



# People Strategy

**2008-2011**

**DRAFT**

Incorporating the Workforce Development Plan, the  
HR Service Plan and the Annual Training Plan

## Version Control

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## Foreword

I have the pleasure in presenting Teesdale District Council's People Strategy (2008-2011), which now incorporates the Workforce Development Plan, the HR & Improvement service plan and the Annual Corporate Training Plan.

The People Strategy identifies the overall priorities for the HR & Improvement team to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan. It also reflects the people priorities identified in the National Pay and Workforce Strategy and the Council's Medium Term Financial plan.

The People Strategy is particularly important in light of Local Government Reorganisation to enable us to ensure a smooth transition to the new unitary authority.

The HR & Improvement service plan identifies the key deliverables and outcomes that will be monitored by the HR & Improvement Team Leader throughout 2008-09.

In addition to the above, the HR & Improvement team will continue to deliver effective first line support to the Council and undertake a range of other transactional activities.



**Neil Stokell**  
**Chief Executive**



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# 1. People Strategy

People are vitally important; without the committed people who make up our workforce we will not deliver the high quality public services that our communities deserve. If we are to make the most of the workforce at Teesdale, it is important that we have a strategic framework leading people management activities across the whole Council in line with the Council's vision.

The People Strategy has been developed to ensure that the HR & Improvement team achieves its vision to:

**Recruit, retain and develop the right people, with the right skills and behaviours, at the right time, who are committed to the corporate values and aims of the Council**

The Council's vision and strategic goals can only be delivered by our workforce, so the People Strategy puts the building blocks in place to ensure that this happens.

## 1.1 Corporate Objectives

The vision for Teesdale, which has been jointly agreed with our Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is:

*“Teesdale will be a place where people will want to live, work and visit while we protect and enhance our valuable environment; where we use opportunities to strengthen our economy; where our communities are vibrant and prosperous; and where our people are safe healthy and able to realise their full potential”*

The new vision is based on extensive consultation, which the LSP carried out in Summer 2007, and a joint analysis of community needs.

The four priorities of the LSP, People, Environment, Access and Prosperity, broadly align with those agreed in the 2007-10 Corporate Plan, therefore, to retain focus and consistency, the previous four corporate priorities have been retained for 2008-09.

The priorities are:

- To make Teesdale a cleaner, greener place
- To grow the economy of Teesdale
- To improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and develop safer communities
- To meet the housing needs of our residents

Improving Together, the Council's improvement programme, focuses on **five** key projects intended to help us deliver our vision, priorities and ambitions.

These projects are:

- Equality and Diversity
- Community Leadership
- Maximising Resources
- Working in Partnership
- Local Government Review

## **1.2 Strategic Context**

### **1.2.1 Organisational Restructure**

Our management restructure was implemented in May 2007, which resulted in a large amount of work for the HR section. A greater number of posts and individuals were affected than was expected, resulting in a large amount of time being taken up with consultation, support and advice. As a result of the restructure the Performance Monitoring function merged with the HR function to create the new HR & Improvement team.

### **1.2.2 Local Government Reorganisation**

The Council is currently facing the new challenge of Local Government Review (LGR), which will have a huge impact on all those currently employed by Teesdale District Council.

Durham County and the seven District Councils will move to a single Unitary Council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, therefore it is vital that we prepare employees for the changes ahead and equip them with the skills to assist with the transition to a the new Authority.

During 2008-09 the amalgamation of the eight Councils will become a major area of commitment for the HR section. Our contribution to the design and implementation of a new organisational structure, the development of a People Strategy and managing the transitional process will be a critical area of work.

A significant number of staff throughout the Authority will also be affected, as they are asked to dedicate an increasing amount of time to the various workstreams that have been established to manage the work that will be required both prior to and following vesting day.

The development of future planned HR initiatives have had to be reprioritised due to LGR. The main focus of activity will be engaging with and influencing the many HR activities required for a successful transfer of staff to the new Unitary Council.

The Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) HR workstream is currently developing a Project Initiation Document, setting out the actions that need to be addressed over the next year.

### **1.2.3 Review of 2007-08**

Despite the significant workload pressures caused by the loss of the HR Manager and the implementation of the management restructure and LGR, a number of key achievements have been made.

#### Organisational Development

- The Corporate Plan 2007-2010 was launched to all staff at a roadshow event, which was presented by the senior management team.
- Work has continued on the Equality & Diversity project and a comprehensive Equality Scheme has now been produced and published. The scheme is intended to bring together work on all equality and diversity themes and assist the Council to meet its public duties.

- A rolling programme of equality awareness has been established so that all new employees experience the training and all managers have been given training on carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA). A corporate programme for EIAs has also been developed and all sections have, at least, carried out a level 1 assessment.

### Training & Development

- The annual training plan was developed using the information employee's had provided on the annual Personal Development Review (PDR). This plan has been closely monitored and, unlike previous years, all the corporate training budget has been allocated.
- The pilot for the North East Excellent Manager (NEEM) programme has proved successful and we currently have 12 managers either participating or having completed the programme. Funding has been provided by the North East Improvement Partnership.
- One manager is also currently participating in the Future Leadership programme, which has been funded by the North East Improvement Partnership and IDeA.

### Communication & Involvement

- The staff satisfaction survey was issued once again in November 2007 with the addition of questions regarding equality and diversity and with the inclusion of a question regarding overall satisfaction. An action plan is due to be developed through the Managers Forum.
- A staff newsletter, Mailbox, has been introduced, which is distributed on a monthly basis. The newsletter includes new updates, competitions and employee and councillor profiles.
- The Bright Sparks employee reward initiative has continued to be successful, with the first annual awards presented in June 2007.

### Performance Management

- The performance monitoring spreadsheet has been updated to make the monitoring of the BVPIs less time consuming and more accurate.
- A notice board has now been set up in the reception to keep staff and Councillors up to date with current performance information.

### 1.3 Strategic Priorities

The strategy is divided into six strategic themes, which provide an overarching structure for the People Strategy. The six themes and the objectives within each are shown below. The HR service plan links directly with these priorities and the associated objectives to show the tasks required in order to achieve each of these and the timescales associated with them.

The creation of a new Local Authority for the whole of County Durham will have a major impact on the Council, as it affects all employees. These developments will require our employees to work within unfamiliar situations and with new pressures, which, when coupled with the existing employee dissatisfaction, is likely to create further tensions and uncertainty.

#### 1.3.1 Recruiting & retaining the right people

To get the right people with the right skills for the right jobs, who will deliver the level of services needed now and in the future.

##### Objectives

- Produce a Workforce Plan that will set out what the workforce composition needs to be like to achieve the people strategy and organisational objectives
- Encourage the use of succession planning to identify individuals who can 'act up' to fill vacancies as and when they arise
- Ensure that the needs of employees of Teesdale District Council are represented throughout the process of LGR
- Develop a retention strategy to ensure that key people are retained by the Authority ( if and when necessary)

#### 1.3.2 Developing People

To ensure that all people received the appropriate development to enable them to deliver excellent quality services.

##### Objectives

- Ensure all employees receive an individual Performance Development Review (PDR) which should include objectives that are relevant and measurable against the priorities of the Council
- Completed Personal Development Plans (PDP) for all employees that identify the training needs of the individual
- Development of the Annual Corporate Training Plan which addresses the needs of the employees and ensures equality and access for all

- Evaluation of all training and development that takes place to ensure continuous improvement and value for money
- Provide support and guidance to line managers and employees throughout the LGR process

### 1.3.3 Involving People

To further improve communications and consultation to successfully inform and engage people.

#### Objectives

- Encourage feedback from employees on important issues through the annual staff satisfaction survey
- Ensure an action plan is developed to tackle any issues arising from staff feedback
- Continue to develop the employee newsletter, Mailbox, to keep employees informed on important issues
- Ensure that all staff are informed about the LGR process and given the opportunity to contribute to the process

### 1.3.4 Respecting People

To maintain and develop mechanisms that guarantee dignity towards each other within a diverse workforce.

#### Objectives

- Monitoring and updating of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) plan for the Authority
- Maintenance of Level 2 of the Local Government Equality Standard
- Equality & Diversity awareness training available to all new and existing employees

### 1.3.5 People's Performance

To ensure that the Council's expectations of people are supported by its performance management framework.

#### Objectives

- Monitor Corporate Health BVPIs and develop ways to improve figures where indicators are below target
- Ensure managers understand the importance of their role in the PDR process, particularly regarding the identification of training needs

### 1.3.6 Wellbeing of People

To raise the profile of safe working and healthy lifestyles and promote wellbeing in the best interests of people in the organization and the community.

#### Objectives

- Promotion of the Council's health scheme to all employees
- Review of the Council's Stress policy
- Organise a 'Wellbeing at Work' day

### 1.4 Roles & Responsibilities

The People Strategy is a corporate document and, as such, the responsibility for its success is dependant on all those involved in ensuring its delivery.

- **Executive Committee**  
It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to set corporate policy for the management of people within Teesdale District Council
- **Corporate Management Team**  
Collectively the CMT is responsible for setting the strategic direction and vision for people management across the Council. Each of the Chief Officers is responsible for accepting their individual role in providing leadership in the management of people within their part of the Council
- **Human Resources**  
It is the responsibility of the HR & Improvement Team Leader to monitor the implementation of the corporate policy for the management of people within Teesdale District Council
- **Managers**  
The whole action plan will be performance managed by managers from all services
- **All Employees**  
All employees will be clear about their roles and responsibilities and will have the opportunity to review their performance through performance appraisal. This will in turn ensure that employees have access to appropriate learning opportunities and can develop the skills needed to do their job.

### 1.5 Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

The People Strategy objectives will be monitored through the implementation of the Workforce Development Plan and the HR Service Plan. These will be monitored by the HR & Improvement Team Leader on a monthly basis.

## 2. Workforce Development Plan

The Council's Workforce Development Plan sets out how Teesdale District Council will seek to ensure that it has the right people, with the right knowledge, skills and behaviours deployed appropriately throughout the services.

Essentially, this process consists of analyzing the Council's current workforce and then extending that analysis to identify future skills and competencies needed to deliver quality services.

By comparing the current and the desired future workforce, the plan highlights potential shortages, surpluses and competency gaps. The plan then proposes actions that will build on the relevant skills and capacity needed to meet any shortfalls.

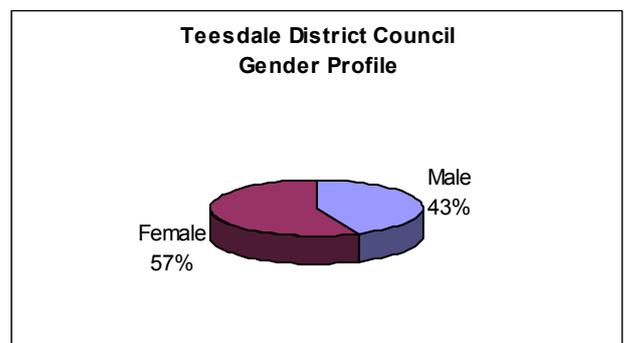
### 2.1 Workforce Profile of Teesdale District Council

The data in this section relates to all employees of Teesdale District Council, with the exception of casual staff (Nil Hours).

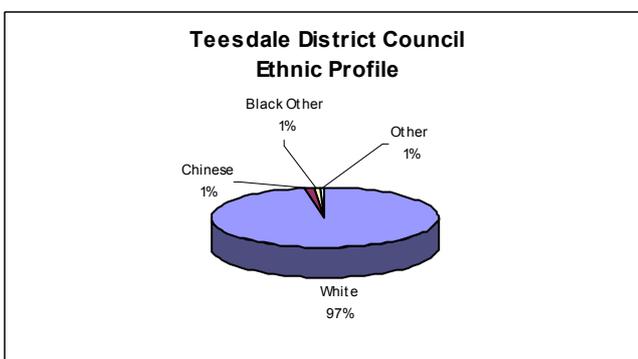
#### 2.1.1 Gender

The profile shows that there is a fairly even split of male and female employees at the Council.

However, this does not quite reflect the gender profile for County Durham (taken from 2001 census) of 45% female and 55% male.



#### 2.1.2 Ethnicity



The current ethnic profile of the Council (2.67%), is actually higher than that of the economically active population of County Durham (1.1%).

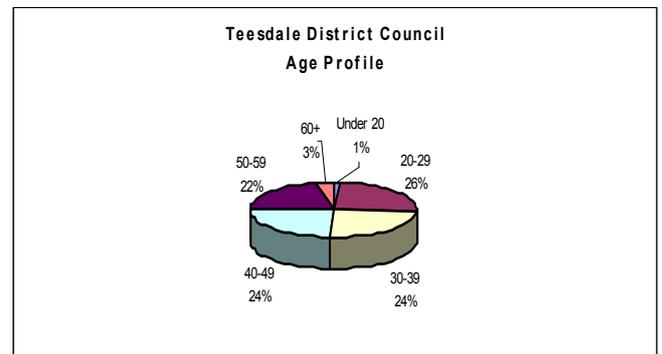
### 2.1.3 Disability

The Council does not currently employ anyone who has declared themselves as having a disability. This is extremely low in comparison to the 21% of resident population who declared themselves as having a limiting life time illness.

This low reporting could be due to under reporting of employees who have a disability, as the information is only currently checked when the employee is recruited.

### 2.1.4 Age

The current age profile shows that there is quite an even distribution across the various age ranges.



## 2.2 Achievements & Future Challenges

### 2.2.1 Recruiting & Retaining the Right People

#### Achievements

- Online application form updated and candidate information pack also made available online
- Standard management template for Line Managers introduced
- All new person specifications now include competencies

#### Future Challenges

- As LGR progresses, it may be necessary to develop and implement a retention strategy to ensure that key individuals are retained
- The joint recruitment protocol that has been agreed between all the District Councils and the County Council will make recruiting for some vacancies difficult

### 2.2.2 Developing People

#### Achievements

- Corporate induction has been reviewed to give a more comprehensive overview of the Council and the current issues that it faces
- Basic IT training and Health & Safety training has now been added to the Corporate Induction programme
- A rolling programme of Equality & Diversity training has been set up so that all new staff receive it within 6 months of taking up their post
- The annual training plan is produced in April and reflects the requirements that are flagged up during the Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)

#### Future Challenges

- The Workforce Development plan will provide comparison between present and desired future workforce, so that potential shortages or surpluses of employees and gaps in their skills can be identified
- The type of training that is required by staff is currently unknown, as there is very little detail available about how the transition to the new authority will take place

### 2.2.3 Involving People

- All staff were encouraged to complete a staff survey which tried to establish how employees felt about a range of issues relating to working for the Council

- An action plan is being developed to try and tackle the issues raised in the staff survey
- The employee newsletter, Mailbox, was introduced and is now being produced on a monthly basis
- The first annual Bright Sparks awards took place, recognising those employees who had 'Gone the Extra Mile'

### Future Challenges

- Development of the Bright Sparks scheme to ensure that staff morale is kept as high as possible throughout the period of uncertainty
- Develop a 'Wellbeing at Work' day
- Use the employee newsletter, Mailbox, to keep staff informed of the latest news regarding LGR

## **2.2.4 Respecting People**

### Achievements

- Corporate Equality Scheme updated and published in line with legislation
- Equality & Diversity training delivered to all employees and a rolling programme set up for new employees
- All line managers received training on the completion of Equality Impact Assessments
- A corporate timetable was developed for the completion and monitoring of Equality Impact Assessments
- The Personal Development Review (PDR) paperwork was updated to include a mandatory objective regarding Equality & Diversity

### Future Challenges

- Monitoring and development of the Equality Impact Assessment timetable to maintain Level 2 of the Equality Standard

## **2.2.5 People's Performance**

### Achievements

- The Personal Development Review (PDR) paperwork was updated to include a mandatory objective regarding Equality & Diversity
- The Performance Monitoring spreadsheet was improved, reducing the amount of time spent updating information and increasing the accuracy of the data

### Future Challenges

- Review and develop the Performance Monitoring spreadsheet to ensure accurate data is received relating to BVPIs
- Monitoring of PDR return rates

### **2.2.6 Wellbeing of People**

#### Achievements

- Use of the Occupational Health service to successfully manage long term sickness

#### Future Challenges

- Manager training on Sickness Absence policy to ensure compliance and accurate sickness figures

## **2.3 Review & Evaluation**

The Workforce Development Plan has provided an opportunity for the Authority to take stock of its human resource profile and to consider the key workforce development challenges to be faced during 2008-09 and beyond.

This plan will be reviewed annually.

## 3. HR & Improvement Service Plan

### 3.1 Service description

The purpose of the service is to ensure that the Council meets the requirements of employment legislation and to ensure the Council works towards good practice guidance laid down by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), and the Audit Commission.

The main services that the HR & Improvement function provides are:

- Organisational Development
- Workforce Planning
- Managing Reward
- Equalities and Diversity
- Managing Employee Relations
- Learning and Development
- Performance Management

The service supports the effective delivery of the Community Plan and the Corporate Plan through the three year People Strategy, which is delivered annually through this service plan.

The HR & Improvement service is located within the Assistant Chief Executive section, providing a Human Resources service for the whole Council.

The HR & Improvement team consists of four permanent employees:

- HR & Improvement Team Leader
- HR & Improvement Advisor x 2
- HR & Improvement Administrator

### 3.2 Our Objectives

Objective Ref No	Objective	Which Community Strategy Priority is this linked to?	Which Corporate Plan or Achieving Excellence Together priority or project is this linked to?	Priority H/M/L
HR 1	<p><b>Recruiting &amp; retaining the right people</b></p> <p>To get the right people with the right skills for the right jobs, who will deliver the level of services needed now and in the future</p>	All	All	High
HR 2	<p><b>Developing People</b></p> <p>To ensure that all people received the appropriate development to enable them to deliver excellent quality services.</p>	All	All	High
HR 3	<p><b>Involving People</b></p> <p>To further improve communications and consultation to successfully inform and engage people.</p>	All	All	High
HR 4	<p><b>Respecting People</b></p> <p>To maintain and develop mechanisms that guarantee dignity towards each other within a diverse workforce.</p>	All	Equality & Diversity	Medium
HR 5	<p><b>People's Performance</b></p> <p>To ensure that the Council's expectations of people are supported by its performance management framework.</p>	All	All	Medium
HR 6	<p><b>Wellbeing of People</b></p> <p>To raise the profile of safe working and healthy lifestyles and promote wellbeing in the best interests of people in the organization and the community.</p>	All	All	Medium

## HR 1 Recruiting & Retaining the Right People

Tasks	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Resources	Targeted Output(s)	Targeted Outcome(s)	Resource Capacity (budget decisions)
Provide support for all HR issues which will occur as a result of Local Government Review	HR & Improvement Team Leader	March 2009	HR & Improvement Team	Supported workforce	Smooth transition to new Authority	HR & Improvement Team
Develop a strategy to enable retention of staff	HR & Improvement Advisor (SB)	July 2008	HR & Improvement Team	Retention strategy	Minimise staff turnover rate	HR & Improvement Team
Develop and implement a process of policy review	HR & Improvement Team Leader	April 2008	HR & Improvement Team	Policy review process	Clear policies accessible by staff	HR & Improvement Team
Update the Workforce Plan in line with developments in LGR process	HR & Improvement Team Leader	Ongoing	HR & Improvement Team Leader LGR HR Leads group	Up to date Workforce Plan	Well trained and developed workforce	HR & Improvement Team
Harmonise conditions of service relating to call out and standby payments	HR & Improvement Advisor (SB)	Sept 2008	HR & Improvement Team	Call out & standby payments policy	Improved staff satisfaction and clarity	HR & Improvement Team

## HR 2 Employee Development

Tasks	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Resources	Targeted Output(s)	Targeted Outcome(s)	Resource Capacity (budget decisions)
Monitor return rates of PDRs and PDPs	HR & Improvement Advisor (SB)	April 2008	HR & Improvement Team Line Managers	100% return rate for all sections	Improved staff satisfaction Well informed corporate training plan	HR & Improvement Team
Develop and implement the Annual Corporate Training plan	HR & Improvement Team Leader HR & Improvement Advisor (SB)	March/April 2008	HR & Improvement Team Training Co-ordinators	Annual training plan Achievement of the local training indicator	Improved staff satisfaction Improved corporate service delivery	HR & Improvement Team Corporate training budget
Identify relevant training required as a result of LGR implementation through PDR process	HR & Improvement Team Leader HR & Improvement Advisor (SB)	March/April 2008	HR & Improvement Team Line Managers	Training relevant to LGR included in the annual training plan	Well trained and developed workforce Improved staff satisfaction Staff equipped with skills to meet changes in local authority	Corporate training budget
Develop the middle managers through the North East Excellent Managers programme	HR & Improvement Team Leader	March 2009	Middle manager development programme, as part of NEEM programme	Improved management capability	Well trained and developed workforce Staff equipped with skills to meet changes in local authority	Regional Improvement Partnership funding

## HR Involving People

Tasks	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Resources	Targeted Output(s)	Targeted Outcome(s)	Resource Capacity (budget decisions)
Support the Assistant Chief Executive in developing the Staff Satisfaction action plan	Assistant Chief Executive HR & Improvement Team Leader	March 2009	HR & Improvement Team Assistant Chief Executive	Staff satisfaction action plan	Improved staff satisfaction feedback	HR & Improvement Team
Continue the annual staff satisfaction survey in November 2008	HR & Improvement Team Leader HR & Improvement Administrator	Nov 2008	HR & Improvement Team	Annual staff satisfaction survey	Improved communications	HR & Improvement Team
Produce employee newsletter on a monthly basis to be distributed with payslips	HR & Improvement Team	Ongoing	HR & Improvement Team	Monthly employee newsletter	Improved communications Greater staff involvement	HR & Improvement Team

## HR 4 Respecting People

Tasks	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Resources	Targeted Output(s)	Targeted Outcome(s)	Resource Capacity (budget decisions)
Deliver the Equalities & Diversity project	Assistant Chief Executive HR & Improvement Administrator	March 2009	HR & Improvement Team Service managers Equality project team Members	Maintain level 2 standard	Improved staff satisfaction Improved customer service Improved corporate service delivery	HR & Improvement Team Equality project team Equality project funds
Develop, maintain & monitor a programme of EIAs for the Authority	HR & Improvement Administrator	March 2009	HR & Improvement Team Service managers Equality project team	Maintain level 2 standard	Improved staff satisfaction Improved customer service Improved corporate service delivery	HR & Improvement Team Equality project team Equality project funds

## HR 5 People's Performance

Tasks	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Resources	Targeted Output(s)	Targeted Outcome(s)	Resource Capacity (budget decisions)
Monitor Corporate Health BVPIs on a monthly basis	HR & Improvement Team Leader Improvement & HR Advisor (VC)	Ongoing	HR & Improvement Team	Targets met	Improved staff satisfaction	HR & Improvement Team
Deliver training on PDR process to new line managers	HR & Improvement Advisor (SB)	December 2009	HR & Improvement Team	Maintain level 2 standard	Improved staff satisfaction	HR & Improvement Team

## HR 6 Wellbeing of People

Review stress policy to ensure it is up to date	HR & Improvement Team Leader	June 2008	HR & Improvement Team	Stress Policy	Minimise stress related illnesses	HR & Improvement Team
Organise a Wellness at Work day for staff	HR & Improvement Team	December 2008	HR & Improvement Team	Wellness at Work event	Improved staff satisfaction	HR & Improvement Team

## 4. Annual Corporate Training Plan

The flowchart below shows how the Annual Corporate Training Plan is developed and monitored.

