

STRATEGY / POLICY FRONT COVER



Name of Strategy / Policy: Human Resources Strategy

Date last updated: March 2010

Links to Council Priorities:

Priority	Linked Yes / No?
Environment – Civic Pride	No
Regeneration and Homes	No
Improving the Council	Yes
Community Safety	No

Links to Other Strategies and Policies

Community Strategy, Corporate Plan, Financial Planning and Capital Strategy, Asset Management Plan and the Housing Investment Plan.

SMART Action Plan in this document?

Yes – Workforce Plan reported separately.

Actions linked to corporate plan objectives?

Yes

Improving the Council, work to achieve Level 2 “achieving” of the Equality Framework for Local Government and the retention of Investor in People status.

Name of officer responsible for co-ordinating and progressing the action plan:

Chris Mills – Head of Resources

Name of lead Member and Member body responsible for monitoring implementation of the action plan:

Cllr Jeffrey Stanley – Cabinet Member for Corporate Policy, Resources and Performance.
Cabinet (quarterly financial updates, monthly budget monitoring statements)

Equality impact assessment undertaken?: No

Sustainability appraisal undertaken?: No

Policy register on N Drive updated?: Yes



Castle Point Borough Council

Human Resources Strategy

For the period

2010/11 to 2014/15

Produced by: Head of Resources

Subject to Annual Review

Approved by:

- Executive Management Team:
- Cabinet:

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Copies of the Council's Strategies and Policies can be obtained at the Council Offices or on our website at www.castlepoint.gov.uk.
- 1.2 The Human Resource Strategy and Workforce Plan set out how we plan to recruit, retain, train and develop staff to ensure that we have a workforce that has the capacity and necessary skills, knowledge and abilities to deliver quality services to our residents and customers. Accountable officers are identified for each key task and key date in the Workforce Plan.
- 1.3 The resource implications of this strategy are set out in the various Service Action Plans and reflected in approved budgets. The financial implications of specific projects set out in the Workforce Plan are quantified, placed in the context of the Financial Planning Strategy, and reported to Members and Executive Management Team (EMT) as and when detailed proposals are produced.
- 1.4 This strategy therefore also has links with the detailed strategies set out in the Financial Planning and Capital Strategy, Asset Management Plan, the Housing Investment Plan, and individual Departmental Service Action Plans. It sets all these plans in the context of an overall Human Resources Strategy for the Borough of Castle Point.
- 1.5 While this Strategy relates primarily to the Council's workforce, it is recognised that the achievement of high performance requires close and co-operative working between Members and officers. The need to develop leadership skills is a particular area where both officers and members should learn together. This document therefore shows the links between officer and Member development in these areas.

2.0 Our Key Priorities

- 2.1 The Human Resources Strategy is also in response to and has links with the current Sustainable Community Strategy 2007/21 and our Key Priorities established with the Local Strategic Partnership. These in turn influence our Corporate Plan which sets out our overarching priorities.
- 2.2 The Corporate Plan is revised annually and the next version is due to be published shortly. This Strategy takes account of any planned changes to be incorporated in the revised Corporate Plan to the extent that they could be identified during its preparation.
- 2.3 Our present Key Priorities established from the Sustainable Community Strategy together with our internal priority are: -
 - Environment – Civic Pride
 - Regeneration and Homes
 - Improving the Council
 - Community Safety

3.0 The Human Resources Strategy

3.1 The bulk of the Human Resources activity will contribute towards delivering the key internal priority of Improving the Council. Since staff are a key resource in the delivery of services, it follows that staff who perform well and are better trained, will contribute more towards the achievement of all the Council's policy priorities.

3.2 Procedures will be designed and implemented to ensure the Council: -

- Undertakes workforce planning to ensure adequate staff resources and to consider the future by means of succession planning.
- Attracts high calibre candidates for employment with the Council and develops pay and employment conditions to retain quality staff.
- Interviews and selects well qualified and competent staff.
- Manages, trains and develops staff to maximise their potential.
- Offers equality of opportunity to all staff and recognises the benefits of diversity.

4.0 Workforce Planning

4.1 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister required every local authority to have in place a Workforce Plan by 1st April 2005 and the Council met that requirement. This provides the detailed activities that will support the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy and is reviewed quarterly with highlights reported to the appropriate Cabinet Member. The detailed Workforce Plan, as refreshed in March 2010, is included as an Appendix to this document.

4.2 The Council will develop policies and processes to support the Workforce Plan to ensure adequate staff resources are allocated to deliver the services identified by its' corporate aims, objectives and priorities. This includes succession planning.

4.3 The attached Workforce Plan sets out the action the Council will take under eight key headings. These headings and corresponding actions are all interrelated: -

- Strategic Human Resource Awareness
- Developing Communication
- Developing Support for Managers
- Workforce/Succession Planning
- Training and Development
- Health and Wellbeing

- Equality and Diversity
- Human Resources Service Improvements

4.4 The Plan contains the detailed activities the Council intends to undertake over the next five years. Planning in this way for Human Resource issues is, however a constantly developing area of activity for the Council so activities shown in the Appendix address the priority issues and milestones for the 2010/11 financial year.

4.5 The following paragraphs set out highlights from the workforce plan.

5.0 Strategic Human Resource Awareness

5.1 The Council recognises the need to be proactive in maintaining an awareness of external influences which may have a long or short term impact on its workforce management.

5.2 The Council will continue to work in partnership with the Essex HR Strategic Partnership.

6.0 Developing Communications

6.1 Castle Point believes that effective communication with employees, partners and stakeholders is fundamental to the delivery of continuously improving services. Effective communication fosters good working relationships between officers and partners and facilitates a shared vision for the Borough and a focus on priorities. Whilst communication within the Council is good, the Council is not complacent and will consider ways to further enhance its existing communication methods during the course of the year.

6.2 The Councils work programme includes actions which will:-

- Expand the use of the Council's Intranet as a communication tool and "one-stop shop" source of information for Managers and Staff.
- Ensure that staff and managers are aware of the Council's agenda and objectives and have access to consistent and reliable information including relevant HR strategies and policies.
- Maintain communication with the Trade Unions recognised by the Council to ensure a co-operative approach to all Human Resource issues.
- Maintain a policy of surveying staff on an annual basis to determine their views and opinions and then acts on the outcome of the surveys.

7.0 Developing Support for Managers

7.1 The Council considers consistent management practices as crucial in order to maintain its improvement journey and wishes to ensure its Managers develop the skills necessary in order that they may effectively manage and develop the workforce.

7.2 The Council's work programme includes actions which will:-

- Ensure all HR policies and procedures are routinely updated and written in a language which is clear and concise.
- Provide training to Managers in key people management themes – to equip them with essential management skills.
- Develop procedures/checklists for key people management themes to ensure practices are consistent.

8. Workforce/Succession Planning

8.1 Castle Point is a relatively small organisation situated in an area where recruitment is affected adversely by the competition from London and the nearby larger authorities of Basildon, Thurrock and Southend. Internal staff development and succession planning are, therefore, key concerns of the Council's Human Resource activities.

8.2 The Council's work programme includes actions intended to:-

- Establish a profile of the Workforce in terms of age, gender, skills etc to aid future workforce planning.
- Establish personal development plans for individual members of staff to support individual development and succession planning.

9. Training and Development

9.1 This Strategy fully supports the Council's aim to continuously improve its' performance in delivering services. Fundamental to this is ensuring that there is strong and effective leadership.

9.2 The programme for developing leadership will ensure the joint development of officers and elected members by creating a challenging but supportive environment in which issues can be discussed openly and possible solutions considered in a constructive manner.

9.3 Staff can only perform to the maximum of their potential if they have clarity about their roles within the organisation, enjoy the support and guidance of their line

managers, particularly in the early phases of their careers, and have access to an appropriate range of training and development opportunities.

9.4 The Council will set a work programme that: -

- Ensures Members and officers at all management levels fully develop their knowledge to deliver the Council's business
- Develops future staff leaders by participation in Leadership development programmes
- Ensures Member and officer development is embedded in the culture of the authority to build capacity.
- Recognises that the greatest asset available to Castle Point Council is the people who make up the workforce.
- Operates a staff competencies framework that will be at the heart of its attraction, recruitment, performance appraisal, training and development policies and procedures.
- Identifies individual performance targets for staff as part of their personal performance and development plans and gives employees the opportunity to reach their full potential.
- Maintains a high standard of staff appraisals which incorporates the competency framework and identifies the link to training needs.
- Develops a corporate training programme that fits in with training needs linked to the staff Personal Performance and Development Plans and the competencies required and considers the needs of professional staff.

10. Health and Wellbeing

10.1 The Council recognises the important role it can play in supporting the health and wellbeing of its workforce.

10.2 The Council will set a work programme that: -

- Promotes awareness of health and wellbeing issues with the workforce.
- Enables access to health and wellbeing support, services and information.
- Promotes its status as an Investor in People.

11.0 Equality and Diversity

11.1 The Council aims to deliver services that are equally accessible to all its' customers and will implement robust policies that will ensure equality in the recruitment, training and development of its' employees. As part of this process the Council achieved Level 4 of the Equality Standard for Local Government in September 2008.

11.2 The Council will set a work programme that: -

- Strives to maintain its achievement in the Equality Standard under the new levels set by the Equality Framework for Local Government
- Ensures the Council as an organisation maintains an awareness of diversity issues both in regard to its' employment policies and the needs of service delivery. Member/officer training to promote understanding will be continued.
- Seeks to promote the benefits of diversity and equal opportunities in employment across the Authority to ensure the Council's obligations as an employer are met.

12.0 Internal Development

12.1 In addition to the foregoing there are also necessary improvements required to the way in which Human Resources delivers services to its' internal customers. These link to the Council's priority of "Improving Council Services" because they contribute towards the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the way the Council organises itself to deliver services.