

HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION SERVICE PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT (2005/06)

1.0 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

1.1 The Division provides professional advice and support for the Council in the effective management, deployment and continuous improvement of the workforce. It ensures that people are treated fairly and value equality and diversity in employment and in services provided to the community. Support is provided under the following broad headings;

- Organisational strategy and development
- Recruitment and selection
- Pay and rewards
- Learning, training and development
- Employee relations
- Equalities and diversity
- Human resources advice and guidance
- Human resources policy development

2.0 THE YEAR IN CONTEXT

2.1 Achievements

- 2.2 The Division has moved forward significant corporate projects during the year that were set down in the Service Plan as well as providing ongoing professional support and advice. Performance for the year against statutory BVPI's and local performance indicators have been monitored on a quarterly basis and are attached at Annexe A.
- 2.3 A People Strategy has been developed and implemented. This will support the achievement of all the key themes in the Council's evolving Corporate Plan enabling the Council to plan for the future with a clear focus on improving services in partnership with its employees.
- 2.4 A significant amount of work has been completed on the Pay and Grading Review project. This has involved close working with a Steering Group including Elected Members and Trades Union representatives. A joint framework for the implementation of job evaluation has been developed and a pilot project completed. This project will remain a significant priority for the next year.
- 2.5 The Division has played an important role with a number of restructuring leading to the development of a framework for managing these changes. This has proven to be successful with the ongoing implementation of the Contact Centre and the effective completion of other changes to the Council's establishment.
- 2.6 A range of learning and development opportunities has been made available. These are developed and provided in house to ensure a tailored and cost effective solution to meeting training needs. Support has also been provided following the commitment to achieve the Elected Members Development Charter. In addition, the Division led

the Council's Investor in People re-accreditation that was formally confirmed in November 2005.

- 2.7 An opportunity to become part of a national pilot programme for the management of stress in the workplace has been secured. This has enabled the Council to receive ongoing support from external partner organisations to identify and take action to reduce the potential negative impact of stress at work. This work will contribute to the final setting of the national standards. It is also anticipated that this work will contribute towards the development of the Council's approach to managing attendance at work.
- 2.8 Looking at statutory indicators they are largely in line with the targets set. Following the award of the two ticks disability symbol and an internal review of the profile of the workforce the numbers of disabled employees has risen. However, indicators relating to the number of BME employees has not progressed.
- 2.9 The Division has continued to support work towards the efficiency agenda with the joint procurement of a new Occupational Health Contract, the appointment of a preferred Agency Supplier and changes to the Council's approach to recruitment administration.
- 2.10 A positive relationship with employee representatives has been sustained. This has been further developed with the introduction of a Joint Facilities Agreement. The Division ensures that both the formal and informal consultation framework is observed to ensure an inclusive and transparent approach to employee matters.
- 2.11 The Council has a wide portfolio of jointly agreed employment practices and procedures. During the year this has been further developed following consultation with Trades Union representatives on areas for further development. These have focused on the management of employees and the development of flexible working practices to enable the achievement of an appropriate work life balance. This work is important to ensure that the Council remains compliant with any changes in legislation or best practice.

3.0 LOOKING FORWARD TO 2006/07

- 3.1 The main challenge for 2006/07 is the completion of the Pay and Grading Review project. This is a significant project for the Council and it will deliver a fair, equitable and sustainable range of employment practices and grading structure that will reflect on our position as an employer. With a tightening market place and competition for talent the final proposals will have to recognise the need for flexibility and be responsive to changing requirements in the workforce.
- 3.2 The delivery of the actions within the People Strategy will also be a key priority for the Division. Work will progress on all themes to ensure that the managers and employees have opportunities to grow their own roles and have choice regarding their working practices.
- 3.3 Sickness absence management remains a high priority both locally and nationally. A range of proposals to improve our performance in this area are to be progressed with the aim of ensuring that all cases of genuine illness are managed in a timely and effective manner. This will be complimented by the completion of the pilot

programme for management stress at work that will also develop our approach in this area.

- 3.4 Training and development of the workforce will continue to be an important service provided by the Team. There will be a revised Corporate Training Plan in the Summer that will be further developed with the provision of a management development programme. Opportunities will also be sought to increase the number of funded training posts on the Council's establishment to build on the progress made last year.
- 3.5 There are also a number of changes in legislation that the Division will have to develop or review existing procedures. In particular this relates to the pending legislation on Age, TUPE and maternity provision as well as planned changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 3.6 The development of Personnel computer system will be progressed and realise benefits in terms of the provision of management information and service delivery.