



PEOPLE STRATEGY FOR BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL 2010-2015



Introduction

We are an ambitious and rapidly improving authority, striving to continuously improve the services we provide to our communities. It is through our people that we can realise our ambition to put us into the top 20 cities in Europe in the next 10 years. To do this, we need to ensure that we have a workplace that is stimulating and supports everyone to contribute and achieve their best.

Our People Strategy provides the high level direction for our approach to making the most of our talent and to becoming an employer of choice. It recognises the valuable contribution that our people make to the council's overall performance and in the delivery of top quality services to our communities. It also highlights areas where we will work with partners so that we have the capacity to increase investment in front line services and explore service integration for the benefit of all citizens.

This strategy is a tool and reference to be used by service directors, managers and work teams in their service planning processes and will guide the activity of the Strategic HR and Workforce Strategy team for the next five years.

We look forward to working with you to continue in our journey to make Bristol a great place to live and work.



Barbara Janke
Leader of the council



Jan Ormondroyd
Chief Executive



Our workforce and where we are today

Employing

approximately 16,500 people, of whom 7,500 work in our schools, Bristol City Council is the largest employer in the South West Region. Here are some key facts about our workforce:

Directorate	Number of Employees
Children and Young People's Services	1,718
City Development	1,398
Deputy Chief Executive	84
Health and Social Care	2,031
Neighbourhoods	1,921
Resources	596
Schools	7,500
Transformation	1,313
Total	16,561

- Employee salaries account for approximately 37% of our gross budget.
- 46% of our employees work less than full-time hours, ie they are either part-time or casual.
- Of these, 88% are women. Female employees outnumber male employees by just over 2.6 to 1, but they only represent 52% of the top 5% of earners.
- Only 4% of our workforce is under 25 years of age, with the smallest age group being the 16 to 19 years old band (0.3%). This compares with 16% of our local population who are aged between 16 and 24.

Our workforce and where we are today

- 35% of our workforce is aged 50 or over, with 1.9% employees aged 60 or over.
- Our workforce does not yet reflect our local black and minority ethnic community which is 12% of the local population. Only 7.3% of our employees currently represent these groups and we have particularly poor representation in leadership and management roles.
- 5.4% of our workforce have identified that they have a disability, consistent with the definitions under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This compares with 7.1% of our local population who are economically active.
- 4.1% of our workforce identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual. This compares with 6% which is the measure that the council uses based on Government Actuary and Stonewall advice.

This tells us that our workforce is predominantly female, part-time and is ageing. Most significantly, our workforce does not reflect the communities we serve and this requires urgent attention.

Despite some of the challenges that we need to address, there have been a number of successes and improvements over recent years and they are:

- 92% of council employees had a performance review in 2009.
- Developing new HR policies which support smart working methods such as remote and home working.
- Single Status Pay and Benefits Harmonisation across the council and in all schools.
- Reducing the impact of losing highly skilled employees by introducing employee retention schemes such as flexible retirement and career progression schemes.
- Our sickness absence rates have reduced from 9.13 to 7.68 days per employee during 2009.
- In our 2009 employee satisfaction survey 73% of our people said they were satisfied with their job.

Our workforce and where we are today

- We have a Worklife Balance Policy that has achieved national and international recognition. It enables our people to make lifestyle changes but at the same time retain their skills and expertise.
- We have put in place an Apprenticeships Scheme and a range of Traineeships that has led to an increase in the number of young people from a very low base.
- We have developed excellent working relationships with our partners in the city, and in neighbouring authorities.
- We have well-developed competency frameworks that cover all employees, which form an integral part of our performance management scheme.
- New performance management initiatives led by the Chief Executive (Deputy Chief Executive: “Bristol Performs”) and directorate health checks regarding service performance (including HR and Finance).
- All posts at first and second tier Director level are subject to annual appraisal, which determines whether or not they receive incremental progression or a reduction (at top of grade).

Our approach to people management will therefore recognise these issues and build on the successes in a way that will continue to motivate people. We will also put in place effective succession planning by developing the talent that already exists, and welcoming a steady stream of new talent into the council using targeted programmes such as apprenticeships to ensure that we are seen as a desirable employer that values diversity and makes a difference.

Our local context and the key drivers for organisational change

The organisational assessment of the council by the Audit Commission in December 2009 stated that the organisation is performing well. It highlighted that we are realistic and self aware and target efforts at areas of poorer performance. This has resulted in sustained improvements in areas of historically low performance, although more remains to be done.

We need to close the gap and reduce inequalities in our most deprived neighbourhoods and continue to improve outcomes for children and young people. To support our priorities we have also devolved powers to neighbourhoods through the creation of neighbourhood committees. We are also working in a context where we face enormous challenges over the next five years as the city begins to move out of recession. We will need to work closely with our partners to make tough decisions over priorities in a context where the financial landscape for public services will be extremely challenging and our workforce will have to reduce. At the same time, we need to make our workforce much more diverse and responsive to changing priorities.

Whilst we have made significant progress, our transformation is far from complete. Some of our major priorities are:

- The 20:20 Plan – Our Vision for Bristol sets out the Bristol Partnership’s ambitious plans and aspirations for all those who live and work in the city for the next 10 years.
- The “Transforming Bristol” programme is delivering better outcomes at better value for our customers and our employees as One Council. We now have a new shared services centre which started in December 2009. Further business efficiencies will be generated through new ways of working, including rationalising office accommodation and smarter working.
- “Total Place”, which will deliver more effective working arrangements with our public sector partners in the city.
- The council’s Medium Term Financial Plan which sets out the strategic issues in respect of future council expenditure requirements.

These priorities incorporate a value for money culture in delivering customer focused services.

Our local context and the key drivers for organisational change

We therefore face a number of workforce challenges:

- We need to recognise that changes of the scale we need to make cannot be achieved without using the knowledge and ideas of our people.
- We need to regularly review our pay and grading structures and conditions of employment to ensure that they are competitive in the market, internally consistent, affordable and reflect the business needs of the council.
- We will need to ensure that our workforce deployment is effective and responsive to change. For example, the council-wide application of career progression development structures which provide for the retention and promotion of staff based upon accredited competence, experience and qualifications.
- We will need to ensure that our workforce deployment is effective and responsive to change so our people can transfer their skills and knowledge to new job roles easily.
- Finally, we will need to keep our staff motivated at a time of change and workforce reduction.

Our people strategy needs to be able to respond to this context. Firstly, with our partners we need to have clear workforce plans so we have the capability and capacity to deliver our priorities. Next, we need to ensure that our people have the right skills, attitudes and behaviours to be highly productive and flexible workers. It will also be essential that we continue to embed and develop our performance management schemes so each and every employee is clear about what the expectations of them are. We will need to invest in growing our own talent and particularly ensuring we have a diverse workforce at all levels. Finally, we need to be regarded as an employer of choice where people enjoy working and are healthy.

The Vision for our future workforce

The whole of the council's workforce at all levels, including all professions will be:

- Guided in their work by our core values.
- Neighbourhood and customer focused.
- Positive and optimistic with a “can do” attitude.
- Diverse and reflective of our city's neighbourhoods.
- Motivated, talented, competent and skillful.
- Recognising talent and nurturing and developing our people for promotion through targeted succession planning.
- Healthy and an organisation where people enjoy coming to work.
- Responsive to the changing needs of our citizens.
- Effective at managing career aspirations within a flexible and progressive career structure.
- Skilled to deliver our ambitious plans. This will include technical and professional competence but as importantly the competence to manage a diverse workforce, project management skills, communication skills, the ability to work effectively with our partners and most importantly with our communities.
- Productive and flexible.

Our People Management priorities

Based on our local context and drivers for change and what we have achieved so far, we have set ourselves five strategic priorities that are designed to develop our people and maximise organisational performance so we are a great place to work. They are:

- Build capability and capacity.
- Ensuring our people have the right skills, attitudes and behaviours.
- Effective performance management embedded throughout the whole organisation.
- Maximising the talent in our workforce.
- Being an employer of choice.

Alongside these priorities, we will deliver organisational changes which will effectively address the challenge of improving the skills of our people at the same time as reducing the size of the workforce as a consequence of public spending reductions and efficiency improvements.

See Appendix Sections 1 to 6 which sets out our priorities in greater detail.

Turning the strategy into outcomes

This

People Strategy is an assessment of our workforce requirements in 2010 and therefore represents our best assessment of the high level commitments that are needed for the next five years. The strategy is designed to be a “living document”, and progress against the priorities will be underpinned by annual directorate Workforce Plans. This strategy and directorate plans will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that work streams and projects are delivered.

Workforce Planning arrangements

Integral

to these arrangements will be the production of annual workforce plans by each directorate to be drawn up by Directorate Leadership Teams with their HR and Finance Business Partners. These plans will include workforce issues specific to the services concerned and also incorporate the directorate proposals to implement the people strategy.



Appendix 1. Build Capability and Capacity

NB – Dates set out in appendices right-hand columns are indicative only, and may be subject to change

We will achieve this by	Through	By
Planning for and forecasting our future staffing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rolling out a system of workforce planning across directorates and services, with a direct link to business planning ■ Ensuring that our organisational structure and the way we align services improve service delivery and customer satisfaction ■ Ensuring that our approach to resourcing is flexible and allows employee mobility both within the council as well as across our partnerships ■ Having innovative ways to ensure that the knowledge of our older employees is retained and/or transferred post retirement and resignation 	From April 2010 and then ongoing
Working closely with our private and public sector partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implementing our new Children's Workforce Strategy ■ Having learning and development solutions that can be shared across our organisations, and support career mobility ■ Co-locating cross-organisational teams to reduce duplication and increase impact ■ Providing opportunities for secondment into and out of local public and private sector employers ■ Working with our partners on developing joint employment initiatives 	July 2010 (phased and ongoing)
Growing skills in new and emerging areas of priority and in areas of national demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Targeting our learning and development investment on themes arising from this strategy and directorate workforce plans such as: project management, competence to manage a diverse workforce, customer focus, basic skills, professional skills including planning, housing, health, social work and social care 	April 2011 and then ongoing
Strategically positioning our recruitment activity to enable us to have a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Marketing the council and our schools as desirable employers ■ Using positive action schemes to attract candidates from under-represented communities ■ Building relationships with schools, colleges, universities, Job Centre Plus and other community groups ■ Constantly reviewing recruitment practice and procedures to ensure that they deliver top quality candidates and reflect the council's employment brand ■ Targeted advertising to under represented groups <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working with public sector partners on integrated recruitment and retention solutions. 	Ongoing

Appendix 2. Ensuring that our people have the right skills and attitudes

We will achieve this by	Through	By
Developing positive and empowered attitudes to change through Bristol Performs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Driving a culture of continuous improvement through our competency frameworks ■ Providing opportunities for staff to innovate and take calculated risks to achieve more efficient and improved services ■ Transformation Directorate's Organisational Development team providing interventions to programmes and projects which are designed to support effective change management 	To be determined (joint initiative)
A standardised approach to learning and development which provides all our people with the same opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creation of an integrated learning and development function for all employees and people managers ■ Increasing use of learning and development products through e-learning ■ Providing learning and development products that meet the strategic priorities of the council 	New service fully operational from November 2010 and new products being delivered by April 2011
Raising awareness and understanding of the challenges facing the council and our partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working with leadership teams and programme boards to deliver integrated communication and engagement plans to support change ■ Developing feedback mechanisms to assess team and workforce awareness and understanding 	Ongoing
Building the capability of leaders and managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developing a toolkit of proven approaches that help deliver performance improvement to a diverse workforce that is sustainable ■ Having business change managers throughout the whole organisation ■ Developing and refining the Bristol Manager Framework to meet changed business needs 	September 2011
Building capability in project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Having in place a resourcing strategy which incorporates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A cadre of qualified and trained project managers ● A project management accreditation programme in place 	April 2012



Appendix 3. Effective performance management embedded through the whole organisation

We will achieve this by	Through	By
All our people understanding what effective performance management is and how it links to organisational performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directorate Performance Health Checks (DCX as lead) 	Already implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New style employee induction programme Tools and resources which are easily accessible Ensuring that every employee owns their own performance objectives and that their agreed development needs are met 	September 2010 (phased)
All people managers effectively manage performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Development Products Regular face to face meetings are held with all employees to provide feedback on performance and focus on priorities and objectives. Tools and resources to help managers are accessible and easy to use The “Bristol Performs” programme actively promoted and understood by all managers Understanding how to deal with poor performance and where to get support 	March 2012
Having meaningful engagement with staff on things that affect them and the work they do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring all employees understand the council's vision, values and priorities Providing multiple channels for staff feedback as well as input into team support working arrangements and projects and programmes Encouraging active participation in self organised groups, staff focus groups and trade union activities 	July 2011

Appendix 4. Maximising the talent in our workforce

We will achieve this by	Through	By
Targeted development programmes for high performers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providing individual support for potential leaders ■ Identifying employees who can be utilised as a corporate resource in areas of specialist expertise through a coaching programme ■ A programme of development targeted at the top 10% of performers 	January 2012
Targeted support programmes for those who are not maximising their potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Timely agreement of constructive performance improvement plans ■ Clear objective setting and regular feedback ■ Linking all learning and development to employee competencies and job specific competencies ■ Identifying talent that is not being utilised or realised 	April 2011
Targeted development for aspiring leaders and managers from under-represented groups with BME employees being the top priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providing mentoring and work shadowing schemes ■ Providing positive action skills development programmes ■ Developing a coaching programme to support employees 	January 2012
Recruiting, developing and promoting our people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Throughout the whole organisation, redesigning staffing structures with career progression schemes based upon accredited competence and qualifications rather than relying on vacancies and traditional recruitment methods 	July 2013

Appendix 5. Being an employer of choice

We will achieve this by	Through	By
Having appropriate reward mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full implementation of revised PMDS Appraisal Scheme 	April 2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continuing our annual Employee of the Year award and Make Your Mark scheme 	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fundamentally transforming our reward and recognition systems by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● making individual and team success highly visible ● providing guidance on local reward strategies ● linking reward to individual performance 	April 2012
Having pay and grading structures and conditions of employment that are competitive in the market, internally consistent, affordable, and reflect the business needs of the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensuring that our pay structure meets our obligations and commitment to equal pay ■ Ensuring conditions of employment, job design and job families are sufficiently flexible to support the changing requirements of the organisation ■ Considering the implementation of market competitive non-pay related benefits 	November 2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensuring that our HR policies and process are simple and easy to use and legally compliant and support organisational requirements 	Ongoing
Having a healthy and safe work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continuing to raise employee and management awareness of responsibilities and accountabilities in relation to health and safety as well as the management of risk ■ Effectively managing employee attendance taking into account new requirements following recent legislative changes and government recommendations to employers ■ Assisting and supporting employees to return to work through rehabilitation and reasonable adjustment ■ Providing effective occupational health services including pre-employment screening, ongoing health surveillance, absence referrals and professional advice 	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implementing in-house sickness absence telephone line (Transformation – Shared Transactional Service Centre) 	Sept 2010 (tbc)

Appendix 5. Being an employer of choice

We will achieve this by	Through	By
Fostering an employee relations environment based on the principle of partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establishing a consultation and negotiation protocol that is supported and enacted by both management and trade unions 	April 2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensuring that we have effective mechanisms in place for meaningful dialogue with staff on issues that affect them and the council, including a revised council-wide Joint Consultative Committee framework ■ Ensuring that we have effective channels for our people to provide effective feedback on how we are doing ■ Partnership working with trade unions on key initiatives and projects that support our agendas relating to health and safety, learning and development and equalities 	Ongoing
Recognising that as the largest employer in the region, our employment practices can have a positive impact on our local community and the wider region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leading the way on community focused policy areas such as volunteering, sustainable travel, flexible working and healthy workplace initiatives ■ Achieving Level 5 of the Generic Equalities Standard ■ Championing national initiatives such as Apprenticeships and Graduate Entry Schemes 	July 2011
Being a healthy place where people enjoy coming to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proactive employee health and lifestyle support programmes designed to improve well-being ■ Introducing proactive health screening which will enable to us provide targeted programmes of support to employees and their families ■ A healthy workplace strategy ■ Continuing promotion of the council's Worklife Balance Policy 	July 2012

Appendix 6. Organisational workforce initiatives

We will achieve this by	Through	By
Reviewing the workforce	■ Vacancy management controls (interim)	Implemented – review April 2010
	■ Reducing dependency upon agency workers	April 2011
	■ Providing organisational design support to directorate management (from Transformation Directorate's Organisational Development team)	To be determined
	■ Production of annual directorate workforce plans, integrated with the People Strategy	From April 2010
	■ Supporting organisational reviews and restructuring (HR Shared Transactional Services and HR Business Partners)	Ongoing



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