

DRAFT

TEAM Middlesbrough
Together Everyone Achieves More

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2007 – 2010

PART ONE

“Our people are our most important asset. To raise the hope and improve the lives of local people we have to be a people orientated employer. Our People Strategy and Workforce Plan are therefore an essential part of realising the vision”.

**Mayor Ray Mallon
Middlesbrough Council**

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1. Introduction

The People Strategy and associated plans have been developed to ensure our workforce is fit for the future, well equipped to shape the town and able to continue to deliver excellent services to the people of Middlesbrough. This is the third People Strategy and its content has been shaped by the previous action plans, consultation outcomes and feedback.

Middlesbrough Council aims to ensure that as an organisation it values staff and service users as individuals, strives for continuous improvement and value for money, celebrates achievement and learns from failure and generally works and communicates openly and transparently, valuing long term sustainability over short term wins. Work is being undertaken to consult staff and managers in agreeing a shortlist of the most important values to the Council which can be used in a variety of ways to encourage buy in and demonstrate the Council's approach to services and staff.

This People Strategy links the Council's overall vision, values and priorities with national and regional challenges whilst also demonstrating how these will be achieved in Human Resources (HR) terms. This document amalgamates the organisation's strategic human resource intentions and workforce planning processes to form Middlesbrough Council's overarching approach to people management from 2007 to 2010. The strategy was launched in November 2007 in order to accommodate Middlesbrough Council's original People Strategy (2006-2007) Interim Corporate Workforce Plan (2006) as well as the new National Pay and Workforce Strategy 2007, which at the time of writing, is in draft form.

The **National Pay and Workforce Strategy - A People Strategy for Councils (2007)** will replace the National Pay and Workforce Strategy (2005). Middlesbrough's People Strategy acknowledges the priorities highlighted in the latest version of the national strategy as shown below, whilst also taking into consideration local needs.

The new **National Pay and Workforce Strategy - A People Strategy for Councils (2007)** focuses on building:

- **organisational capability** - establishing new mind sets, structures and ways of working required by Closer to People and Places and the Local Government White Paper;
- **leadership capability** - maintaining the importance of developing strong political and managerial leadership, with a greater emphasis on leadership of place;
- **managerial capability** - developing new skills sets, particularly for second and third tier managers;

- **change management capability** - developing the change management capabilities of leaders, managers, Councils, and local public service partnerships; and
- **workforce capability** - attracting, developing, rewarding and motivating a high performing workforce.

These national aims and priorities have been incorporated into Middlesbrough Council’s Corporate Workforce Plan and Corporate Workforce Development Plan as shown below.

The National Pay and Workforce Strategy 2007 A People Strategy for Councils		Middlesbrough Council’s People Strategy
AIM 1	BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY	Corporate Workforce Plan
AIM 2	BUILDING LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY	Corporate Workforce Development Plan
AIM 3	BUILDING MANAGERIAL CAPABILITY	
AIM 4	BUILDING CHANGE MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY	
AIM 5	BUILDING WORKFORCE CAPABILITY	

The People Strategy is specific to Middlesbrough Council employees and Elected Members. The standards and ideals expressed should also be viewed as guiding principles for partnership working involving both direct and indirect employment.

The Structure of Middlesbrough Council's People Strategy

The People Strategy is presented as three separate documents:

Part One	The People Strategy
This provides an overview of the medium-term priorities for all strategic human resources and the workforce planning process.	
Part Two	The Corporate Workforce Plan and Corporate Workforce Development Plan
This contains the corporate workforce plan, which explains how our human resource priorities will be delivered.	
It also contains the corporate workforce development plan that details how we intend to address current and future skill requirements.	
Part Three	The Workforce Profile
This contains an analysis of the current workforce of Middlesbrough Council and other statistical information used in the workforce planning process.	

Parts Two and Three will be reviewed and updated annually to accommodate any relevant changes to the Council's workforce and any changes in external drivers including both regional and national issues.

2. THE VISION – Where are we going?

2.1 Middlesbrough's Vision and Priorities

The Council and its partners are committed to establishing Middlesbrough as a successful regional centre and achieving the shared vision of a well run, sustainable and highly regarded town whose citizens feel included, safe, healthy and who have both the opportunities, and the ambition, to achieve their full potential. In order to fulfil its role in achieving this shared vision and acting as community leader, Middlesbrough Council needs a workforce that:

- reflects the community it serves;

People Strategy - Part One

- is able to deliver high quality customer service;
- has managers who take ownership and provide clear direction;
- has future leaders who are able to take the Council agenda forward;
- has a flexible and diverse workforce; and
- has leaders who are engaged with the community and who promote partnership working.

The Council is a lead partner in delivering the aspirations of the Local Strategic Partnership and the Community Strategy themes which are:

- supporting children and learning;
- promoting healthier communities and effective social care for adults;
- creating safer and stronger communities;
- transforming our local environment;
- meeting local transport needs more efficiently; and
- promoting the economic vitality of Middlesbrough

The Council's priority contributions to the Community Strategy are based upon the 'Raising Hope' agenda set by the elected Mayor and supported by the Council's executive and non-executive Councillors – these priorities are set out in the Council's Strategic Plan.

The Community Strategy themes together with the overarching theme 'Fit for Purpose' create the strategic priorities that will drive the Council over the next twenty years. Together with the Local Area Agreement they provide the framework for the planning and development of all services across the Council.

The People Strategy is aligned to organisational priorities and objectives. The strategy sets out a comprehensive approach to ensuring that the Council maximises the effectiveness of its workforce and the organisation is "Fit for the Future".

The People Strategy follows the vision and objectives of the Council and sets standards for the deployment and treatment of employees and outlines how performance will be improved. It complements the Council's business continuity and risk management plans by focussing on the human resources needed to deliver the services provided by each department.

Each department in the Council produces a workforce plan that is specific to their service needs. This is embedded in their annual service plans and informs the corporate plan on an on-going basis. The diagram below shows how national and local priorities join together.

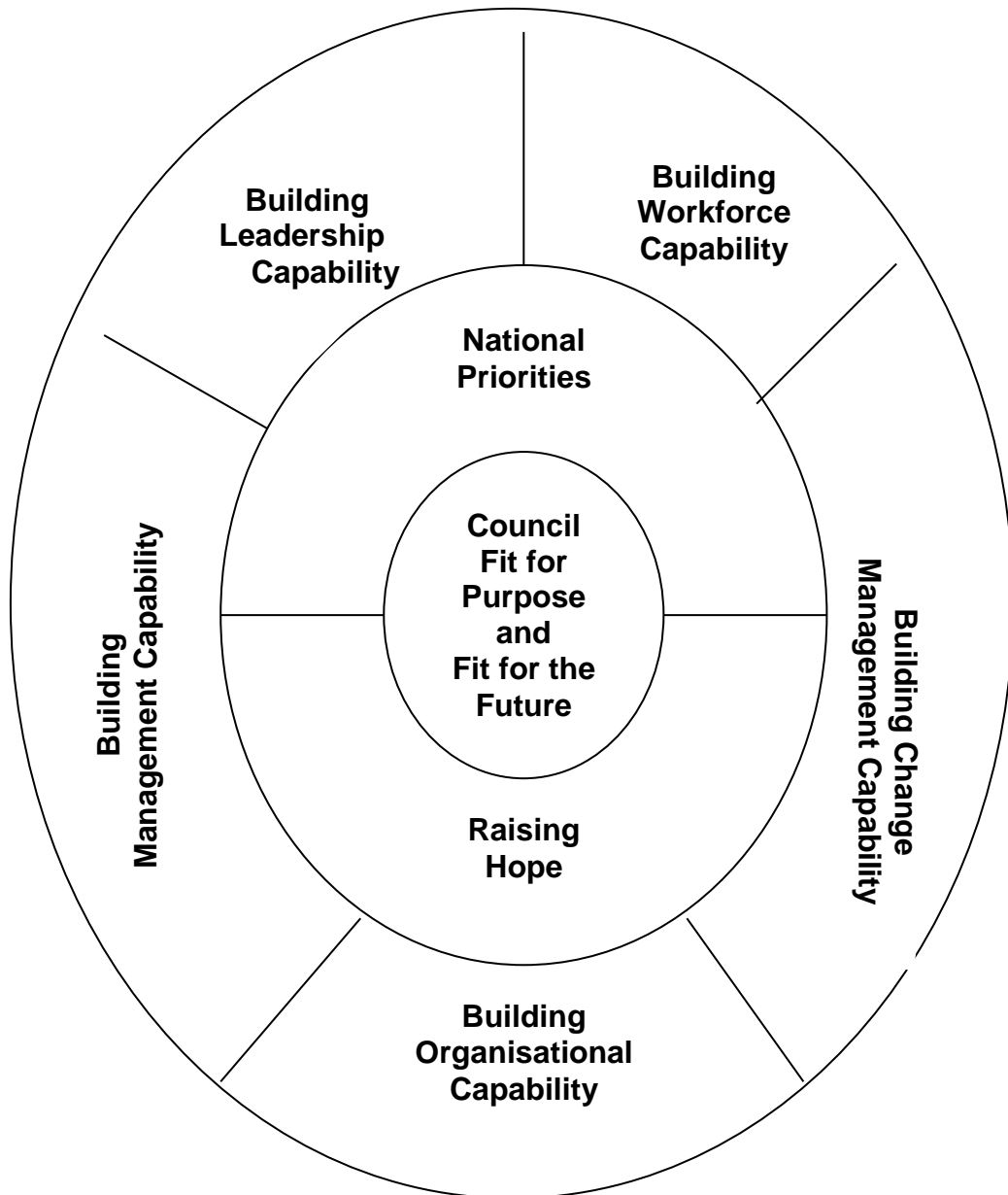


Fig 1 – A Council Fit for Purpose and Fit for the Future

3. THE CONTEXT– Where are we now?

3.1 National picture and future challenges ahead

There are a number of key influences and challenges expected to affect human resources management in local government over the next few years. These include:

<p style="text-align: center;">Modernisation of Local Government Strong and prosperous communities – the Local Government White Paper Local Government Association’s ‘Closer to People and Places’ Local Area Agreement Community leadership/planning changes Local Government People Strategy (2007) Public Service Agreement targets Comprehensive Performance Assessment National Performance Indicators Comprehensive changes to the traditional roles of officers and Elected Members</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Working in partnerships Increased need to work in partnership Developing closer working with voluntary and community partners Further development of links with health Development of outsourcing and private/public partnerships</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The financial/resources context Pressure on terms and conditions Cost of Single Status implementation and Equal Pay claims Controlling the pay bill Efficiency Agenda including Gershon The Comprehensive Spending Review</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Single status Completion of Job Evaluation Embedding new pay and grading systems Flexibility to meet ongoing change Controlling costs and encouraging performance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Equal opportunities and diversity in employment Mainstreaming of equality policies into day to day employment practices Ensure that the image of the Council is positive and welcoming to those groups under-represented in the workplace The integration of equality legislation and statutory requirements</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The changing world of work National recruitment and retention challenges Capacity and skills gaps The Leitch Report Changing working patterns Increased flexibility and re-skilling as the ‘norm’ Development of a lifelong learning approach Managing an older workforce Up-skilling of knowledge based jobs and de-skilling of some other roles New working approaches such as teleworking, ‘hot-desking’ and home working Work/life balance issues and employee well-being promotion Health and safety legislation and directives, including stress management</p>	

All Our Futures - The Challenges for Local Governance in 2015 (published by The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)

“All Our Futures” predicts the challenges for local governance in 2015 based on analysis of recent trends in demographics, the economy, the environment, health and care, quality of life and transport. This research has resulted in the prediction of ten core functions for local governance in the future, which require change capabilities. These functions are:

1. coping with stark differences between and within regions and places;
2. caring for a significant proportion of the population (young, old, disabled and vulnerable);
3. controlling and regulating human and physical flows and circulation (from ASBOs to traffic);
4. prompting economic growth and developing economic performance, capacity and capability;
5. strategic marketing (identifying, developing and selling new actions to the public);
6. brokering, marshalling and relationship building between key players;
7. planning (including planning of investment) and mobilising local resources;
8. providing and making transparent complex sets of information;
9. reconciling the diversity of individual and group expectation, needs, culture, identity and morality; and
10. representation (of the locality and the community).

HR considerations for Middlesbrough Council when planning to meet future requirements

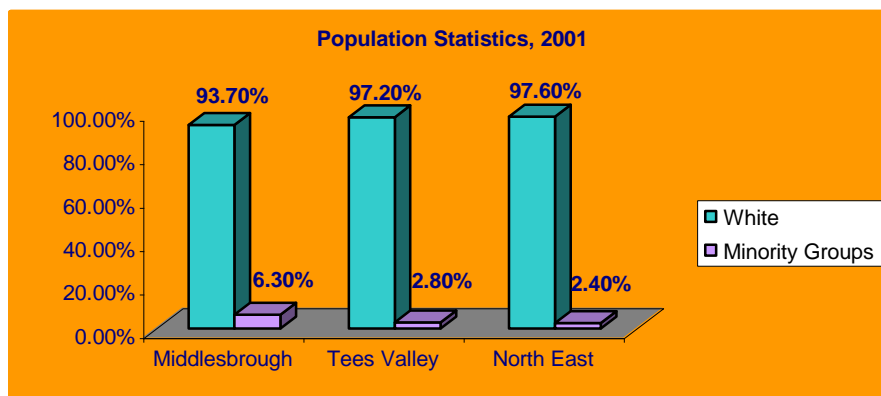
- Developing traditional local government skills to meet changing needs
- Meeting qualification and skills requirements of existing and new employees
- Developing new skills frameworks and skills pathways for the future
- Responding to the implications of the future use of the job evaluation process as a grading mechanism
- Developing new and different ways to attract and retain talented individuals from all backgrounds
- Working to ensure the Council recruits and retains employees from minority backgrounds
- Coping with national and local skills shortages

3.2 Middlesbrough The Town - Local Context and Challenges

POPULATION

Middlesbrough is located at the heart of the Tees Valley, drawing on a travel to work area stretching from Durham to the North York Moors. It has a population of 137,300, which is falling, although new approaches to the regeneration of Middlesbrough aim to reverse the decline. With a rich industrial past as a centre of the iron and steel industries, Middlesbrough's current economy is now in the service industry, which employs 89.2% of employees in the town, mostly in the town centre.

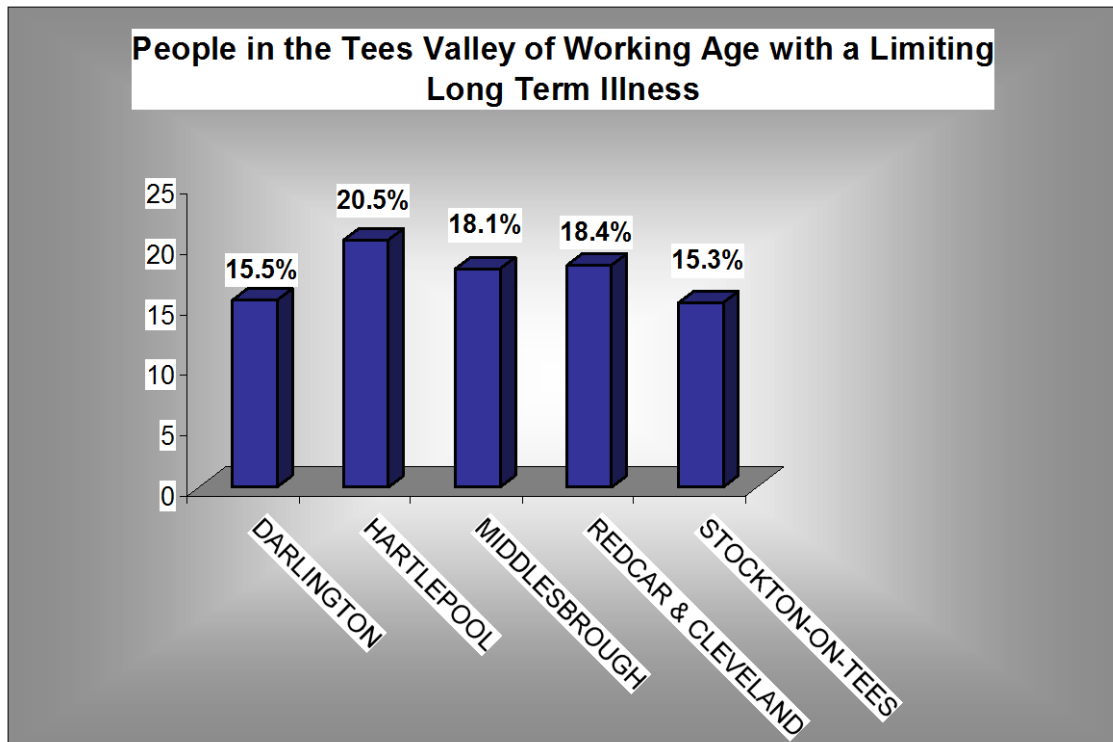
ETHNICITY



Source: Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

The town has a culturally diverse population with the highest concentration of ethnic minorities in the North East. Currently 6.3% of people who reside in Middlesbrough are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

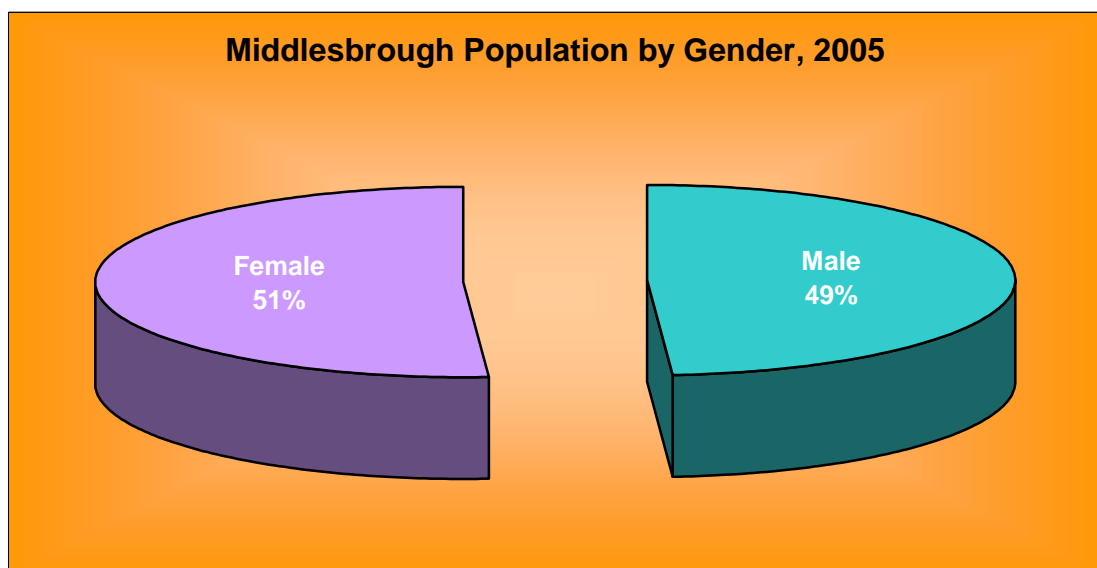
HEALTH



Source: 2001 Census

Health indices in the North East show that further progress needs to be made on the health agenda. In 2001 just over 18% of people living in Middlesbrough, who were of working age, had a limiting long term illness.

GENDER

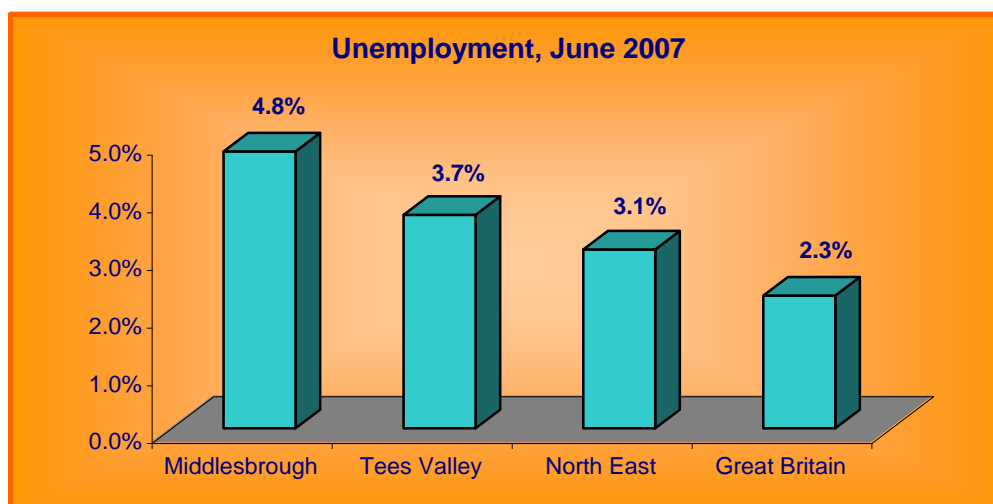


Source: www.statistics.gov.uk

The male to female ratio in Middlesbrough reflects the national position. The mid 2005 census statistics showed an almost even split between females (51%) and males (49%).

UNEMPLOYMENT

Although Middlesbrough has areas of affluence, parts of the town experience levels of deprivation more than twice the national average and 12 of its 23 wards are amongst the 10% most disadvantaged in the country. Our Community and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies are key to tackling deprivation and there is evidence of progress in many areas.



Source: Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

Middlesbrough has the highest level of employment in the Tees Valley and this is above regional and national levels. Joblessness in neighbourhoods where there is a high proportion of people from minority ethnic groups, and in traditional housing estates, is especially high.

EDUCATION

The proportion of pupils achieving five A* - C grades at GCSE (equivalent to NVQ 2) is lower than the regional and national averages. However, it is improving faster than nationally and this is narrowing the gap appreciably. The proportion of Middlesbrough school leavers who are not in education, employment or training six months after leaving school is above the national average, but is improving at a faster rate than nationally which is closing the gap with the national average.

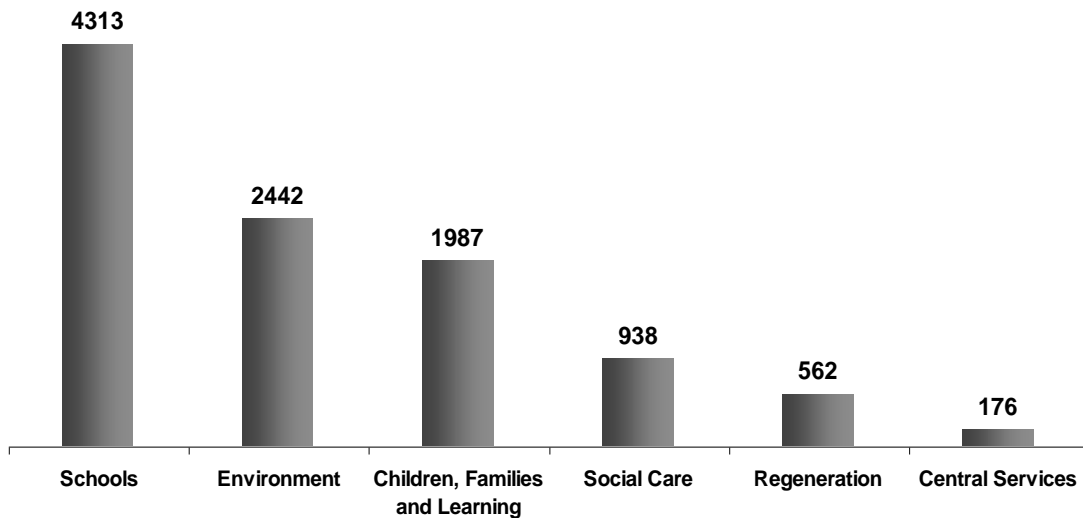


Source: Nomis

3.3 Middlesbrough Council’s Workforce Profile

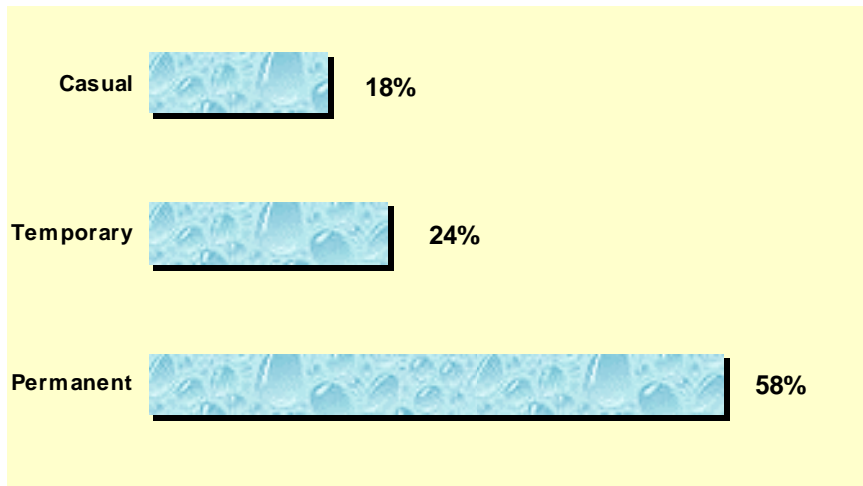
The key information about Middlesbrough Council’s workforce, which is of relevance to the workforce planning process and the people strategy, are summarised below, excluding Schools. Detailed analysis of the workforce profile is available in **Part Three**.

TOTAL STAFF (BY DEPARTMENT) As at 30th June 2007



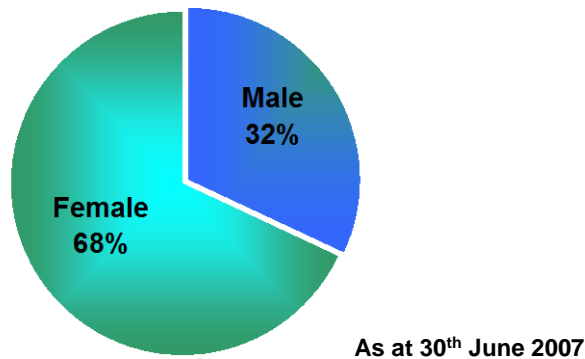
Environment and Children, Families and Learning are the two largest departments in the Council. The Environment department employs **40%** and Children, Families and Learning employs **32%** of the Council’s workforce. These two departments also employ the majority of part-time and casual staff.

CONTRACT STATUS (ALL STAFF) As at 30th June 2007



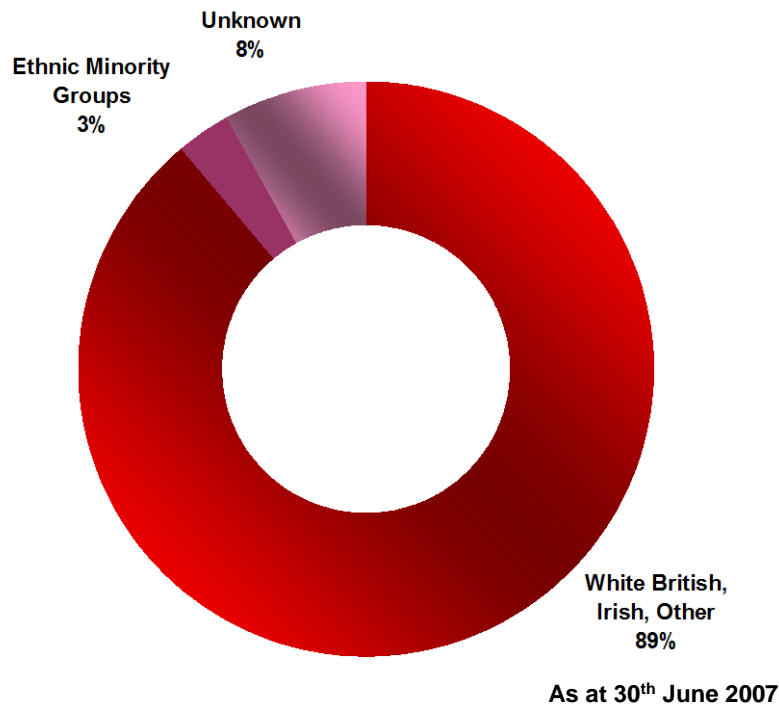
The current workforce contractual status includes 3,474 permanent, 149 temporary and 1,133 casual posts.

GENDER



The gender ratio has remained largely unchanged over the previous twelve months and shows a workforce with a greater proportion of females than is in the population as a whole. This reflects the Council's responsibility for a number of service areas which have traditionally been female dominated. The headcount of the Council's workforce comprises 4,126 females and 1,979 males. In 2006/2007 the Council's Best Value performance indicator showed 52.1% of its top 5% earners to be female.

ETHNICITY



Ethnic minority representation makes up 3% of the Council workforce, 163 employees are from ethnic groups with the largest group being of Pakistani Asian origin at 8%. Middlesbrough, the town, has the highest concentration of ethnic minorities in the North East; therefore the Council is continually trying to ensure it promotes Council employment to ethnic minorities and supports its ethnic minority employees. Feedback from focus groups and local organisations has informed a range of positive initiatives.

DISABILITY

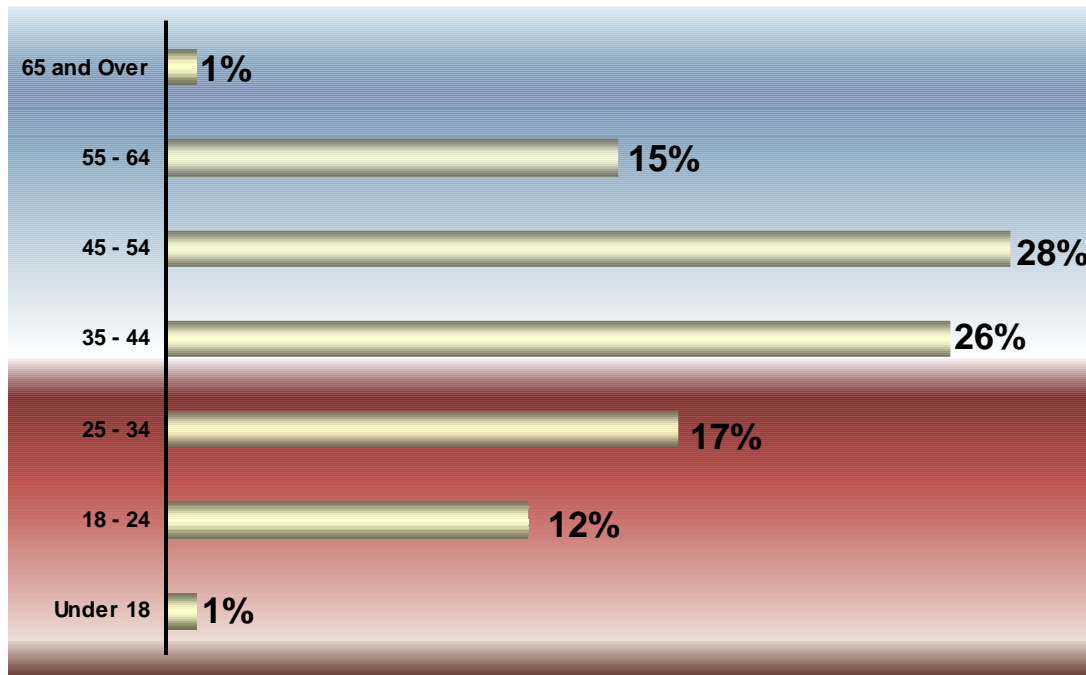
Percentage of employees with a Disability



As at 30th June 2007

There are 173 employees of the Council who have declared a disability. 5,293 have declared that they were not disabled, 639 are not known since they have chosen not to declare their disability status. The Council aims to ensure that people with disabilities are encouraged to apply for Council jobs and that employees with disabilities are supported. A number of initiatives are being used to promote a positive approach since feedback from employees and local disability groups indicated that further work might produce results.

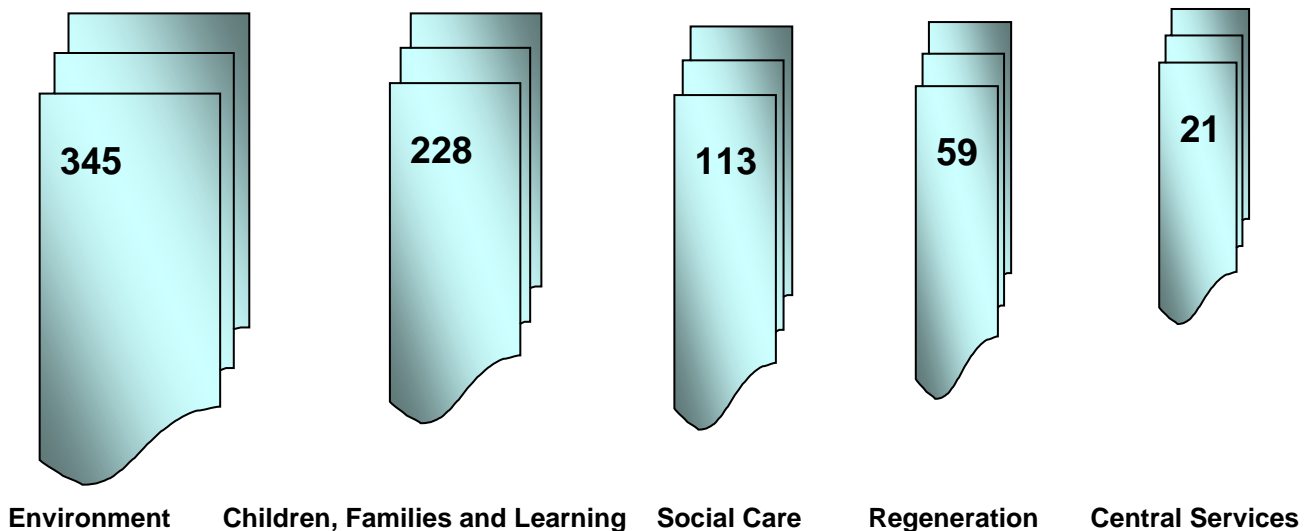
AGE PROFILE



As at 30th June 2007

The local and national population age profile becomes increasingly older. The national average age is 38.4 years and this is projected to rise to 43.3 by 2031. Less than 20% of the national population is aged under 15. This is 21% for Middlesbrough but this is projected to decrease to 18% by 2021. These figures show a shrinking labour pool nationally and locally.

LEAVERS (by Department during April 2006 – March 2007)



In total 766 people left the Council during 2006 - 2007, the different numbers of leavers reflect the size of the departments. The turnover rate for Middlesbrough Council was 13%, which was slightly below the median labour

turnover in local government of 13.6% in 2006. (The Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy Survey 2006).

3.4 Human Resources (HR) and Organisational Development (OD) Implications for Middlesbrough Council

The current local demographics and future predictions have the following implications for Middlesbrough Council, its partners and its employees. These implications will be prioritised and feature in the appropriate action plan in **Part Two** of the People Strategy. The implications are:

- Increased number of older people in both the local population and the workforce has implications for service provision as well as recruitment and retention.
- Relatively high unemployment rate and some Middlesbrough residents unable to satisfy certain labour demands has implications for recruitment and retention as well as the need to improve the skills base of the current workforce.
- Inward commuters fill many posts in Middlesbrough and this has implications for recruitment and selection activities within and outside Middlesbrough.
- The need to raise the attainment levels of Skills for Life within the local population and the workforce.
- Continued relatively low representation in the workforce of people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities. Middlesbrough Council has higher representation from these groups in the workforce than most local authorities in the Tees Valley area but continues to seek further improvement.
- The predicted 'war for talent' and the ability to attract talent in an increasingly competitive labour market.
- Focus on talent management required to retain and develop current and future employees and ensure required levels of skills are present at all levels of the organisation.
- Issues related to morale of the workforce and organisational implications of the continuous change required to meet strategic objectives.
- The need to continue to develop further progress made in promoting employee health and well-being, linking into managing attendance, reduced sickness absence levels and a well motivated workforce.
- More robust workforce information required to aid future workforce planning with particular emphasis required on skills.

4. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

4.1 Mouchel Business Services

The Council has a partnership with Mouchel Business Services (formerly HBS) for the provision of support and administrative services. This means that services delivered by Middlesbrough Council are supported by services provided by this partnership. Former Middlesbrough Council staff Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) transferred to HBS originally as part of this arrangement.

One of the key issues for Middlesbrough Council is to work with Mouchel Business Services to ensure the partnership is effective and provides what Middlesbrough Council needs. Mouchel Business Services provide all the operational HR services with strategic HR provided by the Council.

4.2 Internal HR/OD Partnerships

For strategic HR activities to be effective there needs to be a good understanding of the organisation and of the potential impact of any initiatives on those delivering front line services. Groups such as the Managers' Best Practice Group (Managing Attendance), Staff Focus Groups, Positive Steps Steering Group, Corporate Workforce Planning Steering Group, Investors in People Steering Group all contribute to a close working relationship between the corporate centre and departments. They also provide feedback on proposals and promote consistency across the organisation. Partnership working with Leisure Services on many of the health and well-being activities ensures that the benefit gained from all available internal resources is maximised. The use of volunteers from each department in delivering the Positive Steps initiative is extending the Council's capacity to undertake recruitment outreach work and attend local events.

To strengthen its organisational development the Council has signed the Skills Pledge to skill the workforce up to at least Level Two (in the national qualification framework). This has included a number of activities with various internal partners such as the Trade Unions (to support the Unions Learning Project) and the Corporate Skills for Life Group.

4.3 External HR/OD Partnerships

A number of strategic HR and OD activities are delivered through partnership working with external organisations. Our Occupational Health Service and many of the health and well-being activities are delivered by external partners, including the North Tees Primary Care Trust and South Tees Primary Care Trust. The annual employee Healthy Living Day involves a range of external organisations, both local and national, including Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service, Middlesbrough College and the Alzheimer's Society.

A strategic HR representative chairs the Employment Task Group, part of the local Mental Health Social Inclusion Reference Group with representatives of employers from public and private sector local organisations. Along with each Local Authority and Fire and Rescue Service in the region, Middlesbrough Council is participating in the Regional Online Recruitment Portal project which is being funded by the Improvement Partnership and the North East Centre of Excellence. The Council works closely with Jobcentre Plus and has recently signed up to the Local Employment Partnership programme.

Partnership working activities in terms of organisational development have included a series of workforce-planning workshops facilitated by a consultant from the IDeA. These workshops were targeted at departmental workforce planning coordinators.

During 2007 Middlesbrough Council took part in an online skills assessment in partnership with, and hosted by, Jobs Go Public. There were two elements to the project. Almost 200 front line staff from the Environment department assessed themselves against a regional customer care framework and over 200 managers across the Council assessed themselves against a regional management framework. The results from the assessments will be used to inform various workforce planning activities and training and development.

Middlesbrough is also represented at the regional Organisational Development partnership where representatives from local authorities in the North East meet to share best practice and progress workforce planning at a regional level.

5. What have we done so far?

5.1 Key achievements over the last twelve months include:

Policy Development

Employee and Trade Unions consultations led to the Council introducing a range of policies and initiatives to assist employees in achieving a good work/life balance to meet personal commitments whilst still maintaining an excellent service. Examples of this include the Carers' Leave policy reviewed in 2007, and the "Stuck Not Sick" initiative introduced in 2007.

Health and Well-being Initiatives

In response to analysis of sickness data, employee and Trade Unions feedback various support has been made available to employees; this includes: Feel Well Clinics - a qualified nurse runs confidential clinics for employees to receive advice about health, health and fitness checks, a weekly lunch-time walking group, regular Pilates and dance classes, an annual Healthy Living Day with various stands promoting employee health and well-being.

Considerable work has been undertaken in providing managers and employees with support mechanisms to address stress. A new stress risk assessment process and training based on the Health and Safety Executive standards have been developed, together with a Stress Management Workshop for Managers. Following a previous trial period, the Council in 2007 entered into a contract for the provision of an Employee Assistance Programme, which provides a 24-hour confidential telephone counselling, legal and financial advice service. Access to a Support Officer is offered to all employees who are absent due to stress, whether home or work related, and face to face confidential counselling is available for employees needing longer term support.

Succession Development Planning

In 2007 a personal and professional development programme for aspiring managers starts to complement the New Managers' Induction and Development Programme which was introduced in December 2005 since feedback from this, from Corporate Management Team and Young Local Authority of the Year competition indicated a need for more development for staff below middle management level.

Middlesbrough Council is taking part in the Leaders of Tomorrow Annual Young Local Authority of the Year competition. The programme aims to stretch the minds and broaden the horizons of young people and newly appointed managers and contributes to the personal development of talent within the Council. Feedback from the Council's participation in the competition indicated that process was viewed as important career development.

Leadership Development

The Council continues participation in the National Graduate Development Programme and is committed to taking one graduate each year; there are currently two management trainees in place who will undertake placements in a number of different departments.

Middlesbrough Council is also participating in the Future Leaders Programme, delivered by Ashridge Business School and the Improvement and Development Agency. The programme aims to improve the performance and delivery of local government through concentrating on organisation development as well as increasing management capacity. A total of 17 managers have completed the programme to date.

The Leadership Centre for Local Government has worked with the Executive, CMT and Heads of Service during 2007 to develop leadership and promote succession development. This will continue in 2008.

Corporate Training and Development

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) approved the TEAM Middlesbrough Skills framework in June 2006. The framework outlines the Council's minimum standard of knowledge, skills and behaviours for all employees. The standard

is split into four levels: all employees, first line managers, middle managers and senior managers. Managers use the framework with their staff as part of their preparation for annual appraisals or as part of their normal supervisory meetings.

In response to evaluation and feedback on the previous model, the approach to corporate training has moved increasingly towards a commissioning model of training provision, although delivery of certain Council training courses remains in-house. This change in emphasis has enabled the expansion of the range of courses provided and new approaches to training and development, such as bite-size workshops and the identification of the need to develop e-learning if further expansion to meet identified needs is to be possible.

Coaching

In response to a need for more individualised development coaching is being piloted as a means of identifying learning and development needs and providing support for personal and professional development. Initially, coaching is being trialled with senior staff but following evaluation of the pilot, consideration will be given to extending this approach to other groups, including minority groups.

Investors in People

A number of departments achieved the Investors In People Award (IiP) in 2007. A corporate IiP Steering Group has now been formed to co-ordinate Middlesbrough Council's approach to gaining corporate IiP status.

Elected Member Development

The Elected Members department achieved IiP in May 2007 and was the first Elected Members department to achieve IiP accreditation against the new standard in the North East. The department also achieved the Member Development Charter. The charter and IiP standard complemented one another.

Management Development

The New Managers' Induction and Development Programme was reviewed in 2007. The programme is designed to develop the management skills of managers who are either new to Middlesbrough Council or new to management and to encourage them to take responsibility for their personal development. The review demonstrated that the programme was meeting most managers' needs but indicated the need for some minor changes. Building on the success of this programme an HR Management for Managers course has also now been piloted and introduced. The course is designed for managers looking to improve their understanding of their legal and HR management responsibilities.

A range of mandatory core management training modules has been developed to ensure managers are equipped with the skills needed to manage effectively and delivery excellent services both now and in the future. Modules include risk management, financial management, project management and procurement.

As part of the drive to improve management skills and in response to middle managers' needs, 35 managers from Middlesbrough Council have completed the North East Excellent Manager Programme (NEEM), the first programme of its kind in the region, with some four hundred managers participating from across the region.

Regional Skills Audit

A total of 200 managers from across Middlesbrough Council are taking part in an online skills audit with the North East Improvement Partnership project across the region. The tool allows managers to audit their management skills against the regional management skills framework.

Workforce Planning

The Council's Workforce Planning Group meets regularly to share best practice and further develop workforce development plans. The Council is developing a structured work plan and development programme for this group to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities to deal with workforce planning issues.

Single Status

The modernisation of the pay and grading structure and the implementation of Single Status are essential for future needs. Close working with the Trade Unions enabled the Council to reach a Single Status Agreement in 2005 and to implement job evaluation for all staff up to Scale 6, with all appeals completed and a collective agreement for Nursery Nurses reached in 2007. The Phase 2 implementation is planned to be completed late 2007/early 2008.

Communications

The existing communications mechanisms have been improved and expanded to include a regular weekly e-mail alert system to convey important messages to employees and in response to managers' needs, Management Matters, an electronic newsletter for managers that highlights changes in employment legislation, new HR policy development and provides hints and tips on management issues.

The Council already has a staff newsletter 'Middlesbrough Matters' which has recently been re-vamped.

5.2 Key challenges ahead to be addressed from 2007- 2010

This section brings together the key findings of the previous sections and summarises the challenges and priorities to be addressed within the People Strategy, including the Workforce Plan and Workforce Development Plan.

- **Improving Workforce data**

At present the limited availability of reliable workforce data hampers the development of robust workforce plans. The provision of data and information will therefore feature as a priority in the workforce plan.

- **Further development of corporate and departmental workforce plans**

Departmental workforce plans and development plans need to further develop to include sound analysis of the current workforce profile and future predicted needs. Reliable workforce data will contribute towards this process.

- **Changing the focus of corporate training and development**

The corporate training programme needs to address skill requirements as highlighted in the Strategic Plan. Skills audits, training needs analysis and evaluation in relation to measuring return on investment (ROI) will be included in order to measure links between organisational performance and workforce skills and capacity.

- **Addressing skill shortages and surpluses**

Middlesbrough Council currently has limited information regarding current or future potential skills shortages and surpluses. National statistics and forecasts are used as the basis for corporate and departmental plans. Improved workforce data will assist in the identification of these areas so that relevant plans to address each situation can be put into place.

- **Addressing workforce flexibility**

Workforce flexibility in relation to skills and service provision needs to be addressed. This has links with current business continuity planning processes as well as skills development and lifelong learning. To maximise the flexibility of the workforce and achieve high standards of service delivery, we also need to continue to promote the health and well-being of employees and achieve further reductions in sickness absence.

- **Promoting leadership and management development**

The leadership and management development framework introduced in 2006 outlines a number of activities aimed at developing leadership and management skills and abilities across the Council. Feedback and evaluation so far indicate that further development and embedding of a structured

programme of delivery is essential, including Elected Member development programmes.

- **Developing talent management processes**

The need for a succession development planning process across predicted skill shortage areas has been identified in work on service plans and workforce plans and is required to address shortages as well as to maintain appropriate levels of skill and experience to meet future needs. This has wider implications for talent management and investment in new ways to attracting people to careers in local government including those from under-represented groups.

- **Providing Vocational Training Opportunities**

Further development of the corporate skills framework is needed to establish and communicate the minimum skills requirements for all employees. Detailed work on vocational skill development and skills pathways is also required to alleviate skills shortages areas and ensure skills are constantly updated in line with service requirements.

- **Raising Skills Levels**

The Skills for Life strategy for employees has been launched and to support this a series of drop-in free taster sessions of skills for life activities were held at different Council venues across Middlesbrough. The strategy is designed to raise skills levels and promote learning opportunities across all Council employees.

A Union Learning Representative (ULR) has been appointed to establish and support a network of ULRs in a pilot area. The ULRs will work with partners to promote lifelong learning, skills for life awareness, including ICT, equal opportunities and vocational development for the benefit of individual learners and the organisation.

The Council's commitment to encouraging and support learning for the workforce is demonstrated by our commitment to meet the Investor in People (IiP) standards and the Get On in Local Government Award (GO Award). The workforce development plan accommodates actions which demonstrate the organisation's commitment to maintain and go beyond the requirements of the basic IiP standard and the GO Award basic criteria.

- **e-Learning**

The Council is developing its e-learning approaches and early in 2008 an e-learning pilot commences which involves several departments trialling e-learning packages and the internal development of an e-learning package.

- **Single status**

The completion of Phase 2 of the Single Status implementation should ensure that grading and payment systems are fit for purpose and designed to meet future needs.

- **Trade Unions**

Middlesbrough Council is continuing to develop its working with the Trade Unions as its internal partners. Previous history did not always promote close joint working and there is a need to ensure that relationships which have been repaired are maintained and further developed so that the Trade Unions are part of Middlesbrough Council's future. Their involvement is crucial to many of the development plans and they are trying to build capacity to cope with this.

The modernisation of the pay and grading structure and the completion of the implementation of Job Evaluation are essential to meet future needs and avoid future problems. Close working with the Trade Unions is on going to ensure that the new structures are workable, affordable and fit for purpose.

- **Employer of preference**

The promotion of Middlesbrough Council as an employer of preference has included the introduction of online recruitment in April 2007, improvements to the jobs pages of the Council's website, participation in the Regional Online Recruitment Portal and increased attendance at local community events and recruitment fairs. Specific efforts are being made to promote Middlesbrough Council to minority groups and develop strategies to recruit employees from minority groups in areas where there is low representation. A Positive Steps Steering Group has been established to drive this area of work. In order to recruit well in the future Middlesbrough Council needs to continue to promote itself as one of the leading employers in the area.

6. Overview of the Corporate Workforce Plan and Workforce Development Plan

Workforce planning is about looking to the future, being proactive and ensuring the Council employs the appropriate number of appropriately skilled and qualified people in order to realise the vision and priorities of the organisation as described in the Strategic Plan.

Middlesbrough Council's Corporate Workforce Plan is included in **Part 2** of the People Strategy. It includes details regarding how the Council intends to:

- review current provision of workforce information and formulate project plan to facilitate improved service;
- carry out skills audits to improve corporate and departmental skills information;

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- monitor to ensure continuous improvement of departments' workforce plans;
- provide multi –skilling opportunities;
- investigate further ways of working flexibly;
- support managers in the management of attendance;
- support employees to remain healthy and at work;
- analyse skills shortage and surplus areas affecting current and future services;
- invest in new ways to identify and develop existing employees with potential;
- identify and implement different approaches to retaining talent;
- publicise corporate commitment to provision of vocational development to meet long-term service requirements;
- address low representation of minority groups in some areas of the Council;
- maximise the benefits of e-recruitment in widening the pool of potential applicants and reducing advertising costs;
- use all available resources to maximise candidate attraction;
- work with partners to improve employment opportunities and reduce worklessness in the local community;
- work with partners to attract the talent and promote workforce flexibility; and
- improve the retention of employees.

Workforce development planning is about how the Council's plan of action to address any skills gaps or predicted skills shortage areas by developing existing and future staff appropriately. This will assist the Council to mitigate risk in respect of numbers in the workforce and their skill levels. There are also links with business continuity planning to ensure the Council has the levels of skill required to operate in extreme circumstances.

Middlesbrough Council Corporate Workforce Development Plan is included in **Part 2** of the People Strategy. It includes details of how the Council intends to:

- maintain and improve the Elected Member Development Programme;
- introduce and maintain a Corporate Management Team Development Programme;
- introduce a Heads of Service Development Programme;
- introduce further Leadership Succession Development Planning processes;
- invest in the development of new management skills;
- develop the change management capabilities of leaders, managers and partners;
- commit to and achieve the Get On in local government award (GO Award); and
- support the introduction and development of a Unions Learning Representative (ULR) Project managed by the Trade Unions.

Both the Corporate Workforce Plan and the Workforce Development Plan will be reviewed annually and be informed by departmental specific plans.

7. Consultation and Monitoring Processes

7.1 Consultation

The People Strategy includes many new human resource and organisational development initiatives, which will involve both formal and informal consultation activity. The consultation process involves:

- Elected Members
- Corporate Management Team (CMT)
- Trade Unions
- Heads of Service
- Employees
- Corporate Diversity Group (CDG)
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Focus Group
- Gay and Lesbian Focus Group
- Disability Focus Groups
- Investors in People Steering Group
- Workforce Planning Group
- Skills for Life Steering Group
- Managers' Best Practice Group (Managing Attendance)
- Positive Steps Steering Group
- Working Carers' Group

Relevant external organisations including the Learning Skills Council, IDeA, LGA and our strategic partners, Mouchel Business Services are also included as appropriate.

7.2 Monitoring and Reporting

The People Strategy is intended to set the human resource aims and objectives for the next three years and this latest version has been reviewed and updated for 2007 - 2010.

The Action Plans contained in **Part 2** detail the activity needed to achieve the aims and will be reviewed on an annual basis. The statistical information contained in **Part 3** will also be reviewed each year.

On-going monitoring activities will include:

- quarterly reports on workforce data for planning and development purposes will be cascaded to CMT, Heads of Service and Managers to better inform them with regards to their workforce;

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- departmental workforce plans will be monitored as part of annual service planning process;
- the annual review of departmental plans will inform the content of corporate plans; and
- a three yearly review of effects of skill development and outcomes from the corporate workforce plan on organisational performance will be carried out.

The Action Plans are not intended to cover all activity in the areas of Human Resource and Organisational Development, but to single out activities selected as central to advancing the aims and objectives included in the People Strategy and the Council's overall aims.

The achievement of the actions contained in the Action Plans for 2007 – March 2010 will play an integral part in enabling Middlesbrough Council to realise its vision and to continue to move forward the Council's agenda for people management in the years to come.

8. References and Acknowledgements

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