

People

Strategy

2006 - 2009

Achieving excellence through our people

1. Introduction

The purpose of this People Strategy is to create a framework that allows Flintshire employees to deliver services that meet existing and future demands. This People Strategy has been designed to reflect the corporate aims and goals detailed within the Flintshire County Council Plan 2006-2009. It does not apply to staff employed by School Governing Bodies but we commend it to their Governing Bodies as an exemplar.

The People Strategy will provide Flintshire with a unique advantage in changing, adapting and responding to our customers needs more effectively thereby consistently delivering an excellent standard of service. The People Strategy will work towards delivering positive outcomes through the following aims.

- Focusing us all on the delivery of 'customer-centred' services (Creating a skilled and motivated workforce focused on customer care and capable of embracing change)
- Improving employee relations (Developing employment partnership through improved communication, involvement and consultation processes)
- Branding Flintshire as an excellent employer (Making Flintshire County Council an employer of choice)
- Developing a positive working environment (Flintshire recognising our work life and wellbeing – enhancing the workplace environment to create a safer, healthier place to work)
- Mainstreaming equality (Putting equality at the heart of everything we do)
- Modernising the HR service (Through listening to our customers and understanding their needs we will be reshaping the HR service to meet your needs)

How the Strategy will be used:

This Strategy will provide a blueprint for the design of the organisation of the future.

We will actively and consistently communicate the messages within this Strategy to you all and regularly seek your feedback on how this Strategy is working.

We will train all managers to use the People Strategy to assist with the ongoing development of all Council services.

We will develop the HR Team to support the implementation of the Strategy within the Council.

“At Flintshire we recognise that all have a part to play in the delivery of excellent services, we value your contribution and this Strategy will help you all to achieve your potential.”



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Kay'.

Acting Chief Executive
Chris Kay



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Shotton'.

Leader
Cllr Aaron Shotton

2. Where does the People Strategy Fit?

The People Strategy provides the critical people link between the Community Strategy, the Council Plan and how we all actually deliver services.

Our People Strategy reflects the national Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy* and addresses the five key priority areas

- Developing the organisation to achieve excellence in people and performance management, process design, diversity and partnership working
- Developing leadership capacity
- Developing workforce skill and capacity to address both current and future skills deficits
- Resourcing, ensuring sufficient high performing staff are recruited, trained and retained
- Designing pay and reward structures that attract, retain and develop a skilled and flexible workforce, while achieving value for money and fairness

The People Strategy also supports the “Making the Connections” ** agenda which consists of four key principles:

- Citizen Centred (improving front line access to services)
- Making the Most of our Resources (Efficiency gains)
- Working Together as the Welsh Public Sector (Collaboration)
- Engaging the Workforce (Co-operation / Support in delivering the Vision)

To find out more about these strategies, log onto:

***www.communities.gov.uk**

****www.wales.gov.uk**

2. Where does the People Strategy Fit?

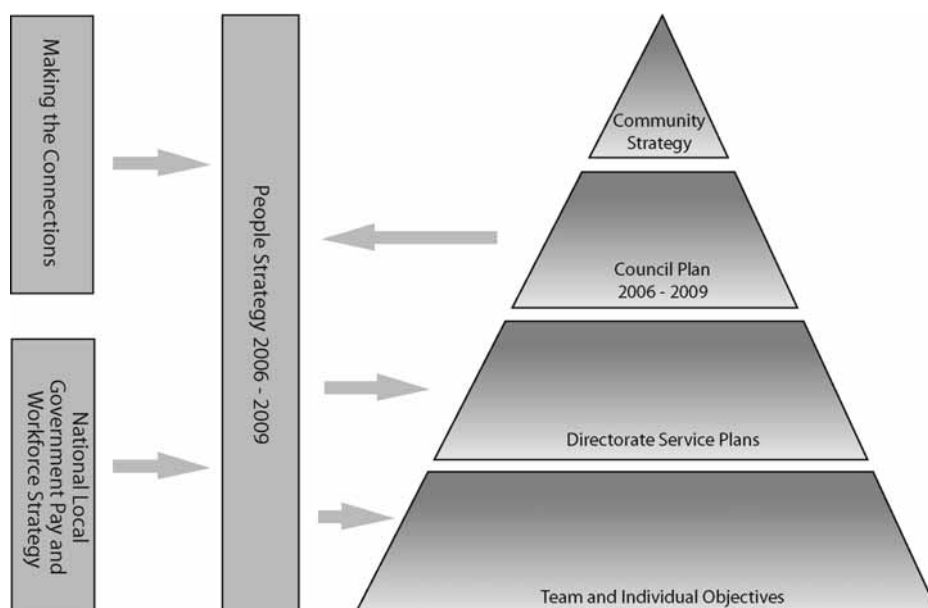
The People Strategy provides the 'people blueprint' to support, strengthen and integrate plans within the Council which clearly identifies our priorities and explains how we will work with you all.

The People Strategy supports the culture we aspire to through the Flintshire County Council VALUES:

WE WILL:

- Be accessible, listen and respond
- Act openly and fairly
- Value and develop our workforce
- Challenge and be innovative in finding solutions
- Make best use of our resources
- Work effectively within the Council and with our partners.

Positioning the People Strategy



3. Council Aims and Values

3.1 Council Aims

The Council Aims as set out in the Council Plan are detailed below:

AIM 1 CUSTOMER FOCUS - PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

- Improvement Goal - "We will ensure that our customers consistently receive an excellent standard of service"

AIM 2 SAFE AND CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS

- Goal "We will help to make Flintshire a safe and attractive place to live, visit and work in"

AIM 3 HEALTHY AND CARING COMMUNITIES

- Goal "We will encourage good health, promote independence and offer better life chances for all people in Flintshire"
- Improvement Goal "We will ensure that all have access to a home that best meets their needs"

AIM 4 INVESTING FOR TOMORROW'S GENERATION

- Improvement Goal "Children in need, particularly those looked after by the Council, will be provided with the same quality of care and opportunities that would be expected from a good parent"
- Improvement Goal "Ensure that all children maximise their potential through high quality formal and informal learning opportunities provided in a range of settings"

AIM 5 PROTECTING OUR FUTURE WAY OF LIFE

- Goal "We will meet the needs of the present without compromising the future"

4. What are the People Strategy Aims?

The aims are defined as follows:

- **Focusing all on the delivery of 'customer-centred' services**
(Creating a skilled and motivated workforce focused on customer care and capable of embracing change)
- **Improving employee relations**
(Developing employment partnership through improved communication, involvement and consultation processes)
- **Branding Flintshire as an excellent employer**
(Making Flintshire County Council an employer of choice)
- **Developing a positive working environment**
(Flintshire County Council recognising our work life and wellbeing; enhancing the workplace environment to create a safer, healthier place to work)
- **Mainstreaming equality**
(Putting equality at the heart of everything we do)
- **Modernising the HR Service**
(Through listening to our customers and understanding their needs we will be reshaping our service to meet your needs)

5. More Details on the Aims

5.1 Focusing all on the delivery of 'customer-centred' services

(Creating a skilled and motivated workforce focused on customer care and capable of embracing change)

Objectives

- Design the organisation to meet future needs
- Recruit and develop the workforce to fit the organisation design
- Design people strategies that motivate all to deliver excellent customer service

What has been achieved?

- Some redesign of services through 'Programme For Change'
- Re-branding of media recruitment advertising
- 70 customer care workshops completed covering over 900 + employees
- Designed and issued customer care booklet
- Appraisal training provided for all managers
- Corporate training centre and training team established providing a range of training programmes
- Computer-based interactive training – E-Learning pilot delivered
- Corporate induction programme in place

5. More Details on the Aims

Next Steps

- Introduce the HR Service partner role into the organisation. The HR Manager will work in partnership with Directorates to ensure the Council makes best use of our people
- Work in partnership with Directorates and joint trades unions on organisation design / job design and career progression routes
- Review and re-design the recruitment process
- Introduce a Managed Service for agency staff (a single point of contact to manage all agency recruitment on behalf of the Council)
- Introduce assessment centres including enhanced psychometric testing capability for management recruitment purposes and development centres for improved team working
- Develop e-learning capability further
- Develop and introduce a corporate management training programme
- Introduce a standard first day induction for all new starters
- Develop and introduce the next phase of customer care training
- Further align the appraisal process to the corporate performance management framework
- Design and introduce a full workforce development plan to include individual development plans for every employee

5. More Details on the Aims

5.2 Improving employee relations

(Developing employment partnership through improved communication, involvement and consultation processes)

Objectives

- Design and deliver better communication and consultation processes
- Work together well to deliver organisation change
- Complete and implement the Single Status agreement

What has been achieved?

- Completion of team briefing training and introduction of team briefing process
- Creation of dedicated Single Status project team
- Assigned dedicated HR support to each Directorate to form service partnerships
- Implemented an HR Service Centre which provides first level information, guidance, solutions – Call Centre response effectively to all
- Introduced a regular HR update in Flintshire Focus and on the HR Infonet

Next Steps

- Introduce HR/Payroll MIS system to line managers which includes a 'self service' facility for local maintenance of HR records
- Finalise Single Status arrangements including harmonised pay, policies and people processes
- Complete an employee opinion survey which feeds into a monitored action plan
- Develop HR pages on the Infonet to improve access to HR policies and procedures including opportunities for feedback
- Introduce employee suggestion scheme
- Develop employee networks
- Develop an HR Policy Development and Communication Framework

5. More Details on the Aims

5.3 Branding Flintshire as an excellent employer (Making Flintshire County Council an employer of choice)

Objectives

- Improve the perception of potential applicants sufficiently for the Council to attract the people we need to deliver excellent services
- Change the image of public sector working in Flintshire presenting opportunities in a modern and attractive way

What has been achieved?

- Re-branding of media recruitment advertising
- Introduction of bilingual (Welsh/English) recruitment advertising
- HR Service Centre Implemented
- Introduced child care voucher scheme

Next Steps

- Review and re-design the recruitment process
- Promote work life balance in the working environment including flexible working hours
- Develop and introduce a Carers Policy
- Modernise and simplify employment policies
- Introduce a standard first day induction for all new starters
- Re-develop the web based job application facility
- Re-design and introduce new application form / application pack
- Develop pay and rewards strategy linked to Single Status outcomes
- Introduce Graduate Recruitment Programme
- Promote careers within Flintshire to local schools and colleges
- Further develop Modern Trainee Programme

5. More Details on the Aims

5.4 Developing a positive Working Environment

(Flintshire recognising our work life and wellbeing - enhancing the workplace environment to create a safer, healthier place to work)

Objectives

- Encourage a working environment where health and safety risks are properly appreciated and managed
- Develop policies standards and procedures that promote a safe and healthy working environment
- Identify significant health and safety hazards and assist both managers and employees to correct the hazard before illness or injury occur
- Assist employees in controlling personal health in order to enhance their quality of life and wellbeing

What has been achieved?

- Continued provision of in-house occupational health and safety services with access to confidential counselling.
- Attained Welsh Assembly Government's Corporate Health Standard Gold award and continued support of the philosophy of the Corporate Health Standard programme through the establishment and ongoing initiatives of the Corporate Health Standard Steering Group, which includes Trades Unions and cross-Directorate representation.
- Developed and introduced the following policies:
 - No-Smoking Policy
 - Stress Management Policy
 - Sickness Absence Management Policy
 - Corporate Health and Safety Policy
 - Asbestos Policy and guidance
 - Lone Working Policy
 - Managing Violence and Aggression Policy

5. More Details on the Aims

- Enhanced Fire evacuation procedures and training of officers and wardens
- Established strategic Directorate H&S Committees
- Conducted baseline health and safety reviews across all directorates

Next Steps

- Implement Directorate action plans following baseline reviews
- Establish health surveillance/screening programmes for workplace hazards e.g. Vibration and Noise
- Train managers – stress and risk management and managing safety
- Redesign H&S forms and guidance to empower and enable managers and supervisors to manage safety
- Enhance H&S auditing to monitor progress and compliance with requirements
- Continue health education and health promotion initiatives – healthy eating and nutrition, exercise, men's and women's health etc.

5. More Details on the Aims

5.5 Mainstreaming equality

(Putting equality at the heart of everything we do)

Objectives

- Develop a workforce that reflects the diversity of Flintshire

What has been achieved?

- Introduction of various policies to meet changes in legislation
- Provision of equalities data for internal and external use
- Disability Equality Duty project team established
- Equalities training offered for managers
- Welsh Language training offered for employees
- Development of Welsh Language Scheme and Welsh Language Skills Strategy

Next Steps

- Equal pay reviewer solution to be implemented to support equal pay requirements
- Conduct equality impact assessment on all core HR processes
- Develop and introduce training for managers to offer practical guidance in designing inclusive services
- Further develop equalities data capture and usage by managers
- Identify and publicise good examples of mainstreaming equality throughout the Council
- Include plans for recruitment and development of under represented groups within Directorate service plans
- Produce and publish annual workforce information report for both the public and our employees
- Verify that our recruitment process is compliant with the Disability Symbol ('Two Ticks') scheme and publicise our commitment to it
- Ensure compliance with the Welsh Language Scheme
- Deliver further training to support the Welsh Language Scheme

5. More Details on the Aims

5.6 Modernising the HR Service

(Through listening to our customers and understanding their needs, we will reshape our service to meet your needs)

Objectives

- The HR Team will build partnerships with all Directorates, gaining a better understanding of the service each provides and offering real support to drive service improvements

What has been achieved?

- Price Waterhouse Cooper review identified improvements required in the HR service provision
- Investment in resources allocated to deliver a professional HR Service
- New HR structure agreed by County Council to enable HR to deliver enhanced services to support the partnership model approach
- New HR/Payroll Management Information System purchased
- Significant support provided by the HR team to the Programme for Change
- HR Service partner model implemented
- HR Service Centre implemented, which provides first level support - in effect providing a call centre response to all

Next Steps

- Develop organisational change model and train HR team and managers to implement
- Implement the selected Human Resource & Payroll Management Information System (HR/Payroll MIS)
- Develop and introduce an HR internal customer feedback process
- Review and re-design the recruitment process
- Review core HR policies, procedures and processes in line with the development of the HR Service Centre and Management Information System solution.
- Further enhance HR reporting to meet the needs of each Directorate

6. Strategy Consultation and Monitoring

This People Strategy has been developed with widespread involvement of all stakeholders including elected members, senior managers, frontline staff and joint trades unions.

The agreed Strategy was communicated to all employees in April/May 2007.
The Strategy will be reviewed every two years.

This Strategy will feed directly into the HR Action Plan which is available from the Workforce Planning and Information Manager.

The HR Action Plan will be reviewed quarterly by the Director of Corporate Strategy and the Assistant Director of HR.

Progress Reports will be provided following each review to:

- Corporate Management Team
- Executive
- People and Performance Scrutiny Committee
- Flintshire Joint Trades Unions Committee
- Equality Review Team

7. Performance Indicators

In the first instance we are using the performance indicators relating to employees contained within the Council Plan (CP), some of which are National Core Sets (NCS). We also use some targets set in Policy Agreements (PA). We have also developed local indicators (LI) to measure our performance against the People Strategy.

- The percentage of employees (including teachers and school-based staff) who leave the employment of the local authority, whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis (NCS)
- The percentage of employees (excluding teachers and school-based staff) who leave the employment of the local authority, whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis (NCS)
- The number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence (NCS)
- The number of ill-health retirements as a percentage of the local authority's workforce (NCS)
- The percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities (NCS)
- The percentage of local authority employees declaring that they are disabled under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (NCS)
- Number of major injuries to local Authority Employees reported to the Health and Safety Executive per 1,000 Local Authority employees (NCS)
- The number of over-three day injuries to local authority employees reported to the Health and Safety Executive per 1,000 Local Authority employees (NCS)
- Reduction in sickness/absence levels from 9.4 days to 8 days by March 2009 (CP)
- Increase by 10% the % total employees that feel valued from 43% every two years (CP)
- Improve employee satisfaction with their work environment from 60% to 75% by March 2007 (CP)
- 100% of total employees have an annual appraisal with Individual Development Plans by March 2009 (CP)

- The number of Modern Apprenticeships within the Authority (PA)
- Modern Apprenticeship – average occupancy rate (PA)
- Modern Apprenticeship – percentage of those starting to achieve a positive outcome (PA)
- The number and percentage of main reception, call centre or one stop shop posts that have been denoted as ‘Welsh essential’ and have been filled by staff who are bilingual (WLI2)
- The number and percentage of staff who have received training in Welsh to a specific qualification level (WLI 4a)
- The number and percentage of staff who have received language awareness training (WLI4b)
- The number and percentage of staff within the Council’s services who are able to speak Welsh according to service division/post grade/workplace, office and centre in the main area offices (WLI5)
- Achieve Level 2 of the Equalities standard by 2007 (LI)
- The percentage of employees from minority ethnic communities at different levels of the organisation (LI)
- Increase % of employees from different equality target groups feeling valued (LI)

8. Comments and Questions

Details of the action plan to implement this Strategy are posted on the Infonet and are also available upon request from the Workforce Planning and Information Manager.

For copies of this publication in Welsh, larger print, Braille, tape or disk, please call the Workforce Planning and Information Manager on 01352 702714.

If you have any comments or questions about this Strategy please email yourhr@flintshire.gov.uk

9. Glossary of Terms

Assessment Centres

Assessment Centres are a series of extended selection or development exercises, typically lasting one or two days or sometimes longer, where a number of different assessors observe candidates/employees over a longer period of time and have the chance to see what they can do in a variety of situations. Candidates/employees could be asked to undertake interviews, presentations, psychometric tests and individual/group tasks as part of an assessment centre.

Disability Equality Duty

The Disability Equality Duty came into force in December 2006. This legal duty requires all public bodies to actively look at ways of ensuring that disabled people are treated equally. All of those covered by the specific duties must also have produced a Disability Equality Scheme, which they must now implement.

Disability Symbol Scheme

This is a recognition given by Jobcentre Plus to employers based in Great Britain who have agreed to take action to meet five commitments regarding the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees.

E-Learning / Computer-based interactive training

Internet or intranet based training that enables users to access training courses and learning materials on a desktop computer.

Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment is a way to make sure individuals and teams think carefully about the likely impact of policies or procedures, strategies, functions and services, to identify any unmet needs, and to provide a basis for action to improve services where appropriate. It systematically assesses and records the actual, potential or likely impact of a service, policy or project – or a significant change in a service, policy or project - on different groups of people. The consequences of policies and projects on particular groups are analysed and anticipated so that, as far as possible, any negative consequences can be eliminated or minimised and opportunities for ensuring equality can be maximised.

Equal Pay Reviewer

Equal Pay Reviewer Software forms a foundation for organisations undertaking an equal pay review; assisting in the collation of data and identification of potential equality issues within their pay structure.

HR

Human Resources.

HR Service Partner Model

The term 'business partner' is used loosely to cover a diversity of jobs from strategic to administrative to consultancy. Business partnering involves the restructuring of HR into three specialist sub-functions:

HR Service Centre – a single unit that handles all the routine 'transactional' services across the business. An HR Service Centre typically provide resourcing, absence monitoring, and advice on the simpler employee relations issues. An HR Service Centres' remit is to provide low-cost, effective HR administration and often operates alongside an HR infonet and employee self-service.

Centres of excellence – usually small teams of HR experts with specialist knowledge of leading-edge HR solutions. The role of centres of excellence is to deliver competitive business advantages through HR innovations in areas such as reward, learning, engagement and talent management.

Strategic partners – a few HR professionals working closely with business leaders influencing strategy and steering its implementation. The task of strategic partners is to ensure the business makes best use of its people and its people opportunities. They also aim to inform and shape HR strategy, so that HR meets organisational needs. In Flintshire County Council these are known as HR managers.

Infonet

Flintshire's intranet, containing information useful to our employees.

Intranet

A private website/network belonging to an organisation, accessible only by the organisations members, employees or others with authorisation. Like the internet, intranets are used to share information.

Local Government Pay & Workforce Strategy

The key objective of the Pay and Workforce Strategy is to ensure that local government has the visionary leadership, organisational flexibility and people capacity required to deliver improved services, greater efficiency and better customer focus. All authorities are encouraged to embrace the challenge of organisational transformation and workforce planning, in order to create real and lasting change.

Managed Service (Agency Staff)

A managed service brings a corporate approach to the procurement and usage of agency staff. It serves as an interface between the council and its agencies to manage their temporary staff needs, acting as one point of contact for all agency staff procurement.

Psychometric Test

A psychometric test is a way of assessing a person's ability or personality in a measured and structured way. There are 3 main types of tests: ability, personality and interest (although both personality and interest are more like psychometric questionnaires). Some tests are used by employers to help them in their recruitment process or to assist with development, while other tests can help people with career decision-making.

Self-Service (in relation to the HR/Payroll Management Information System)

The HR/Payroll MIS system has a number of modules which will be made available via the infonet to managers and employees where appropriate. This facility will be known as "self-service". This will mean that employees can access up to date information and view and maintain their details, while managers can access and input/amend data relating to their team at anytime.

Single Status

The Single Status Agreement was negotiated between the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government services and Local Government Trades Unions. It covers the jobs held by employees whose terms and conditions of employment are set by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. The purpose of the agreement is to enable Councils to review its pay and grading structures to assess that they are fair and equitable.

your^H_R

Promoting equality Valuing diversity