

**James McLellan – Chief Executive**

Statement by Chief Executive

## **VISION GOALS & VALUES - THE HR STRATEGY**

Argyll and Bute Council underwent a Corporate Best Value review for the first time in 2006 and this process provided a broad indication of progress and direction of travel. The outcome of the review stressed and reinforced the importance of people as a key resource. It has also placed an emphasis on leadership, people management, and workforce planning and development.

If we are to modernise the Council and reflect the outcomes of the review, we need to identify and deliver strategic people management outcomes to enable the Council and its partners to deliver the vision. This HR strategy takes a broad perspective and seeks to identify those strategic priorities that should be delivered. By doing so, it seeks to enable Argyll and Bute Council to maximise its HR capacity and the performance of the workforce and provide a lead in HR issues within the Community Planning Partnership.

The Strategy is designed to encompass all Argyll and Bute employees and aims to embed the commitment to diversity and equality in all our services.

Our vision is to demonstrably contribute together with our Community Planning Partners to the aim of Argyll and Bute being a leading rural area by:

- Leading the development of the Public Sector workforce
- Embedding a culture which is:
  - Customer Focused
  - Performance orientated
  - Owned by all
  - Flexible
  - Outward looking
- Change Management – looking not to respond to but lead and influence change
- Focus on leadership and development of the organisation

## **INFLUENCES**

The Strategy must be focussed enough to deliver but flexible enough to respond to the needs of the Council and local community to ensure continuous improvement. The key influences will include legislation, European directives, Scottish Executive initiatives, Council policy, Corporate Plan and Best Value. Each Department will need to take account of the specific influences that will impact on the way that they deliver services.

The Human Resources Strategy needs to respond to all internal and external drivers that alter over time. The most significant drivers that can be identified for the next three to five years are:

- The continuing focus on the provision of services which centre on the needs and wishes of service users.
- The need to ensure that all services are delivered in the most effective way supported by appropriate performance management information.
- Best Value Reviews which could result in alternative delivery methods, with partnership arrangements or similar in-house teams.
- Developing the shared Services Agenda to promote effective partnership working
- There will be increased partnership working, secondments and transfers and further integrated health and social care services
- The increased emphasis on “customer first” and access to services outside traditional opening hours
- Government policy and legislation will increase the need for family friendly employment practices, which may lead to changes such as more flexible employment arrangements and home working. From the Council’s perspective this may assist in service delivery and reduce costs
- An increased emphasis on addressing equalities issues, including disability, age and gender, race and human rights.
- Implementation of the Single Status Agreement

Taken together the effects of these influences on the organisation should be:

- Corporate human resource planning which enables us to calculate the exact requirements of staff in the organisation. This in turn will allow us to find alternative solutions to issues such as redeployment, retirement and natural turnover which need to be explored
- Maximise employee’s performance and increase capacity
- Maximise customer involvement in service delivery
- Meeting the challenges of the Modernisation Agenda

## **OBJECTIVES**

The broad objectives of the strategy are outlined below and focus on six key priority areas considered to be central to delivery which are to:-

- Meet current and future organisational needs
- Achieve a culture of continuous improvement in organisational, service and individual performance focussed on user involvement and improved outcomes for them.
- Develop collaborative methods of working and effective partnerships
- Achieve a diverse workforce which reflects the communities we serve across all occupational groups promoting equality, fairness and dignity in the treatment of all employees
- Achieve Best Value from investment in people management; including the efficient management of resources and skills recognising the contribution of all employees across the Council
- Create and sustain a competent, motivated and well-led workforce – recognising the particular importance of leadership
- Develop and implement employment packages that meet the needs of modernised services and a flexible workforce promoting the Council as an employer of choice

**KEY PRIORITIES**

Six key priorities flow from these objectives:

1. **Recruitment and Retention**
2. **Recognition and Reward**
3. **Developing Leadership Capacity**
4. **Developing the Skills and Capacity of the Workforce**
5. **Developing the Capacity of HR**
6. **Developing the Organisation**

## **PRIORITY 1 – RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

Our key aims will be ensuring the Council recruits, develops and retains the employees it needs promoting the Council as a career option and employer of choice whilst supporting and promoting equality and diversity to

### **1.1**

#### **Build a diverse workforce by:**

- Recognising the requirement for the workforce to reflect local communities and support the achievement of performance targets
- Recruiting the right people, in the right numbers with the right skills and the right motivation
- Meeting legal requirements and encouraging the use of equality impact assessments across working practices, selection and progression practices

### **1.2**

#### **Manage effective recruitment and progression by:**

- Supporting the use of fair and transparent recruitment and promotion processes for all employee groups
- Promoting local audit procedures for recruitment and progression arrangements to ensure their effectiveness and to monitor their impact
- Supporting recruitment and retention initiatives for shortages in key skills
- Establishing the Council as a provider of a career development path that meets the aspirations of potential and existing employees.

### **1.3**

#### **Attract and retain talented people by:**

- Encouraging recruitment and progression of talented individuals
- Building a safe and healthy working environment
- Encouraging the provision of a positive working environment which recognises the contribution of individuals and supports the aims set out in priority 6 'Developing the Organisation'

- Promoting the development of manager' skill sets to recognise and encourage talent

#### **1.4**

##### **Deliver effective workforce planning by:**

- Promoting robust and consistent workforce planning systems and procedures and the sharing of best practice
- Encouraging and supporting the development of workforce planning at national and local level
- Identification of future demographic and skills issues that will impact on the Council

## **PRIORITY 2 - RECOGNITION AND REWARD**

Our key aims will be to have pay, reward and recognition structures that attract, retain, motivate and develop a skilled and flexible workforce whilst achieving value for money in service delivery to

### **2.1**

#### **Support pay and reward strategies which:**

- Support a high performance, highly skilled and flexible workforce with the necessary motivation to deliver improved services within the resources available
- Establish a clear linkage between reward and change with clear focus on outcomes
- Respond to future pension and compensation proposals in support of the needs of the Council
- Ensure equal pay for work of equal value based on the principle of transparent and equitable pay arrangements
- Provide a terms and conditions framework to support service delivery which will maximise flexibility to meet service needs

### **2.2**

#### **Develop an effective employment package by:**

- Developing and promoting elements within the employment package to support the Council being an employer of choice, for example, the psychological contract, work/life balance, personal development, health and wellbeing

### **PRIORITY 3 - DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY**

Our key aims will be to develop leadership capacity amongst managers and elected members including attracting effective leaders into Argyll and Bute Council to:-

#### **3.1**

##### **Attract and develop leaders at all levels by:**

- Encouraging the adoption of an agreed framework of leadership skills and competencies for managers
- Support succession planning through “Growing Our Own” to identify and support staff with high potential for future leadership positions, for example:
  - (a) Talent management
  - (b) Secondment and other placement opportunities
  - (c) Leadership development programmes

#### **3.2**

##### **Support and develop the leadership capacity of the Council’s senior managers and elected members by:**

- Working with COSLA, the Improvement Service and other agencies to support and develop leadership capacity
- Ensuring that elected members have the knowledge and understanding to enable them to be effective in their role
- Sharing with partners learning opportunities for Managers and Elected Members
- Developing the capacity and quality of management teams

#### **3.3**

##### **Other Managers/Professional?**

**PRIORITY 4 - DEVELOPING THE SKILLS AND CAPACITY OF THE  
WORKFORCE**

Our key aims will be to develop skills and capacity within the Council including back office support services, management and the frontline workforce to

**4.1**

**Raise performance and skills across all Council services to meet customer needs by:**

- Providing an effective framework for people development, supported through the Performance Development and Review (PDR) System
- Promoting effective performance management systems
- Ensuring that learning and development addresses organisational, service and individual skills gaps
- Recognising achievement of competence, for example through attainment of vocational or other appropriate qualifications, including academic qualifications
- Supporting flexible learning opportunities
- Promoting effective working with communities and other organisations
- Developing an inclusive and positive culture that values diversity and challenges unacceptable behaviours
- Ensuring that critical learning and development needs are prioritised
- Developing the professional capacity to deliver effective learning and development
- Developing key skills areas such as Financial Management and Human Resources

**4.2**

**Build capacity to meet Service needs by:**

- Promoting the utilisation of skills and capacity within the Council to meet the targets identified within the Councils Corporate and Service Plans

- Supporting effective change management
- Encouraging services to adopt appropriate quality management systems, such as Investors in People.

## **PRIORITY 5 - DEVELOPING THE HR CAPACITY OF THE COUNCIL**

Our key aims will be to identify and build on the skills and expertise of the HR function in planning and delivering the Best Value agenda to

### **5.1**

#### **Strengthen the contribution of the HR profession to the Council by:**

- Developing the contribution of HR to strategic decision-making
- Championing the professional contribution of HR to Services
- Demonstrating and promoting the added value of professional HR contributions to improved organisational performance
- Promoting innovative and cost effective solutions to the delivery of HR services
- Promoting skills and capacity to support achievement of organisational change

### **5.2**

#### **Strengthen people management practice by:**

- Promoting best practice approaches/standards to people management and development of appropriate skills/standards
- Promoting the importance of developing people management skills in managers through professional HR support

### **5.3**

#### **Develop HR professionals by:**

- Promoting links to Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Institution of Occupational Safety and Health and other professional organisations e.g. Improvement Service
- Promoting appropriate professional standards and qualifications for HR disciplines
- Supporting continuing professional development of HR skills and knowledge to meet the improvement objectives of the Council

## **PRIORITY 6 – DEVELOPING THE ORGANISATION**

Our key aims will be to achieve excellence in people and performance management, partnerships and the efficient delivery of services to

### **6.1**

**Support the change in organisational culture and manage productivity and performance effectively by:**

- Promoting effective performance management
- Supporting and sharing best practice in delivery against people management performance indicators, including attendance management
- Supporting improvements in organisational productivity and efficiency
- Developing new and innovative employment solutions to deliver services
- Identifying and implementing best practice in flexible working
- Identifying and working with partners including the community, voluntary and private sectors
- Supporting the development and requisite skills and capacity within the Council's workforce

### **6.2**

**Build and maintain effective employee relations by:**

- Supporting effective engagement and communication strategies for all employees
- Promoting an effective dialogue between managers and employees as the basis of the employment relationship in the workplace
- Reviewing the effectiveness of employee relations procedures across all employee groups
- Ensuring that all employees are treated with respect and dignity and valued for their contribution in line with core values

### **6.3**

**Build and maintain effective employment relations by:**

- Supporting the development of relationships at all levels with appropriate trade unions
- Supporting the development of effective local employment relations procedures
- Promoting employment relations on the basis of management's right to manage and a trade union's right to represent their membership
- Supporting the achievement of change through agreement
- Promoting a business focused approach to managing the consultation and negotiating process