

Strategy for people

Strategy for managing and developing people

Becoming an employer of choice through a valued, committed and diverse workforce

2004 – 2008



29/01/2004 draft

Strategy for managing and developing people

Becoming an employer of choice through a valued, committed and diverse workforce

Introduction

At Harrow, we understand that without a valued, committed and diverse workforce we cannot achieve the council's vision.

The council aims to raise the standard of all our services and recognises that this can only be achieved through people's enthusiasm, dedication and talent. We will support, encourage, value and engage all the people who provide Harrow council's services.

This strategy will underpin the work of the New Harrow Project and the way the people who work for the council deliver services, so that there is a real improvement for residents and users. We will encourage partners and contractors to embrace and adapt the principles of the strategy so that all services are delivered to the same high standards.

The strategy describes the council's aims for our people, what we will do to achieve those aims, and how we will measure our achievements. The ultimate measures of success however, will be the achievement of the council's vision and strategic priorities and how the people of Harrow assess the service they receive from the council.

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Keeping the strategy up-to-date

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Achieving the vision

Harrow's vision

Harrow's strategy for its people aims to make a direct and significant contribution to achieving the objectives in the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. The strategy for people has been developed in line with the vision:

'We are proud to live in Harrow because of the richness of our cultural backgrounds and diversity of our communities. We are ambitious for the future of our children, our town and our place in London. For these reasons we want to enhance the life opportunities for everyone by improving the quality of life, freeing everyone to achieve their potential and removing barriers to personal development and community growth

In Harrow we look forward to a community:

- Where everyone can aspire to a better life for themselves and their families
- Where diversity can be celebrated and social cohesion promoted
- Where everyone has an equal chance to fulfil their potential
- Where the quality of life is enhanced by a safe, secure and clean environment
- Where standards of education are rising and there is wider participation in lifelong learning
- Where good health and social care is available to all who need those services
- Where there is a vibrant local economy
- Where there is a strong sense of civic pride
- Where there is a dynamic council supported by a valued workforce, working in partnership with the community to improve public services'

The New Harrow Project

The council will strive to achieve its vision and become recognised as a good provider through the implementation of the New Harrow Project sustained by a rolling 3 year Medium Term Budget Strategy. The New Harrow Project will seek to raise all council standards of service so that there is a real improvement for residents and users.

The project is:

- Fundamentally re-shaping the structure of the services in order to ally the structure closely to providing customer focussed services and break down traditional service barriers
- Developing an area based model for the delivery of public realm services
- Developing community schools as the focus for the delivery of its community services

The New Harrow Project needs people to work differently; more flexibly; across professional boundaries and developing and using new competencies.

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Working for Harrow council in 2004

- The council employs over 5600 people, over 2500 of whom are based in schools
- The workforce is based in over 100 locations across the borough
- Over XX% of people work part time - the council is committed to developing work/life balance solutions
- Turnover in the council is stable at around 11%. However there are pockets where turnover is higher and this raises key issues for recruitment and retention
- Absence is an average of 9.9 days per annum, which is above the government target
- Women make up 75% of the workforce but only 35% are employed at senior levels
- People from black and minority ethnic groups account for 27% of the workforce but only 5% are employed at senior levels
- 3% of the people the council employs declare they have a disability. This is good for the sector but lower than the proportion of people with a disability in the working population
- Over 55% of the workforce which have achieved Investors in People status

Building the strategy

The strategy takes account of the council's need to respond to a wide range of external and local factors such as:

- Greater public involvement and influence in the level and nature of the public services provided locally.
- Area based provision of services with increased and more effective consultation.
- The increasing diversity of the local community.
- The organisational change required to achieve the objectives of the council's Corporate Plan and the New Harrow Project.
- Increasing focus on working in partnership with other sectors to deliver services e.g. National Health Service and the Police
- Central government policies and increasing customer expectations which require improved and changed methods of service provision and working arrangements to show value for money e.g. best value, e-government, local strategic partnerships and re-modelling the workforce.
- Ongoing changes to national and European employment legislation.

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Building the strategy

National guidance

The strategy takes a number of national workforce, skills and e-government strategies into account. In particular, it reflects the 5 priority areas from the Pay and Workforce Development Strategy for Local Government developed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

- Developing Leadership capacity
- Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce
- Developing the organisation
- Resourcing Local government
- Pay and Rewards

Outside feedback

Feedback from inspections has been influential in developing the strategy for the council's people, e.g SSI, Ofsted, *iP* assessment and accreditation and in particular the IDeA Peer Review and Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the resulting improvement plans,

Listening to people

In addition to considering external factors, the council has listened to what people in the council and our partner organisations have told us through focus groups and a comprehensive staff survey. The findings from the staff survey were:

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Strategy for people

Putting the strategy into practice

The strategy will form the over-arching framework for managing and developing people over the next 3 years. It will form the basis for key decision making on resource allocation and policy development on people management issues across the council.

Directorate Service plans will ensure specific services meet each of the 5 key priorities for the council, set out overleaf. The broad objectives, outcomes and success measures outlined in the strategy will have explicit targets, action plans, and project plans to ensure they are achieved.

The strategy flows from the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. It also has clear links to, and is consistent with, other strategies, including the ICT, Communications, and medium term budget strategies

The organisational development directorate will monitor the implementation of the strategy continuously. It will report regularly to the Corporate Management Team and the Employees' Consultative Forum on progress and the achievement of key outcomes.

The strategy will ensure the work programme of all staff involved in human resources across the council focuses on delivering the 5 key priorities. The council's performance will be monitored and measured, and the contribution of the human resource function to the achievement of these priorities will be subject to Best Value Inspection in 2004/05.

Measuring Success

Each of the actions set out in the strategy have specific measures identified that will not only enable monitoring of continuous improvement but also where possible to benchmark performance against key indicators.

The measures that will be used to assess the success of these actions will enable the council to demonstrate, in real terms, the progress made in implementing this strategy.

Strategy for people

The Key Priorities

The council's Corporate Plan includes the following priorities for managing and developing people:

- Becoming an employer of choice through a valued committed and motivated workforce
- Ensuring staff are supported and trained to undertake their tasks and develop their full potential
- Embracing diversity by ensuring services are culturally appropriate and through an increase in the diversity of staff providing services

To achieve these priorities the HR strategy focuses on the following:

Finding and developing the right people with the right skills

To recruit, develop, promote and retain the right people, making the most of their skills and potential

Recognising the value of diversity

To value diversity and ensure equality of opportunity and access in the provision of excellent services

Motivating for results

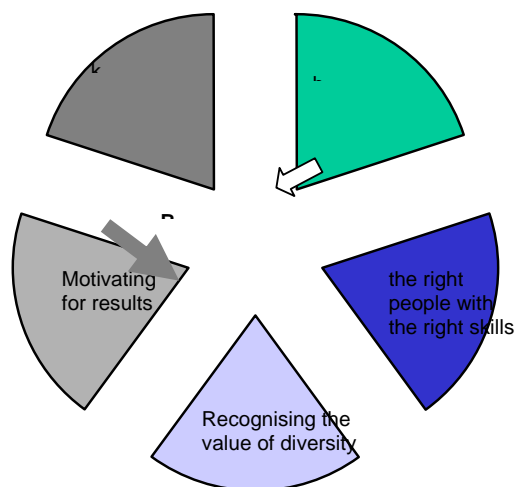
To develop safe, supportive and rewarding working environments and practices to achieve continuous improvement in performance

Keeping people up-to-date

To improve communications and use new technologies to increase the capacity to deliver services effectively

Building capacity

To drive and support change and improvement for individuals, teams and services and through working in partnership build capacity for the council as a whole.



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Key priority 1

Finding and developing the right people with the right skills

Harrow council will be an organisation people want to work for by;

- **Developing effective recruitment and retention strategies and processes**
- **Developing and promoting attractive employment recognition and reward packages that people value**
- **Embedding learning and development opportunities for people**

The actions the council will take:

What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Develop and implement an effective reward package	The way in which the council rewards people is seen to be fair across the council, and rewards contribution Improved staff morale The council will attract and recruit talented applicants for posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in turnover in skill shortage areas ▪ Increase in applications for hard to fill posts ▪ Reduction in number of re-adverts ▪ Staff survey results 	
Develop and implement a flexible benefits package	People will be able to choose benefits to suit their current needs People will be able to change their benefits package as their needs change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in applications in hard to fill posts ▪ Decrease in turnover in skill shortage areas ▪ Staff survey results 	
Promote a range of flexible working opportunities	Maximises the potential pool of people able to work for the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in applications for hard to fill posts ▪ Reduction in turnover in skill shortage areas 	
Produce annual reward statements for staff	A motivated workforce who understand and appreciate the total reward package they receive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff survey results 	

Strategy for people

What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Develop and implement a streamlined, professional recruitment service	The council will attract talented applicants and impress them with the fairness and efficiency of the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in the time taken to fill posts ▪ Reduction in number of re-adverts ▪ Reduction in average advertising spend per appointment ▪ Feedback from applicants 	
Achieve Investors in People status across the whole council by January 2005	A workforce developed to meet the business and service needs of the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ liP assessment and accreditation 	
Develop and implement a structured approach to career and individual development	A stable and suitably skilled workforce which increases capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in internal applicants for jobs ▪ Career development programmes established ▪ Evaluation of one to one advice on careers ▪ Evaluation of coaching, mentoring, secondment and shadowing programmes ▪ Results of exit interviews 	
Develop and implement a learning and development strategy	Maximum access to, and equality of opportunity across the council for, learning and development opportunities for informal and formal learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liP assessment and accreditation • Staff survey results • People Skills Scoreboard results 	
Develop and implement a process to enable effective succession planning	A workforce which reflects the community, effective business continuity and increased capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Year on year improvement against BVPI 11a&b targets 	
Develop managers as coaches	Continuing improvement in the number of effective, learning opportunities in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff appraisals ▪ liP assessment and accreditation ▪ Staff survey results 	
Promote career opportunities in the council with the local community, in local colleges and	The council will be recognised as the employer of choice by people in all Harrow's communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved representation of local communities in the workforce ▪ Increase in numbers of internships, industrial 	

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Strategy for people

universities

placements, work
experience opportunities
and trainee programmes
for local people

Strategy for people

Key priority 2

Recognising the value of diversity

Harrow council will value diversity and promote equality of opportunity and access to achieve the provision of excellent services by:

- **Eliminating discrimination and ensuring staff are treated fairly and consistently**
- **Building on the council's reputation and its role in Community leadership to lead and promote diversity and equality of opportunity through demonstrating best practice in employment**
- **Using management information to improve practices and resolve imbalances**

The actions the council will take:

What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Develop and implement a Corporate Equality Plan incorporating the council's Race Equality Scheme	Embed diversity and equality of opportunity in all aspects of people management and service delivery across the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Year on year improvement against local and BV performance indicators ▪ Staff survey results ▪ Customer satisfaction survey results 	
Consult and involve community and representative groups in developing key employment policies and practices	Minimise adverse impact in employment policies and practices and promote diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Year on year improvement against local and BV performance indicators ▪ Staff survey results ▪ Customer satisfaction survey results 	
Introduce a fair treatment in employment policy	Effective resolution of people's complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improvement in number of complaints resolved at early stages ▪ Reduction in complaints to outside bodies 	
Undertake an Equal Pay review	A fair and equal reward system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outcome of review ▪ Avoidance of complaints to outside bodies 	

Strategy for people

What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Conduct a learning and development equalities audit	Equality and diversity issues are mainstreamed in all learning and development activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outcome of audit ▪ Staff survey results ▪ liP assessment and accreditation 	
Develop and implement a positive action programme in consultation with representative groups	A workforce which reflects the community it serves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show a year on year improvement against local and BV performance indicators 	
Develop and implement a disability and cultural awareness programme for all staff	People in the council will treat each other with respect and understand and work to meet the needs of a diverse community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in harassment and grievances cases ▪ Reduction in customer complaints ▪ Staff survey 	
Develop and implement a programme to share best practice with partner organisations	The council will encourage its partners to embrace best practice in equalities issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendance at events ▪ Feedback from participants 	<i>Procurement Strategy</i>
Develop the provision and reporting of management information	Continuing improvement in management information to enable Identification of patterns and trends and eliminate adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A year on year improvement against local and BV performance indicators 	

Strategy for people

Key priority 3

Motivating for results

Harrow council will develop safe, supportive and rewarding working environments and practices by:

- **Looking after people who work for us**
- **Acting with integrity, trusting, empowering and fairly rewarding the council's workforce**
- **Helping people to build a good work life balance**
- **Fostering a pride in people's achievements**

The actions the council will take:

What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Provide a systematic approach to celebrating organisational, team and individual success	Individual and team contributions and achievements are recognised and the workforce is motivated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Staff survey results▪ IIP assessment and accreditation	
Promote flexible benefits and working options	A more motivated workforce whilst improving the service to customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Show a year on year improvement against local and BV performance indicators▪ Increase in applications for hard to fill jobs▪ Customer satisfaction survey results	
Define and embed what behaviours and competencies the council expects from staff	People are clear about what and how they are expected to contribute towards achieving the council's vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Staff survey results▪ IIP assessment and accreditation▪ Customer satisfaction survey results▪ Reduction in customer complaints	

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What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Develop and implement an effective health and safety strategy which meets the changing requirements of the council	<p>Healthy and safe places to work</p> <p>Safe ways of working</p> <p>Ensure peoples personal safety and security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in numbers of incidents/accidents ▪ Reduction in number of days lost through accidents BVPI 12 ▪ Achievement of HSE standards 	
Provide structured encouragement, support and initiatives for people to adopt healthy lifestyles	A healthier workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in levels of sickness absence BVPI 12 ▪ Staff survey results 	
Provide structured pro-active support to people who become sick or are injured at work	A healthier workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in levels of sickness absence BVPI 12 ▪ Reduction in number of early retirements on the grounds of ill health BVPI 15 	

Strategy for people

Key priority 4

Keeping people up to date

Harrow council will improve communications and use new technologies to deliver services more efficiently by;

- **Communicating and consulting with people inside and outside the council more effectively using appropriate methods and technologies**
- **Making best use of technology for learning**
- **Making access to HR information and services readily available to customers and partners**
- **Providing management information for managers to take action to improve services**

The actions the council will take:

What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Develop and implement a staff communications strategy which uses new technologies to the full	People can give customers up-to-date information about what the council is doing and can use the information to provide and improve services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff survey results ▪ liP assessment and accreditation ▪ Customer satisfaction survey results 	<i>Communications strategy ICT strategy</i>
Develop and implement a standard framework for face to face briefings across the council	A two way process of communication on new developments and changes to the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff survey results ▪ liP assessment and accreditation 	<i>Communications strategy</i>
Develop an interactive HR intranet site	People able to access services more easily and at a time to suit them. Improved communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in the number of transactions ▪ Increase in the use of learning resources ▪ User evaluation and feedback ▪ Customer satisfaction survey results 	<i>Communications strategy ICT strategy</i>

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What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Develop and implement an integrated personnel /payroll system	Efficient processing of transactions and information transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in administrative costs ▪ Reduction in number of transactions ▪ Improvement in management information 	<i>ICT strategy</i>
Develop and implement an integrated learning management system	<p>People have greater access to development</p> <p>Improved management and evaluation of learning and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reports show staff development undertaken systematically ▪ Reports show performance reviews are being undertaken ▪ liP assessment and accreditation ▪ BVPI 2 a+b 	<i>ICT strategy</i>
Develop more effective reporting of management information on people issues	More effective management of performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Year on year improvement against local and BV performance indicators ▪ Staff survey results ▪ Customer satisfaction survey results 	
Make sure people have the skills to make best use of new technologies	People make excellent use of new technologies to improve service to the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff survey results ▪ liP assessment and accreditation ▪ Customer satisfaction survey results 	<i>ICT strategy</i>
Develop and implement an e-learning programme	<p>Mandatory procedural training is undertaken by all in a timely way</p> <p>Increased access to opportunities for personal and career development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendance at mandatory programmes ▪ Reduction in breaches of procedures ▪ Uptake of optional programmes 	<i>ICT strategy</i>

Strategy for people

Key priority 5

Building capacity

Harrow council will drive and support change and improvement for individuals, teams and services and through working in partnership build capacity for the council as a whole by;

- **Developing competent and confident leaders and managers**
- **Optimising the potential of team and project work for innovation and change**
- **Involving and engaging everyone in change at the earliest opportunity**
- **Developing effective partnerships with trade unions and other partners**
- **Making sure supportive processes are in place for managers to manage performance**

The actions the council will take:

What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Develop and implement a performance management and development framework across the council	A consistent approach to managing performance and development across the council with people who are clear about their role and their contribution to delivering services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Outcome of CPA▪ Staff survey results▪ liP assessment and accreditation	
Develop effective partnerships with the trade unions	Effective employee relations which contribute to achieving the council's objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reduction in the number of disputes raised with members/regional/national bodies	
Develop and implement a capability procedure	Poor performance in the council is identified and remedied	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Outcome of CPA▪ Staff survey results▪ Customer satisfaction survey results	
Develop employment policies procedures	Effective use of people and improved service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Outcome of CPA▪ Customer satisfaction survey results	

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What the council will do	To achieve what	How the council will measure success	Responsibilities & links
Develop and implement a process which makes sure people are consulted and engaged in changes from the start	A more effective change process for both minor and major changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff survey results 	
Introduce team based improvement reviews in work and project teams	<p>Improvements in performance through people working collaboratively</p> <p>A learning culture is established</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CPA ▪ Year on year improvement against local and BV performance indicators ▪ Staff survey results ▪ Customer satisfaction survey results 	
Develop and implement a programme of member leadership development	Highly effective members able to fulfil their leadership, representational and scrutiny roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CPA ▪ Investors In People ▪ Member Development Charter standards 	
Develop and implement leadership and management programmes based on competency frameworks	Highly effective, ethical leaders and managers who are customer focussed, performance driven and empower their staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CPA ▪ Staff survey results ▪ Customer satisfaction survey results 	

Strategy for people

Keeping the strategy up-to-date

It is important that the strategy is updated as the council changes. The strategy will be formally reviewed and amended every two years.

Thanks to the following organisations and people who have contributed to the development of this strategy: