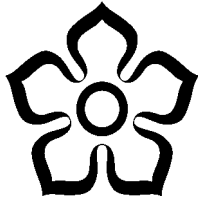


WARDS AFFECTED
All Wards (Corporate Issues)



Leicester
City Council

CABINET

19TH MARCH 2001

HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

Report of The Town Clerk

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to secure support for the attached, draft Human Resource Strategy.

2. Summary

The Human Resource Strategy is one of four resource strategies, along with the Revenue and Capital Budget Strategy, the ICT Strategy and the Asset Management Plan, that together enable the Council to manage effectively its main resources. They form a key element of the Council's performance management framework and therefore are fundamental to achieving Best Value. The Human Resources Strategy is attached. Its significance is discussed in the supporting information.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft Human Resource Strategy be endorsed for adoption by the Council.

4. Financial and Legal Implications

The development of the Strategy may lead to a range of proposed initiatives which themselves will have to be costed.

The Strategy includes provision for the Council to anticipate forthcoming legislation and provide for it. Additionally, it is anticipated that an enhanced employment climate will reduce costs and improve efficiency in pursuit of the policy of continuous improvement.

5. Report Author

The author of this report is Mike Powell, Acting Assistant Director (Human Resources & Employment Equalities), Town Clerk's and Corporate Resources Department, 7th floor, 'B' Block, New Walk Centre (Tel. 0116 252 7060).

UNISON

LEICESTER CITY BRANCH

COMMENTS ON THE HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

1. **Aims and Objectives:**

- This should include a broad commitment to the provision of greater equality in the provision of services.
- UNISON is committed to providing quality services and products but these can only be achieved if staff are well informed, well paid and highly motivated. There should be continuous improvement in the terms and conditions of all employees.

2. **Values:**

- The Council and all employees have a responsibility to ensure that equality is fundamental in all aspects and activities.
- Cultural diversity should be a corporate value
- Should include the need to address the problems relating to stress and health and safety.
- There should be equal access and opportunity of training and development.

3. **Key Tasks:**

- Importance of continuity across all departments.
- Monitoring to be done corporately and responsibility taken for this - ensuring all work is carried out.
- A training and development policy should be useful, fair, and meaningful to all employees and to include lifelong learning.

Human Resource Strategy

Part 1 Strategic framework

The Human Resource Strategy is one of four resource strategies along with the Revenue and Capital Budget Strategy, the ICT Strategy and the Asset Management Plan, that together enable the council to manage effectively its main resources. Together they form a key element of the council's performance management framework and therefore fundamental to achieving Best Value.

Over 60 % of the councils budget is spent on people therefore our approach to managing them is critical to achieving our aims and objectives. The overall purpose of the human resource strategy therefore is to :-

Invest in our employees

Because.....

our service counts – our employees matter.

Local Government is now facing unprecedented pressures to respond to increased public needs and expectations, improve our performance, adapt to new political decision making processes, consult more effectively with our users and non users, and work in partnership with other organisations. Constant change is now a continuous process for us and therefore having a Human Resource Strategy that enables us to plan and respond to these changes is essential.

Strategic Objectives

The Human Resource Strategy has four main objectives.

- 1. To ensure the Council has the appropriate level of staffing to achieve its key priorities as set out in the Community Plan and key strategies.**
- 2. To ensure our staff have the right level of skills and competencies to perform their duties for the benefit of all communities across the city.**
- 3. To ensure the council has adequate but flexible procedures to**
 - *Meet its statutory obligations***
 - *Maintain good industrial relations***
 - *Operate efficiently and effectively***
- 4. To ensure the management of the human resource function across the council achieves Best Value.**

Our values

The culture of the organisation is critical to maintaining motivation and performance; therefore it is essential that as part of developing our Human Resource Strategy we establish clearly our Values. **This includes the identification and maintenance of the principles of equality in everything we do.**

The Council also has four corporate values of :-

Creativity -We value ideas, innovation, consultation and experimentation.

Balance - We value our staff and we want to allow them to take real responsibility for their efforts. In return we will support them in everything they do on our behalf. With the right training and development, and by recognising the many stresses and strains in local government today,we can work together to meet the growing and changing demands of our modern city.

Harmony – We value constructive relationships between Members and officers and between the Council and the community – where respect and courtesy are the norm. And, even when we disagree, blame should not be unnecessarily dealt out.

Perseverance – We value a commitment to improve. Despite setbacks, and with a willingness to apologise for justified criticism, we want to keep getting better at everything we do.

In addition, the following principles will be applied in the management of our staff:-

1. The Council's service provision should be focused on its citizens.
2. The Council will provide an environment:-
 - (a) where morale is high
 - (b) which enables employees to perform their roles effectively.
 - (c) where risk is minimised and managed.
 - (d) where diversity is celebrated, disadvantage addressed and equality is integral to what we do.
3. Employees should respect the dignity of their colleagues and customers.
4. Employees should be given the opportunity to gain the required skills and experience to enable them to provide an agreed quality of service and to develop and progress within the Council.
5. Employees should be clear on the standards of performance expected of them and to be helped to achieved these standards where improvement is necessary. Quality performance will be acknowledged and poor performance will always be addressed.
6. Employees should identify and resolve any conflict with colleagues at all levels, in a positive, informal and constructive matter, resorting to formal procedures only when necessary.

7. The Council will seek to recruit and retain high calibre employees through the provision of attractive and fair pay and conditions within available resources.
8. The Council will work within the requirements of legislation and Elected Members and aspire to achieve best practice standards in employment and management.
9. The Council values the formal system of employee consultation, to ensure the free flow of information up and down the organisation and to involve employees in the process of Best Value leading to the continuous improvement of services.
10. The Council will develop and maintain a flexible organisation in order to provide accessible and responsive services and meet the requirements for change.
11. The Council will continuously review and learn from the operation of its principles and practice.

Key Tasks Over the Next Three Years

Given the current pressures on the organisation to change and respond to new challenges there are a number of key tasks critical to the achievement of our objectives over the next few years. These are set out below:-

To ensure the Council has the appropriate level of staffing to achieve its key priorities as set out in the Community Plan and key strategies.

1. Develop systems of recruitment and retention which:-
 - (a) seek to ensure that the Council attracts a range of appropriate candidates and achieves a fair selection of qualified and experienced appointees, using all relevant forms of media in an economical way.
 - (b) seek to ensure the retention of employees by paying at least at the market level and providing other incentives such as opportunities to develop and progress within the organisation.
2. Introduce a replacement job evaluation scheme for all posts below JNC Grades, to be implemented with the support of workforce representatives if at all possible, including an implementation programme over three years, accommodating the cost implications.
3. Replace the existing grading structure in order to complement the job evaluation scheme. Also to provide for market influences on pay and to assist in the recruitment and retention of staff at an economic cost.
4. Contribute to the Best Value exercise throughout the organisation by providing support to managers and creating and amending relevant policies and procedures as appropriate.

5. Promote an awareness of the equality dimension in all aspects of personnel/HR provision and pursue the initiatives emerging from the Council's response to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry with particular reference to achieving a workforce reflective of the community.

To ensure our staff have the right level of skills and competencies to perform their duties for the benefit of all communities across the city.

6. Establish a training and development policy which, within financial constraints:
 - (a) seeks to develop and maintain a knowledgeable, experienced and motivated workforce.
 - (b) places special emphasis upon the development of managerial skills against core competencies.
 - (c) supports employees' career development to the benefit of the Council by anticipating the future needs of Council services.
 - (d) achieves an appropriate investment of training funds in all areas to meet the needs of the organisation and individual employees.
 - (e) achieves the comprehensive endorsement of Investors in People
7. Establish an environment which :-
 - (i) enables employees to feel confident in managing risk
 - (ii) fosters creativity
 - (iii) ensures continuous improvement, learning from experience

To ensure the council has adequate but flexible procedures to

- ***Meet its statutory obligations***
- ***Maintain good industrial relations***
- ***Operate efficiently and effectively***

8. Achievement of organisational flexibility through:
 - (a) enabling departments/managers to address employment issues whilst maintaining a corporate approach, ensuring consistency of treatment and maintaining fairness for members of the workforce.
 - (b) Facilitating cross boundary and partnership activities.
 - (c) having in place a system of performance management which measures employees against a range of core competencies and permits managers a range of responses.

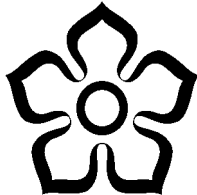
9. Continue to respond to the challenges created by new legislation and the demands of best practice in employment.
10. Improve the quality of relationships throughout the Council by emphasising this as a duty placed on all employees at all levels and facilitating the fair treatment of employee complaints by empowering and supporting managers to deal with them in a flexible manner.
11. Review and develop the employee transport policy, enabling the efficient provision of services to the community whilst having regard to environmental considerations.

To ensure the management of the human resource function across the council achieves Best Value.

12. Have foremost the business objectives of the Council and facilitate their delivery.
13. Embrace best value to achieve continuous improvement in the Council's HR/Personnel Services.
14. Ensure the Council's human resource planning informs, and is informed by, the budget and other relevant strategies
15. Facilitate a system of improved employee communication, both up and down the organisation, including a means of readily ascertaining employee views.
16. Establish a management information database which meets the immediate requirements of the organisation but also has the flexibility to easily accommodate future needs.

Mike Powell
Acting Assistant Director
(Human Resources & Employment Equalities)

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Leicester
City Council

CABINET

19TH MARCH 2001

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Report

A copy of the proposed Human Strategy is attached.

The draft has been prepared in collaboration with the Human Resources and Management Development Sections in the Town Clerk's Department, Departmental Personnel Managers, Departmental Training Managers and Employment Equality Staff. It was subsequently re-modelled and approved by the Strategic Resources Group which commends it for adoption by the Council.

The Strategy may be seen as an expression of the concerns and requirements of the organisation with regard to the management and reward of its most important asset, its workforce.

Work is beginning on breaking down the elements of the Strategy into workable projects which, added to other outstanding tasks, not least the significant workload emerging from the Council's Lawrence response, create quite a formidable workload, to be undertaken by corporate and departmental teams. Accordingly, it will be helpful to receive any suggestions for prioritisation.

2. Financial, Legal and Other Implications

The development of the Strategy may lead to a range of proposed initiatives which themselves will have to be costed.

The Strategy includes provision for the Council to anticipate forthcoming legislation and provide for it. Additionally, it is anticipated that an enhanced employment climate will reduce costs and improve efficiency in pursuit of the policy of continuous improvement.

3. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within Supporting Information	Reference
Equal Opportunities	YES	The attachment includes the Council's strategy on achieving equality.	
Policy	YES	The attachment forms one of the four resource strategies of the Council.	
Sustainable and Environmental	YES	The attachment refers to the environmental considerations of employee transport at item 11.	
Crime and Disorder	NO		
Human Rights Act	YES	The attachment was prepared with the requirements of the Act in mind.	

4. Background Papers - Local Government Act 1972

None.

5. Trades Union Consultation

The draft Strategy has been passed to the Trade Union Side Secretary for comments by constituent Trades Unions. The attached response has been received from the UNISON branch. The views expressed complement the contents of the Strategy and are welcomed. It is proposed that they be carried forward into the implementation stage and drawn to the attention of staff involved.

The first item in 2 has been responded to by the inclusion of the second sentence under "our values" on page 2. "This includes.....".

Also, particular attention is drawn to the first element of item 3 "importance of continuity across all departments". This issue of consistency of treatment versus manager discretion was one that occupied the minds of the authors of the Strategy and this topic deserves careful consideration when the Strategy is developed.

6. Report Author

The author of this report is Mike Powell, Acting Assistant Director (Human Resources & Employment Equalities), Town Clerk's and Corporate Resources Department, 7th floor, 'B' Block, New Walk Centre (Tel. 0116 252 7060).