

## **Workforce Strategy 2009 – 2011**



## Foreword

Our Council Plan sets out a vision for Medway - a city of learning, culture, tourism and enterprise and as a place to live, work and have fun. Medway Council is committed to improving the quality of life for all Medway's residents. It places great importance on its dual role as both community leader and service provider - leading the transformation of Medway and providing high quality services for customers. Within the Plan, Medway Council identifies six priorities that we want to achieve over the next three years. These are:

- A clean and green environment
- Safer communities
- Children and young people having the best start in life
- Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence
- People travelling easily and safely in Medway
- Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration

In addition, we have two core values that set out how we will go about achieving these priorities:

- Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do
- Giving value for money

People are a key driver for this success. We remain committed to being an employer of choice within the area and to continue to recruit competitively and demonstrate best practice in training and developing our people. As a community leader we continue to set the highest employment standards and help generate economic success through encouraging a more skilled labour market.

Effective management of the workforce directly contributes to the council's success and to more efficient and effective services. Reductions in turnover and sickness absence, better management of temporary and agency staff, more imaginative and responsive employment arrangements and the use of new and improved technologies can all deliver savings while moving the council towards excellence.

Medway Council, alongside other local authorities faces a number of challenges when planning its future workforce requirements (Audit Commission, 2008) including:

- An increase in demand for services for older people due to an ageing population.
- A Children's Workforce that better meets the needs of our children.
- A changing balance of competition between and within sectors due to economic changes.
- Innovation in technology and partnership working reducing demand for some skills and increasing demand for others.
- Pressure for a more diverse workforce to respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse society.
- An increasingly tight fiscal environment.

In addition to these, services are now designed and delivered more through local partnerships with Health Authorities, the Police, the voluntary sector and others. From 2009 Medway Council's performance will contribute to a Comprehensive Area Assessment judgement by the Audit Commission (Audit Commission, 2009). This closer working can be seen in a number of national workforce strategies that include: Putting People First (DH, 2008), One Children's Workforce (DCSF) and Mind the Skills Gap (Academy for sustainable communities, 2007).

Locally, Medway's programme of economic and social regeneration (Medway Renaissance Partnership, 2006) is transforming the employment and life opportunities of Medway people. This is especially important during the current economic downturn. Medway Council and the Local Strategic Partnership has a key role to play in helping long term claimants back into employment, as well as promoting self employment and enterprise and as a significant procurer in the economy, should use this market power to encourage all bidders and suppliers to offer more opportunities to workless people, and enable more social enterprises to bid for contracts.

These changes in emphasis set the context for this Workforce Strategy to look outwards towards the local population from which three quarters of our a staff come and also to also acknowledge the necessary redesign and delivery of services through new partnerships to meet the every growing expectations of its customers. Workforce planning and development lies at the heart of this transformation.

Workforce planning must take into consideration how we work together with our partners to ensure that sufficient people with the right skills are in place to deliver a seamless service to the community.

Innovative organisations do not happen by accident. They are designed and all share characteristics of nurturing and developing their own talent. We will make Medway Council an innovative organisation. One that reflects the communities we serve and where all employees, volunteers, managers and Members continue to learn, develop and support the learning of others.

**Councillor David Carr**

Chair Employment Matters Committee, Medway Council

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## Our Workforce Data

Significant development has taken place over the past few years in relation to the production and monitoring of our workforce data.

The workforce data is used both at a council level and by services to enhance workforce planning. It is provided to assist services to integrate people issues into their service and business planning processes and as part of the Quarterly Performance Reporting:

- Workforce profiles
- Employee turnover and reasons for leaving
- Absence
- Recruitment

Continuing developments are planned to provide workforce data on:

- Employees undertaking learning and development
- New starters completing corporate induction
- New managers completing manager inductions
- Employees completing Personal Development Reviews
- Enhanced use of exit review data
- Leadership and management competencies
- Skills gap analysis
- National Minimum dataset for social care
- School Workforce Census

Our staff survey also provides valuable information and feedback from our employees. In future, the survey will be conducted at divisional level to provide more specific feedback from staff on how well they feel they are supported to deliver improved services to customers.

Assessments against the Investors In People framework have given external judgements and feedback on our people processes and management development requirements:

“The culture underpinning the Investors in People Standard is well embedded and the Council is an example of good practice in the way it supports and manages its people, and this is something that other organisations can learn from.” (Baker, 2007).

Workforce monitoring is presented annually to the council’s Employment Matters Committee.

The following data is taken from the council’s payroll/human resources records system as at 31 March 2009.

NB: The ONS data includes all residents, not just those who were economically active at the time of the Census in 2001.

Both data sources have also informed the 2008/09 workforce monitoring report to the Employment Matters Committee.

- Sixty-five per cent of the council’s workforce is based in schools.
- The council has an ageing workforce.
- Across the organisation, fourteen divisions (out of the eighteen shown below) are facing an above-average proportion of staff who are due to retire in the next five years.

- The average age of employees across the whole organisation is 43.6 years.
- One-in-eight staff are female.
- Disabled people are under-represented in the workforce.
- Chinese/Other and Multi-Ethnic communities are under-represented in the workforce.
- 16-24 year-olds and 30-34 year-olds are under-represented in the workforce.
- The proportion of 40-59 year-olds is higher than expected when compared with the local population.
- Three-quarters of employees live in Medway.

Division *	No. of employees (headcount)	Full-time equivalent (rounded)	Proportion who are full-time (headcount)	Proportion who are part-time (headcount)	Proportion who are aged 16-24 *	Proportion who are aged over 65 ** (headcount)	Proportion who are due to retire within 5 years *** (headcount)
Public Health	14	12	57.1%	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>BUSINESS SUPPORT DEPARTMENT (including Chief Executive)</b>							
Communications, Performance and Partnerships	57	52	78.9%	21.1%	5.3%	0.0%	5.3%
Customer First, Democracy and Governance	266	206	54.1%	45.9%	11.7%	0.8%	7.1%
Finance	161	149	80.7%	19.3%	6.8%	0.0%	1.9%
Housing and Corporate Services	189	179	85.2%	14.8%	5.8%	0.5%	7.9%
Organisational Services	137	127	80.1%	19.7%	9.5%	0.7%	3.6%
<b>CHILDREN AND ADULTS</b>							
Children's Care	278	251	72.3%	27.7%	6.1%	0.7%	11.2%
Commissioning	25	25	88.0%	12.0%	16.0%	0.0%	4.0%
Inclusion	226	168	49.6%	50.4%	10.6%	1.8%	6.6%
Learning and Achievement	346	236	45.4%	54.6%	4.6%	2.3%	9.5%
Medway Schools	5,332	3,940	41.2%	58.8%	5.4%	1.3%	4.6%
Social Care	502	419	45.6%	54.4%	2.4%	1.2%	10.4%
<b>REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE</b>							
Business and Service Quality	175	153	69.1%	30.9%	4.0%	4.6%	8.0%
Development, Economy and Transport							
Frontline Services	198	190	89.9%	10.1%	5.1%	2.5%	9.1%
Leisure and Culture	296	226	55.1%	44.9%	14.2%	4.7%	8.1%
Medway Park and 2012							
Medway Renaissance	15	15	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,217</b>	<b>6,348</b>	<b>48.6%</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>

\* Where a division comprises fewer than 12 employees, it has been merged with another division to prevent individuals from being identified.

\*\* As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, \*\*\* Calculated as the number of employees aged 60 to 64 years as at 31 March 2009



When compared with the local population, men are significantly under-represented within the workforce. This not the case at the most senior grades where men account for just over half of the top five per cent of earners. These figures are representative of the national picture of Local Authorities (Audit Commission, 2008)

Gender	Medway Council		Medway Population
	Headcount	Full-time equivalent	
Female	81.1%	77.7%	51.2%
Male	18.9%	22.3%	48.8%

The Council has been signed up to the national Positive About Disability (Two Ticks) scheme, run by Jobcentre Plus, since 2001. Working in partnership with the Disabled Workers Forum, activities to improve accessibility and to address other issues and barriers are being identified and implemented. Continued monitoring is required to assess how successful those are.

Disability Declared	Medway Council Headcount	Medway Population
Yes	2.17%	12.92%
No	95.96%	87.08%
Not given or refused	1.87%	-

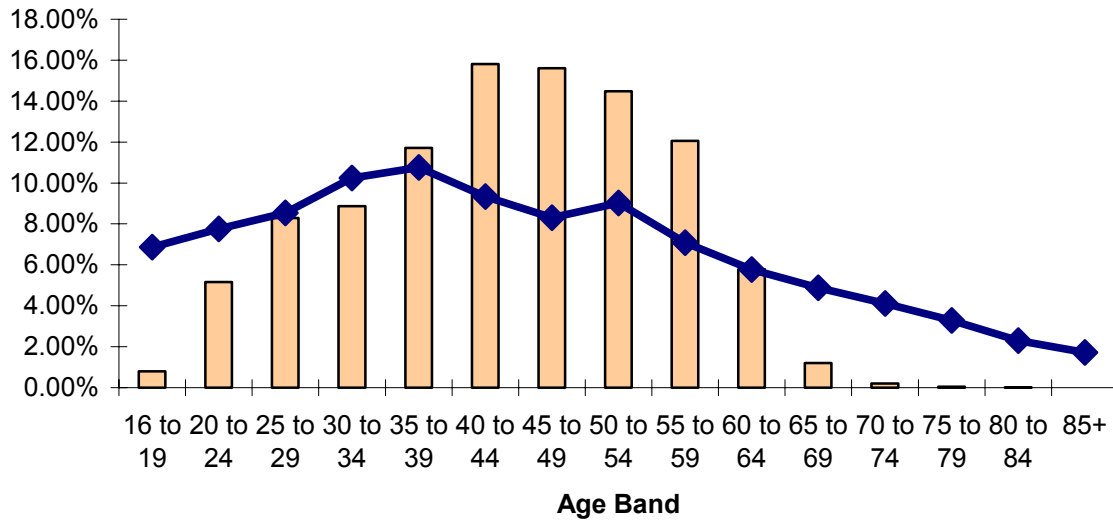
The ethnic profile of the Council's workforce varies from that of the local population. The proportion of Black and Black British staff is approximately double that of those same communities in Medway. Chinese/Other and Multi-Ethnic groups are less well represented proportionately.

Medway Council's workforce profile, like most local authorities, does not reflect the local populations it serves. Workforce data shows that recruitment tends to filter out diversity (ethnicity, age, gender and disability) and that employees leaving the organisation are disproportionately more likely to come from these minority groups.

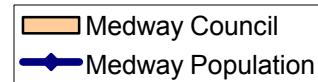
Race/Ethnicity	Medway Council Headcount	Medway Population
Asian or Asian British	2.23%	2.94%
Black or Black British	1.38%	0.69%
Chinese or Other	0.37%	0.66%
Multi-Ethnic	0.72%	1.09%
White (White British, White Irish & White Other)	93.83%	94.62%
Not Given or Refused	1.48%	-

There is a clear difference between the spread of male and female staff by age. The pattern for women fits more closely the Medway population as a whole. This is not the case for men where staff are under-represented in the 25-49 age range particularly.

## Medway Council Employees by age compared with Medway Population



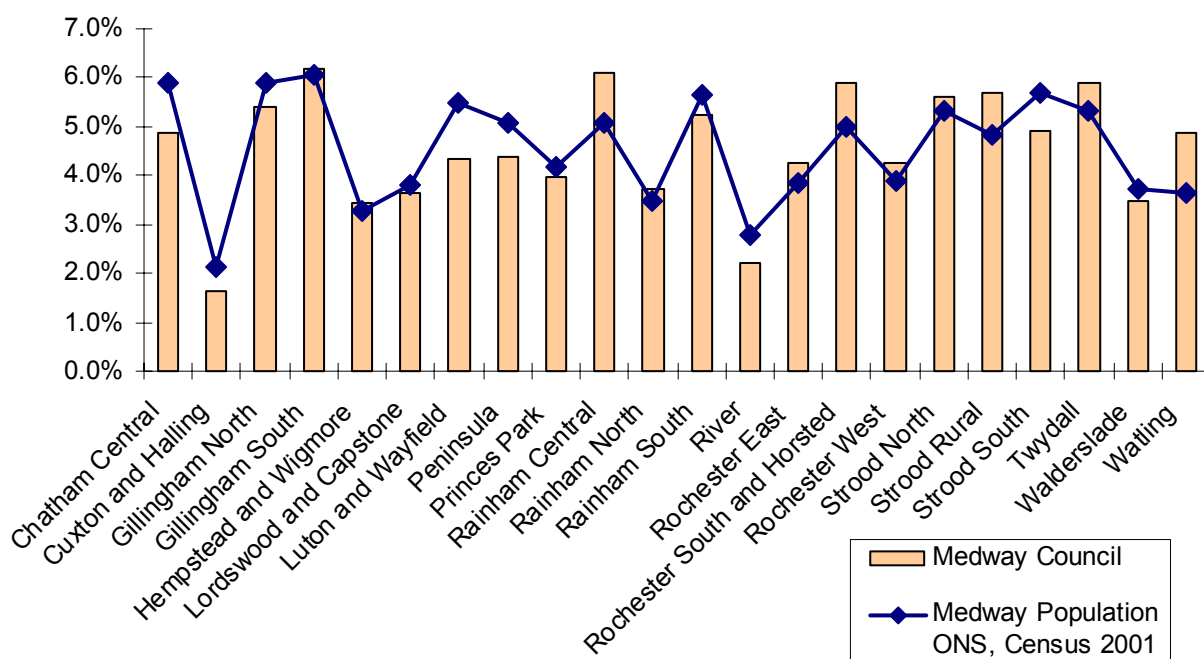
Medway Population (ONS 2001) shows total population not only economically active.



The graph above clearly shows the difference between the age profile of the council and that of Medway’s population as a whole. Under-representation in the 16 to 25 age group is an indication of young people remaining in further and higher education whilst the over-representation in the 40 plus age groups may be contributed to the post war baby boom. This analysis would suggest that with effort to target promotion and encourage those under 30 years of age to consider careers within local government the current imbalance could resolve itself over time.

Three-quarters of employees live in Medway. The distribution of employees across Medway wards is shown below, in comparison with that of the local population.

## Medway Council Employees by ward compared with Medway Population



The council's reliance on the local labour market for the majority of its staff inextricably links the Council's role as employer with that of a community leader – improving the skills, employability and employment opportunities within Medway will improve the quality and capacity of the local labour market which in turn will provide a ready source of future employees for the council.

### Other Internal factors

**Sickness absence** - The average number of days sickness absence per employee for 2008/09 was 8.17 days, against a Council target of 7 days. This is a decrease from the previous year and equates to a reduction of 4,862 days absence due to sickness.

**Starters and leavers** - During 2008/09, 920 new starters joined the Council. In the same period, 1,027 members of staff left the Council. If the Community Support Service is excluded, there were 961 leavers. The top five departure classifications were resignation, redundancy, natural retirement, end of contract and early retirement. These account for 93% of all leavers in 2008/09.

**Early retirements** - There were higher levels of early retirements in 2005/06 due to the Council-wide restructure and in 2007/08 due to the staffing reductions as a result of budget pressures. The figure of 47 employees for 2008/09 is slightly higher than 2007/08 and this was largely due to the closure of the Community Support Scheme in Mental Health Services (18 employees) and school re-organisations (17 employees).

**Ill-health retirements** - Medway Council has a lower level of ill-health retirements compared with the Unitary and National averages and indicates that the criteria for ill-health retirement are being applied in a robust manner.

**Discipline, grievance, bullying and harassment** - BME staff are over-represented in employee relations cases generally, when compared with BME levels in the workforce. There appears to be no emerging pattern in relation to ethnicity by specific type of employee relations case. However, the numbers are low, meaning that a difference of only one or two cases can have a significant effect, potentially masking any trends or presenting a misleading picture. An independent review undertaken in late 2006 reviewed those cases involving BME staff and found all were dealt with appropriately.

### **External factors**

**Tackling Worklessness** – A report to Government on how to tackle worklessness (Houghton 2008) stressed that local authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships were central to a multi-agency approach in tackling worklessness. The interim report recommended that every local authority should examine jointly with their Local Strategic Partnership the extent and robustness of their arrangements covering employment and skills.

The report also recommended that local authorities, with Local Strategic Partnerships, should have more responsibility to help long term claimants back into employment, as well as promote self employment and enterprise. Consequently, public sector employers should be required to provide a basic offer to local people. The basic offer should include:

- minimum numbers for apprenticeships
- using Local Employment Partnerships with Jobcentre Plus and its partners to notify vacancies and to recruit staff
- to stimulate work of benefit to local communities, funded through funding channelled through the Work & Skills Plan and/or the proposed national challenge fund
- encourage their suppliers to conform to the basic offer.

Finally, the public sector, as a significant procurer in the economy, should use this market power to encourage all bidders and suppliers to offer more opportunities to workless people, and enable more social enterprises to bid for contracts.

**Changing needs of an ageing population** - Currently over three quarters of the workforce delivers services to either children or to adults with social care needs. (LGE, 2008). The government recognises the need to transform these staff and through the Department of Health and the Department for Children Schools and Families aim for Local Authorities, schools, NHS Trusts and others to develop programmes to address the predicted shortfall in trained professionals in key areas over the next ten years.

The vision for social care is stated within Putting People First – Working to Make it Happen (DH, 2008). “The change in the demographic structure of the population is one of the most significant challenges we face. Not only is there the requirement to further develop existing and establish new skills in order to meet long term complex needs, but there is also an urgent imperative to create additional capacity across the social care workforce from non-traditional backgrounds and to create a positive environment for new types of workers working in non-traditional roles. In addition, the existing social care workforce is ageing and remains predominantly female. Effective workforce planning is vital in delivering the right capacity as well as competency of the adult social care workforce.”

**Improvements to children’s services** - The vision for the children’s workforce is contained within 2020 Children and Young People’s Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) which sets out a number of areas in which partners will work together to secure improvements across the children and young people’s workforce, These include:

- a more integrated approach to the development of leaders and managers, including extending the remit of the National College of School Leadership to develop a comprehensive package of support for current and aspiring Directors of Children's Services;
- a strategic approach to recruitment, including raising the profile of jobs in the children's workforce, tackling and encouraging the best new entrants to join it;
- supporting people in the workforce to develop the skills and behaviours they need to work effectively in partnership with children, young people and parents, and with each other, in ways that help to secure better outcomes;
- ensuring that qualifications, training and progression routes are accessible, high quality and help people in the workforce to develop their skills and their careers;
- ensuring that people in the workforce have the skills and knowledge they need to support children who are particularly vulnerable, including those who are looked after, are disabled or have mental health needs;
- developing a knowledge bank for the children and young people's workforce, to ensure that practice, training and workforce development is firmly based on evidence about what makes the most difference.

**Transforming services to disabled children and their families** – Following the Fundamental Review of Services to Children With Disabilities (Medway Council, 2008) and in response to the Government's Aiming High for Disabled Children (DCSF, 2008), universal services such as child minding, nurseries, after school clubs and holiday play-schemes will be supported to open their services up to children with more complex needs as well as increasing the number of short breaks available to children with the most complex needs. In addition, health, education and social care services will continue to move closer together to provide a more integrated service. The government's Transition Guide for All Services (DCSF/DH, October 2008) aims to heighten the aspirations of disabled children and their families in adult life through employment and access to further and higher education where appropriate.

**Transforming Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services** – Following the Fundamental Review of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (Medway Council, 2008) health, education and social care services will become more integrated around a common assessment framework process and offer a single point of entry into services.

The transformation of disability and mental health services will be led by the Children's Trust which will jointly commission new services provided by the Council and NHS Trusts within Medway. These services will be designed to better meet the needs of children and their families and these changes will require services to be delivered in new ways. This may impact on the current staff within all provider organisations.

**Shortages in other key areas** – Medway Council has experienced shortages in the managerial and professional grades. A quarter of the recruitment and retention difficulties reported by councils (Audit Commission, 2008) are at basic professional level, 35 per cent for experienced professionals, 25 per cent at principal professional level and 16 per cent at Service Manager level.

In recent years, Medway Council's experienced difficulties in recruiting qualified Social Workers (especially in the child protection area), Planners, Environmental Health Officers,

Engineers, Lawyers, IT programmers, Senior Regeneration roles, Benefits Assessors, Educational Psychologists, Housing and Benefits Officers. These difficulties, to a large extent have been overcome and the current economic climate may further assist with this. The council will benefit from those out of work and looking to alternative careers within the public sector and newly graduating students from the local universities but needs to develop a more systematic yet flexible and supportive approach to train potential employees in these historically difficult-to-fill posts. Greater use of graduate placements and work experience is an effective way of identifying people with an aptitude and desire to pursue public sector careers.

## How we have been measured

The council has been required to report annually to the government on a number of employment related performance indicators. Up until 2008 we were measured against local and national targets for improvement and compared against other councils in England. A summary of performance against Best Value performance indicators is provided below:

Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI)	2004-05	2005-06	2006/07	2007/08	2007/08 target	2007/08 Unitary Average	2007/08 National Average
11a - Percentage of top 5% earners: Women	44.0%	47.0%	49.0%	49.0%	50.0%	46.7%	34.1%
11b - Percentage of top 5% earners from Black and Minority Ethnic communities	4.0%	3.7%	3.8%	4.5%	5.5%	3.2%	3.4%
11c - Percentage of top 5% earners who are disabled	-	4.6%	3.2%	3.2%	5.0%	3.1%	3.8%
12 - Number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per employee	7.4	7.5	8.1	8.8			
14 - Early retirements (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total workforce	0.2%	0.7%	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.6%	0.6%
15 - Ill-health retirements as a % of the total workforce	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	8.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
16a - Percentage of employees declaring a disability	2.3%	3.2%	4.7%	4.1%	3.5%	2.6%	3.7%
16b - Percentage of economically-active population in Medway who have a limiting long term illness	12.9%	Source: Office of National Statistics 2001 Census					
17a - Percentage of employees from Black and Minority Ethnic communities	4.3%	4.8%	5.2%	5.1%	6.5%	5.2%	5.4%
17b - Percentage of economically-active population in Medway who are from Black and Minority Ethnic communities	5.4%	Source: Office of National Statistics 2001 Census					

Medway Council has consistently performed well when compared with the National and Unitary Council averages. In common with most other authorities, though, the diversity of the workforce does not reflect the local population. More frequent monitoring of the workforce diversity is needed, especially at service level and the effectiveness of the recruitment processes in addressing this imbalance. Also, more needs to be done to encourage and support people with disabilities to achieve employment within the Council and its contractors.

## **What we will do**

There are four workforce priority areas for the Council over the next three years:

- Build a workforce that reflects the community we serve through better workforce planning, recruitment and retention.
- Improve employment opportunities within Medway.
- Improve leadership and management skills across the organisation.
- Train and develop individuals and teams to deliver effective and improving services.

These four priority areas will address the key challenges facing Medway Council alongside other local authorities when planning its future workforce requirements (Audit Commission, 2008) including:

- An increase in demand for services for older people due to an ageing population.
- A Children's Workforce that better meets the needs of our children.
- A changing balance of competition between and within sectors due to economic changes.
- Innovation in technology and partnership working reducing demand for some skills and increasing demand for others.
- Pressure for a more diverse workforce to respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse society.
- An increasingly tight fiscal environment.

### **Build a workforce that reflects the community we serve through better workforce planning, recruitment and retention.**

#### ***Improve recruitment***

We experience recruiting difficulties in a number of key roles and service areas. These difficulties are caused by shortages nationally of skilled and professionally qualified staff in key jobs and a labour market where we must recruit competitively with our neighbouring authorities and partners.

We aim to change the make up of our workforce to include a wider breadth of skills and knowledge by creating a number of apprenticeship and trainee posts in key shortage areas. The roles of senior professionals will be enhanced to acknowledge and expand the mentoring and development of junior staff within their areas. This will be supported by a workforce development service, in partnership with local partners in further and higher education to ensure a steady supply of skilled and qualified workers. Medway will begin to compete for staff not on the basis of ever increasing salaries but on the development and flexible employment opportunities it provides for local people.

## ***Apprenticeships***

Medway Council started its apprenticeship scheme in September 2008 to introduce young people into the workforce and to develop the workforce to meet its future needs.

As the largest employer in the area, the council offers a diverse range of career and development opportunities within its many service areas such as the legal profession, health and social care, democratic services, finance, enforcement and green spaces. The apprenticeship scheme allows the council to 'grow its own' workforce in answer to the challenges it will face over recruitment shortages.

Apprenticeship intake will increase considerably during the 2009/10 period. Plans exist to work in partnership with businesses and organisations across Medway, to create further employment and training opportunities for the high calibre of young people leaving our schools every year.

Apprenticeships, 18-24 months in duration, are a mixture of on and off the job learning. Our apprentices undertake NVQ qualifications in such topics as Business Administration or Customer Service amongst others at level 2 or 3, a technical certificate and key skills assessment at the same time gaining valuable work experience.

Apprentices also undertake relevant training and development within their specific work areas as well as gaining an insight into how the Council operates at a political level. Other classes/tuition/development activities pertinent to their qualification are delivered in-house, such as minute taking, letter and report writing with the possibility of learning a modern language. Their personal development is enhanced through access to courses on personal finance, time keeping, relationships and others.

Our aim is to make the Medway Council Apprenticeship Scheme one to be recognised by employers as giving young people every opportunity to continue into the world of work and be successful in their chosen careers. The current age profile will be improved to more closely match that of the local population and the council will benefit greatly from the fresh ideas and innovation that these young people can bring to their workplace.

## ***Work experience***

We actively support work experience placements for school students, young people at college, university or local training providers, adults returning to work or retraining and people with learning or physical disabilities. In the year 2007/2008 the number of placements completed was 287, predominantly in office and administration work. In the future we will encourage managers to use work placements in the areas experiencing recruitment difficulties to offer more people the opportunity to see the work involved in the area and inspire new talent into the field.

## ***Graduate placements***

In 2008, the Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Greenwich to give university students work experience through voluntary summer placements in council departments. This initiative offers great benefits to both parties. It gives students the opportunity to put their theoretical knowledge into practice, gain valuable employability skills and a current work-based reference to add to their CV. It offers managers the benefits of new team members at a time when many of their permanent staff are taking their annual holidays, without financial cost; and, if there are staff vacancies within the department, the



opportunity to look at potential recruits over the placement period. We will be strongly promoting this scheme across the council and especially in the areas of the council recognised as experiencing recruitment difficulties.

### ***Induction and retention***

Gareth Roberts, author of *Recruitment and Selection*, for the Chartered Institute of Personnel and development, recently said, "Recruitment and selection is the foundation of all other HR activity. Get it wrong and it doesn't matter how good the development programme is, how well an employer motivates their staff, how well they manage their performance, or even how well they reward them - they are always making up for that one bad decision".

Current research shows that for many organisations one in eight employees leave within the first six months, so recruiting the right person in the first place, retaining them and revising existing selection techniques should be a priority for employers. The induction process plays a key part in effective recruitment and this should begin before the role is actually taken up.

The current recruitment and selection practices are being revised to ensure that we are able to recruit a workforce that is adaptable, motivated and able to deliver high quality public services to meet the ever changing needs of the local community. In order to realise this we need to ensure these practices are objective and standardised, but equally flexible enough to meet the demanding needs of a highly complex organisation.

### ***Talent management and Succession planning***

The idea of talent management is relatively new and describes the processes involved in identifying existing a future staff that can be developed to fulfil the roles we traditionally find hard to recruit. There is a need to develop a talent management and succession planning strategy that encompasses current best practice (CIPD, 2009). Such a strategy will include:

- Consolidate the people management skills of line managers to identify, assess and develop talent effectively through a improved Personal Development Review process (performance management, giving feedback and having effective conversations, coaching and engaging staff).
- Develop pivotal roles and opportunities for staff to stretch themselves through short-term project work and secondments.
- Maintain a strong and consistent approach to performance management.
- Continue to market and promote Medway Council as the local employer of choice and, during the current economic climate where recruiting activity is reduced, keep potential talent warm for the future.

### ***Total rewards approach to pay and benefits***

It is recognised that the Council needs to adopt a strategic approach to pay and rewards to ensure we can recruit and retain appropriate staff, and target expenditure in ways that drive service improvement.

The council will work to address the following three priorities:

- To continue to develop and review our pay and reward structure to ensure it works to support a high performance and highly skilled workforce.

- To ensure our pay and rewards policies are fair and that they work to eliminate discrimination; and
- To develop a Total Rewards approach to pay and benefits, to ensure that the value of our available benefits are maximized and that they are made available more flexibly to staff. The Council already offers a comprehensive selection of financial and non-financial rewards and benefits such as:
  - the Local Government Pension Scheme;
  - Flexible working initiatives
  - Employee Assistance Programme
  - Salary Sacrifice Schemes
  - Recognition Awards

The Total Reward approach will draw together all the financial and non-financial investment the council makes in its workforce. It will emphasise all aspects of reward as an integrated and coherent whole, from pay and benefits through flexible working to learning and development, not forgetting the quality and challenge of the work itself.

The Local Government Employers suggest three key challenges to implementing a Total Reward system. These are:

- management challenge to develop competence to run a Total Rewards system;
- organisational challenge to develop a performance culture capable of benefiting from Total Rewards, and
- Trade Union challenge to develop confidence to negotiate on individual rather than collective reward structures.

It is our belief that this Workforce Strategy will help the organisation face these challenges and assist in the development of a Total Reward Strategy.

### ***Employee Wellbeing***

The physical and mental wellbeing of the workforce is of paramount importance in relation to providing high quality consistent services to the community. A workforce that is fit and healthy will be able to perform at its highest level and be absent from work due to sickness less frequently.

It is now nationally recognised that employers who invest in wellbeing programmes and support for their workforce achieve greater motivation and loyalty from the workforce, which directly impacts on the quality of the service. Such employers become “Employers of Choice” who people want to work for and remain working for.

The Council already has a number of provisions, which will assist with its goal to become an Employer of Choice.

The Council’s aim is to develop these provisions into a more holistic Employee Wellbeing Programme, which will include:

- Developing and improving the Occupational Health Service
- Increased preventative work such as health screening and advice on healthy living
- Reaching those employees in outside units, who often work shifts and cannot always access the existing provisions

- Increase management awareness of the importance of employee wellbeing and undertaking risk assessments
- Improved communication with all employees

### ***Equality Framework for Local Government***

In April 2009, the Equality Framework for Local Government replaced the Equality Standard for Local Government. Like the standard, the framework continues to provide a structure to help local authorities mainstream equality and diversity into service delivery and employment. This builds on the legal duties to produce equality schemes (currently there are separate requirements for race, disability and gender).

Prior to April 2009, Medway Council assessed itself as being at level 2 of the standard, with a commitment to achieving level 3. Level 3 equates to the 'Achieving' level under the equality framework. As well as a shift in focus from process to impact and outcomes, the framework has revised the four themes under the standard and has introduced a fifth, as follows:

- Knowing your community – equality mapping (new)
- Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Community engagement and satisfaction
- Responsive services and customer care
- A modern and diverse workforce.

The council's ability to deliver responsive, personalised services will depend in a large part on the composition, skills, understanding and commitment of a workforce.

### ***Transform Adult Social Care***

Work has begun to transform the adult social care workforce in response to 'Putting People First' (DH, 2008).

A Transformation and Modernisation programme is in place within Medway under the direction of a programme board made up of senior representatives from social care, health, the voluntary sector and other partners, that will consider future staffing needs in the context of services that respond to clients and carers taking a central role in the design and commissioning of their own support. Medway has already adopted the 'Fair Access to Care Services' (DH, 2002) ethos and will develop Self Directed Support for clients and carers and have a target to have 30 per cent of clients in receipt of an individual budget within two years and 60 per cent of clients within five years.

The transformation programme board recognises the increasing role that partners within the voluntary sector will play in offering a more flexible and creative response to the needs of clients and their families and the need to continue to improve the skills and knowledge within the social care sector through the Medway Social Care College.

### ***Build a Children's Workforce that better meets the needs of our children***

The Children's Trust within Medway is responsible for developing a workforce that will continue to improve the outcome for children, young people and their families. A Lead Partnership has been established with senior representatives from schools, social care, health, early years, youth services, the voluntary sector and other partners to take forward the '2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy' (DCSF, 2008). This programme will

give the workforce a shared purpose and vision with common values and language and the training and capacity to deliver better outcomes and keep children safe.

Work is underway to bring together information on the current workforce within schools, social care, health and other partners using the 'One Children's Workforce' toolkit (CWDC, 2008). This information will allow us to plan and focus recruitment and training around core skills and competences, design better integrated teams of professionals and to develop a more coherent Management and Leadership programme across the partners for middle and senior managers to provide the Children's Trust with leaders in the future.

The Medway Children's Trust, established in April 2009 has put in place a number of partnership boards to take forward the necessary work to integrate and transform services for disabled children and those services to children suffering from mental ill health.

### **Improve employment opportunities within Medway.**

#### ***Future Jobs Fund***

The Future Jobs Fund is set up to provide additional job opportunities to jobseekers and other people on out of work benefits who would otherwise be unable to find work, by ensuring a significant number of people, particularly those aged 18 – 24 who have been unemployed for around 12 months, are able to take up these new jobs.

The primary focus of the employment to be generated will be on enabling young people to undertake jobs where they are actively serving their fellow local residents, delivering outcomes that directly contribute to improving the quality of life of the broader community.

They will gain vital work experience and skills, which are highly transferable, enhancing greatly their chances of accessing sustained employment following on. The jobs will be predominantly "front line" in nature in that they will be engaging new young employees in the direct implementation of services to benefit local people. This will include roles in the Safer Communities team, with the Town Centre Managers, in the Community Centres as Hall Attendants, in highways maintenance, grounds maintenance, sports development waste management recycling, housing stock maintenance and trading standards.

Young people, who are often significantly disadvantaged by their lack of experience, will be able to gain up to a year of experience employed by Medway Council by working in front line services. They will be able to gain skills and possibly even qualifications in Customer Services, which is excellent for the growing number of retail job opportunities. They will also gain skills and potentially qualifications in areas such as administration, ICT, supervision, highways and ground maintenance.

Some of the jobs we envisage to be created include the training and development of youth workers within both the local authority and voluntary sectors. At the present time there is a shortage of qualified youth workers in North Kent and the Future Jobs Fund programme presents an excellent opportunity for young people to respond to that shortage with a view to pursuing a career in youth work.

A number of the jobs envisaged relate to sports development and events management. In the run up to the Olympic games there will be an increasing number of sporting and cultural events in North Kent and in neighbouring parts of the Thames Gateway. This includes the Modern Pentathlon world championships due to take place in Medway next year. The Future Jobs Fund provides an excellent opportunity for longer term unemployed people to access

temporary employment in events management, stewarding or sports development, which could act as vital platform for them subsequently to go on to access some of the plethora of new jobs in similar events management fields that will be coming out in the run up to the Olympics.

### ***Project Search***

Valuing People Now, (Department of Health, 2008) is a three year strategy for people with learning disabilities and sets out plans to transform life chances for people with learning disabilities in England to 2011.

Research has shown that too often people with learning disabilities are not expected to move into paid work. The strategy recognises that there needs to be aspirational enhancements for individuals, parents, carers and educators and employers to achieve a real change to enable more people with learning disabilities to live independently through having paid employment, instead of relying on state benefits.

Project Search, part of the Valuing People Now strategy, is a programme to help people with moderate and severe learning disabilities secure and keep full-time paid permanent jobs. Many of the participants will secure and retain full employment within a host organisation; others leave the scheme ready for work and generally secure employment elsewhere. In Medway, a local college tutor and job coach will run a year-long programme of work training for 12 people via a series of work placements in both Medway Council and NHS Medway.

### **Improve leadership and management skills across the organisation.**

#### ***Develop workforce information***

At the heart of the Workforce Strategy is the requirement for accurate and up-to-date information on the workforce.

For the first time this year, we will collect detailed information on all of our school staff through a National School's Workforce Census (DCSF, 2008). We will also collect detailed information on individual staff employed within a social care setting for both adult and children's services through the National Minimum Data Set (Skills for Care, 2009). We will continue to undertake an annual staff survey to provide a complete picture of our total workforce.

We will continue to develop our reporting of sick absence, recruitment, workforce profile, discipline, grievances, harassment and bullying at divisional or service level so that managers can compare their performance against others. This level of data will also provide greater corporate awareness of areas of concern at an early stage and to better target support.

We will improve the recording of qualifications, learning activities and Personal Development Plans of staff to help realise their full potential and to target development more effectively to more closely meet the needs of our organisation.

#### ***Leadership and management development***

Medway Council was first recognised as an Investor in People (IIP) in 2002/2003 and renewed in 2006.

Studies by the Cranfield Business school (Bourne, M., 2008) into the value of achieving IIP status identified:

- Those organisations that are IIP recognised are more likely to have high levels of trust, commitment and cooperation among their employees.
- The IIP Standard has a positive impact on the perception that employees' have of the company's non-financial performance (assessed by the quality of the company's product and services, customer satisfaction, attraction and retention of employees, and employees' relationships).
- The IIP Standard has a positive impact on innovation. Those organizations that are IIP recognised are more likely to have high levels of products and service innovation.
- The IIP Standard has a positive impact on the degree of achievement of company's strategic goals. Those companies that are IIP recognised are more likely to meet their strategic objectives.

Medway Council will renew its IIP accreditation again in 2010 and aims to attain the highest level of IIP accreditation (Gold) under the new IIP standards framework. Through becoming an internal assessor, the council will embed these IIP standards into its performance management framework.

The leadership and management competencies are being developed to encompass the IIP standards framework and in partnership with local universities will form the basis of a leadership and management programme for Medway Managers that recognises the experience of managers whilst equipping them with consistent, comprehensive and continuing management development.

### **Train and develop individuals and teams to deliver effective and improving services.**

Training will continue to focus on key skills and knowledge for staff and partners. These areas will include keeping children safe, protecting vulnerable adults from abuse, disability awareness, equalities and good customer care, health and safety and induction. Greater use will be made of blended learning such as mixing classroom based teaching with e-learning to ensure that all staff have a consistent and effective understanding of these key areas. More of this training will become mandatory and methods to record this will be developed.

#### ***i-Share***

i-share is a Kent and Medway partnership venture that will provide an online training community social networking site where all public sector partners can share training and development events with each other.

The website, [www.i-share.org.uk](http://www.i-share.org.uk), is a joint collaboration between all 14 councils, boroughs and districts across Kent, funded by Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE).

It aims to improve the skills of the county's public sector workforce and will offer a wider choice of courses by taking advantage of opportunities being offered across all the authorities.

Further phases planned for i-share include secondment and mentoring opportunities across authorities, the sharing of policies and procedures and the eventual roll out to include Fire and Rescue, Police and Health.

#### ***The Medway College of Social Care***

The Medway College of Social Care is an innovative project developed as a partnership between Medway Council and Kent Community Housing Trust. Serving the entire Medway

social care sector, the 'virtual' College provides a one-stop shop for easy access to funded, high quality social care training. The College is a dedicated Medway centre for social care learning, recruitment and resource gathering. During 2009/2010 a procurement exercise will be undertaken to select a new supplier to take forward the college. At this time, Medway Council will adopt the Medway College for Social Care as its main provider of Social Care training for those services it provides directly to users. The College will play a key role in developing the skills of the care provider workforce across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

### ***Union Learning Agreement***

Medway Council, through a Learning Agreement with the unions, is committed to promoting learning opportunities for employees with the aim of raising achievement and encouraging life-long learning so that every individual, whatever their age or starting point, can realise their full potential. The unions can play a major role in encouraging staff either back into learning or to continue learning. The Learning Agreement aims to:

- encourage staff within Medway Council to participate in Life Long Learning, either through workplace learning or through external provision.
- ensure that Lifelong Learning is accessible to all staff.
- encourage and support staff to attain the Government's current learning initiatives (e.g. a level 2 qualification in literacy and numeracy, or an NVQ).

### ***Develop our skills***

Medway Council through its Professional Qualifications Centre delivers NVQ qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 4 in Customer Service, Business Administration, Learning and Development, and Management.

The Centre has forged partnerships with a skills broker and a local provider to draw down funding to support and supplement delivery of NVQs. This method enables the Centre to continue with delivery of qualitative NVQs, at the same time drawing down funding through the Train to Gain provider. In effect, this will make operation of the NVQ Centre cost efficient because, undertaking delivery of the qualification allows the Centre to make considerable cost savings and surplus funds can then be utilised to finance other qualifications that do not attract funding.

In order to meet the demands of the organisation, and to cater for the diverse range of careers throughout, the Centre also encourages members of staff to become Assessors within their areas of expertise. The Centre can then become accredited to deliver the relevant NVQ and enable delivery of the qualification in-house, creating considerable cost savings for the organisation where funding is not available. This will allow Medway to deliver more qualifications and ensure a high standard of continuous professional development for its workforce.

### **How we will measure success**

From 2009 onwards, Medway will be judged by the Audit Commission through the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). Medway Council will be judged on the extent to which it:

- has a productive and skilled workforce;
- knows in the medium to longer term what staff it will need, with what skills, and has plans to achieve this;
- engages and supports staff in organisational change; and
- has policies which support diversity and good people management.

The success of this Workforce Strategy will be measured by its positive impact on the lives of Medway residents and improved services to customers.

In addition to these outcome measures we will continue to monitor a number of local measures in line with the four Workforce Strategy priorities.



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