
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report updates Members on progress to date in connection with the production of and implementation of the Workforce Development Plan. It also seeks Members approval to the way forward.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Workforce Development is key to this authority, given its size and the resources available. For the past 12 months officers have been working to bring together the key elements of the Workforce Development Plan and ensure its implementation within the budgets available. Progress was included as part of the CPA assessment and the inspectorate commented positively on the work being carried out.
- 2.2 Significant progress has been made over the last year and achievements to date include:-
- A revised corporate induction process has been established (including a presentation/question and answer session with the Chief Executive).
 - A fortnightly newsletter has been introduced.
 - A new sickness procedure has been implemented.
 - A new recruitment portal has been set up with other Essex authorities (partly funded by a bid to the ODPM) to promote careers in local government. An advertising campaign will take place in November and December to bring attention to the site .
 - We have now outsourced our recruitment pages to “jobs go public” so that we have immediate cost-effective access to an on-line application process and wider advertising of vacancies.
 - The Revenues and Benefits division has undergone a restructure to enable it to better meet service demands.
 - A staff sounding board is in operation to take forward staff views, both positive and negative – with a feedback mechanism to CMB.

3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 A copy of the Workforce Development Plan is attached as an Appendix. Its implementation over a period forms a key element of the CPA improvement plan, to be considered by Members at the Extraordinary Council meeting on 30 November. In the main, the elements within it are cost neutral or may over a period result in a saving to the Authority e.g. the Essex wide recruitment portal.
- 3.2 However, there are some issues which will require detailed investigation over time and reports back to this committee in terms of proposals which might have implications for the policies of the Council or might have resource implications. These include matters around work-life balance, recruitment and retention, etc. Reports on these matters will be brought to committee in accordance with the timeframes outlined in the plan.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Strategic Risk

We must have a workforce development plan by March 2005 as this was agreed in the recent national pay negotiations. The Workforce Development Plan is essential to enable us to meet our objectives and must underpin all service planning. We will be assessed on progress through the CPA Improvement Planning Process.

4.2 Resource Risk

The Workforce Development Plan must be implemented but the majority of actions will be undertaken within current budgets so resource risk is low.

4.3 Operational Risk

The plan must be owned by the Council.

4.4 Reputation Risk

Implementation of the plan should help the Council to maintain and enhance its reputation as a good employer.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The main elements of the plan can be met through existing resources. However as and when additional resources might be required in connection with specific elements, reports will be brought forward for consideration with the overall budget making process.

6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) To note the progress made on the Workforce Development Plan to date.
- (2) To receive reports in due course around work-life balance and recruitment and retention in accordance with the timescales outlined in the plan.

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Background Papers:-

None

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