

# **HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL** **PEOPLE STRATEGY 2009-2012**

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## **FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The demands on Local Government are increasing. Customer expectations are rising and the challenges facing the public sector as a whole are growing. Halton Borough Council acknowledges that it needs to embrace continuous change if it is to maintain and deliver its strategic priorities.

We know that in anything that we do our key goal is to raise the quality of life of in the borough. To do this, we need to continue to make better use of public money to deliver our services in the most efficient and effective way possible. The development of a People Strategy can help us to achieve this because it provides the framework for planning our future work force requirements in a structured and coordinated way.

We need to make sure that the Council continues to deliver customer focused services, and that we have a workforce that is able to do this.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our People Strategy is divided into nine sections:

**Section 1** – outlines *why we have developed a People Strategy*. We make reference to the role People play in improving organisational performance. The development of a People Strategy is helping us to plan for the future by providing a framework for us to assess our current workforce and people management activity. It also allows us to address leadership, skills development, recruitment and retention and pay issues in a structured and coordinated way.

**Section 2** – provides a summary of *'where we are now'* in relation to the background and strategic context for the development of our People Strategy. The section also explores the environment in which we operate, *'where we are going'* and how internal and external factors have influenced the development of people based priorities for the organisation.

**Section 3** – outlines *'what we want to achieve'*, our vision for the type of organisation we would wish to develop and emphasises the close links between Halton's Community Strategy and Halton Borough Council's corporate plan and the harmony that exists between our borough-wide and corporate priorities. This section also reaffirms the importance of our workforce in driving forward and implementing these priorities. However, the section also recognises that if our People Strategy is to be implemented successfully, then 'People' issues must be firmly embedded within our business/service planning processes. The section further emphasises the partnership approach to workforce planning that Halton is progressing, and makes reference to Halton's Children's Trust Arrangements, Safeguarding, Integrated processes and front line delivery.

**Section 4** - having outlined in earlier sections, the vision and type of organisation we would like to have in the future, section 4 introduces the *'how we are going to get there'* and includes the key strategic aims that will enable us to achieve our vision, identifying the priority actions needed to achieve this. Key priorities are:

1. Attract, develop, and retain excellent people;
2. Prepare for change, and promote improvement
3. Value the diversity of our workforce
4. Develop leadership
5. Maintain our 'can do' business culture
6. Meet customer needs
- 7 Recognise the role of partner agencies in meeting customer needs
- 8 Promote and fulfil the duty to safeguard children and adults of Halton

**Section 5** – This section focuses on key areas of work, which we would wish to implement.

**Section 6** – Implementing the Strategy provides information on an action plan and supporting strategies and documents, for example, work force development plans.

**Section 7** – provides a summary of the Efficiency Review process.

**Section 8** – evaluating the strategy; here we emphasise the fact that our People Strategy is not a ‘one off document’ and will need to be continually reviewed and refreshed. This will only be possible if people strategy strategic aims are embedded within the operational and service planning processes of our organisation and we set out plans for how we intend to do this.

**Section 9** - Appendices

## SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

Recognising the need to continually improve, the Council has initiated two processes which will have a significant impact on the way it organises itself in order to deliver its priorities. These are:

1. The Efficiency Review Which is changing the way we work.
2. The work with the Leadership Centre sensei UK to, improve the way that Management Team and the Executive Board work, and in particular, make space for the development of strategic policy

As these processes develop they will form the context for Organisational Development (OD) within Halton Borough Council, to ensure that we take a whole organisation approach to planning for, and bringing about, significant improvements in the services we provide.

### Organisational Development – a people based approach

There are a number of OD assessment tools and techniques aimed at supporting whole organisation improvements. One approach, the People Based approach, states that if OD is concerned with the ability of an organisation to adapt to change, then the availability and potential of its work force, will be a major factor in determining whether an organisation is capable of *implementing* change.

This is why Halton Borough Council is developing a People Strategy.

### What is a People Strategy?

A People Strategy is founded upon the principle that developing their 'people' best develops organisations. If staff are well trained, are well motivated and they feel that they are being treated well, then good organisational performance will follow.

### The Purpose of our People Strategy

The purpose of this People Strategy will be to bring together in one place a strategy for how people will be deployed, managed and developed within our organisation and how they will be expected to behave. The strategy will be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 and will run until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012. The accompanying action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

A key driver in the development of any People Strategy is the relationship between delivering customer focused services and ensuring that there is an appropriate workforce in place to do this.

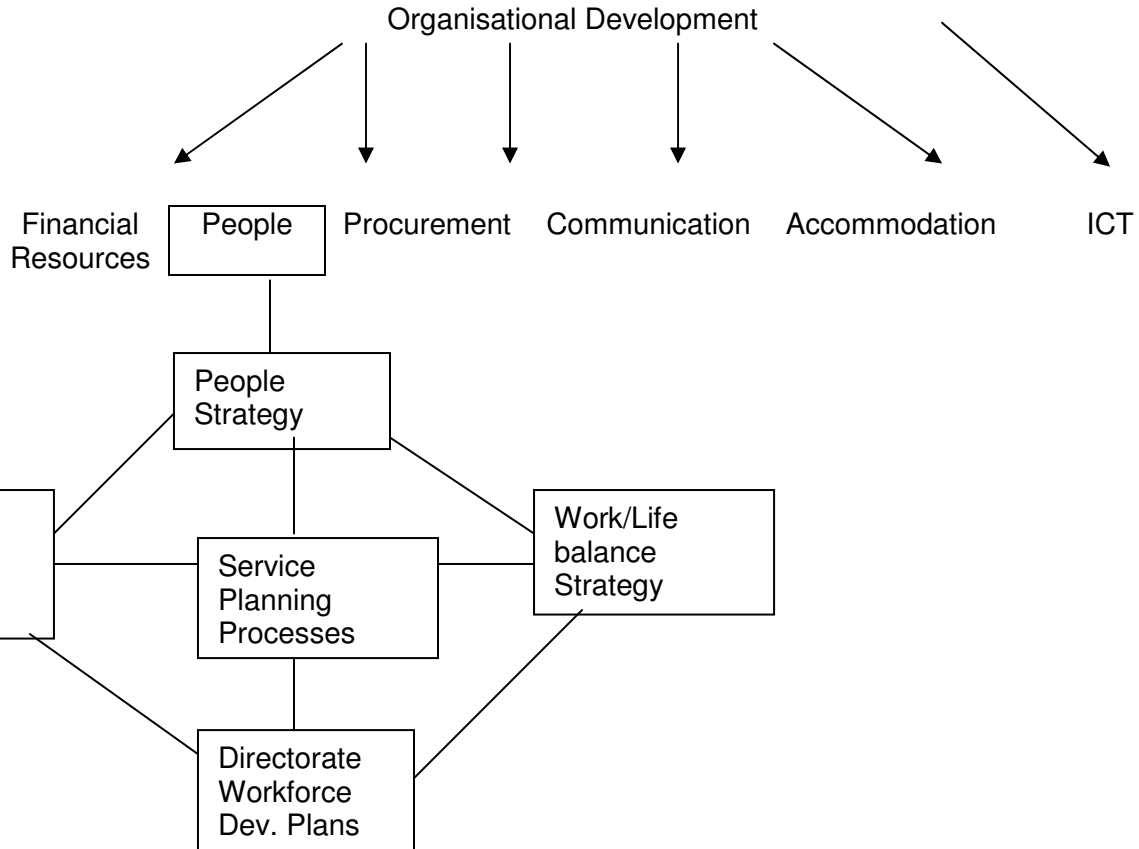
Our People Strategy will, therefore, identify (all) the people management implications of delivering corporate objectives and set out how people management activities will support the achievement of these objectives.

We will use this People Strategy to set out our vision for our workforce and to set out a series of improvements that we will make to achieve this vision.

Why we have developed a People Strategy

In 2005 the organisation published its workforce development plan. In 2007 it was agreed that the document should be reviewed to acknowledge the development of other corporate strategies.

Organisational Strategies



As part of this review, we felt that we needed to take a step back, and acknowledge that a more strategic approach is needed to develop a workforce, which is best able to deliver our corporate objectives. A cross-directorate Steering Group was established to lead on work force planning issues.

Importantly, a Strategic Director, who does not have day-to-day responsibility for Human Resources issues, chairs the group. This has helped to develop the Strategy in a wider corporate context.

Alongside the cross-directorate Steering Group, directorate level sub-groups have been set up. These groups have been a useful communications network for gathering the views of colleagues across the organisation on workforce planning issues. These views have informed the key people aims presented later in this document. The groups have also undertaken gap analysis work, which again, has been fed into the action plan appended to this strategy. The group has also championed the People Strategy within respective Council directorates, taking soundings and obtaining employee opinions on implementing the strategy.

Our starting point has been a need to ensure that our organisation will have “the right people, working in the right way and within the right culture”.

Although our existing Workforce Development Plan has helped us to decide how many employees are needed now and will be needed in the future to prepare for and respond to workforce planning issues, the development of this People Strategy precedes this work as it will enable us to address leadership, skills development, recruitment and retention and pay issues in a structured and coordinated way.

Developing a People Strategy is helping us to plan for the future by providing a framework for us to assess our current workforce and people management activity and identify any gaps that need to be filled.

This document will, therefore, act as a forerunner to an updated Workforce Development Plan, which will subsequently provide information on operational/practical requirements in greater detail.

The aim of this strategy will be to make it possible for Halton Borough Council to take a leading role in **securing a better future for the people of Halton**. To achieve this, our People Strategy will allow us to make sure that:

**“The Council is a first class employer that engages a well-trained, motivated and committed workforce in a working environment of trust, cooperation and respect”.**<sup>1</sup>

Our corporate plan, which is aligned with the Borough’s Community Strategy, sets out, within available resources, what we plan to achieve over the next five years. It focuses on how we will deliver our strategic priorities i.e.

- A Healthy Halton
- Halton’s Urban Renewal
- Halton’s Children and Young people
- Employment Learning and Skills in Halton
- A Safer Halton

It also identifies the key issues and challenges facing us. These include preparing for and responding to new legislation, delivering efficient and effective services within a context of reducing budgets. There is also a move towards greater community engagement, and the use of co-procurement and commissioning methods with emphasis on developing and delivering shared services both within and outside the Borough.

These challenges are picked up in greater detail in section 2 of this strategy, where further detail on how we will respond to these challenges will be provided in section 3.

### People Management Aims

In drawing up this strategy our research reveals that there are a number of issues and themes that resonate across many Local Authorities. In the background and strategic context of this document we also outline other internal and external factors that have shaped our strategic aims. The Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy 2006 also provides guidance on key issues for our sector. Finally, as part of the Council’s Corporate Planning Framework, each service plan includes a PESTLE analysis and a summary of this in relation to people management issues is provided in appendix 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Halton Borough Council Corporate Plan 2006-2011.



## **SECTION 2 - BACKGROUND & STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

### *Government Policies*

Recent Government policies have had far reaching implications for workforce planning the public sector.

For example, The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, as well as the Lyons Review emphasise the co-ordinating, the leadership and the brokering role of local government in “place shaping”. Government asserts that if improvements in public services are to be made, then local authorities and their partners need to be given more powers to shape services and communities. At the same time, expectations regarding the quality and nature of public services are rising; service delivery is changing with a growing emphasis on delivering services *with* users, often through multi-agency working.

Equally, the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 presented a number of challenges in respect of workforce development. This includes a focus on driving forward an efficiency programme to deliver cash savings of at least 2.5 per cent per year over a three-year period.

It is expected that streamlining processes and increasing collaboration across the public sector as a whole will make many of these savings. Pay and Workforce Plans are to be developed in line with the Government’s 2% pay target. There is an assumption that resources will be redirected to “frontline” services with a focus on customers. Other efficiency gains are anticipated in areas such as how we procure goods and services and the use of ICT in service delivery and better information sharing between departments and organisations within this framework.

### *Workforce issues – Demographic Change*

Nationally the UK has an ageing population with a falling birth rate and a decreasing death rate.

This presents workforce challenges to Local Authorities both as providers of health and social care services, but also as employers. In regard to the latter, The Age and Employment Network reported in 2005 that younger people are staying in education longer, workers are working longer and a significant growth in labour has been in the group of ‘Over 50s’. Equally, recent legislation (‘Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 bans age discrimination in terms of recruitment, promotion and training and this places duties on employers to attract employees of all ages.

### *Borough Profile*

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for 2007 suggests that levels of deprivation have reduced in the Borough. In 2007 the IMD ranked Halton as 30<sup>th</sup> most deprived Authority in England compared to 16<sup>th</sup> in the 2000 Index. However, it still ranks as one of the most deprived districts in England. Although located in Cheshire, Halton shares many of the social and economic problems more associated with its urban neighbours on Merseyside. Halton is ranked in the IMD as the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest authority in terms of deprivation on Merseyside, behind Knowsley and Liverpool, and 10<sup>th</sup> highest in the North West. Neighbouring authorities St Helens (47<sup>th</sup>), Wirral (60<sup>th</sup>) and Sefton (83,) are way down the table compared to Halton.

Halton has some of the most deprived wards in the country in terms of child poverty. Several parts of Halton are amongst the poorest in the country. In Widnes, the most deprived areas are Kingsway, Riverside and Appleton. In Runcorn, the most deprived areas are Castlefields, Halton Lea and Windmill Hill. However, there are many affluent areas of the borough as well. These are located mainly on the outskirts of both towns and comprise of several new housing estates.

The following data will have a significant impact on Halton Borough's approach to Workforce Planning.

### Employment

Claimant unemployment in the Borough has risen from 5.0% in January 2000 to 5.9% in November 2009. Halton still has the 5<sup>th</sup> highest claimant rate in the North West in. Research shows that the skill base of the local area is relatively poor compared to the United Kingdom as a whole and surrounding local economies. Halton has a low percentage of adults with further education qualifications and low rates of numeracy and literacy. All told, there is a mismatch between skills in the local workforce and jobs available in the borough, and it is anticipated that in the future over 95% of new jobs will need qualifications of at least NVQ 2 level and over 70% at NVQ 3 and above.

Percentage of adults with further education qualifications and low rates of numeracy and literacy. All told, there is a mismatch between skills in the local workforce and jobs available in the borough, and it is anticipated that in the future over 95% of new jobs will need qualifications of at least NVQ 2 level and over 70% at NVQ 3 and above.

### Halton's Ageing Population

Forecasts suggest that Halton's population is ageing at a faster rate than England as a whole, which reflects a long-term demographic trend of an aging population.

Over 65's made up 13.6% (16,100) of population in 2003 and will be 22.1% (26,000) by 2028, this represents an increase of 61.5% in over 65's and 100% in over 85's. The over 65 population, is expected to rise annually, for example by 200 people between 2006 and 2007 and a further 300 between 2007 and 2008. The largest proportionate growth is in over 85 years population. There is also an increase in the number of older people with more complex needs, particularly around homelessness, alcohol abuse and dementias as people live longer.

This shift to an older population will have a large effect on demand for social care, local government and health services unless outcomes are improved through effective, adequate prevention. However health and social care are still focussed on meeting need as it arises, i.e. once someone has had a fall or is in difficulty. That is not sustainable given the levels of health in the Borough. The relative increase in older people also reduces the number of informal carers available, which necessitates a stronger focus on supporting the carers that there are and developing preventative services that reduce social isolation.

### Recruitment and Retention Issues

In 2005, Halton's Local Strategic Partnership commissioned a Workforce Development Strategy for the Borough, which identified borough-wide recruitment and retention

difficulties, exacerbated by the borough-wide low qualification, and low skills problems highlighted below:

*Proportion of Working Age Population with High Level Qualifications (NVQ Levels 2, 3 and 4+)*

Halton has the lowest percentage of working age people with higher-level qualifications at 49.9% this is significantly lower than the North West regional average.

*Percentage of Working Age Population with No Qualifications*

In the North West the area with the lowest amount of unqualified people is Cumbria with 9.6% of people. The area where the most people have no qualifications is Merseyside with 21.2% of the Working Age population. Halton is the second worst area with 19.9%. The percentage of no qualifications is higher than the North West and National averages (17% and 14.3% respectively).

An increased importance has been placed upon making sure that those who are in or looking for employment have the correct skills to gain and stay in employment throughout their working lives. Currently there are 6 million unskilled workers in the economy nationally, however it is estimated that this will fall to around half a million by 2020.

*Percentage of Working Age Population with Low Qualifications*

Low qualifications are qualifications under NVQ Level 2. Within the North West, Halton has the highest amount of people with low qualifications (39.2% of the working age population for comparison the North West average is 31.7%).

*Employers' Organisation Recruitment and Retention Survey*

The Recruitment and Retention Survey undertaken by the Employers Organisation for Local Government revealed that in 2004, 93.6% of all authorities reported experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties with one or more professional and managerial occupations.

The highest recruitment difficulties existed in Planning, Environmental Health and Social Workers for children and families.

*Halton Borough Council Workforce Profile*

In January 2007 the Council appointed KPMG as an efficiency partner to:

- Undertake a rigorous assessment of the Council's current baseline position with regard to activity, cost efficiency and productivity.

Work included a Comprehensive Value Chain Analysis (VCA) exercise.

A matrix analysis of staff time allocations identified activity proportions in certain functions and was used to ascertain how well the Council prioritises and delegates for example, the proportion of time the organisation allocates to **management activity** in priority front line functions, the level of **specialist** input into the procurement support function, **transactional activity** i.e. the time spent on repeated tasks specific to a service or professional function. It also identifies the time spent on **administration**.

A second step of the analysis established the proportion of staff time allocated to:

- Strategic functions, such as policy or strategic finance;
- Frontline functions such as customer contact or delivering an in-house service; or
- Support functions, such as transactional finance, HR, or property and building services.

KPMG published a report and presented recommendations to the Council in October 2008. This work has provided an evidence base for identifying efficiency opportunities across the Council and is also being used to inform the implementation this strategy.

In addition, we have acknowledged that further work has been required to strengthen the data we hold on our organisation's workforce. Much of this work has been incorporated into the People Strategy Action Plan referred to later, and resources are being made available to populate the TRENT database. Data will focus on:

- Number of vacancies – proportion of vacant posts
- Number of applicants for jobs – levels of recruitment
- Numbers of agency staff – proportion of posts covered by agency staff and average times
- Turnover – frequency of staff leaving the employment of the Local Authority
- Number of staff that hold a relevant professional qualification
- Number of staff that hold a relevant vocational qualification
- The highest academic qualification held
- Ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Reasons for leaving employment
- Destination of leavers – where staff go on leaving the Local Authority.
- Sickness Absence – the number working days lost due to sickness absence
- Pay Rates – i.e. an analysis of positions held according to gender and age across the Council

## SECTION 3 - WHERE THE PEOPLE STRATEGY FITS INTO THE CORPORATE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

### Vision, Values and Objectives of the Council:

#### Halton's Community Strategy – 'Making it Happen in Halton'

Halton's community strategy sets out the steps that we all need to take to bring about real improvements in the borough. To achieve this, the borough's strategic partners have agreed five strategic themes:

- A Healthy Halton
- Halton's Urban Renewal
- Halton's Children and Young people
- Employment Learning and Skills in Halton
- A Safer Halton

Our vision is that **Halton will be a thriving and vibrant borough where people can learn and develop their skills, enjoy a good quality of life with good health; a high quality modern urban environment; the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential; greater wealth and equality; sustained by a thriving business community; and within safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods.**

Aligned to the Community Strategy, the Council has in place a corporate planning framework to deliver its strategic priorities. The framework has a hierarchy of plans that ensure the priorities are cascaded down the organisation and progress against targets are measured and reviewed. This framework is summarised as follows:-

The Corporate Plan is a five-year document (2006 –2011) and is at the apex of the framework pyramid. It details the strategic priorities together with the key objectives, shared improvement targets and the key outcomes that the Council will work towards over the life of the Plan. The Corporate Plan themes mirror those of the Community Strategy referred to above.

Linked and aligned to the Corporate Plan are the departmental service plans. They provide a clear statement on what the individual services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute towards achieving the strategic and resource priorities of the Council. They are an essential tool for making key decisions about future service provision and the level of resources required e.g. financial, people & skills and assets

The departmental service plans sit within the established corporate planning framework and are central to the Council's performance management arrangements. The Directorate Workforce Plan determines the future staff resources, skills and competencies required to deliver existing, new and improved services. It is a key resource document that supports the corporate planning framework and is directly linked to the set of service plans in the directorate.

Ultimately, Halton Borough Council acknowledges the role effective people management plays in improving the services we deliver to our communities and our corporate structures and plans match the Borough's key strategic themes as identified in the borough's community strategy.

To make a real impact on the strategic priorities it was essential that the financial, human and physical resources and the means of information and communication of the Council were effectively managed and organised. Therefore, the Corporate Plan identified the four Resources Priorities to support the key objectives for each of Halton's strategic themes. These are:

- Attracting and managing financial resources effectively
- Organisation, people, skills and culture
- Managing the Council's physical resources of land, buildings, equipment and materials
- Managing information and communication

#### *The Council's Role as a Local Employer*

This People Strategy also accords with the Employment, Learning and Skills theme identified in both the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. As a major employer within the borough we will implement actions to raise the skills and qualification levels of our workforce.

#### *Corporate Governance*

Since achieving Unitary Authority status in 1998, Halton Borough Council has demonstrated a proven track record in managing and delivering services for the people of Halton. The Council boasts one of the lowest Council Tax rates in the North West.

In 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008, the Audit Commission confirmed Halton to be a 4 star authority that is "improving well". The Audit Commission wrote;

**"The Council knows its area well and its ambitions are firmly based on evidence, on a detailed understanding of local problems and opportunities, and on consultation with local people. The ambitions are clearly articulated and are well understood by the Council's partners and by the Council's own staff".**

In 2006 the Council was commended in the Municipal Journal awards Council of the year category and as a CPA four stars rated Local Authority, Halton has seen major achievements in tackling the severe economic and social problems that still face the borough.

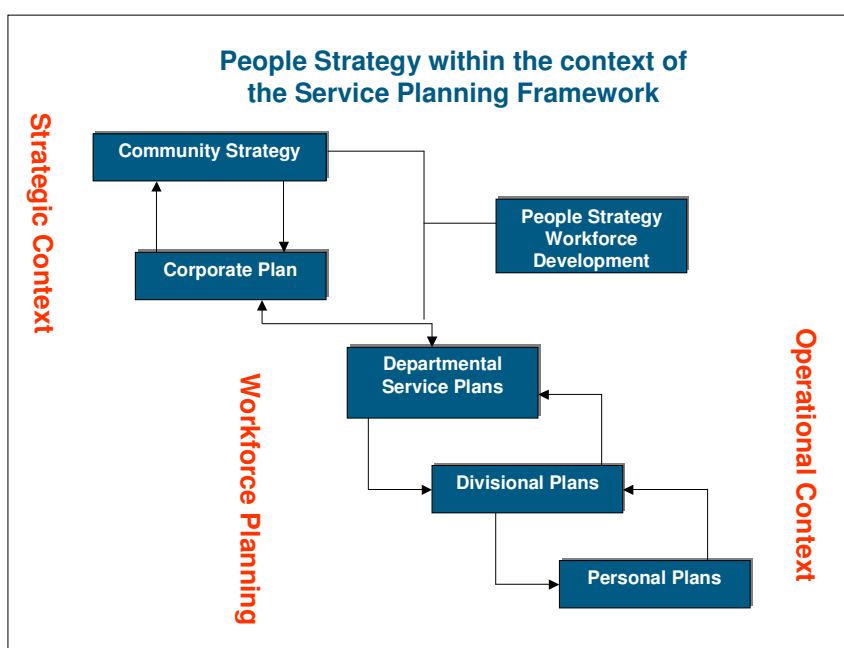
#### *Where a People Strategy fits in to Service Planning Processes*

Section 1 of this document has summarised how the (successful) implementation of corporate priorities is dependent upon how effectively we manage our People through the development of a People Strategy.

The diagram below illustrates that to achieve this, we will need to embed People Management issues into the development of our Service Plans and, therefore, our Service Plan procedures and processes will be used as a signposting instrument for ensuring that our operational practices accord with the key aims of the People Strategy.

Service Plans will, however, be predicated by directorate level workforce development plans, which will be used as an aid to identifying and deploying staff resources in line with priorities and needs identified in respective service plans. Workforce development Plans will respond to the uniqueness of issues at a 'local' i.e. directorate and or departmental level.

The diagram also identifies the relationship between service planning and our commitment to Investors in People (IIP). In Halton this is channelled through the Employee Development and Review Process (EDR), where individual employee training plans are produced. We apply IIP principles to ensure that all our employees have equal and fair access to training opportunities. We also use the EDR process to not only prepare people for the jobs that they are doing now, but also to prepare them for the jobs of the future.



### Halton' Children's Trust Arrangements

Halton has developed Children's Trust arrangements that promote inter-agency governance and integrated strategy. This means we ensure that our thinking and planning (strategy) are joined up and we have in place a system, which brings together all organisations to provide challenge support and accountability (governance) to make sure we are making improvements.

Our Children's Trust brings together a number of senior representatives from a variety of agencies, organisations and professionals that work with children, young people and their families locally. [Children's Trust Members](#). Their purpose is to create a collective and innovative strategic response to meeting the needs of children locally with the explicit expectation that their decision making and drive will improve outcomes and make a difference to the lives of children and young people in Halton.

The importance of building these strong and sustainable relationships across the range of strategic planning arrangements cannot be underestimated in our continued commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people. Therefore the impact and importance to us of this wider planning network in supporting our goals and ambitions for children and young people have to be considered and utilised.

### **Halton's Safeguarding arrangements.**

Halton's Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) was formally established in February 2006 and we are proud of our achievements so far in building an acceptance across communities and partners of the importance of safeguarding and in particular disseminating the message that safeguarding is everybody's business.

As parents and professionals caring and working with children and young people safeguarding is part of everything we do. Therefore, throughout the plan and throughout our promises and efforts to improve outcomes for children and young people our commitment to safeguarding will be and is an essential aspect in everything we do. We will also continue to embed safeguarding as a crucial aspect to all of our relationships with children and young people.

The key to this will be the role and relationship HSCB has with the Children's Trust. It is particularly important that HSCB has the capacity and ability to challenge and scrutinise the safeguarding practice and planning decisions made with the Children's Trust in addition to making sure the operational demands associated with effective safeguarding practice are considered and acted upon appropriately by all Board and Trust members.

A significant responsibility of HSCB is to share learning across services, agencies and professionals as a way to continue to develop our workforce and the skills they need to carry out effective safeguarding practice. This responsibility includes delivering training and overseeing policy development that meet with up to date guidance and best practice.

A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Unit has been established which includes staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding in Health, Education and Police. This team will strengthen multi-agency working and ownership of safeguarding by making effective use of knowledge and expertise across the Children's Trust. This integrated way of working will also ensure that the important challenge and scrutiny of practice across all professional areas will be applied in a coordinated way. It will also enable public engagement activity to be managed from a "Centre of Excellence" and enable greater coordination and efficiency of work.

The Unit will also develop and administer a formal procedure for managing conflict of opinions between professionals from different services relating to the safety of a child.

The Safeguarding Unit will lead the ongoing development of rigorous auditing processes across the range of multi agency services available for children and young people in the borough. These auditing mechanisms are critical to improving safeguarding practice and in monitoring the quality of frontline service delivery. This will provide an opportunity to scrutinise specific practice issues or themes e.g. resulting from a Serious Case Review. It is also an opportunity to share good practice across agencies in Halton. The Safeguarding Unit will also report on the Audit Findings on a quarterly basis to the Children's Trust and HSCB.



Partnership working has been the cornerstone to improvements in Halton. Our JAR in 2008 commented upon “the high degree of co-operation between partners and stake holders and the strong involvement of the community and voluntary sector. The vibrancy and commitment of Third Sector organisations is key to success in Halton and we will continue to build upon these strong foundations in the coming years.

The Third Sector contributes real added value in terms of bringing additional funds to Halton and has the flexibility to respond to the needs of children, young people and families particularly in times of crisis and where mainstream support is not accessed.

Locally based organisations are uniquely placed to engage families in areas of disadvantage and families who are often marginalised. With these families local providers are delivering significant elements of progress that reflect real and demonstrable improvements in circumstances.

Third Sector representation and their ability to bring a unique sense of creativity and innovation to our inclusive planning arrangements for commissioning of services demands that Third Sector organisations will continue to work with the statutory organisations in Halton to drive improvements in services and outcomes.

However the world moves on and we want to improve. By building on these firm foundations we will ensure that the process of commissioning will be used as a ‘tool for improvement’. The development of our Children’s Trust means that we are in a healthy position to accelerate progress.

### **Integrated processes and front line delivery**

Integrated processes and front line delivery will describe how our partnership will join up the way we do business to improve how we deliver services and supports to children and young people.

This section will also offer a description of how we are going to continue to develop our workforce in ways that promote integrated working and integrated delivery, again so we can continue to make sure children and families are receiving the help and guidance in the most responsive and flexible way

### **Integrated Workforce Strategy**

We know that our local workforce is the most significant tool that will improve outcomes and assist children and young people in achieving their goals and ambitions. We are currently using innovative ways to develop our teams and the skills of our workforce around the needs of communities. Using the Organisational Development Services (ODS) model of Population Centric Workforce Planning, we are thinking beyond qualifications and professional labels and addressing how real improvements can be offered by matching skills and knowledge to the needs of our children and young people. (For more information see the [Children’s Integrated Workforce Development Strategy](#))

Developing and implementing such creative approaches to strategic and operational planning arrangements offers a significant opportunity, but the ambitions we have for our children and young people demand we tackle the challenges within our communities using the means and talents we have available to us.

Our current activity includes a wide ranging partnership approach to understanding our workforce better, so we are better prepared to develop their skills and knowledge in the

future. To assist us in this task we are currently undertaking a comprehensive needs analysis as part of a research exercise developed by the Children's Workforce Development Council. It is expected this will enable us to understand those areas within our workforce, which may need further development as well as focussing activity on the areas that are likely to have the greatest positive impact on both our priorities and the Every Child Matters outcomes.

The plans we have to make sure services identify and intervene as early as possible:

Halton's Children's Trust partners are fully committed to ensuring that we concentrate on preventing issues escalating rather than storing up problems for the future.

We have major plans to introduce needs led locality working. For Halton our goal is to have Children's Trust Teams based in locality areas across Halton. It is expected these teams will be able to respond quickly, sensitively and flexibly to the calls of families or professionals for extra support to enable families to receive the help when they need it.

The teams will also provide professional advice and support for professionals already working within our communities.

We are currently piloting this approach in one community and anticipate the values, goals and approaches we have built into this pilot will not only secure its success but also allow us to roll out the new way of working across the whole of Halton.

We are still in the early stages of learning from this pilot and will continually review and assess the most appropriate methods and skills necessary to support families before their concerns or issues escalate and require more significant measures. So far we have made sure the composition of the teams is based upon what we know about the needs and issues within each community.

As we roll this pilot out across the borough we expect there will be a core team of staff from a range of professional backgrounds, who will work as part of a team located together within one of our local communities. There will also be a virtual team of specialist workers who can be called to provide specific support depending on assessed need. It is this virtual team that we anticipate will differ across communities and locality teams, as this team will offer the specialist care, knowledge and support families may need in specific circumstances.

## **SECTION 4 - EMPLOYEE OPINIONS/VIEWS ISSUES THAT THE STRATEGY WILL ADDRESS**

In drawing up this strategy we also sought the views of employees and asked colleagues to identify key issues, which should be taken into account when formulating an action plan. A series of focus groups were held in directorates where colleagues were asked to prioritise actions for the future

This work was supplemented by a workshop facilitated by the NW Employers' Organisation aimed at identifying 'where we are' and 'where we need to be' and 'how we are getting there' in the development of a people strategy. It provided an opportunity to take stock of our achievements and to recognise that there are a number of processes and procedures that we have already implemented which will help us to develop a People Strategy for Halton Borough Council.

### **Summary of key issues:**

A summary of the points raised is set out below.

- More flexible / remote working following the advances in IT. Potential exists to rationalise office accommodation by adopting different working practices. This would have an impact on the way that staff would need to be managed.
- Succession planning – needs to be considered to minimise the impact of losing key members of staff with lots of experience in specialist areas. This could be achieved by rotation of responsibilities / provision of training / work shadowing etc. to ensure that a wider number of staff get experience of specialist areas.
- The changing focus of work that Financial Services staff are involved in is resulting in less work being suitable for the more junior members of staff. It is likely that this trend will continue, increasing the need for more experienced / better qualified staff requiring less direct supervision.
- Recruitment / retention – difficult to forecast until the outcome of JE is known. Many local authorities have cut back on professional training for accountancy / audit staff, which is having the effect of reducing the pool of qualified staff likely to apply for vacancies.
- The efficiency agenda, the Council's budget position and future restraints on public sector spending are going to require all areas of the Council to review staffing levels and working practices to ensure that they provide vfm.
- Governance in relation to IT and associated projects with focus and strategy
- A recognition of the dependence on IT
- IT Induction and Smarter Working training
- The changing focus of the work professional staff are involved in will result there being less work for more junior members of staff, thus increasing the need for more experienced and better qualified staff.
- Succession planning needs to be addressed to minimise the impact of losing key members of staff with lots of experience in specialist areas. Options that could be considered include rotation of responsibilities, further training; work shadowing, which would ensure more staff have experience in specialist areas.
- Major Projects are already and will continue to require additional specialist support from professional advisors. This area may demand skills in areas not currently available to the Authority.

- The People Strategy is developed with regard to other internal inter-related strategies e.g. 3-year financial forecast, IT strategy and accommodation strategy.
- There is a view that all recruitment and retention issues are dealt with on a financial basis
- Flexible and remote working needs to be developed in consultation with the accommodation and IT strategies and consideration given of adopting different working practices. At present there is no incentive to promote different types of working, as the potential for savings has not been realised. However, there is potential to rationalise office accommodation if/when strategic decisions are made. This would also impact upon staff management.
- Career grade schemes should be developed and extended as a way of encouraging and motivating staff
- The EDR process should be used more effectively to encourage staff development
- Staff should be given more information and understanding of the whole set of services we provide to the community as a way of promoting their role in a large organisation
- Training provision in the Authority should be publicised more and its structure to assist staff to progress should be made more accessible
- The benefits of working in Halton should be publicised much more e.g.: beneficial terms & conditions of employment, pension, leave, flexi, small authority, free parking
- Bureaucracy within the Authority should be reduced significantly
- An acknowledgement from senior management of the consequences of their decisions on the workforce e.g. the effects of taking away small benefits which demotivate staff,
- Consideration should be given to Business Process Re-engineering
- A form of "reward" system to motivate staff e.g. additional increments, flexibility to managers to reward for exceptional work, additional days leave for no sick in a specific period and other "work perks".
- More structures with regards to prioritisation of work with some form of "road map".
- Proper systems should be adopted as a matter of urgency to ensure that there is appropriately accessible management information on the existing workforce i.e. numbers, retention rates, qualifications etc
- Realistic investment in training particularly for IT
- Strategic decisions need to be taken at the highest level as to how the Authority wishes to progress in relation to flexible/remote working to ensure that all such policies enable the Authority to benefit by e.g. a reduction in the requirement for office space
- Proper strategies for succession planning in all areas need to be developed
- Career grade schemes to be developed and used more widely to encourage staff development
- Halton Borough Council to be more pro-active in promoting its conditions of service and as a place to work
- Consideration is given to the effect on the workforce of negative decisions by management and also to incentives that could be introduced at very little cost.

The key messages arising from this consultation work focused on:

- Consistency in developing workforce plans across the organisation;
- The need to include workforce planning in our corporate planning framework;
- The need to link workforce planning to financial planning;
- Further work with partners in joint partnership planning is required.

### Diversity

Diversity issues featured prominently in the consultation process described above.

The Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Group (CEDG) provides leadership in the promotion and development of equality and diversity issues across the organisation. Whilst there are legal duties to which we should adhere, it is our aim to exceed our statutory duties through the promotion of fairness in how we recruit and retain staff and how we implement policies, which encourage greater diversity within and across our workforce. We have recently invested resources in Neighbourhood Management to promote community cohesion and we are striving to ensure that our employee profile reflects local demographics.

The CEDG is helping the organisation to move towards the Equality Standard for Local Government level 4 and has developed an action Plan divided into 4 work streams:

Leadership and Corporate Commitment  
Consultation and Community Development and Scrutiny  
Service Delivery and Customer Care  
Employment and Training

EDRs will include a requirement to demonstrate how employees contribute to the promotion of Equality and Diversity. Reviewers must also ensure that reviewees have an appropriate understanding of equality and diversity issues and set key tasks to enhance the Equality and Diversity of the Council and its services.

- mobile working
- co-locating e.g. supermarkets, Job Centre Plus etc to make services more accessible
- the Authority and its staff should not be penalised for taking appropriate risks
- flexible and other forms of home working

## **SECTION 5 - PEOPLE STRATEGY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Our People Strategy brings together in one place a strategy for how people will be deployed, managed and developed within our organisation and how they will be expected to behave.

Our People Strategy will, therefore, identify (all) the people management implications of delivering corporate objectives and sets, in the accompanying action plan, out how people management activities will support the achievement of these objectives.

Halton Borough Council's overarching aim is **to secure a better future for the people of Halton**. The People Strategy sets out our vision for our workforce and sets out a series of priorities leading to improvements that we will make to achieve this vision.

The 6 strategic priorities are:

1. Attract, develop, and retain excellent people;
2. Prepare for change, and promote improvement
3. Value the diversity of our workforce
4. Develop leadership
5. Maintain our 'can do' business culture
6. Meet customer needs

These aims will form the basis of our Improvement and Action Plan set out in Appendix 1 of this strategy.

### **1. Attracting, developing, retaining excellent people**

This aim focuses on developing and maintaining a culture where everyone can contribute and where our employees' skills and knowledge are applied in the most appropriate way.

*Priority Actions:*

- *Adoption of Skills Pledge;*
- *Modern Apprenticeships Programme;*
- *Implementing a management competency framework;*
- *Developing a skills pathways programme.*

### **2. Preparing for change, promoting improvement**

This aim focuses on engendering a proactive approach to managing change, encouraging creativity managing and taking risks.

*Priority Actions:*

- *Development of Excellence Programme;*
- *Development of Workforce Development Plans for all directorates;*
- *Providing Training to support partnership working.*

### **3. Valuing diversity**

This aim focuses on building a diverse workforce that is best place to understand the needs of our customers, the people of Halton.

*Priority Actions:*

- *Mainstreaming equality and diversity in service planning;*
- *Redrafting Home working Policy;*
- *Introduction of EIA assessments.*

### **4. Developing leadership**

This aim focuses on building on the work of the Leadership Centre to maintain and develop the Council's pivotal role in serving the needs of local people...

Leaders are prevalent across the organisation, they are not confined to senior people in the organisation. Our strategy seeks to identify potential, build knowledge and experience from within the organisation.

*Priority Actions:*

- *Develop Leadership programme;*
- *Implement Master Classes on leading Change.*

### **5. Promoting our 'can do' business culture**

This aim focuses on building on Halton's reputation as a 'can do' organisation. Despite the issues and challenges facing us, we have not used these circumstances as an excuse for non-achievement; but rather, we have a growing reputation as an organisation that gets the job done.

*Priority Actions:*

- *Further promote use of MSc Project Groups;*
- *Roll out Project management Training;*
- *Promote innovation by further developing staff suggestion scheme.*

### **6. Meeting customer needs**

This aim focuses on promoting innovative, new ways of working and applying a business orientated approach to how we operate

*Priority Action:*

- *Maintain a Customer Service Programme (for all employees)*

### **7. Recognise the role of partner agencies in meeting customer needs**

- *This aim recognises that through partnership working customer experience will be improved and we will be more efficient*
- *Priority Actions:*
- *Include partners in the work force development plan*

- *Use formal agreements with partners such as Section 75 Agreements with Health agencies to identify and deliver integrated services*

**8. Promote and fulfil the duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in Halton**

This aim recognises that “safeguarding is everybody’s business “ and requires the awareness of all employees

Priority action :

Training and work force plans will promote training in safeguarding



## **SECTION 6 - IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY**

The accompanying action plan (Appendix 1) also highlights the implementation of Supporting Strategies such as:

### **1. Implementing a Human Resources Strategy**

The Council recognises the importance of having effective people management processes in place. Developing a formal Human Resources Strategy helps provide information about what we already do and what more we can do to strengthen these processes.

This strategy will create a framework for our people management practices, to ensure that we **recruit** and **retain**, the right number of people with the right skills who are able and motivated to deliver the strategic goals of the Council and who are **rewarded** appropriately for their contribution both financially through their terms and conditions and by being a proactive employer offering flexible ways of working.

### **2. Preparing Workforce Development Plans**

It is proposed that each directorate of the Council will be required to update workforce development plans on an annual basis. Whilst directorate workforce development plans will prepare for and respond to local issues, corporate guidance will be updated to ensure that content will be consistent across the organization.

### **3. Implementing the Work Life Balance (and well being) Strategy**

The Council has recently introduced a Work Life and Well Being Strategy. The Strategy points to existing flexible working arrangements in place, but states that there is an opportunity to introduce additional initiatives to ensure that employees obtain the best possible balance between working lives and their home lives.

### **4. Implementing a Consistent Approach to Training and Development Plans**

The development and delivery of Training Plans varies across Halton Borough Council and a consistent approach to employee training will be progressed through the implementation of this strategy.

### **5. Implementing the Skills for Life Strategy**

This Strategy responds to the Employers' Organisation Local Government Skills for Life Strategy, which encourages employers to promote a sustained and strategic approach to workplace Skills for Life.

## **SECTION 7 – THE EFFICIENCY REVIEW**

During 2009/10 the Council has conducted an efficiency review. The outcome of this has been a significant restructuring of the organisation with effect from April 2010. The principle features are:-

- 1) A simplifying of management structures with fewer managers in floated structures.
- 2) The consolidation of support services into corporate centres of excellence (finance, admin, policy etc. brought together under single professional bands).
- 3) A rolling three year programme of service review.
- 4) Following the re-allocation of support staff to centres of excellence, services departments have been restructured to reflect current and future requirements.

The initial impact of this will be a reduced workforce working within new structures.

The process has been based on a review of current activity by KPMG and supported by extensive training and support. A Staffing Protocol sets out the relevant HR policies.

This people Strategy is an essential component of our approval to delivering this organisational change.

## **SECTION 8 - EVALUATING OUR PEOPLE STRATEGY**

The development of a People Strategy is an ongoing process. Whilst the strategic aims highlighted earlier in this document may not change, service needs and demands will, and, therefore, the context in which the People Strategy will operate will need to be reviewed. We intend to do this annually in line with our corporate planning framework processes.

In order to measure and evaluate the success of the strategy we acknowledge that there are gaps in the information and data we hold and therefore, further work is required to set a baseline position. This will be based on understanding what performance measurement information is currently available, what further information is required, and what processes will need to be in place to collate the required information. The establishment of a baseline position is included in the People Strategy action plan.

Performance indicators and progress against targets will be managed using existing HR information systems, such as exit interviews, Employee Development Reviews, and employee surveys. Our Improvement plan/action plan presents a balance of quantifiable and process measures. Equally, the action plan identifies a number of 'quick-win' as well as longer-term actions required.

It is proposed that we will work with the Efficiency Review project team to consider how HR practices and procedures impact on business outcomes; similarly part of the review will consider the costs of employing people alongside the cost of buying in services.

## SECTION 9 – APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

### People Strategy Draft Action Plan

#### STRATEGY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Objective	Actions	Success Measure	Lead Officer	Resources Required/Comment	By When?
To achieve a baseline position	To collect baseline data	Baseline position prepared	Hazelle Jones	TRENT via Human Resources	Produced annually to inform workforce development plans (March 2010)
To assess risks to the successful implementation of the strategy	To undertake and review a risk assessment of the strategy	Risk assessment undertaken, risks identified and mitigation actions introduced	Work force Planning Group	Strategic Risk Management Division	April 2009 (achieved)
To promote and communicate People Management activity across the organisation	To introduce a staffing protocol	Greater Awareness of people strategy	Workforce Planning Group	Support from Communications and Marketing; COMT	January 2010

#### 1. ATTRACTING, DEVELOPING, RETAINING EXCELLENT PEOPLE

Objective	Actions	Success Measure	Lead	Resources Required/Comment	By When?
To address recruitment challenges facing Halton BC	1. To implement fair and equal pay structures across the organisation	<i>Job evaluation process completed</i>	Hazelle Jones	Appeals taking place.	March 2010
	2. implement a programme of apprenticeships across	Reduced use and cost of agency staff;	Gerry Fitzpatrick	Discussions are taking place to	Implemented by January

	the Authority.	Reduced number of posts being advertised/readvertised.		consider Lancs County Council model. The project is being progressed through the LSP employment learning and skills partnership	2010
	3. To adopt a Management and Development Pathway process	<i>baseline data will inform these success measures.</i>	Hazelle Jones	The pathways programme is already in place	October 2010
To implement the Council's Skills for Life Strategy	1. Adoption of 'skills pledge' 2. Complete action plan 3. Implement action plan	All employees possess or are working towards at least basic and level 2 equivalent skills in Maths and English	Corporate Staff Development Group	Progressing as part of core HR activity. This is being picked up through the interview process as well as corporate induction	Ongoing
To introduce and maintain consistent and safer recruitment and selection processes across the Council	1. Develop a fair recruitment and selection process 2. Provide support to managers to implement the revised process	Safer recruitment and selection process Higher levels of recruitment and retention of talented employees particularly in key occupational areas	Hazelle Jones	Progressing as part of core HR activity	October 2010
To develop a consistent approach to career development and succession planning	1. Develop as a package, a skills pathway programme 2. Develop and implement a succession planning process across the Authority	Increase in employee satisfaction rates, employees see increased opportunities for development. Successor employees identified for key posts	Corporate Succession planning group	Progressing as part of core HR activity	Ongoing

To identify trends in recruitment, turnover and market demand for skills	By providing data from the TRENT system on an annual basis	Data readily available to map and prioritise workforce planning requirements i.e. numbers, retention rates, qualifications	IT and Human Resources	Information is now available. E.g. incorporated into Corporate & Policy workforce development plan	Ongoing
To implement a management competency framework that is consistently applied across the Council	1. undertaking a skills mapping/audit exercise 2. develop a competency framework and implement to ensure integration with relevant policies and procedures ( e.g performance review and development	Overview of employees' skills and knowledge available across the organisation  Competency framework developed and implemented.	Central Training team  Central Training Team	Competency framework agreed for introduction 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2010 and training undertaken	April 2010

## 2. PREPARING FOR CHANGE, PROMOTING IMPROVEMENT

Objective	Actions	Success Measure	Lead	Resources Required/comment	By When?
To manage change effectively	1. development of excellence programme and project management capability 2. Develop channels for two way communication	Excellence and project management capability embedded within the organisation  Implementation of revamped cascade briefing sessions	Human Resources	Being taken forward as part of Learning and Development Programme	September 2009 (Achieved)
to ensure effective workforce planning across the Authority	1. development of effective directorate workforce plans 2. development of integrated workforce plans with partners	Reduction in overheads, time lost, reduction in vacancies	Directorate Leads from Working Group		Annual –1 <sup>st</sup> April each year

To embed partnership working within the culture of the Council.	By providing training to support partnership working with colleagues in other organisations;  By utilising key partners	Efficiencies arising from greater collaborative working	LSP Partnership team	Included in the central training calendar. Also through Local Strategic Partnership events	April 2010
As above	For example for recruitment support, T.U.s to help promote learning, Employers' Organisation for advice, LSC for skills needs analysis etc.  <i>Partnership Working Conference</i>  <i>Corporate Partnership Training</i>	Efficiencies arising from greater collaborative working	LSP Partnership team	Included in the central training calendar. Also through Local Strategic Partnership events	April 2010

### 3. VALUING DIVERSITY

Objective	Actions	Success Measure	Lead	Resources Required/Comment	By When?
To promote equality of opportunity for all our employees	By developing fair and equitable employment development and reward packages.  By development of workforce representative groups	Employees will feel rewarded, motivation levels increased.  Employees feel there are no barriers to making a contribution because they may be in a minority group	Corporate equality and diversity group	To be considered through development of Council's Human Resources Strategy	Tbc Ongoing
To ensure that the Council has a diverse workforce at	By mainstreaming equality and diversity in service planning and Employee Development	A workforce that represents the local community; an organisation that provides	Corporate equality and diversity	To be considered through development of	Ongoing



all levels that reflects the communities we serve	<p>Review processes</p> <p>By introducing EIA assessments</p> <p>By including equality and diversity principles in induction courses</p>	services that are what local people want (Places Survey – customer satisfaction indicators)	group	Council's Human Resources Strategy	
To achieve Equality Framework for Local Government Excellent Level	Mobile working; co-location of services with other sectors; Redrafting of home-working strategy	The Council successfully meets its commitment to Local Employer Partnership	Corporate equality and diversity group	Link to community cohesion work through LSP	2011
Community Cohesion	Develop protocol with job agencies to ensure efficient advertisement of vacancies with priority given to priority customer groups	Employees become more aware of the whole set of services that we provide to the community	Corporate equality and diversity group	Link to community cohesion work through LSP	Ongoing
To implement the Work Life Balance (and well-being) Strategy	<p>By Introducing a managing absence course for managers</p> <p>By assigning welfare officer support to each directorate</p>	<p>A positive profile of Local Government careers and the promotion of Halton as an employer of choice</p> <p>Reduction in employee absence rates.</p> <p>Reduction in accommodation/office space required</p>	Completed		Completed

#### 4. DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP

Objective	Actions	Success Measure	Lead	Resources Required	By When?
to ensure effective leadership capability throughout the organisation	<p>1. Developing leadership competencies</p> <p>2. Develop a leadership programme for employees who demonstrate leadership potential.</p> <p>ILM7 leadership, management and development programme</p> <p>Chester university Business School master classes on leading change</p>	Employees are provided with increased autonomy	Human Resources and via Cascade group	Existing training budgets	March 2010
to develop community leadership capability within the borough					

#### 5. PROMOTE A 'CAN DO' (BUSINESS) CULTURE.

Objective	Actions	Success Measure	Lead	Resources Required	By When?
To cultivate business management skills within the organisation	To introduce business mentor programme	Implementation of programme	Gary Collins	Existing Resources	December 2010
To roll out HM Treasury's Operational Efficiency Programme	Produce OEP action plan	Implementation of Action Plan	Rob Ross	Existing resources	December 2009

(OEP)					
To promote innovation across the organisation	Staff suggestion scheme MSc project group(s) Business Improvement Project Management Training		Alan Graham Hazelle Jones Mike Horsley Corporate Training	Existing resources	Ongoing
CAA Managing Resources	1) To self assess against HR key lines of enquiry. 2) To develop an action plan based on findings of Audit commission	Use of resources	Hazelle Jones	Existing resources	(1) Jan 2010 (2) Sept 2010

## 6. MEETING CUSTOMER NEEDS

Objective	Actions	Success Measure	Lead	Resources Required/Comment	By When?
To promote excellent relationships with our customers (internal and external)	By maintaining a customer service programme for all employees (not just frontline staff)  Pursue Customer Service Excellence standard (set by cabinet office)	Increased customer satisfaction rates  Corporate assessment completed	Customer Service Excellence Working group	Assessment to be completed by December roll out to HDL & Revenues and benefits by March 2010, then further roll out.	December 2009
Engaging with	Establish baseline using	Increased and improved	Review of	Need to consider	tbc

customers	postcode analysis and use ACORN software to analyse service users and non users	information concerning use and non-use of council services	community engagement is taking place e.g. develop internet access and database to map and track community development and engagement activity.	resources required to undertake baseline work	
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## APPENDIX 2

### PESTLE: Workforce Issues Halton Borough Council.

The PESTLE analysis below captures workforce-planning issues identified in departmental service plans.

<b>Political issues</b>	<b>Economic issues</b>
<p>The 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust's new model of care for mental health services 'Change for the Better' will impact on the way mental health services are delivered.</p> <p>The reconfiguration of PCT's resulting in a new PCT: Halton and St Helen's PCT. This has led to the requirement to form a new relationship with the PCT and also to take account of the changed function of the PCT.</p> <p>The introduction of Practice based commissioning should move commissioning budgets to GP's and local consortia.</p> <p>The North Cheshire Hospitals Trust has redesigned the roles of Warrington and Halton hospital sites with the move to elective activity at Halton and more acute care at Warrington. The social work service has been redesigned accordingly. There is a risk that funding does not follow services moving out of hospital system into community settings.</p> <p><b>Every Child Matters:</b> The Every Child Matters: Change for Children Agenda introduced a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. The aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be healthy</li> <li>• Stay safe</li> <li>• Enjoy and achieve</li> <li>• Make a positive contribution</li> <li>• Achieve economic well-being</li> </ul> <p>The Agenda promotes early intervention and co-ordinated service provision delivered through stronger partnership working and children's trusts.</p>	<p>Halton's generally poor health statistics mean increase pressure on front line services. Services need to ensure that they are designed to deliver greater efficiency and value for money without detrimental impact on those people who use them.</p> <p>Pressure on the Community Care Budget has meant a stricter application of Fair Access to Care services, resulting in care packages being re-assessed and in some cases re-designed for some people.</p> <p>Supporting People – Reductions in Supporting People Grant will increase budget pressures in operational areas. Business support will be required to assist services in ensuring projects after VFM within the funding requirements.</p> <p>External Grant Funding – Exit Strategies will need to be identified and become integral to the commissioning process.</p> <p>New Regulations on the processes for naturalisation came into force from 1 November 2005 and there is a requirement for applicants to have confirmed English Language ability (speaking and listening) at Entry 3.</p> <p><b>Child Poverty:</b> Halton has an open ended target to reduce child poverty by 40%, and so far has managed a 10% reduction.</p> <p>National economic picture will result in a reduction in real financial resources available to local government from April 2011.</p>

<p><b>Children's Plan:</b> The Children's Plan, published in December 2007, sets out the government's plans (via the Department for Children, Schools and Families') for the next ten years via a range of key strategic objectives.</p> <p><b>Halton Children's Trust:</b> The Children's Trust is responsible for strategic planning of services to children and young people, including developing and implementing the Children and Young People's Plan and Children's Trust arrangements.</p> <p><b>Halton Safeguarding Children Board:</b> The Board was established in April 2006 in line with the requirements of the Children Act 2004, and links into the Halton Children and Young People's Strategic Planning arrangements and the Halton Children and Young Peoples Plan.</p> <p><b>External Inspections:</b> These take various forms ranging from Ofsted inspections through to unannounced inspections of Contract, Referral and Assessment (Safeguarding) and 3 yearly inspections of Safeguarding and Children in Care.</p>	
<p><b>Social issues</b></p> <p>Pressure on the Community Care Budget has meant a strict application of Fair Access to Care services, resulting in care packages being re-assessed and in some cases re-designed for some people.</p> <p>A number of Government initiatives and legislative requirements have put social inclusion higher on the social care agenda.</p> <p>There is an increase in the number of young people with more complex needs and a growing number of ageing people with learning disabilities; therefore, there is increasing pressure on resources within adults' services.</p> <p>A number of Government initiatives and</p>	<p><b>Technological change</b></p> <p><b>ContactPoint:</b> This is a quick way for a practitioner to find out who else is working with the same child or young person, making it easier to deliver more coordinated support. This basic online directory will be available to authorised staff who need it to do their jobs. Halton was designated as an early adopter authority and went live in January 2009.</p> <p><b>Electronic Common Assessment Framework:</b> The electronic CAF system (eCAF) for Halton has been piloted with practitioners from a range of voluntary and statutory agencies. A new eCAF system within Halton is available for testing and has been built on the Children and Young</p>

legislative requirements have put social inclusion higher on the social care agenda.

**Health:** Statistics show that health standards in Halton are amongst the worst in the country and single it out as the aspect of life in the borough in most urgent need of improvement. The population is ageing which could put even greater demands on the health and social care services. At the same time lifestyle choices in the borough, especially among the young, in terms of diet, smoking, alcohol, exercise and other factors continue to give cause for concern for the future.

The numbers of long term unemployed eligible for support under government schemes seems to be falling and emphasis is shifting to worklessness, of which there is much in Halton and as such there could be a bigger client group that can be supported. Clear implications for HPIJ and the Employment Team.

The increased commitment of resources to support the area forum as strategies are updated and work plans rolled out.

The need to attract the hardest to engage adults in adult learning classes and employment initiatives.

Pupil numbers are declining. This presents a number of issues concerning the LEA's duty to provide the appropriate number, but not excessive numbers, of school places.

Reducing pupil numbers makes it difficult to meet Government targets on spending per pupil (for central administration).

Loss of Pupil Numbers at 11+ Numbers leaving the Authority at 11+ continues to be high. Approximately 155 pupils left Halton at 11+ in 2005. The continued development of Halton High School will have an important role in arresting this trend, as will the drive to raise attainment in all High Schools.

People's Database. In 2007 the DCSF announced the decision for the implementation of a national eCAF solution which will be operational across England in approximately 2010. Halton is currently in the decision making process as to whether to pursue the local or national eCAF solution.

**Integrated Children's System:**

Halton currently has an in-house ICS System live across all 9 Halton Children's Social Care front line teams. However, we are in the process of moving to CareAssess and aim to have a fully implemented ICS System in line with the anticipated DCSF deadline of October 2009.

**14 to 19 Online Prospectus & Common Application Process (CAP):**

Halton has implemented a searchable Online Prospectus of 14-19 learning opportunities available within the borough and also opportunities across greater Merseyside.

In October 2008 Halton launched an online post-16 application system; also know as the Common Application Process (CAP). The CAP is an integral part of the online prospectus, allowing young people to browse for courses and apply online directly to a provider.

**Halton Virtual Learning Platform:**

The DCFS e-strategy requires every school learner in England to have access to a personalised online learning space (Learning Platform) with the potential to support e-portfolios. Halton's Learning Platform is currently being developed and promoted within the Authority, with a number of collaborative projects beginning to take place.

**Building Schools for the Future (BSF):**

Key to the success of BSF is the integration of learning and teaching, physical environment/buildings, infrastructure and technologies. Our vision is for an ICT enabled learning community, which covers not just the students and teachers but also extends the provision of learning across to the

	<p>community, and therefore builds on our current ICT strategy. Through BSF, ICT will transform the way that education is delivered in Halton ensuring it is a real tool for the delivery of education and is embedded across all schools.</p> <p><b>Electronic Common Assessment Framework:</b> Halton has established a multi-agency group to oversee the development of an electronic CAF system (eCAF).</p> <p>The development of the Safer Stronger Communities agenda will impact on service delivery, particularly in respect of Anti-Social behaviour and Neighbourhood Management.</p> <p>The Government agenda for sport and physical activity will dictate the delivery for sports development.</p> <p>Initiatives such as a single national planning application form, electronic submission via the Planning Portal, increased internet based services, 'Expert Systems' for planning advice and information and PARSOL (Planning &amp; Regulatory Services On-Line), will all impact upon the way aspects of our Planning service will be delivered.</p> <p>Work is still ongoing to develop an integrated health and social care mental Health system across the 5 Boroughs Partnership.</p> <p>Following a successful pilot of assistive technology in a number of properties within Halton, the rollout of assistive technology will continue to offer real alternatives to care and reassurance to carers and families.</p> <p>Work is still ongoing to roll out Single Assessment. E-forms are now being used in a number of teams to improve generation of documentation and care plans.</p> <p>Work is underway to improve information about services available on the Halton Website. There are also developments in</p>
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	<p>the use of self-assessment and the use e.g. digital cameras in relation to adaptation work.</p> <p>The launch of Consumer Direct North West contact centre will enable officers to take the Consumer Protection service to the socially excluded (who wouldn't otherwise contact the service) and raise awareness of statutory rights amongst this vulnerable group.</p>
<p><b>Legislation</b></p>	<p><b>Environmental</b></p>
<p>The Mental Capacity Act 2005 received Royal Assent in April 2005 and was fully implemented by April 2007.</p> <p>The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 came into force in England on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005. The Act gives carers new rights to information, ensures that work, life-long learning and leisure are considered when a carer is assessed and gives Local Authorities new powers to enlist the help of housing, health, education and other Local Authorities in providing support to carers.</p> <p>The Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Disability Equality, which was introduced in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, came into force in December 2006. The Duty required that a Disability Equality Scheme be in place by public sector organisations by December 2006. The action plan developed as part of the Scheme continues to be implemented corporately and departmentally.</p> <p><b>Children Act 2004</b> provides the legislative spine for the Every Child Matters agenda. It aims to minimize the risks and improve outcomes for children and young people by transforming the way children's services are organised and improving joint working between agencies.</p> <p><b>Adoption and Children Act 2002</b> became operational from December 2005, introducing comprehensive changes to adoption services. The Act makes the child's welfare the paramount</p>	<p>The Council has signed up to the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme in The programme will guide the Council through a systematic analysis of its carbon footprint, outline opportunities to help manage carbon emissions, develop Action Plans for realising carbon and financial savings; and embed carbon management into the authority's day-to-day business.</p> <p>As part of the programme the Council will development a Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan by March 2008 to reduce energy bills and carbon emissions over the next five years. Through the Strategy and Implementation Plan, Council services will need to encourage closer examination of their policies around procurement, transport and the use of renewable energy.</p> <p>The Councils waste management section is working to appoint volunteer 'Recycling Champions' across all services, to ensure that all employees, members and contractors are encouraged to use recycling facilities that exist within their working environment. The Council will continue to seek, and to take advantage of all opportunities to promote recycling and effective waste management within the community.</p>

consideration in all the decisions by courts and introduces the use of the 'welfare checklist' into adoption work. It also highlights the need to prevent delay in planning for permanence and adoption and places a duty on local authorities to ensure that the support and financial assistance needed is available to people affected by adoption. The Adoption and Fostering Service has been restructured in order to ensure services are delivered in accordance with the new legislation.

**Childcare Act 2006:** The new Childcare Act aims to transform childcare and early years services in England, taking forward some of the key commitments from the Ten Year Childcare Strategy, published in December 2004. The Act will require authorities to improve the five Every Child Matters outcomes for all pre-school children and reduce inequalities in these outcomes, secure sufficient childcare for working parents and provide a better parental information service. The Act also reforms and simplifies early years regulation and inspection arrangements. It is anticipated that the main provisions of the Act will come into effect in 2008.

**Local Government White Paper Strong and Prosperous Communities:** The White Paper promotes community and neighbourhood engagement, and will strengthen the council's role in leading community-wide improvements.

It develops the role of overview and scrutiny in relation to external bodies, and provides new requirements on service providers to engage with Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements. There are changed requirements for council constitutions, and announced changes to the performance management and inspection regimes.

**"Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Children in Care:"** The Green Paper, was launched for consultation in October 2006 and sets out a radical package of proposals for transforming the lives of children in care, and will have major resource implications.

**Education and Inspections Act 2006:**

the Act contains a duty on governing bodies to promote well-being and community cohesion, and to take the Children and Young People's Plan into consideration when undertaking this duty. The Act introduces a new duty for Local Authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel for children attending school and young people of 6th Form age. It also amends the School Admissions Code of Practice having a stronger statutory basis than its predecessors.

**Extended Schools Prospectus 2005:**

The prospectus sets the agenda for all schools and children and families to be able to access a core of extended services which are developed through multi-agency partnership.

**14-19 strategy** aims to develop a coherent 14-19 phase of education where young people are committed to continuing learning whether in school, college or the workplace. The Strategy aims to encourage more young people to stay in school beyond 16 by increasing curriculum flexibility and choice, extending the programme of studies for learners in the 16-19 age group and improve the vocational offer.

Under the 2004 Civil Contingencies Act, Council's have a duty to promote business continuity to businesses and voluntary sector agencies in their administrative area. In taking this forward, Halton Council's Business Development Division, in conjunction with the Risk Management Division, have taken the lead in discharging the Council's responsibilities under the Act.

The Local Government White Papers "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say" and "Strong and Prosperous Communities" promote improved health and well being outcomes for people, community and neighbourhood engagement

The new Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 strengthens	Modernisation of Day Services. Review of management
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<p>the requirements on services to ensure that all carers are effectively supported.</p> <p>White Paper - Our Health, Our Care, Our Say. This paper places a stronger emphasis on the involvement of people who access social care services and their carers being involved in service planning and delivery to ensure services are needs led (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) and outcome focussed (Comprehensive Area Assessment).</p> <p>White Paper – Strong and Prosperous Communities. Local authorities will need to consolidate their role as ‘place-shapers’ and strategic leaders. They will also work collaboratively to build cohesive communities. Priority areas improve include: reducing inequalities; partnership working with LSP and LEAs; health improvement and strengthening health commissioning.</p>	<p>structure to deliver unified Day Service across Halton. Includes specific role to ensure Performance Management intrinsic within service. Senior roles have specific service developmental responsibilities.</p> <p>More community-based individual and group work to be undertaken. Support staff upgraded to facilitate more autonomous working within the community.</p> <p>Community Mental Health services delivered in more community-based settings. Review current working arrangements as part of partnership.</p> <p>Re-design of Intermediate Care. With integrated management, an increase in workforce requirements and the number of services delivered, this will impact on the staff involved.</p>	
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<p>The 2007 Mental Health Act. Putting people first through a radical reform of public services, including a strategic shift towards early intervention and prevention. Every person receiving support will have choice and control over the shape of that support in all care settings.</p> <p>NSF Long Term Conditions. One of the workforce implications of the NSF is a greater emphasis on joint working and the development of multi-disciplinary teams.</p> <p>Social Care registration. Under the General Social Care Council (GSCC) regulations, the next group of social care workers to be formally registered has been agreed as domiciliary care workers, although in the first instance, this will be voluntary.</p> <p>Independent Safeguarding Authority. Legislative framework for a new vetting and barring scheme for people who work with children and</p>		
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<p>vulnerable adults.</p> <p>In line with “Putting People First: a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care” (the ministerial concordat launched during 2007), the Directorate has set up a new Personalisation team. A Transforming Adult Social Care Change Board (TASC) has been established to take responsibility for the implementation of Personalisation, split into the four work-streams of Finance System, Workforce, Commissioning and Outcomes. The implementation of Personalisation will have major impacts on many areas of the social care workforce with the introduction of new systems, new ways of working and different job roles over the implementation period.</p> <p>The Integrated Local Area Workforce Strategy (InLAWS) is a joint initiative between Skills for Care and the Association of Adult Social Services (ADASS).</p>		
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<p>The projects main aim to develop effective ways to support Directors of Adult Social Services with workforce commissioning across their local area. The vision is to have the right workforce doing the right things at an achievable cost. This will involve brining service commissioning, financial and workforce strategies into balance.</p>		
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**APPENDIX 3**

**RISK ASSESSMENT OF PEOPLE STRATEGY**

**CHART 2 – RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

**Organisation/department/function/project:** Halton Borough Council

**Business Objective:** People Strategy

**Completed by:** Wesley Rourke

**Date Completed:** 23/12/08

No.	Risk Threat/Opportunity to achievement of business objective)	Assessment of Risk (As it is now)			Risk Treatment Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk (With control measures implemented)			Risk Policy
		Impact (Severity) (I)	Likelihood (Probability) (L)	Risk Score (I x L)		Impact (Severity) (I)	Likelihood (Probability) (L)	Residual Risk Score	
	Human Resources ability to recruit and retain staff applying and developing appropriate skills	4	3	12 H	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement and review People Strategy Action Plan.</li> <li>2. Engage managers in embedding People Strategy into service plans.</li> <li>3. Consultation</li> </ol>	2	3	6	M



	Contracts and Partnerships outsourced services not delivered. Different ways of working may require new skills and competencies	2	2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prepare tendering briefs with input from Council's Procurement Team.</li> <li>2. Work with partners that are to commission resources based on LSP priorities.</li> <li>3. Undertake training and awareness raising.</li> </ol>	2	2	4	L
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## CHART 2 – RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

**Organisation/department/function/project:** Halton Borough Council

**Business Objective:** People Strategy

**Completed by:** Wesley Rourke

**Date Completed:** 23/12/08

No.	Risk Threat/Opportunity to achievement of business objective)	Assessment of Risk (As it is now)			Risk Treatment Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk (With control measures implemented)			Responsible
		Impact (Severity) (I)	Likelihood (Probability) (L)	Risk Score (I x L)		Impact (Severity) (I)	Likelihood (Probability) (L)	Residual Risk Score	
	The political development of a People Strategy will require political approval to changes in structures, deployment of staff	3	4	H 12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outline issues to Council's Executive Board</li> <li>2. Prepare Project Plan</li> <li>3. Consultation with employees, employee representatives, Elected Members</li> </ol>	1	4	4	L
	Social changes in population will impact on the type and level of services provided	2	4	8 M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gather research and intelligence on demographic profile of Borough</li> <li>2. Develop partnerships with other organisations to initiative better ways for joint working</li> </ol>	1	4	4	L

**CHART 2 – RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

**Organisation/department/function/project:** Halton Borough Council

**Business Objective:** People Strategy

**Completed by:** Wesley Rourke

**Date Completed:** 23/12/08

No.	Risk Threat/Opportunity to achievement of business objective)	Assessment of Risk (As it is now)			Risk Treatment Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk (With control measures implemented)			Responsible	Timescale / Review Frequency
		Impact (Severity) (I)	Likelihood (Probability) (L)	Risk Score (I x L)		Impact (Severity) (I)	Likelihood (Probability) (L)	Residual Risk Score		
	Technology: Changes in technology will impact on the number of employees and skills required	2	2	L 4	1. Review IT strategy 2. Consult with IT Services (Client liaison)	2	2	4	L	
	Environmental primarily relates to accommodation required	3	3	9 M	1. Accommodation Strategy 2. Update/revisit home-working policy	2	3	6	M	
	Finance – greater constraints on Local Authority e.g. Gershon and CSR settlement	4	4	16 H	1. Implement succession planning 2. Promote policy corporate develop efficiency model 3. Work with Efficiency Review Project Team	3	4	12	H	

