

TO: COUNCIL
22 JANUARY 2014

PAY & WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2013/16
(Director of Corporate Services & Resources – Human Resources)

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This is the Council's 7th Pay and Workforce Strategy which is agreed annually by full Council. Like all strategies it is important to regularly review it in the light of changing priorities, new legislation and other issues which impact on the Council.
- 1.2 The attached report provides both an update on progress to date against the previously agreed priorities, and an assessment of what changes need to be made to the Strategy over the coming three years alongside detailed Action Plans.
- 1.3 This Strategy is intended to demonstrate how HR priorities for the Council link into departmental priorities and take into account local issues; it is not intended to be a resource allocation document but should be viewed as an outline plan on priority HR areas for the Council to tackle in the next 1-3 years.
- 1.4 The Strategy is not intended to relate in detail to work with schools staff although there are some generic issues contained within it which do cover schools employees.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is therefore to bring the Council's attention to the key elements which make up the workforce requirements over the next 12 – 36 months and impact on the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Council approve the attached 7th Pay and Workforce Strategy.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Department of Communities and Local Government expects that all local authorities will have a strategy in place which shows how they plan to address the 5 key national workforce priorities, which are detailed in the Pay and Workforce Strategy.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 As it is a requirement for the Council to produce an updated pay and workforce strategy on a regular basis, no other options were considered.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Council's current Pay and Workforce Strategy is a "living" document which is annually revised and regularly updated to take account of changes to national, regional and local priorities. The Strategy consists of a number of linked plans including the Local Safeguarding Children's Board Workforce Strategy, the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy and the Recruitment and Retention Strategy.

The Local Government workforce (including Bracknell Forest) faces a number of major issues which include: an aging workforce, recruitment difficulties in particular skills shortage areas, equalities requirements, improving leadership and management capability and competence, developing fair and modern pay systems and increasing flexibility in working practices. These issues can be successfully addressed at a local level by identifying them in the Strategy and then introducing suggested remedial actions through the Action Plans.

5.2 Local Issues

5.2.1 Key issues include:

- The significant budget pressures on the Council which will continue to impact on how services are delivered.
- An increase in flexibility within the workforce.
- Recruitment and retention requires constant monitoring with innovative approaches to service delivery and working practices being an element of that.
- Increasing flexibility of staff in line with the "Time For A Change" initiative.
- The key themes from the staff survey on improving management capability and the management of performance.
- The outcome of the Peer Review.
- The "Good to Great" initiative.
- The local impact of the national Public Sector Network security requirements.

- 5.2.2 The national issues relating to changes in legislation will have a significant impact on the Council at a local level as work is required to enable changes in culture and operational practices.

5.3 Regional Aspects

- 5.3.1 The South East Region Workforce Strategy 2013-2016 has been re-launched to take account of new priorities around supporting Members, benchmarking and improving the skills of the local government workforce.

5.4 National Aspects

- 5.4.1 Financial constraints are a major issue for the public sector; there are continuing difficult negotiations ahead in the light of the economic downturn and significant restrictions on grant settlements for local authorities.
- 5.4.2 Forecasting future numbers and skills requirements is difficult because there will be changes in the number of staff required to deliver changing needs/priorities. The influence of central government strategies in all areas will impact on staffing requirements and the skills and approaches of those staff.

5.4.3 Large scale strategic partnerships/collaboration arrangements will have a part to play in delivering efficiency savings and improving services; there is likely to be an increase in the commissioning role of local authorities rather than their role of direct service delivery. Shared services is a concept which will remain a consideration for Councils as they seek alternative ways to provide services in a time of increased financial austerity. All these factors will impact on the numbers and types of staff required in the future.

5.5 Conclusion

5.5.1 When revising strategy documents, it is important to ensure that links to other high level plans are taken into account and any impact on them assessed and addressed. This Strategy seeks to do that through its work across the Council in services areas to ensure all workforce priorities are identified and addressed.

6 **ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

Borough Solicitor

6.1 There are no additional legal implications arising from this report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 Within the context of a challenging financial environment, the delivery of this strategy will be dependent upon future budget decisions by the Council. The action plans attached as appendices to the strategy provide the means by which available resources are prioritised to best effect, within the overall budget constraints.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 The Pay and Workforce Strategy, alongside the Equality Scheme 2012-16 sets out how the Council will achieve its equality objectives and further advance equality of opportunity amongst the workforce of the Council.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 The Council requires an overall people management strategy in order to ensure it meets its obligations and makes the best use of its resources.

Other Officers

6.5 Contributions from other relevant officers are included in the Strategy.

7 **CONSULTATION**

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 Corporate Management Team and Departmental Human Resource Managers.

Method of Consultation

7.2 By face to face meetings

Representations Received

7.3 Representation was received from CMT on behalf of the organisation departmental Human Resource Managers on behalf of their individual departments.

Background Papers

6th Pay and Workforce Strategy November 2012

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