for housing maintenance service provision.</p>
<p><b>Leisure -</b> Improving and supporting</p>	<p>Need for strong project management skills and leadership on the Leisure strategy</p> <p>Increased partnering to achieve objectives within tight</p>

<p>supporting opportunities for all to take part in sport, recreation and culture</p>	<p>financial budgets</p> <p>Need to develop skills to access funding grants and manage those grants once obtained</p> <p>Assess impact on staffing of National initiatives and targets for health and fitness for the community</p>
<p><b>Value for money</b> - Ensuring all our activities are customer focused and provide good value for money</p>	<p>Strong financial leadership and sound financial skills for all managers</p> <p>Ability to challenge and utilise lateral creative thinkers</p> <p>Need for consistent training on customer service.</p> <p>Need to develop a more consistently good customer service culture.</p> <p>Effectively manage short term staffing costs.</p> <p>Promote a performance management culture, train staff on Covalent.</p> <p>Continue to use service planning process to plan, deliver, review and evaluate the services we provide.</p>

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**Recommendation**

That the Executive approves the Workforce Plan.

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**Background Papers (CEX)**

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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