

workforce development planning

guidance document

May 2004

what is the purpose of this document?

The Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy stresses the importance of all authorities developing a Workforce Development Plan by March 2005.

This document aims to help you produce a Workforce Development Plan, setting out guidelines for what a Workforce Development Plan should cover and suggesting how you might develop your own Workforce Development Plan.

It includes suggestions as to what issues you should be planning to tackle, and gives checklists of potential actions you might consider.

It complements other Employers' Organisation documents, for example our **'Guide to Workforce Planning for Local Authorities'** (2003), which gives much fuller advice on the techniques of workforce planning and **'What's Your People Strategy?'** (2004), which looks in much greater depth at how to develop and implement an effective people strategy.

If you have any comments or questions about this Guidance then please contact the authors, Jonathan Trubshaw or Nigel Carruthers at the Employers' Organisation (jonathan.trubshaw@lg-employers.gov.uk or nigel.carruthers@lg-employers.gov.uk). The Guidance will be updated over time in response to your comments.

'There is a reservoir of talent in councils, but the new agenda requires new skills and capabilities, which are latent in some but can be tapped.

People are a key driver for improvement, which means investment in training and development.'

Nick Raynsford, Local Government Minister, July 2000

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introduction and definitions

Most of local government's service delivery is provided through people, directly and indirectly. The success of an authority, its customers' satisfaction, its efficiency, its performance indicators and Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) rating all depend heavily on its employees' skills, ability, knowledge and motivation.

CPA has demonstrated that many poorly performing authorities have under-invested in workforce development. Many improvement plans include the need to re-invest in focused skill development.

'The improvement needed will only be achieved by improving the capacity and capability of the people who deliver the services. Having a structured approach to building the capacity of the workforce will therefore positively impact and improve the services delivered to the community.'

Audit Commission CPA Briefing Paper 3 on People Management, June 2003

Effective people management and development is fundamental to achieving service improvement. Unless an authority can attract, retain, develop, manage and motivate skilled people it will find it difficult to keep pace with the increasing demands for high performance, improvement, modernisation and efficiency.

All authorities need to carry out workforce planning and use this as a basis for their Workforce Development Plan. This Plan should identify their strategies for building the relevant skills and capacity needed for organisational success.

Workforce planning is the process of getting the right people, with the right skills, in the right jobs at the right time.

workforce planning means:

- identifying the current and future skills and numbers of employees needed to deliver new and improved services
- analysing the present workforce's characteristics in relation to these needs
- comparing the present workforce and the desired future workforce to highlight shortages, surpluses and competency gaps
- looking at the authority's diversity profile at all levels against that of the future local population

The process of workforce development can be defined as:

'...an activity that improves the level and application of skills, so as to achieve greater success for individuals and employers...'

Performance and Innovation Unit, Cabinet Office Report, November 2001

The workforce planning process provides the basis for producing a three to five year Workforce Development Plan that sets out how the Local Authority will recruit, support, develop and retain the employees it needs for the future. The Plan should also set out where employees will need to move to new jobs to meet changing needs and priorities.

organisational context

Improving services and building capacity is only possible if clear links are made between the Council's corporate strategy and how the authority manages its workforce. Ideally a Workforce Development Plan should be part of an authority's wider People Strategy (or Human Resource or Workforce Strategy) and should fully reflect the authority's corporate priorities and objectives. Factors such as willingness to learn, attitudes to change, flexibility and adaptability are key to successful capacity building within an organisation.

comprehensive performance assessment

The Audit Commission's CPA process asks local authorities some key questions that directly relate to how the organisation manages its people. Previous CPA processes asked two key questions that an effective Workforce Development Plan should help to provide an answer to:

- does the Council have the capacity and skills it needs to achieve improvement / change?
- how will the Council ensure that it has the capacity to identify, implement and maintain improvements / further improvements?

identifying requirements

For any organisation to be able to build the capacity needed it must be able to identify what is required. This may seem rather an obvious statement however the ability to identify this at an organisational level and relate it to the changes required at an individual level can be difficult to achieve in practice.

Workforce Development Planning should be integrated into the organisation's business planning (or corporate planning) processes. The Employers' Organisation's **Workforce Planning Guidance** (available on www.lg-employers.gov.uk) provides additional advice for authorities on how this can be done.

figure 1: three-step approach

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| step one | where are you trying to get to? what workforce do you need? |
| step two | where are you now? what is the current workforce position? |
| step three | how are we going to get there? what needs to be done to achieve the necessary changes? |

At the individual / team level the organisation needs to be clear as to the key service priorities over the coming months and years. This will determine what jobs (roles/responsibilities/objectives/tasks) are required, then what skills, knowledge and behaviours are required (associated with these jobs) and therefore whether the people required (existing staff / new recruits) have these knowledge, skills and behaviours.

wider context

Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy

The Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy (PWS) sets out a comprehensive approach to help to ensure that local government has the right numbers of people in the right places with the right skills to deliver improved services, higher productivity and greater customer focus. It follows the requirements set out by the Treasury and the Cabinet Office for all government departments and is part of a national strategic initiative across the public sector workforce.

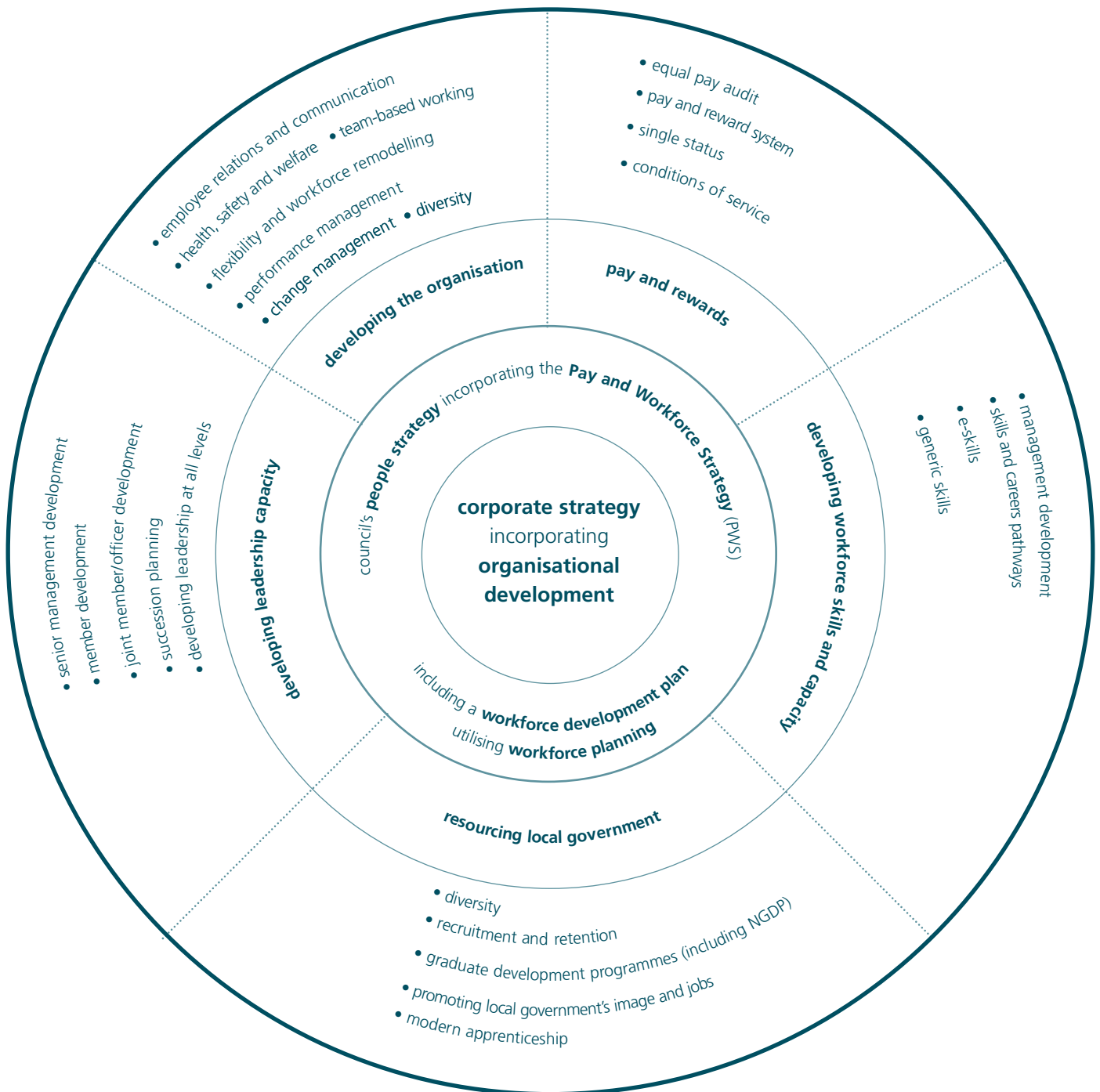
The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and the Employers' Organisation (EO) developed the strategy, with input from local authorities, other government departments and relevant agencies and professional organisations.

The strategy identifies the following five priority areas as critical to developing the local government workforce:

Developing Leadership Capacity – among both officers and members, including attracting effective leaders into local government from outside the sector.

- **developing the skills and capacity of the workforce** – across the corporate centre of authorities, specific services, management and the frontline workforce.
- **developing the organisation** – to achieve excellence in people and performance management, partnership working, equality and diversity and the efficient delivery of services.
- **resourcing local government** – ensuring that authorities recruit, train and retain the staff they need.
- **pay and rewards** – having pay and reward structures that attract, retain and develop a skilled and flexible workforce while achieving value for money in service delivery.

figure 2: the workforce development plan and other organisational strategies and how they link with the PWS



Pay and Workforce Strategy and capacity building Regional Action Plans

Regional Action Plans are being developed that identify regional priority issues, objectives, targets, responsibilities and timescales. In most instances, overall regional implementation is being co-ordinated by the Regional Employers' Organisations (REO). The Employers' Organisation's Regional Skills and Capacity Advisors are supporting authorities in relation to workforce development and recruitment and retention. The Improvement and Development Agency's Regional Associates offer support for overall corporate capacity building and leadership development. ODPM's Regional Directors provide advice on the Capacity Building Fund and support regional action. Other organisations such as the Regional Development Agencies and Local Learning and Skills Councils are assisting regional implementation to different degrees in different regions.

National Skills Strategy, 21st Century Skills, realising our potential

The Government launched their National Skills Strategy, 21st Century Skills last year, setting out their blueprint for skills development over the next five years.

The main elements of the Strategy are:

- a rapid expansion of the Sector Skills Council network
- the development of a national programme for employers based on the Employer Training Pilots scheme
- reform of qualifications to make them more employer-friendly and responsive to business needs
- more employer involvement in the design and delivery of Modern Apprenticeships
- the creation of better business support services so that employers know who to turn to for help on skills, joining up the work of Business Link, local Learning and Skills Councils and Jobcentre Plus
- a new 'Employers Guide to Good Training'
- a new management and leadership drive, working with Investors In People

FRESAs and Regional Skills Alliances

Frameworks for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESAs) have been agreed in each of the English Regions by the key agencies and employers. Regional Skills Alliances have been formed to drive the regional skills agenda. This includes briefing educational establishments about employers' future skills needs and influencing the planning of future higher and further education spend.

Information about regional skills needs is being gathered by RDAs to support the FRESA process. It is important that authorities articulate their skills needs individually and collectively to ensure local government's skills issues are considered and addressed regionally.

Local authorities are represented on Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) but often their representatives' focus is outward facing, for example many are concerned with economic development. It is important that authorities' own skills needs are fed into the RDA process. For more information on your FRESA contact your local Regional Development Agency or the Employers' Organisation's Regional Skills and Capacity Advisor.

producing a Workforce Development Plan

The advice below assumes that the Plan is a free-standing document. However the best Plans will be contained within a council's wider People Strategy.

A Workforce Development Plan should set out the future workforce composition (including jobs, skills, knowledge and behaviours) needed by an organisation to achieve its objectives and how this will be attained. A Workforce Development Plan should cover a three to five year period and take a more comprehensive and strategic approach than the traditional short-term and separate Training and Development and Recruitment and Retention Plans.

A comprehensive Workforce Development Plan needs to be based on a workforce planning analysis. We set out below our suggestions for the main sections of a Workforce Development Plan with a commentary as to what should be included in each.

introduction

It is important that the Workforce Development Plan has high-level organisational commitment and not just about what the Human Resource team should do. The introduction should demonstrate that the Plan has political and strategic endorsement, for example, by including a statement of commitment from the Chief Executive and/or Leader/Mayor of the council.

establishing the strategic context

The Plan needs to demonstrate that it reflects the organisation's key priorities and is tackling the strategic workforce development challenges. This Section should include these as well as setting out any major changes being proposed or considered over the next five years. This might include, for example: the impact of e-enabled services; a move towards a one stop shop approach; the development of strategic partnerships, Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMO)s or Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs); changes in the use of technology, new methods of working; changes to service standards; the impact of any restructures following Best Value reviews or CPA results; the impact of expected retirements; the need to recruit to new roles for new services that are being delivered. Other drivers for workforce development are listed at figure 3.

figure 3: drivers for workforce development activity

- delivering modern local authorities that lead and enable their communities, fostering democratic renewal
- managing flexible and competitive service partnerships
- procuring services more cost effectively
- delivering services in different ways to different people
- exploiting the benefits of using new technologies to the full
- meeting heightened and diverse customer needs and expectations
- managing organisational improvements within tight resources
- managing major changes in structures and organisations such as the transfer of staff between organisations, and potentially coping with regionalisation
- addressing the demands of external inspection e.g. SSI, OFSTED, CPA
- responding to the Gershon Review and other efficiency drivers
- responding to the Children's Bill
- ensuring compliance with legislation (both British and European), codes of practice and central government policy
- achieving workforce reforms including more flexible working practices and re-modelling
- achieving a diverse workforce that reflects the local community at every level
- delivering other organisational priorities
- responding to the increasing recruitment and retention challenges in key occupational areas.

skills and development planning

This section of the Workforce Development Plan should identify the key current and future knowledge, skills and attitudes required by the authority. Authorities who have achieved Investors In People (IiP) will have developed strategies and plans with regards to skill development. The Employers' Organisation supports the Investors in People process and this guidance has been produced to compliment existing Investors in People guidance¹. There are a number of approaches to developing skills with an organisation:

using a Skills Framework approach

Many authorities adopt a Skills Framework approach, which breaks down the workforce into different skill groups and identifies the skills needed by that group of staff, for example leaders, managers and front-line staff. (The South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council approach is outlined in Appendix Three)

Ten-Box model approach to skills development

The Ten-Box model approach is set out in Appendix Four. It links both skills development and the evaluation of skill development activities to organisational and service priorities.

skills pathways

Skills pathways set out key steps and stages for the acquisition of the core skills, occupational experience and values needed to enable an individual to progress within their job or from one job to other. For example someone might be recruited as a Planning Administrator, then progress to being a Planning Assistant before becoming a Planning Officer. This would involve them in on-the-job development as well as attending a part time external qualification course.

At each stage the competence to move to the next level would be tested. Skills pathways are not guaranteed steps to obtaining employment at a higher level. Some can enable employees to move between jobs at the same level, providing opportunities for new challenges and new learning.

Many authorities use a combination of the above methodologies to provide a comprehensive approach to skills and development planning. The issue is to ask the type of questions shown in figure 4.

The Employers' Organisation's Regional Skills and Capacity Advisors (RSCAs) can provide advice to local authorities about how to use and apply these models and well as other specific techniques. Contact details for the RSCAs are in Appendix Two.

The Employers' Organisation is developing a national Skills Framework to assist in the development of both generic and occupational skills in 2004-5. Further information can be found by contacting nigel.carruthers@lg-employers.gov.uk

1 See www.investorsinpeople.co.uk for more information on IIP and related supporting material on skills development. Some authorities are adapting and using National Occupational Standards² as a basis for creating skill pathways. Skills pathways allow individuals to update their skills and provide support in the drive for continuous learning and improvement.

2 National Occupational Standards (NOSs) are the competencies that form the basis of National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications. There are NOSs that cover most local government occupations and roles. For details see the EO website: www.lg-employers.gov.uk.

figure 4: the Workforce Development Plan:

key questions for skills and development planning

- have the priority corporate skills that are needed for high performance been identified? (e.g. project and programme management; performance management; procurement; diversity; maximising the use of technology)
- has the current position been mapped in relation to the future skill needs of the authority, including:
- have the current and future occupational shortages been identified? (this may include undertaking a skill breakdown, proposals for job redesign, remodelling roles to address specific skill shortages identified).
- have the key managerial and generic skill gaps been identified across the organisation? (e.g. leadership, management development, customer care, health and safety, equal opportunities/diversity etc)
- have the potential future skills shortages/gaps been identified in relation to projected or expected changes to the workforce profile? (e.g. key occupational areas where there are large numbers of people nearing retirement or where there is high turnover; areas where skills needs are expanding such as care staff or technology or the need to reflect a more diverse workforce profile)
- have the potential future skills shortages/gaps been identified in relation to projected or expected changes in service delivery, working methods, technology, legislation or government policy?
- once skill needs have been identified across the organisation the Workforce Development Plan needs to set out the actions to be taken to address key skill
- shortages, gaps and workforce diversity issues. A Checklist (figure 5) has been produced to help local authorities reflect on their approach to skills development as part of the workforce development action planning process.

figure 5: the Workforce Development Plan:

check list for skills and development actions

- agreeing annual individual development plans for all employees with regular one-to-one reviews
- agreeing a minimum number of employee development days for all staff
- establishing a learning agreement in the workplace with trade unions
- maximising the opportunities for on-the-job learning
- providing mentors and/or coaches
- including development briefings in team meetings
- organising workshops, seminars and conferences
- organising secondments or assigning stretching projects
- using e-learning materials
- action learning sets
- reading programmes
- 360 degree appraisals
- organising development programmes
- providing Learning Centres
- providing National Vocational Qualifications assessment
- sponsoring employees to attend external and qualification courses
- organising team away-days
- organising development opportunities with partner organisations or neighbouring authorities
- visiting other authorities/organisations
- involving other organisations such as the Local Learning and Skills Council or the Basic Skills Agency
- spotting and developing employees with the ability to move to higher levels posts
- supporting and encouraging Union Learning Representatives and other Learning Champions
- encouraging employees at all levels to look for learning opportunities

recruitment and retention planning

Employers' Organisation Surveys have identified problems in recruitment and retention across a number of local government occupations including social workers, occupational therapists, environmental health officers, planners, building control officers, teachers and care assistants³. A number of surveys have identified that local government is not always seen as an exciting employer.

Authorities need to be able to deliver improved services within a current challenge of low unemployment, shortages of some key skills and tight financial constraints. Recruitment processes need to support the overall business needs of the organisation. Authorities need to consider whether services could be delivered in different ways.

Although authorities cannot single-handedly address the problems of a poor public image of public sector employment, there are a number of issues that they can take to improve their own recruitment and retention rates.

³ See www.lg-employers.gov.uk/recruit/workforce_surveys/index.html for further information.

the Audit Commission's 2002 recruitment and retention report

The Audit Commission's report noted that for the public sector in general:

- demand for staff is growing faster than supply
- the cost of living and increased employment opportunities exacerbate problems in London and the south east
- the age profile of the public sector workforce means that problems will continue to grow if not coherently addressed.

They recommended that the best responses to recruitment problems are ones that move away from a primary focus on recruitment to a holistic focus on people's whole work experience.

The report found that there were a number of complex issues lying behind the situation. In particular, people leaving public service employment were doing so because of negative experiences rather than compelling alternative options.

the age profile challenge

Most local authorities are facing challenges regarding their workforce's age profile. In England and Wales less than 7 per cent of local government employees are under 25 years old and more than 31 per cent of the workforce are over 50 years old. Authorities need to examine the age profile of their employees in key occupational and professional roles to see if they are likely to have skills gaps in the near future. All authorities need to contribute to developing the next generation of skilled employees by taking on trainees.

This section of the Workforce Development Plan needs to address the above challenges. These have been summarised as five key recruitment and retention needs that should act as a focus for Workforce Development Planning (figure 6).

figure 6: key recruitment and retention issues

- increasing the number of new people coming into local government, including young people and people from other sectors
- addressing skill shortages and recruitment challenges
- raising the positive profile of local government careers and promoting the council as an employer of choice
- ensuring the council has a diverse workforce at all levels that reflects the communities the council serves
- increasing the retention of talented employees, particularly in key occupational areas

addressing key current and future occupational shortage areas

Many authorities have begun to address their recruitment challenges. The Checklist at figure 7 has been produced to help authorities reflect on their approach to recruitment and retention actions as part of the workforce development action planning process.

figure 7: activities to address recruitment and retention challenges:

- using entry-level development schemes linked to career graded job roles to increase the number of new/young people in local government
- developing fast track skill development programmes for certain occupational groups
- introducing bursaries for professional studies
- joining or setting up partnerships with other organisations to implement national and regional sector action plans
- undertaking job rotation schemes
- creating work placements
- in partnership with Job Centre Plus, utilising New Deal initiatives and Entry to Employment schemes
- accessing apprenticeships schemes through work based learning providers and the Further Education Sector e.g. Modern Apprenticeships (now known as Apprenticeship schemes and the 'Earn as you learn' initiatives.)
- supporting Unison's Return to Learn scheme to engage existing employees back into learning and onto specific skills pathways projects e.g. Social Care.
- developing cross-service progression routes by sharing recruitment challenges with other related service areas, e.g. 'School Meals services' with 'Meals on Wheels services' etc

- remodelling areas of work, changing skill mixes, creating more para-professional posts, redesigning jobs etc
- creating more career pathways, with skill development and qualification release, which allow staff in front line posts to move up step-by-step into more highly skilled posts (e.g. planning administrator to planning assistant to planning officer)
- setting up graduate entry schemes or signing up for the Employers' Organisation's National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)
- using the Employers' Organisation's GOLD database to recruit top quality graduates
- recruiting overseas to fill critical and urgent shortages
- analysing and addressing the issues causing high turnover in key occupational areas e.g. doing exit interviews
- promoting jobs more effectively, speeding up and improving recruitment processes to attract better candidates
- promoting skill shortage areas to schools, colleges and universities
- supporting more student placements and/or sponsoring more students on qualification courses
- setting up schemes to attract mature candidates who bring experience from other sectors (re-evaluating person specifications; creating opportunities for suitable candidates from other sectors to gain any necessary experience)
- offering those approaching retirement opportunities to work more flexibly, reduce their hours or move to less responsible posts in order to keep them at work
- attracting back retirees or others who have left skilled jobs e.g. women who left to care for their families (offering 'updating' courses and/or mentors to support re-entry)

- working with other authorities on some or all of these initiatives
- anticipating and avoiding skills shortages which can often turn into vicious circles (as they put pressure on the employees left covering for vacancies and supporting temporary staff, so increasing absence levels and turnover and impacting upon the authority's image, which can reduce the supply of potential new recruits)
- ensuring good employment and staff care practices so that employees want to continue to work for you
- operating good diversity practices so that black and minority ethnic employees, women, and people with disabilities want to work for you
- improving induction practices so new recruits get a better start

diversity and workforce planning

We have highlighted diversity issues in relation to both skills and development and recruitment and retention issues. Authorities may also wish to look at diversity and workforce planning issues as a whole to see where blockages are occurring, what the workforce diversity profile is at different levels of the organisation, and within different areas of the workforce.

figure 8: checklist for actions to address the diversity profile of the workforce:

- actions are likely to include setting up a high level Diversity Action Group to develop and implement a Workforce Diversity Strategy that might include:
- ensuring all managers and employees understand and operate best practice in promoting diversity
- analysing the composition of the workforce at different levels to see where there are blockages
- analysing the underlying causes of these blockages and addressing these
- considering benefits/disadvantages of offering positive action development programmes or mentoring schemes

utilising key partners

This section of the Workforce Development Plan should consider how the authority might benefit from working with other organisations, locally and regionally, that can provide support, advice, solutions and funding for workforce development issues including:

- the Local Learning and Skills Council for support with skills needs analysis, workforce development advice, apprenticeships, addressing basic skills needs and National Vocational Qualifications
- Regional Employers' Organisation for cross authority initiatives
- Job Centre Plus for recruitment support
- trade unions to help to promote learning, particularly for front-line staff
- Employers' Organisation – making use of Regional Skills and Capacity Advisors' advice on workforce planning, workforce development and recruitment and retention

The Employers' Organisation is developing national partnership arrangements with all the above organisations to support a more coherent response at a regional and local level. A Learning and Skills Council Strategy for developing Schools Support Staff has recently been published. A new Learning and Skills Council Local Government Policy will be produced in September 2004.

trade unions

The national employers are currently negotiating with the local government trade unions in relation to guidance on workforce development. Appendix One has a summary of the current draft statement on Workforce Development. It recommends that employers involve their trade unions at a local level in developing their Workforce Development Plans, and encourage and support the introduction of Trade Union Learning Representatives and the development of Local Learning Partnership Agreements.

key action plan

Once the challenges have been identified, the needs prioritised and the solutions developed it is important to structure this information into an Action Plan. The action planning process should not be separate from existing plans or processes but rather form part of the council's existing Performance Plan. As with all action plans it is essential to:

- identify and assess the potential risks associated with not achieving your desired objectives, and to set up appropriate contingency plans. Many local authorities utilise their existing risk management processes to carry out this exercise
- assign roles, responsibilities and tasks, with agreed deadlines
- ensure sufficient resources are available to deliver the Plan
- set up processes for monitoring, evaluation and review – when it will be done and by what method and means.

A beautifully set out Plan is pointless without action and follow through. Ultimately it is what you do that is critical, not what you say you are going to do. You need to make sure things happen and you learn from what goes well and what doesn't. You need to review your Plan at least every six months and to update it at least every year.

appendices

Appendices can be used to provide data to support the actions or analysis outlined in the main document. They may include:

- workforce profile charts (produced from workforce planning exercises)
- skill audits (for example, using existing information from appraisals, recruitment surveys or new data from skills audits)
- local labour market trends (provided from partner organisations such as Job Centre Plus, Regional Development Agencies or Learning and Skills Councils).

appendix one: guidance on local workforce development plans

1. preamble

1.1 The NJC believes that investment in workforce development is essential to the sustainable improvement of local government services. This guidance is intended to assist in developing and implementing plans for workforce development.

2. Workforce Development Plan guidelines

2.1 The NJC recommends that plans include:

- targets and commitments on access to learning.
- the approach to developing Learning Partnerships including any delivery of programmes jointly with the trade unions
- provisions for ensuring that managers and trade union representatives are jointly trained to deliver the plan

- the approach expected of contractors in relation to workforce training and development.

2.2 The plan should also cover the role of Union Learning Representatives and specify the following in detail:

- paid time off to attend Union Learning Representative training and accreditation
- paid time off to attend joint training with managers in connection with developing and implementing the agreement
- paid time off and facilities to carry out Union Learning Representative duties
- any paid time off arrangement for employees to consult Union Learning Representatives.

2.3 The following section contains action points that authorities may wish to include as part of their plans:

2.3.1 corporate strategy:

- strive to become a 'Learning Local Authority' including seeking and maintaining Investors in People or Public Sector Excellence Model status
- assess the authority's future skill requirements, then examine the age profile and turnover of their current workforce (overall and by occupation) to identify areas that are a priority for action.
- monitor their workforce in relation to equality and use measures such as positive action training to address under-representation of any groups in relation to the profile of the local community
- identify external funding opportunities (such as individual learning fund accounts, Learning and Skills Council funds) and other resources such as local school or college facilities that can be used to assist in workforce development.

2.3.2 investing in the current workforce:

- give priority to addressing basic skills needs and to providing basic ICT skills development opportunities for employees.
- explore new methods of learning such as distance learning and e-learning.
- ensure that all managers have the skills to support their staffs' development, including the ability to organise on the job development opportunities and offer coaching.
- as part of employee benefit packages (to help to recruit and retain learning staff) and to encourage a positive attitude to learning, offer a variety of learning opportunities to enable employees to develop skills and knowledge beyond what they might need for work. (For example: by developing learning partnership arrangements with other local organisations; by finding ways to subsidise or negotiate reduced fees for college courses; or by setting up learning centres).
- benchmark workforce development spend as a percentage of payroll against other public sector organisations

2.3.3 investing in the future workforce:

- contribute significant time and resources to effectively promoting local government careers in local schools, colleges and universities, via Connexions, Learning and Skills Councils and other careers services, etc.
- devote sufficient resources to marketing the authority as a positive employment choice, e.g. pay attention to the quality of advertisements and recruitment materials
- invest in sufficient progression opportunities and trainee posts to address future skill needs
- give appropriate priority to taking on student placements, both supporting the development of those in specific occupations and more general ones e.g. for undergraduates and those still at school

- set up or participate in schemes to attract groups of young people, such as Apprenticeships or Graduate Trainee schemes.

2.4 implementation and measuring progress:

The Workforce Development Plan should set out:

- assessment of current performance against the commitments;
- key targets and performance indicators for improvement;
- milestones and timetables towards achieving these targets;
- responsibility for action;
- methods for monitoring, and reviewing progress.
- role of any local partnership arrangements

3. general information and advice

3.1 Workforce Development Plans can cover all types of learning including:

- job-related training designed to equip employees to undertake their current job;
- initiatives designed to develop new skills and knowledge, relating either to their current role or expanding scope for progression;
- training and development that allows an employee to develop skills and confidence but is largely unrelated to the current role.

3.2 Workforce Development Plans are likely to concentrate on the first two areas of training and development. However authorities may wish to consider ways in which they might promote the third area as part of recruitment and retention initiatives, to promote learning designed to cover skills gaps and to encourage a positive approach to learning.

3.3 Workforce Development Plans should have clearly quantified objectives. These may include targets such as:

- an annual development assessment review for each employee.
- specifications on access to learning opportunities for all employees.
- a specified level of achievement for nationally recognised qualifications.

3.4 The NJC recognises that quality marks such as Investors in People help to benchmark achievement in training and development and it encourages councils to seek this and other forms of appropriate external benchmarking of their training and development activity. The NJC will track progress, using indicators promoted by the People Skills Scoreboard to include Race, Gender, Age, Disability and Grade.

3.5 apprenticeships and traineeships

Following a local grading review the local parties may agree apprentice and trainee pay rates and training schemes for individual jobs. Training schemes could provide for:

- any arrangements for appointment to a permanent post following satisfactory completion of training.
- training for a nationally recognised qualification where this is available.
- quality training provided, or supervised by, a reputable training provider.

3.6 skills pathways

Skills pathways are an approach to workforce development that focuses on the acquisition of core skills and occupational experience and values needed to enable an individual to perform at a level of competence within an occupational role.

The purpose of skills pathways is to clearly identify and map out opportunities for career progression, against the core competence levels required. These levels of competence are currently defined by the National Occupational standards framework, however local authorities would be encouraged adapt these to meet regional and local needs.

Skills pathways will provide a clear set of expectations (skills profiles) and the mechanisms that need to be in place to assist employees obtain career progression in an occupational role. Skills pathways are not guaranteed steps to obtaining employment and must not be seen as stand alone approach.

Implementation will ensure that individuals can update their skills and are supported in the drive for continuous learning and improvement. This initiative will also provide opportunities for staff to move between services e.g. teaching assistants may become social workers or care workers.

3.6 individual development

Local schemes providing access to funds for individual development may be developed. The following broad characteristics are recommended:

- an account controlled by the individual employee but with a limited range of providers and with rigorous accounting procedures in place
- administration provided by or funded by the employer or an agreed external agency
- provision to be funded by any grant support available, an employer contribution, and an agreed employee contribution by deduction from salary
- links with one or more training providers and/or internal training facilities with an agreed range of learning options.
- a focus on individual development, not usually supported by the employer.

appendix two: additional advice

Guide to Workforce Planning for Local Authorities (2003)
www.lg-employers.gov.uk/recruit/working_planning/index.html

What's Your People Strategy? (2004)
www.lg-employers.gov.uk/people/index.html

The Employers' Organisation website www.lg-employers.gov.uk has detailed information, guidance and case studies on many aspects of workforce planning and development and recruitment and retention. It also provides advice on best practice in people management and development, pay and reward systems, diversity, health and safety and many other relevant topics. You can sign up for regular e-alerts as new material is added to the website.

Regional Skills and Capacity Advisors

You can receive local advice on developing a Workforce Development Plan from the Employers' Organisation's Regional Skills and Capacity Advisor. The contact details are as follows:

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The East Midlands and the London posts are currently vacant.

appendix three: using a Skills Framework approach

A Skills Framework can provide a unified and systematic approach to skills and learning across an authority. Figure 9 shows South Tyneside's Skills Framework. The word 'skills' in the context of this framework relates to skills, knowledge and behaviours.

figure 9: South Tyneside Skills Framework

skill groups	target groups	skill levels NQF
governance and partnership skills	strategic partners / elected member / senior managers	
leadership skills	chief officers / elected members / talented employees	Level 5
management skills	managers / professionals	Level 4-5
	trainee managers/ supervisors / technical assistants	Level 3-4
	trainee supervisor / operative	Level 2-3
technical / occupational Skills		
generic skills (including skills for life and employability skills)	operative / trainee	Level 1-2
	all employees	

In Figure 9 there are five different skill areas identified within the Skills Framework which impact on the council's workforce. These groups have been identified as:

- Governance and Partnership Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Management Skills
- Occupational/Technical/Professional Skills
- Generic Skills (including Employability Skills and Skills for Life)

The Skills Framework aims to show the relationship between the Skill groups and specific groups of employees in the workforce. For example all employees (including Elected Members) require the Generic Skills to contribute and work effectively in a high performing local authority.

The other skill groups relate to specific occupational/job areas i.e. the Technical/Operational Skills required to perform a job role to the required performance level and the generic management skills required to manage people, resources, information and finances

The remaining Skill Groups refer to the skills needed to lead the local authority both inwardly across the organisation and outwardly within the community. These have been referred to as Leadership Skills and Governance and Partnership Skills respectively. These skills are the additional skills senior managers and elected members require to perform their role.

The Skills Framework identifies specific skill groups that relate to certain groups of individuals. Figure 1 shows how these two groups relate to each other. A third column also shows the skill attainment levels required across the council. These levels equate to the National Qualifications Framework. The purpose of this is to show diagrammatically how skills, job roles and qualification levels should interrelate.

The Skills Framework does not imply that qualifications are the only measure of skill attainment, but only that the National Qualifications Framework can act as a benchmark on which to base individual progression and development.

The Skills Framework can show progression and succession routes in relation to the Group and the level of skill required. It can also be developed over time to reflect changing priorities.

One of the main reasons for developing a Skills Framework is to show a transparency and structure to the development of all people who work and contribute to the success of an organisation.

As an individual using the Skills Framework you will be able to see where you are in relation to the skills required, identify your skill successes and your immediate needs and the skills required to further your career progression. In many areas there are National Occupational Standards that can be used as a basis for agreeing Technical/Operational skills requirements.

Peter Fanning the Organisational Development Manager for South Tyneside Council believes the Skills Framework has raised the profile of Workforce Development Planning as he states,

‘From an organisational development perspective the Skills Framework helps to raise discussion and debate around the skill needs for the future, particularly in relation to Management and Leadership Skills and the relationship of these skill groups and those relating to the Technical/Operational Skills. It has also challenged the organisation to act more strategically in relation to training and development to avoid duplication of resources and time’.

using a Skills Framework in practice

The Framework provides a simple but user-friendly approach to mapping current activity, identifying and acting on skill needs within an organisation.

The key element of any Skills Framework is the relationship between the Skill Group and the Target Group. The relationships can overlap but it is important when using the framework to start with a relatively fixed relationship between the two elements. It is also important to note that some Target Groups will apply to all or in part some of the Skill Groups.

priority planning using the Skills Framework

You should use the framework to build up data on the Skill Group and the Target Group (figure 10). To do this many organisations will already have information sources that can provide the data. It is important however to identify if you don't have data available and then to add this as part of your action plan.

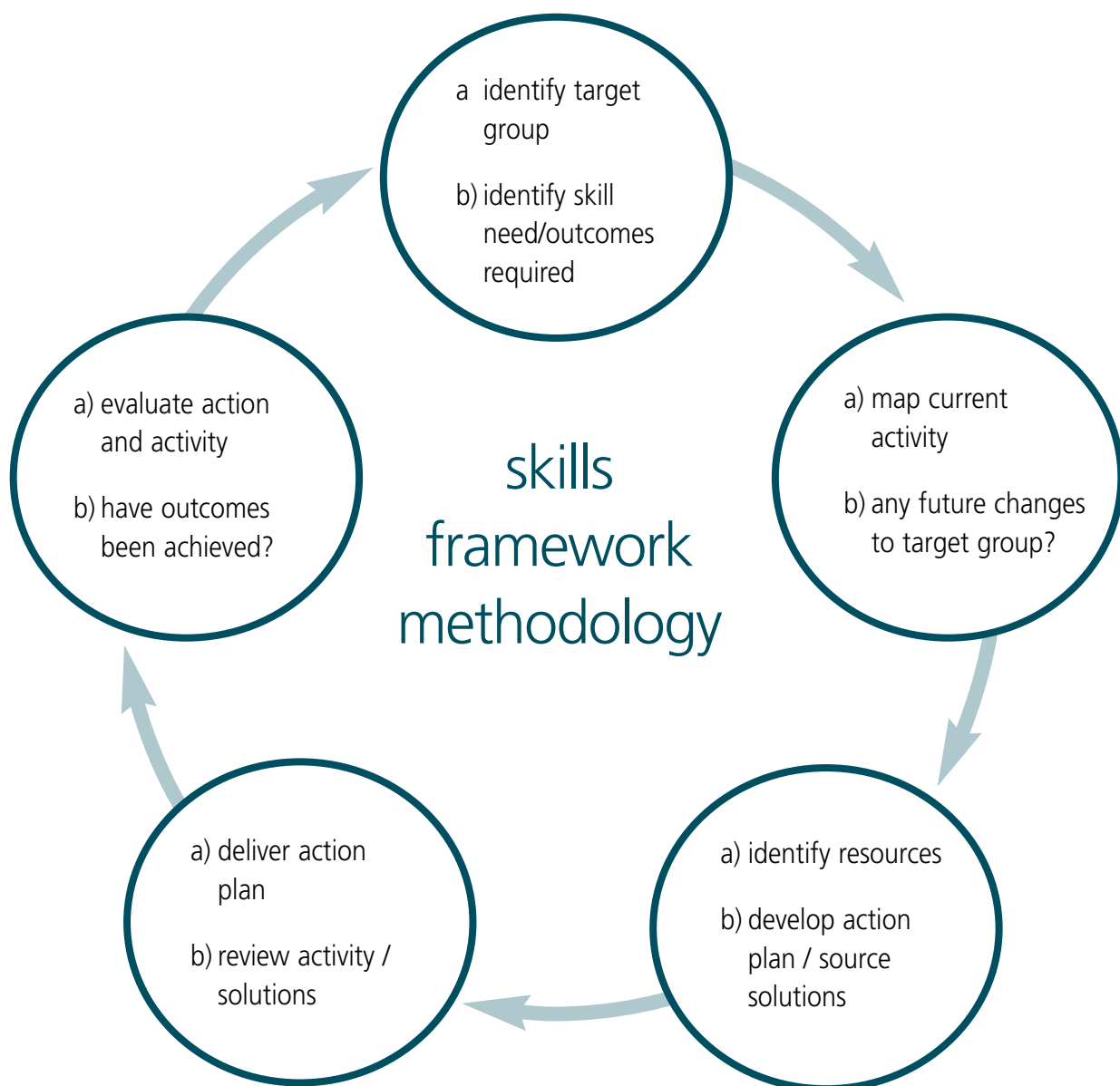


figure 10: Skills Framework methodology

STEP ONE – identify the existing and future needs

Identify both the future and current challenges and needs facing each skill group within the workforce (this should be expressed in terms of outcomes required and in terms of knowledge, skills and/or behaviours required). It is important to review the current method of identifying skill needs across the organisation. It may be relevant to evaluate these methodologies (if there is variance) and establish more effective systems. This usually involves a review of performance and development appraisals processes in relation to these skill groups and any occupationally based training needs analysis process.

STEP TWO – map current activity

Most authorities already have activities that aim to address skill needs. It is helpful to assess what current activity is being carried out for each skill group area. Often there are a number of different approaches being taken across the organisation either at individual, team or service department levels. It is also important to identify the current level of resources allocated, the methods of delivery being used and the cost effectiveness of existing activity.

STEP THREE – develop the action plan

Once the needs and current activity have been identified, gaps can be identified as well as low priority or ineffective activities. Next priorities can be agreed and resources allocated. Ways of addressing priority gaps can be devised. Often recruitment needs emerge that need to be considered in planning.

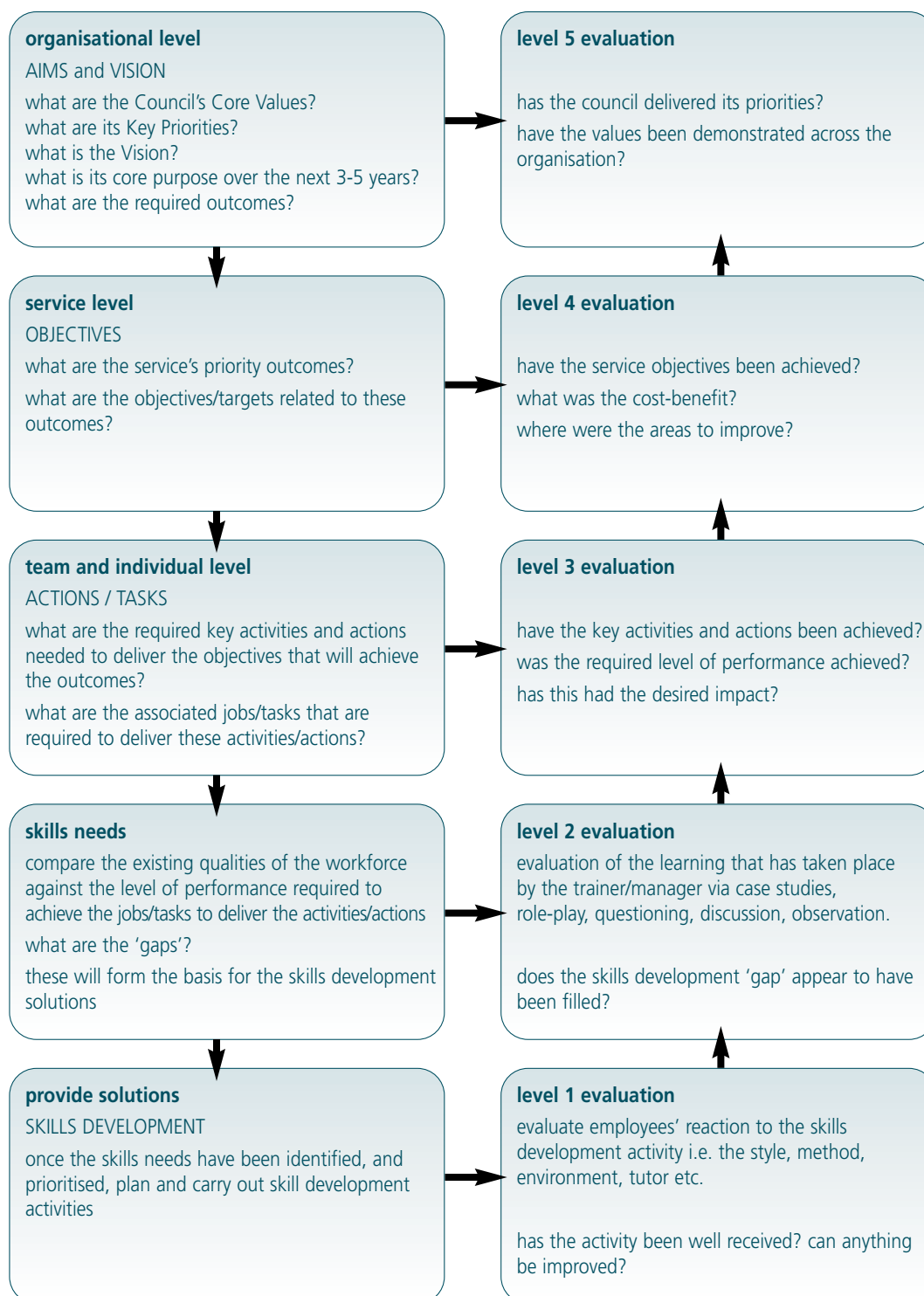
STEP FOUR – deliver skills development activity

This is the delivery stage and is based on addressing priority needs. The skills and development Section of the guidance gives a range of approaches that may be employed.

STEP FIVE – evaluate and review the effectiveness of activities

This stage reviews the effectiveness of the skills development activities. Appendix Four sets out the different levels of evaluation in more detail.

appendix four: Ten-Box model approach to skills development and evaluation



appendix five: glossary

benchmarking Making comparisons with other organisations and then learning the lessons that those comparisons highlight⁶

building capacity Increasing the ability of the organisation to perform well by undertaking skills development, recruiting people with new skills or increasing the number of staff in a particular skills area. Can also refer to introducing new systems or new technology and other methods of increasing the organisation's productivity and performance

coaching Supporting and encouraging someone's development by tutoring them, usually one to one, including: encouraging them to reflect and think through issues to find the best solutions for them; encouraging them to take measured risks; listening to their concerns and giving them alternative perspectives; demonstrating how to tackle issues; occasionally giving direct advice

comprehensive performance assessment (CPA) Comprehensive Performance Assessment was introduced by the government early in 2002. All Counties, Mets and Unitaries were subject to CPA during 2002, and Districts followed in 2003. CPA is made up of a number of elements, including self-assessment, and corporate assessment carried out by a team nominated by the Audit Commission. Overall scores for each Local Authority have been produced with freedoms and flexibilities promised for those authorities who rate well, and varying forms of intervention being used to improve the performance of those who are performing badly

corporate objectives The organisation's overall service delivery aims that are set out in clear, measurable terms

corporate strategy The organisation's statement about where it wants to go in terms of its vision and values and how it is going to get there

⁶ The European Benchmarking Code of Conduct from Benchmarking for Public Services, Public Sector Benchmarking Service

corporate values The principles that underpin how the organisation wishes to operate and behave

corporate vision The organisation's overall view of what it wants to be like

human resource planning See 'workforce planning'

human resource strategy See 'people strategy'

manpower planning See 'workforce planning'

mentoring Similar to coaching, but with a stronger emphasis on avoiding providing advice. Often an external person or can be someone much more senior.

pay and workforce strategy The national strategy that sets out a comprehensive approach to ensure that local government has the right number of people in the right place with the right skills to deliver improved services⁷

people strategy The overarching statement about how people should behave and be deployed, managed and developed in order to support achievement of the organisation's overall corporate vision, value and objectives

people strategy objectives Clear, measurable aims for achieving the organisation's statement about how people will be deployed, managed and developed

⁷ Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Employers' Organisation (2003)

performance indicators (PIs) Specific measures or metrics that the organisation uses to measure progress against its objectives

performance targets Specific aims setting out what the organisation is expecting to achieve in relation to its performance indicators

recruitment plan Sets out what jobs are required over a set period of time and what recruitment actions the organisation will take in order to meet these Resourcing needs.

recruitment and retention strategy The overarching statement about how people should be recruited, including the values and vision for how the organisation is focusing on becoming an “employer of choice” including specific strategies to be deployed in meeting the recruitment and retention needs usually incorporates Recruitment and Selection Policy Statements, including diversity and equal opportunities employment actions. Informs the Recruitment Plan.

smart objectives Clear, measurable targets that are Specific, Measurable, Action-orientated, Realistic and Time-related

strategy The direction and scope of an organisation, over the long term ideally, which matches its resources to its changing environment and in particular, to its markets, customers and clients to meet stakeholder expectations⁸

training and development plan Sets out what skills, knowledge and behaviours need to be in place within the organisation in order to achieve its objectives and how these will be met

⁸ Johnson and Scholes (1993) from Strategic HRM: The Key to Improved Business Performance, Armstrong & Baron, CIPD (2002)

workforce development plan Sets out objectives for the workforce composition, including jobs, skills, knowledge and behaviours to achieve an organisation's objectives and how these will be addressed.

workforce planning A method of determining the current composition of the workforce, what will be required in order to meet future needs and the gaps that will need to be filled

workforce strategy See 'people strategy'