

# **Mansfield District Council**

## **PEOPLE STRATEGY 2010-2013**

**April 2010**



## Forward

Welcome to the second issue of The People Strategy (2010 – 2013). We have taken the opportunity to refresh and review the strategic document in line with local government updates, changes to national legislation and developments and achievements of the Council over the last three years.

A significant development this year is the completion of The Workforce Development Plan (WDP 2010 – 2013) to be launched with the People Strategy (2010 – 2013). The WDP has a major influence on the direction and development of the People Strategy.

The success of The People Strategy (2007 – 2010) has encouraged us to build on the key themes of the document and to continue to use these over the next three years. They are:

1. Valuing our People
2. Transforming Our Organisation
3. Developing Our People

Effective communication and Valuing the Customer and Community (Key themes four and five in 2007) have proved to be the recurring themes throughout The People Strategy Action Plan to date. In consultation we have chosen to embed these themes within the overall strategy to ensure continued successful communication and beneficial outcomes for the customer and community.

For us to achieve our strategic ambitions, to lead and support our local communities and to offer value for money, customer focused services we need to ensure that we:-

- Have visionary, ambitious and effective leadership,
- Are innovative, responsive and joined up with partners,
- Have streamlined ways of working, customer-focused practices and effective management,
- Attract, develop, motivate and retain the right people with the right skills for success.
- Offer flexible, fair rewards that promote high performance.
- “Mainstream diversity.” (I&DeA 2009).

We are confident that the People Strategy, supported by the Workforce Plan will provide us with the framework to deliver these ambitions.



## People Strategy

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Section 1 Executive Summary	4
Section 2 Introduction	6
Section 3 Strategic People Objectives – The 3 Themes	9
Section 4 Key Theme 1 - Valuing Our People	10
Section 5 Key Theme 2 - Transforming Our Organisation	11
Section 6 Key Theme 3 - Developing Our People	12
Section 7 Key influences and challenges	12
Section 8 Workforce Planning	16
Section 9 Workforce Data and Analysis	16
Section 10 Risk Assessment	16
Section 11 Business Continuity	18
Section 12 Responsibility, Accountability and Review	19

### Appendices

Appendix A People Strategy and Workforce Development Action Plan 2010-2013

Appendix B MDC Workforce Development Plan



## Executive Summary

### 1.0 Corporate Plan, the Council Vision and Values

- 1.1 The continuing development and review of the People Strategy takes into account the Vision and Values of Mansfield District Council.
- 1.2 The **Vision** detailed in the Council's Corporate Plan is to:
- Create a more positive image of Mansfield District to help people, businesses and investment in the area.
  - Improve confidence, pride and dignity so that everyone can enjoy a good quality of life in their neighbourhoods.
- 1.3 The **Corporate Plan** is the blueprint for the achievement of this Vision. A number of cross cutting themes are detailed in the Plan to meet the challenges that lie ahead and ensure that efficient and effective services are provided for the Community in the priority areas it has identified.
- 1.4 The way we do things to achieve the vision is defined by the **Corporate Values** of "Quality", "Respect" and "Openness"

#### Quality

- We provide excellent quality and value-for-money services that meet the needs of all our communities and are accessible to everyone.
- We develop and seek out new opportunities for partnership working to improve, expand and build upon the services we provide.
- We are able to manage change, and help support employees, members, partners and communities through change, efficiently and effectively whilst maintaining high quality services.

#### Respect

- We consult, listen to and understand the views of our communities, partners and employees.
- We meet the needs of our communities, partners and employees by showing consideration and empathy for their emotional and physical well-being.
- We encourage good employment practice, effective employee development, and a positive and enthusiastic workforce.

#### Openness

- We strive to be open, honest, transparent and accountable.
- We promote a culture of effective and consistent communication with and between employees, members, partners and communities.



Underpinning our values and everything that we do is our commitment to equality. As an employer, service provider, corporate body and community leader, we aim to treat everyone fairly and strive to achieve equality for our diverse mix of communities.

## **1.5 Employee Charter**

The corporate values are complemented and supported by the Employee Charter. The Charter is a clear statement on what employees can expect from the Council as their employer, their manager and of other employees. It aims to facilitate improvements in our quality of working life, develop an environment for promoting positive relationships and good employment practice. The Charter also sets out what the Council can expect of its employees in return. The rights and responsibilities outlined in the Employee Charter include the themes of:

- Leadership and management
- Communication, involvement and consultation
- Training and development
- Fairness and equality
- Balancing work and personal commitments
- Security and personal welfare.

## **1.6 Summary**

The People Strategy adopts a thematic approach underpinned by an action plan which clearly states tasks, milestones, outcomes and responsible officers.



## 2.0 Introduction

Mansfield District Council recognises the value of its employees. Without them the Council will not deliver further improvements or be able to provide quality and efficient services for the Community. The demands on Local Government are constant. The Council has to meet the increasing expectations of the community as well as national government initiatives such as Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), efficiency targets along with the aspirations of the Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities”. To meet and exceed these challenges is what the Council strives to do.

The People Strategy supports the achievement of all the key themes in the Council’s evolving Corporate Plan. An effective People Strategy enables the Council to plan for the future with a clear focus on improving services in partnership with its employees. The People Strategy and associated Workforce Development Plan (Appendix B) is an integral part of the Council’s performance management framework. It provides the link between valuing and developing people, with improving and developing services and needs to be embedded in Service Plans.

It is clear from national research and trends from Comprehensive Area Assessments completed on authorities that have scored good or excellent, that there is a link between good Human Resource Management practices and organisational performance. Within Local Government, it has been identified that eight headline employment interventions have been shown to improve performance;

- Development of top leadership
- Training and development of managers
- Sickness absence management
- Work-life balance issues
- Training and development of non-managers
- Improving internal communications
- Team based working
- Improved recruitment and retention policies

All these interventions have been identified as important employment issues for the Council. A number of actions to address these issues have been included within the three themes of the People Strategy and are included in the Action Plan (Appendix A).



## 2.1 What is a People Strategy?

In essence it sets down how people will be attracted to and retained by the Council and how they are deployed, managed and developed within the Council. Linked to the objectives set down in the Council's Corporate Plan, it identifies the people management implications and makes it clear that all employees are vital to the delivery of improving services for the Community.

The People Strategy continues to influence and inform how the people resource in the Council will be developed and utilised to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services.

To be effective the People Strategy cannot operate in isolation. It will need to reflect external national influences such as the Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy, national employment negotiations and trends in the market place. It will also need to demonstrate clear links to other corporate strategies such as the Sustainable Community Strategy, Corporate Plan, Economic Development Strategy, procurement and financial strategies.

## 2.2 What does it mean for the Community?

It provides the framework, along with the Workforce Development Plan (WDP) to ensure that we deploy the right number of trained and motivated people, to deliver high quality services for the Community. The Council continues to learn about the needs of the Community through participation in The Citizens' Panel and user focus groups. This has enabled the Council to influence the development of a sustainable community strategy that provides the overarching framework for the future of Mansfield. Our Corporate Plan sets down the contribution that the Council will make towards the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## 2.3 What does it mean for Employees?

It clearly demonstrates that the Council is committed to its employees and their ongoing development. As an employee, linking your own development to the development of your role and service will ensure that you contribute to the achievement of the objectives within the People Strategy. As these are linked directly to the Corporate Plan, your contribution will enable the Council to achieve its objectives.

## 2.4 How has the Strategy developed and evolved?

Like most strategies, the targets and objectives outlined in the action plan are indicative of the needs assessed at a moment in time. A range of influences could mean that priorities within this action plan need to be changed. By communicating effectively we will ensure that any changes are made available to and explained to all employees.

This updated Strategy is largely based on the 2007-2010 document and has been reviewed by the People Strategy Steering Group which is representative of all stakeholders who have



had an opportunity to put forward their views on the document and its contents. These include elected members, Trade Union representatives, managers and employees.

The People Strategy Action Plan is reviewed twice a year and the Strategy itself will be reviewed in 2013 to ensure that it continues to reflect the objectives identified in the Council's Corporate Plan.

## 2.5 How is the Strategy's contribution assessed?

Central to the People Strategy is an action plan that includes milestones with measurable targets. As they will directly impact on the objectives set down in the Corporate Plan, its contribution will be assessed on a regular basis by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the People Strategy Steering Group. The Group includes employees, managers, members and the Trade Unions who are responsible for monitoring progress against milestone targets. Monitoring and review will also be embedded within the performance management framework via service plans and the employee Personal Development Scheme (PDS).

## 2.6 Progress to date.

Since the launch of the People Strategy in 2007 there has been considerable progress in implementing the Strategy and a number of initiatives and actions have been achieved. The achievements identified below are not exhaustive but give a flavour of the work undertaken to date:

- Several key HR policies reviewed, including Disciplinary, Grievance, Attendance, Capability, Flexi Time, Maternity, Flexible Retirement, and Safeguarding.
- Implementing an effective recruitment and retention strategy, reviewing recruitment practices, induction, extending some employee benefits with external providers, establishing effective relationships with partners, employing more apprentices and adopting a formal work placement policy.
- Health, safety and well-being being actively promoted and delivered across the Council. No smoking policy and stress policy introduced, with stress training for managers, improved performance monitoring of health and safety in the workplace, new occupational health provider and Employee Support Service; as well as improved support for employees returning to work after long term absence.
- Corporate Workforce Plan published and a robust planning process implemented within service areas. Signed up to the Skills Pledge and Member Charter as well as a Lifelong Learning Agreement with the Trade Unions who now have 11 Union Learning representatives in the workplace and have held two successful Adult Learner day events. Engaged a sole provider for embedding Skills for Life in NVQ provision.
- Involving employees in change programmes and service planning, embedding performance management in teams. Invested in Leadership and Management



development programmes, introduced a management competency framework, with all managers being assessed against the framework and having the opportunity to be coached as a result. Introduced Coaching and Mentoring at levels 3, 5, and 7 to improve and embed effective performance management.

- First District Council to achieve Level 3 and self assessed at level 4 of the Equality Standard and now aspiring to excellence. Achieved the Get on in Local Government Award and nominated for an MJ award for the work done on Skills for Life. Also achieved corporate accreditation for Investors in People and now have a fully trained internal assessor team in place.
- Working with the Mansfield Learning Partnership to address the 14 – 19 agenda ensuring that all young people are given meaningful opportunities to develop their skills through apprenticeships and work placements.

## 2.7 Planning for the future

This Strategy, along with the WDP, provides an assessment of our current position and a vision of where we would like to be over the next three years. It provides a framework to identify capacity within the workforce against future needs identifying actions to be taken to bridge any gaps. This will then have further benefits in terms of costs, efficiencies and performance.

It enables resources to be invested in key priority areas that will provide direction not only for elected members, managers, employees and Trade Unions, but will also shape the services provided by the Human Resources Team and other Corporate Support teams and how those services may be delivered.

## 3.0 Our Strategic People Objectives – The Three Themes

3.1 The People Strategy has been updated taking into account the key employment influences and challenges that face the Council, the objectives in the Corporate Plan, analysis of our workforce and feedback obtained from employees and external sources e.g. CAA, Audit Commission and Use of Resources Organisational Assessment, the National Workforce Strategy for Local Government and liP assessment.

3.2 Our 'People Objectives' have been grouped under three broad themes. They are;

- Valuing our People
- Transforming our Organisation
- Developing our People

A brief description of each theme is given below including the local challenges that face Mansfield District Council and a limited number of priority areas. These areas are then further detailed in the action plan that is attached at Appendix B.



3.3 It is important to understand that all the themes are interlinked and should not be viewed in isolation. Progress in one area will have an impact on other themes

The three themes are underpinned by 'effective communication', 'valuing the customer and community' and equality and diversity.

#### 4.0 Key Theme 1 – Valuing our People

We aim to be a good employer by looking after our people. We will provide a balanced approach to the employment of people by;

- Ensuring the fair and equitable treatment of all our employees.
- Recruiting and retaining excellent people
- Developing a range of flexible working options
- Motivating employees and valuing their contribution to organisational objectives
- Ensuring we fulfil our duty of care
- Actively promoting employee Health and Well being
- Effectively communicating and engaging with employees, developing genuine two-way, cross services communication.
- Employing a workforce that reflects diversity of the local population

#### 4.1 Challenge

Local Government has to compete effectively in the market place to recruit and retain staff. The Council needs to ensure that it promotes itself positively as an employer of choice to existing and potential employees.

We need to tackle the difficult issues that get in the way of setting up new organisational structures, such as professional rigidity and different terms and conditions. We need to foster innovation to make the most of scarce resources.

This theme focuses on employment matters including pay and grading structures, recruitment and retention, terms and conditions of employment, absence management, health and well-being, promoting flexible working options and engaging effectively with employees.

Underpinning everything is the need to communicate effectively, therefore two way communication and consultation with our people and their representatives will be valued on all employment matters.

#### 4.2 Priority areas

- Implementing fair and transparent pay, grading and reward structures.
- Developing a recruitment and retention strategy that meets our current and future workforce needs as well as being representative of the community we serve.
- Ensuring equality and diversity is embedded and any issues are addressed
- Developing flexible working practices that support the achievement of



Work Life balance and/or support different ways of working.

- Ensuring HR policies and procedures reflect legal compliance and best practice.
- Promoting and developing health, well being and attendance strategies
- Investors in People Re-accreditation achieved.
- Ensuring a safe and secure working environment and protecting vulnerable groups in society through effective selection screening.
- Promoting and developing effective communication and employee engagement strategies

## 5.0 Key Theme 2 – Transforming our organisation

We will aim to be a Council that actively pursues change, in partnership with employees, their representatives and other organisations by;

- Being a good employer and looking after our people.
- Adopting clear expectations resulting from any change programme.
- Being open, transparent and inclusive with the change being implemented
- Monitoring the effects of change on the workforce.

### 5.1 Challenge

The pace of change within Local Government is unrelenting. With other drivers such as the Government's efficiency agenda, Comprehensive Area Assessment, National Indicators, climate change agenda, advancements with the use of technology, e-government and the commitment to enhanced two-tier working alongside shared services, it is important that the people aspects of change are managed effectively.

Under this theme, the Council's approach to changes in the workforce, the impact the change may have, and actions to minimise the associated risks of change are addressed. It also includes an overview of the Council's approach to workforce planning at a service level. One of the priority actions contained within the action plan under this theme is the embedding of a Workforce Development Plan and to develop an ethos of customer focus and priority by creating long term strategies and working practices.

### 5.2 Priority areas

- Effective and embedded Workforce Planning with talent and succession planning in place.
- Performance Management operates effectively throughout the Council
- Change and transformational management is fully integrated in operational practice.
- Effective leadership and management programmes to improve capacity and capability.
- Achieving Excellence on the Equality Standard Framework.



## 6.0 Key theme 3 – Developing our people

We aim to develop our employees to deliver excellent services by;

- Enabling regular discussions on performance and development
- Providing a range of learning opportunities
- Embedding leadership and management competencies in selection and development.
- Establishing employee competencies to ensure we have the skills to effectively meet our customers needs particularly minority groups and vulnerable people
- Providing opportunities for all employees to enhance key skills
- Developing opportunities for cross service and partnership working

### 6.2 Challenge

In order to deliver services for the Community, the workforce needs to have the right skills and competencies. Having a structured corporate approach will enable a focus on key priorities and the effective allocation of resources.

This theme looks at the development of people and the approach taken by the Council. It covers issues such as learning and development, providing regular reviews of performance, identifying any learning requirements arising from changes in service delivery and the provision of learning options. It also recognises the value of Trade Union and Union Learning Representatives to facilitate the development of individuals.

### 6.3 Priority areas

Sustained investment in learning and development activities for employees, linked to service and individual needs.

- Member Development Charter Status achieved
- Leadership extends to the Community
- Coaching and Mentoring embedded as a management approach.
- Respond to the needs identified from the workforce planning process
- Effective talent management and succession planning
- Respond to the National Skills Strategy
- Competency led people performance
- Develop employees' skills further in line with the Lifelong Learning Agreement

## 7.0 Key Influences and challenges

Our people strategy is about looking to the future. Whilst it is impossible to accurately predict what the requirements of our workforce is going to be over the next few years, it is important to take into account a range of issues that will influence our future needs. These are identified below under very broad headings



### 7.1 National factors. These include matters such as;

- External inspection of the Council's performance through Comprehensive Area Assessment and Use of Resources – Key Line of Enquiry 3.3
- Local Area Partnerships
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Improved efficiencies
- Organisational restructures
- Business Transformation and process improvements
- The National Skills Strategy 2009
- Pay and Workforce Strategy 2010
- Shared services and partnerships
- Flexible and mobile working
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Competitive labour market
- Image of the public sector as an employer
- Advancement in technology and E-government targets

### 7.2 Local factors. These include matters such as;

- Priorities identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy
- Priorities identified in the Council's Corporate Plan
- Updated Corporate Priority: "Develop a high quality, clean, green and pleasant environment."
- The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Development of local service plans
- Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity issues into employment and services
- Customer expectations identified through consultation and surveys
- Commitment to enhanced two tier working in local government.
- Opportunities to review services and work in partnership with other local authorities, public sector, third sector bodies and other agencies.
- Social responsibility to decrease the number of NEET young people

### 7.3 In order to achieve the vision it is essential that locally we have: -

- The right organisational culture
- With a focus on the right things
- Delivered in the right way
- With the right people
- Who are well motivated
- And have the right skills

#### Right culture

- Have a culture which supports continuous improvement and innovation



- Demonstrate behaviours to support the Corporate Values

#### Right things

- Design services with partners around customers' and citizens' needs using evidence to forecast future trends
- Keep abreast of local, regional and national best practice
- Ensure that all work adds value to customers and citizens
- Monitor and measure productivity to ensure goals and targets are being met and benchmark information against others to target future development

#### Right way

- Embed process improvement into the culture of the Council
- Ensure all process improvements deliver the benefits predicted in the business cases
- Promote and support new models of working, including mobile working, shared service, partnership arrangements

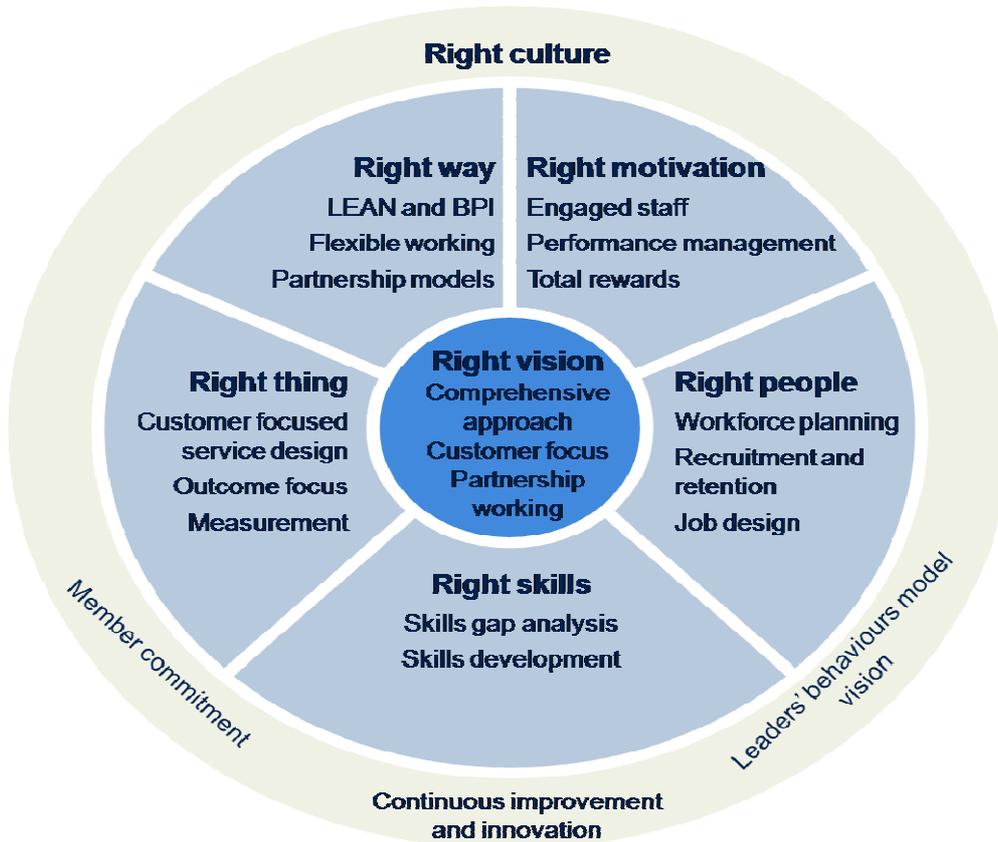
#### Right people

- Ensure that the Council attracts and retains employees with the right skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to deliver the vision
- Effectively undertake workforce planning to identify future skill needs and take action to address areas requiring action
- Right motivation
- Involve employees in organisational development including the development of operational service plans
- Manage performance effectively
- Have a pay and rewards system that reinforces corporate priorities

#### Right skills

- Provide the right development activities that deliver the right skills at the right time in order to deliver the Corporate Priorities
- 





7.3 Local employment factors. This includes matters such as;

- Financial constraints and the need to be accountable for public expenditure
- Completing a Pay and Grading Review including job evaluation
- More complex employment legislation and new legal requirements emphasising individual rights – race, disability, religious belief, sexual orientation, stress, age, , equality standards, TUPE, pensions
- The provision of employment practices that enable a Work Life balance
- Employing a workforce that reflects the local community
- Feedback from employees and their representatives
- Feedback from inspections including CAA, IIP and Use of Resources KLOE 3.
- Workforce composition – age, gender, ethnicity, disability profile, absence, turnover, vacancy rates
- Employment Costs
- Recruitment and retention challenges including employee motivation
- Recognised skills shortages in specific roles

7.4 These are only examples of the types of factors that have been considered with the development of this People Strategy and action plan. All have a local effect on the Council and the services that are provided.



7.5 The action plan therefore needs to be responsive to these changes and also needs to try to maximise any opportunities to improve employment or related issues for the workforce.

## 8.0 Workforce Planning

Our People Strategy sits alongside the Workforce Development Plan and represents the framework for enabling specific actions to be completed linked closely to the development of employees. The Workforce Plan involves longer term planning of the capacity required to deliver services.

The Workforce Plan has a major influence on the continuing development of our People Strategy. The content of both are complementary and provide a robust and sustainable framework for the long term planning and management of the Council's workforce. The Workforce Plan specifically addresses actions under Key themes two and three of the People Strategy. The Workforce Development Plan is detailed in Appendix B.

## 9.0 Workforce Data and Analysis

Individual service areas are provided with their own workforce profiles as part of the service planning process to enable consideration of people issues and needs in developing services in the future.

## 10. Risk Assessment

A high level assessment has been completed to identify any areas of potential risk in the implementation of the People Strategy. Whilst the actions listed under the action plan are specific, there are key corporate issues that need to be considered. These have been broadly identified as:

- Resources
- Recruitment and retention
- Service delivery
- Performance

### 10.1 Resources

Adequate resources need to be available to support the implementation of the People Strategy. These include not only financial resources but also people resources and the sustained commitment to the delivery of the objectives within the Strategy from elected members and managers. If actions arising from this strategy meet the criteria to be a key decision these will be referred to Council for a decision.



Annual budgets are set each year in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Any approved actions within the People Strategy requiring additional funding will be submitted in accordance with the framework that is in place.

Human Resources has a key role to play with the delivery of the People Strategy. The Human Resources Manager is responsible for ensuring that, as far as possible, resources are allocated to support the delivery of set milestones.

In addition, the delivery of the Strategy will require support and ownership by managers, all employees, Trades Union representatives, elected members and other partners. In its development, time has been taken to raise the profile of the People Strategy and the actions required by all parties. These will be subject to an annual review and feedback will be requested.

## 10.2 Recruitment and Retention

The People Strategy provides the framework for building capacity to deliver services. Failure to sustain organisational capacity at the required levels will have a direct impact not only on the actions in the Strategy but also on the delivery of the Corporate Plan.

The development of modern employment practices and policies will promote the Council as a good employer. Having effective and flexible recruitment policies will enable the Council to target the market place for employees and anticipate any areas where recruitment difficulties are expected.

The completion of the Pay and Grading Review will establish a fair, transparent and sustainable pay structure for the Council.

The opportunity to consider alternative options to provide support at times of high demand or turnover has been/needs to be addressed with the procurement of a preferred supplier for Agency Workers. Further possibilities include the development of partnership with other bodies, sharing of resources or shifting resources into key priority areas.

## 10.3 Service Delivery

As people deliver services it is important that a framework is followed to ensure that they have the right skills, training, experience and involvement.

A secondary risk relates to the delivery of the Human Resources service and the need to provide continued assessment, monitoring and evaluation of the People Strategy to ensure it remains linked to the achievement of the Council's objectives.

All Services are required to produce a Service Delivery Plan which is supported by a Workforce Development Plan. This will be developed to include a clear focus on the



resources including capacity and learning to deliver the stated actions in their Plan. These are reviewed on a regular basis in line with the Council's Performance Management framework.

The Human Resources service will reflect and respond to any trends or changes in priority arising either from the Corporate Plan or other national or legislative requirements.

#### 10.4 Performance

The People Strategy has to follow the key objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan. It follows that it should have a direct influence on the performance of the Council towards the achievement of stated objectives.

Proposed actions will then have a direct influence on any external assessment of the Council for example CAA and IIP.

Performance measures will be included against each proposed action to demonstrate progress and outcomes. Any external assessment completed will provide an indication of the contribution being made by the People Strategy.

Each Service area completes their own plan outlining how people issues are to be addressed with the delivery of their service. These are reviewed on a regular basis as part of the performance management framework and will enable an assessment of their effect to be noted.

### 11.0 Business Continuity

The People Strategy will form part of the Council's approach to enabling services to be sustained wherever possible in the event of a serious emergency. Whilst certain events may restrict the availability of key staff it is expected that having a structured approach to the development of people and services will build capacity in key areas. It will also enable information to be shared readily across the Council using existing channels if available. HR will work with Risk Management to help develop a robust Business Continuity plan with respect to People's skills and knowledge.

### 12.0 Responsibility and Accountability

The responsibility for the effective management and development of the Authority's workforce lies both with elected members and managers of the Council.

The structure of the People Strategy and the actions proposed will touch every service and employee within the Council. It is expected that everyone will therefore make a contribution towards the delivery of the three strategic people objectives.

#### 12.1 Monitoring and Review



Regular monitoring and review of the People Strategy are essential to ensure that employees have the appropriate information and skills to enable the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Regular review and monitoring will be the responsibility of the People Strategy Steering Group along with reports submitted to Corporate Management Team in line with the performance management framework. Updates will be provided to employees and Trade Union representatives.

The Strategy will be formally reviewed at least annually. Any new or revised policies that are developed to support the implementation of this People Strategy will be subject to the formal consultation processes that exist with the recognised Trade Unions.

## 12.2 Continuous Improvement

The Council encourages and will actively consider any initiatives and suggestions for improvement from any employee, partner, external agencies or customer. If you have any comments, ideas or suggestions to develop the People Strategy in the future please email [humanresources@mansfield.gov.uk](mailto:humanresources@mansfield.gov.uk).

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