



# **THE SIXTH PAY AND WORKFORCE STRATEGY**

**Delivering Through People**

**2012-2015**

**December 2012**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The five national priority themes identified in the original 2003 DCLG Workforce Strategy remain key to the construction of an effective local workforce strategy. They are

- (a) **Organisational development** – addressing the workforce dimensions of organisational transformation to deliver citizen – focused and value for money services, in partnership.
- (b) **Leadership development** – building visionary, effective and ambitious leadership to make the best use of political and managerial roles, in a partnership context.
- (c) **Skill development** – with partners, developing employees' skills and knowledge in an innovative, high performance, multi-agency context.
- (d) **Recruitment and retention** – with partners, taking action to recruit and retain the right workforce, address key future occupational skill shortages; promote jobs and careers; identify, develop and motivate talent and address diversity issues.
- (e) **Pay and rewards** – implementing effective approaches to reward the workforce while controlling employment costs to reflect budget efficiency requirements, as well as new ways of working and innovative working patterns.

1.2 Since the Council's last Workforce Strategy was produced in November 2010, there have been a number of important developments which have impacted or will impact on the way in which local government provides services to the community. They include:

- Public Health changes.
- Welfare Reform Act 2012.
- Results from the 2011 Census
- Localism Act 2011.
- 2020: Children and Young People's workforce strategy
- Proposal to move Adult Safeguarding Boards onto a statutory footing.
- Reforming the law for Adult Social Care and Support consultation opened July 2012.
- Revision to Working Together to safeguard children 2012.
- Election of a Police and Crime Commissioner in November 2012.
- Caring for our Future – Social Care White Paper 2012.
- Continuing financial constraints.

1.3 The Council, in responding to the national agenda, has constructed this, a sixth revision to the local Pay and Workforce Strategy.

## 2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 The overall aim of this Strategy is to identify the key Human Resource challenges facing the Council over the next three years and suggest actions which can be taken in response to these challenges.

The Pay and Workforce Strategy has incorporated the key themes arising from the departmental workforce plans.

## 3 THE NATIONAL JOURNEY – SO FAR

- 3.1 The most recent Local Government Workforce Strategy was published in April 2010 and there have been significant changes since then.

The underlying challenges facing the local government workforce have not really changed in recent years. There is continuing pressure to deliver more and better services with less resource through greater efficiency, service transformation and partnership development.

The level of change affecting the local government workforce is unprecedented since the 1970's and 1980's, which impacts not only how the workforce sees itself, how it is seen by others but also on the psychological contract between employer and employee. The impact of continuing pay freezes/pay reductions/changes to terms and conditions, coupled with pension changes all have the potential to compound the challenges. In addition the potential for local pay determination may feature significantly in employees minds.

Job losses in local government, brought about by the front loading of spending reductions will continue for some time. In 2011, 3% of full time equivalent posts in the whole of local government service were lost. The scale and speed of losses has the potential to:

- Create a “fear factor” in the workforce which can be debilitating when trying to introduce change and improve performance.
- Increase the work pressure on those employees who remain.
- Undermine morale and commitment, especially if employees feel that job reductions/changes have not been properly thought through.

The impact of the economic downturn has also brought extra demand for some services (particularly in relation to young people not in employment, education or training (NEETS), but with a reduced demand for others.

The recession has reduced all authorities' income, pushed up costs leading to the need to make significant service cuts, including reducing posts. The pressure to do “more for less”, more efficiently and to increase productivity is greater than ever. In a recent Local Government Association report examining the future funding outlook for Councils, they anticipated a funding gap between £16.5 billion and £19 billion a year by 2019/20.

In that report, published July 2012, they found that Councils were cut earlier and harder than the rest of the public sector. If the same pattern applies in the next spending review, Councils will not be able to deliver the existing service offer by the end of this decade. In the LGA's view, fundamental change would be required to either:

- The way in which local services are funded and organised.
- Statutory and citizen expectations of what Councils will provide.

Demographic pressures continue to have an impact. The 2011 Census indicated that the population of Bracknell Forest has grown by 3.3% from 109,617 to 113,200 between 2001-2011, with increases in the numbers under 5 and over 65 years of age with impact on schools and adult social care support. Also increasing numbers of residents from black and minority ethnic groups will affect both the workforce composition and service demands.

One impact of government's policies is that a significant proportion of employees in their fifties are likely to have to work to an older age before they can claim their pension; it could therefore be that a sizeable proportion of the workforce will consist of employees aged over 60, who are working longer than they wanted or expected to, and may be disaffected and de-motivated.

- 3.2 The public sector faces continuing uncertainties because of the economic recession and the financial constraints placed on it. On the one hand it could make the recruitment of staff easier as there is a slowdown in the jobs market, staff may be prepared to stay longer with the organisation rather than risk moving job and home but on the other hand it means natural healthy turnover is stagnant.
- 3.3 It is part of the work of the HR teams to forecast the future skills and numbers required of local government. For example, the move to move flexible ways of working will require different approaches to management and changed skills within the workforce in order to implement these changes successfully.

#### **4 THE REGIONAL JOURNEY – SO FAR**

- 4.1 The South East Employers priorities developed in 2008 still apply and are:
  - Effectively build workforce support for new structures and new ways of working
  - Build visionary and ambitious leadership operating in a partnership context
  - Develop employees' skills and knowledge
  - Take action to address key future occupational skills shortages; promote jobs and careers and address diversity issues
  - Modernise pay systems to reflect new structures, new priorities and new ways of working.

## 5 THE LOCAL JOURNEY- SO FAR

5.1 The Council's six overarching priorities currently are:

- Priority one: a town centre fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Priority two: protecting and enhancing our environment
- Priority three: promoting health and achievement
- Priority four: create a borough where people are safe and feel safe
- Priority five: sustain economic prosperity
- Priority six: value for money

5.2 Some of the local issues which the Council has to consider as part of its Pay and Workforce Strategy are:

- The Government's planned budgetary constraints which have shown that the Council's financial situation remains challenging.
- The continuing challenges in recruitment and retention, coupled with the changes to working arrangements and practices which will be required through flexible working.
- Changes in legislation which will continue to have a significant impact on the Council.
- The need for managers to improve their existing skills and develop new ones eg commissioning services, partnership working.
- The impact of downsizing on the skills required within the workforce and the changes to working practices required.

5.3 The Council cannot solve all its own workforce issues so efforts continue to be taken to increase the level of "grow your own" opportunities in areas such as Social Care, for example:

- the agreement between the three East Berkshire Authorities for more effective delivery of learning and development opportunities for the Adult and Children's social care workforces.
- Joint agreements across Berkshire for training to support Approved Mental Health Practitioners.

## 6 SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

6.1 The Learning & Development team is able to take a wide corporate view on all training activities. There is a significant amount of development activity taking place and over 200 events are corporately run annually. In addition, specialist training for staff working within adult and children's social care, formal management and other qualification programmes are offered.

6.2 The requirement for social workers to re-register with the new Health Care Professional Council (HCPC) means that continuous professional development events are run to ensure that this group of employees are able to comply with the HCPC requirements.

Changes following the closure of the General Social Care Council in July 2012, will have an effect on post qualification training requirements for all social workers, especially those in their first year post qualification.

- 6.3 The 2011 Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy survey contained detailed information on a range of issues including turnover, off the job training, sickness absence, etc.

The HR function has been and will continue to participate in other benchmarking groups (eg CIPFA) to identify how well it compares to other local authorities.

<b>Performance Indicators 2011 (2010 in brackets)</b>	<b>England local government employment (2010 figures in brackets)</b>	<b>Unitary authorities in England (2010 figures in brackets)</b>	<b>Bracknell 2011 (2010 figures in brackets)</b>
All turnover including redundancies and other leavers	13.1% (15.7%)	13.2% (13.9%)	19.1% * (13%)
Days off the job training per employee	1.6 (3.0)	1.1 (1.5)	3.4 (2.5)
Gross training expenditure per employee	£212 (£300)	£175 (£239)	£375 (£257)
Members gross training expenditure	£175	£225	£430
Sickness absence rates (days per employee)	7.7	9.6	5.64 (6.28)

\* The Council's voluntary turnover rate for 2011/12 was 12.7% which has remained around this level for the last 2 years. The atypical figure of 19.1% was due to the TUPE transfer of 175 school staff to an Academy and 44 non-school redundancies.

## **7 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ISSUES**

- 7.1 Bracknell Forest remains an area of relatively low unemployment and high housing costs, and with a mixture of a skilled/semi-skilled population. Recruitment into posts of a generic nature continues to present no significant problems.

However, although some professional vacancies remain hard to fill, the lack of recruitment in other local authorities is likely to have contributed to very low turnover in some of the Council's usual hard-to-fill professions (Trading Standards, Planning and Building Control). Problems still however remain with filling vacancies for Occupational Therapists and experienced Social Workers. Furthermore, the initial upturn in the private sector presented particular retention and recruitment problems for occupational areas such as ICT where skills can easily transfer between the public and private sector.

The use of Market Premia to respond to market forces has been suspended for new vacancies pending the implementation of a new job evaluation scheme. Nevertheless, it remains an important tool to help fill hard to recruit posts and maintaining service provision. Meanwhile, the market for posts which currently have market premia is tested by advertising without the premium first, to see if it is still necessary for effective recruitment – so far no significant problems have been encountered in filling these posts.

7.2 The Council's voluntary turnover rate for 2011/12 was 12.7% which has marginally increased (from an average of about 12% for the previous four years). This is likely to reflect general unease about government spending cuts and perceived lack of job security. The voluntary turnover rate for employees with less than one year's service was 31.46% in 2011/12 which has increased from 24.3% in 2010/11. This is likely to reflect:

- a) the recruitment of those previously unemployed who may be using the position as a route back into employment
- b) the use of Fixed Term Contracts.

7.3 The key priority areas for the next year are:

- To further focus on the Council's employer brand, especially in the light of the well-publicised public sector austerity measures. In particular:
  - Working through the action points which have emerged from the 2011 staff survey, which will help promote the Council as an "Employer of Choice".
  - Explore opportunities to create equivalents of the "Advanced Practitioner" status to recognise those with excellent skills but who are not seeking a management position.
  - Making best use of the adoption of flexible working practices for staff as a recruitment and retention tool, which will improve the attractiveness of jobs within the Council to those who live beyond the usual travel-to-work catchment area.
  - The continued involvement in all initiatives which attract the local workforce to careers in local government, in particular participation in the Bracknell Forest Careers event.
- Leading the way in the community via the continued development of employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups with particular reference to the apprenticeship scheme and other government-funded initiatives. Currently modern and advanced apprenticeships are available for young people under the age of 25 in IT, Business Administration, Customer Services and Sports and Leisure which is an important support for the local economy. However other areas have yet to be developed.
- Identifying areas experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties by making best use of the management information provided by the new arrangements for recruiting and managing agency workers.



- Further strengthening the links between learning and development and the recruitment strategy to embed “grow-our-own” as an attractive option to recruiting fully experienced staff.

## 8 THE FIVE WORKFORCE PRIORITIES – PROGRESS TO DATE

As identified in paragraph 1, the five national priorities have been used as the basis for identifying the key issues for the Council, what has been achieved to date and what still needs to be done.

### 8.1 **Organisational Development**

Key issues:

- Anticipating and tackling critical current and future workforce challenges.
- Engaging with staff positively in service transformation and other major changes.
- Developing new ways of working, including maximising the use of new technology and flexible working arrangements.
- Increasing in workforce productivity (particularly through reduced staff absence).

#### **What we have achieved**

- Implementation of the Community Cohesion and the Community Engagement Strategies.
- Development of a single Equality Scheme 2012-2016 with workforce objectives
- Promotion of greater flexibility in terms of working arrangements and increased range of flexible benefits.
- Respond to “Every Child Matters” and the CWDC 2020 Children’s workforce strategy with increased focus on cross cutting and partnership working.
- Improved clarity of linkage between the Council’s business objectives/service plans and individual employee work objectives through the appraisal process.
- Reaccreditation by the Institute of Learning and Management (ILM) to be able to deliver in-house Level 3 and 5 Manager certificate programmes.
- Achieved reaccreditation to the Investors in People revised standard for Corporate Services.
- 2011 Staff Survey completed with 62% response rate. Corporate and Departmental action plans have been produced.

#### **What we still need to do:**

- Maintain Investors in People for those areas already accredited and seek to extend it to other parts of the Council, where departments are willing. Areas currently accredited include Corporate Services, Brakenhale, Binfield Church of England and Harmanswater Primary Schools and Garth Hill College
- Review the existing internal communications strategy as part of the staff survey action plan.
- Benchmark services where appropriate.

- Support managers and staff to develop flexible working arrangements to respond to the “Time for a Change” programme.
- Review the requirements on CRB checking/rechecking in light of new government regulations and best safeguarding practices.
- Ensure the transfer of the Public Health function is completed satisfactorily and integrate it with current Council Services where applicable.

## 8.2 **Developing Leadership**

Key issues:

- Attracting and developing political leaders to effectively represent their local communities.
- Creating leaders for the future.
- Developing partnerships to improve leadership and skills.
- Enabling Members to continue to play an active part in Overview and Scrutiny activities.
- Developing the leadership capabilities of officers

### **What we have achieved:**

- Managerial and supervisory competency frameworks integrated into all management programmes.
- Management Development Centre completed.
- Accreditation by the Institute of Leadership and Development to deliver a Level 3 First Line Manager Certificate programme and a Level 5 Manager Certificate Programme.
- Provision of opportunities for project working, secondments (particularly internally).
- Reaccreditation to the Charter Plus for Member Development (2011).
- Completed 360 degree appraisal pilot programme for a cross sectional group of Elected Members and extended this to all Executive Members.

### **What we still need to do:**

- Produce development material, including e-learning for Councillors and employees.
- Extend the 360 degree appraisal programme to cover all Elected Members
- Develop suitable mechanisms to ensure all social workers are able to undertake post qualification training and comply with all other recommendations of the Social Work Taskforce.
- Embed the concept of Overview and Scrutiny throughout the Council.
- Enhance and expand management development opportunities

### 8.3 **Developing Workforce Skills and Capacity**

Key issues:

- Maximising access to learning and development opportunities for employees.
- Developing an ever more flexible and skilled workforce.
- Improving skills for managers, including developing new skills e.g. commissioning, working in partnerships, managing flexible working effectively.
- Improving skills for all staff in enhancing customer care, basic skills/skills for working life.
- Enhancing partnership approaches to learning and development.

#### **What we have achieved:**

- Delivery of a range of management development opportunities for service managers – staff absence management, procurement, financial management, significant range of new recruitment training including safer recruitment, managing the early days.
- Redesigned the corporate induction programme to meet the needs of new employees, new managers or managers new to the Council linked to e-learning.
- Launched e-learning through Learning Pool, the e-learning provider for the public sector. To date 2000 employees have successfully completed e-learning packages, including an introduction to safeguarding children and young people, information security, health and safety, data protection, an introduction to equality and diversity. Ninety nine packages are currently available
- Introduced Safeguarding awareness training for all staff in areas where they come into contact with Children, Young People and/or vulnerable adults.
- Delivered a range of equality and diversity training programmes for Members, Directors, Chief Officers, Managers and Team Leaders/Supervisors.

#### **What we still need to do:**

- Develop further equality and diversity related programmes eg faith and belief, cultural awareness, etc.
- Expand the use of e-learning opportunities within the Council
- Identify the best ways to enable all staff, especially those working part time or non standard office hours to access learning and development opportunities.

### 8.4 **Resourcing, Recruitment, Retention and Diversity**

Key issues:

- Supporting social workers to practice effectively.
- Remodelling the workforce in response to future trends.
- Maximising the use of technology to improve services.
- Developing cost effective means of attracting suitable job applicants and retaining skilled workers.

- Developing suitable strategies to encourage a diverse range of suitable applicants to apply for jobs within the Council and to support their development.

**What we have achieved:**

- Continued to develop recruitment initiatives to expand the ways in which the public can find out about job vacancies, etc.
- Carried out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to ensure equality implications are taken into account in all policy initiatives, including the provision of some basic and advanced EIA workshops for appropriate managers/staff.
- Reviewed and implemented new arrangements for the provision of temporary agency workers

**What we still need to do:**

- More detailed workforce planning to better predict need particularly in relation to local partners and their workforce plans, including the Berkshire Health and Social Care Workforce Development Forum
- Continue to manage the movement of employees resulting from budget reductions and reorganisation of services including the retraining of employees as necessary.
- Support the contract requirements with Comensura for temporary agency workers to ensure that the Council obtains value for money.
- Encourage as diverse a range of job applicants to increase workforce diversity

8.5 **Pay and Reward**

Key issues:

- Competitive, fair and flexible pay structures.
- Equal pay.
- Clear linkage between service objectives and improvements.
- Modernising pay systems.
- Transparent pay structures for senior staff.
- Achieving better work/life balance especially for people with caring responsibilities and older workers.
- Expansion of flexible working options.

**What we have achieved**

- Achieved almost total workforce integration onto the Bracknell Grading structure.
- Expanded the flexible benefits scheme.
- Reviewed severance policy, to facilitate workforce restructuring.
- Completed Stage 1 of the job evaluation review programme (measurement of jobs) and commenced discussions with employee representatives.

### **What we still need to do:**

- Continue discussions with trades unions about a new pay and grading structure including the possibility of a collective agreement
- Continue discussions with the trades unions on a new pay structure.
- Continue to explore additional flexible benefits for staff.
- Complete Stage 2 of the job evaluation review programme (pay structures).

## **9 KEY WORKFORCE PLANNING PRIORITIES**

- 9.1 The Council incorporated workforce planning into service planning in 2009. Refresher training was undertaken for managers and the annual departmental workforce plans are now being produced. The Service Plan Priority 6 (Value for money) and Medium Term Objective 10 reflect the workforce planning requirement and embed them into the whole service planning process.
- 9.2 Each department's key priorities will be reflected in their action plans and they will continue to monitor progress at a local level. The key priorities for each of the Council's departments identified through the workforce planning process are as follows:

### **Environment, Culture and Communities**

- Government pressure for local government to outsource services, including creating mutuals and shared services partnerships.
- Further proposed changes to planning regulations, including the impact of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Potential regionalisation of some environmental health functions.
- 2014 Public Realm Contract.
- Develop management competence through mentoring, network events and other support.
- Effectively plan to ensure that the actions identified in the Safeguarding Section 11 audit are implemented in a timely manner.
- Support managers and staff to roll out flexible working.
- Ensure better use of limited resources through improving management skills, in relation to managing sickness generally and stress related sickness in particular.

### **Children, Young People and Learning**

- Assess the impact of the safer workforce training programme.
- Introduce an integrated introduction programme to the Children's and Young People's workforce.
- Develop the Children and Young People's workforce strategy as a result of the priorities identified through the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) and early intervention strategies.
- Review the recruitment and retention in the areas of skills shortages such as headteachers and experienced children's social workers.

## **Chief Executives Office/Corporate Services**

- Improving managerial skills to enable them to make better use of the available resources
- Supporting the HR aspects relating to office moves and the roll out of flexible working across the organisation.
- Review the Member Development Strategy and deliver a comprehensive Member Development programme.
- Develop partnership working eg joint development plans with strategic partners

## **Adult Social Care Health and Housing**

- Modernise the Adult Social Care workforce to meet new skills sets eg end of life care at Bridgewell.
- Continue to enhance the skills of the wider adult workforce in terms of Safeguarding responsibilities, to ensure that the levels of competence meet those set out in the East Berkshire Workforce and Development Strategy for Safeguarding (2012).
- Embed the transition of Public Health into the Department including addressing the specific learning and development needs of Public Health employees, linking with the Oxford Deanery.
- Consider the integration of the contract terms of new Public Health onto Council conditions.
- Ensure that the learning and development needs of public health
- Enhance the skills of the workforce to meet the anticipated needs arising as a result of the implementation of the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

## **10 ISSUES WHICH WILL IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S WORKFORCE**

### **(i) Staff Communications**

This remains key to having an effective workforce as major change issues are fundamentally affected by effective communications eg workforce remodelling and restructuring.

### **(ii) Job Evaluation**

In recognition of the Council's legal obligations, the potential vulnerability of the Council's existing job evaluation schemes and increased case law, the Council decided to revise its scheme and to carry out a complete re-measurement of its jobs. This has now been completed and discussions with Trade Unions on the implementation of a revised pay structure are on-going.

### **(iii) Flexible Working**

Policies need to reflect current flexible working arrangements and accommodate employment rights which also means that training and development activities are offered in a variety of different ways to accommodate these arrangements.

#### **(iv) Audits and Inspections**

The amalgamated Adult Learning Inspectorate, OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission, will continue as will audits of financial arrangements. The focus of inspections is moving towards one of identifying the impact of changes on the outcomes from those people in receipt of services. Less regular, planned inspections may be undertaken but with less notice being given. The Council will also be participating in the Peer Review process in the spring 2013, the results of which may have an impact on the workforce.

#### **(v) Partnership working**

The need to work in partnership will continue in the future and is likely to increase over the coming years; this will require the development of consensus building and commissioning skills.

#### **(vi) Enhancing managerial skills and competencies**

Supporting managers to develop new skills needs to be embedded into management thinking through training and HR advice. The new management competency framework was included in the appraisal process from April 2011 and has helped to identify skills gaps.

### **11 A REVIEW OF THE 2010 PAY AND WORKFORCE STRATEGY**

#### **11.1 Achievements and actions still outstanding**

There were 32 actions shown in the Action Plans of the 2010 Fifth Pay & Workforce Strategy. Of these 16 have been completed and 8 part completed. The completed actions include:

- Completion of the Customer Contact Centre strategy
- Revise the Council's appraisal scheme and associated documentation
- Ensure reaccreditation to the Charter for Member Development (2012)
- Delivery of the Development Centre workshops for all managers
- Delivery of a programme of workshops for managers with responsibility for buildings
- Induction of new Members post May 2011 elections
- Development of skills pathway frameworks for social care staff
- Develop support material for New Ways of Working initiative
- Expand the use of the social care common induction standards and the associated assessment tool
- Ensuring that robust workforce planning processes are in place
- Assessment of the adequacy of HR and Payroll data to ensure that it is fit for purpose
- Develop a range of recruitment and retention tools
- Support the take up of the revised post qualification qualifications for social workers
- Support the achievement of the "achieving" level in the Equality framework
- Carry out a skills audit for all social care employees as part of the In-Laws Scheme
- Ensure that the Council has mechanisms in place to assess and react to market forces.

A further 4 were either not expected to have been completed during the first year of the plan, or changing circumstances have meant that they are no longer required as previously envisaged. Four others are on-going and will be rolled forward into this; the 2012-2015 Strategy and these are identified in the appendices in italics.

## 12 CONCLUSIONS

12.1 All the issues discussed in this Strategy will have a fundamental impact on the way in which the Council approaches achieving greater economies and improving efficiency, workforce planning, recruitment and retention, reward mechanisms and skills development of its staff. Whilst the precise nature of the changes described are not all clear, all these factors will need to be taken into account in the coming years and the Strategy adjusted accordingly.

12.2 The following documents underpin the actions proposed in the Strategy:

- Bracknell Forest Partnership – Annual Report 2011.
- Medium Term Financial Strategy – General Fund Revenue Budget Book 2012/13
- Communications Strategy
- Equality Scheme 2012-2016
- Charter Plus standard for Member Development
- Creating Opportunities – a joint strategic plan for children and young people 2011-2014
- Staff Survey Action Plan

## 13 APPENDICES – ACTION PLANS

13.1 The attached appendices are based on the 5 key national priorities outlined in paragraph 1 of the Strategy. Departmental priorities are not covered within this document and will be dealt with through departmental action.