
REPORT TO:	FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 14
DATE OF MEETING:	18TH JUNE 2015	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES	OPEN
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SUBJECT:	ANNUAL TRAINING REPORT 2014/15 AND PRIORITIES FOR 2015/16	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM 05

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To approve the priority areas for training and development during 2015/16.
- 1.2 To note the range of training activities and actions provided during 2014/15.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To propose the priority actions for corporate training activities during 2015/16. This reflects the Council's Workforce Development Strategy, which provides the framework for the effective management and deployment of the Council's workforce.
- 2.2 To provide an overview of corporate training, learning and development activities completed during 2014/15 and the outcomes.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 In line with previous years the assessment of the training priorities for the year 2014/15 were identified from a number of different sources. This included the Corporate Plan, Service Plans and individual Performance Development Reviews.
- 3.2 A variety of learning activities have been provided with the support of the Council's training provider, Northgate HR. During 2014/15, the focus has been on providing sufficient mandatory training for staff, in particular on Council procedures for managers and Health and Safety training for all staff.
- 3.3 Once again there was a focus on management development with the launch of a new leadership programme.
- 3.4 A significant amount of work has also been carried out with Health & Safety training. Training has occurred across all services addressing a number of needs highlighted in the Council's Health & Safety action plan. As well as conventional courses, this

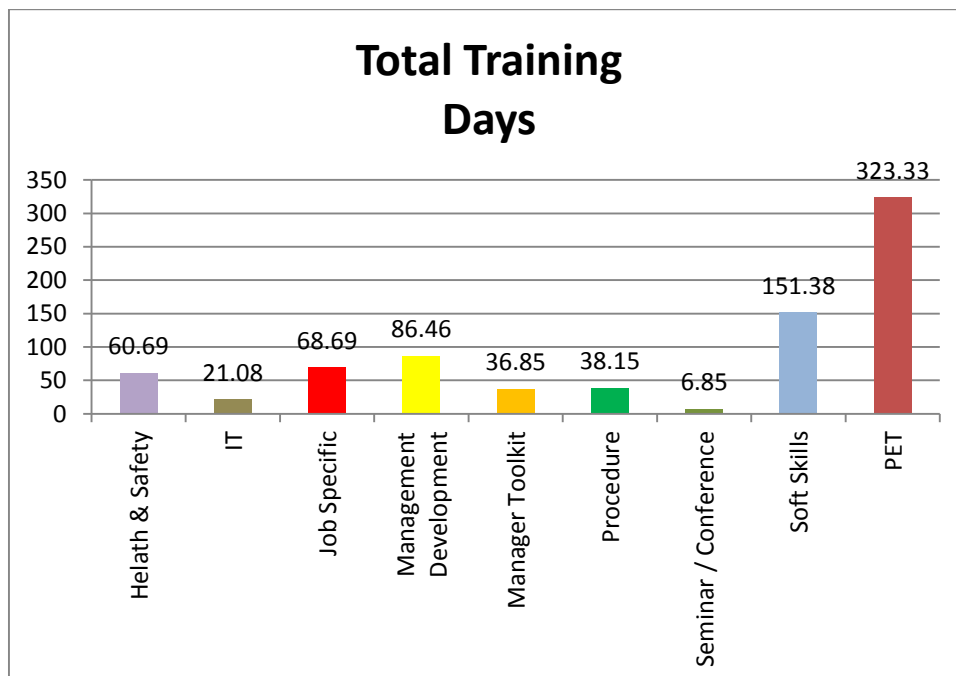
has also included a number of “toolbox talks” to fit into the working patterns of, and engage with, front line staff based at the Council depot.

3.5 This has ensured that employees are provided with the appropriate knowledge and understanding to undertake their roles safely and promoted a proactive approach towards health & safety management.

3.6 Health and Wellbeing Week to support the effective management of stress and stress related absence at work has been scheduled into 2015-2016. This work is supported by the on-going provision of training for Managers in the Council's Attendance Management Procedure to enable a consistent and positive approach towards the management of sickness absence.

3.7 This continued emphasis on developing its staff ensured that the Council retained its Investors in People status in October 2014.

4.0 **Detail - Review of 2014/15**



* Note that each training category will encompass a range of courses and the number of staff trained takes account of some staff attending different training courses within the same category.

** Soft skills training include course on customer care, time management etc.

4.1 Northgate delivered and supported 125 different training, learning and development programmes and provided almost 470.5 days of training.

4.2 A further 323 days of learning and development were completed by employees through study on post entry training programmes. This is an increase in post entry training on the previous two years.

4.3 Based on current headcount of employees in the Council (as at 31/03/2015) of 280, this equates to 2.8 training days per employee, up from the previous two years of 2.05 training days in 2013/14 and 2.03 training days in 2012/13.

- 4.4 “Technical / Job Specific” training is arranged by Service Areas and reported to Organisational Development. However, this is not all captured corporately and much more training and development is likely to be undertaken.
- 4.5 Northgate continue to develop and deliver in house training solutions wherever possible. However it is also important to provide a range of learning opportunities to ensure a varied provision of high quality learning and development interventions and specialist expertise. External training providers are used on occasions when specialist / technical expertise is required.
- 4.6 It is disappointing to report that an increasing number of scheduled training courses are cancelled due to no or insufficient bookings, or late withdrawals by employees. Internal course cancellations have increased from 17% in 2012/13 to 19% in 2013/14, to 33% in 2014/15.
- 4.7 Consequently, there is a risk that knowledge regarding legislation, policies and procedures in certain areas of the workforce are not sufficiently up to date.
- 4.8 This is being reviewed to ensure mandatory courses are attended, but also the content, location and timing of courses is being analysed to encourage greater take-up.

Review of training activity 2014/15

- 4.9 Following the appointment of an external training provider (Penna PLC) to deliver leadership and management programmes, managers and senior managers have been supported in their development on new programmes.
- 4.10 Planning for the Future” events and “Management Toolkit” sessions have continued to be delivered throughout the year along with a continued focus on providing learning opportunities for managers and employees to manage attendance levels across the Council.
- 4.11 The continued focus on health and safety training as a priority is evident, ensuring safe operating procedures and compliance with legislation. A range of programmes have been rolled out including general Health and Safety Awareness, Manual Handling, COSHH and First Aid courses.
- 4.12 The main focus at the start of the year was to ensure the Council met its obligations in respect of mandatory training for its workforce. However, take-up of these mandatory courses was disappointing and

Training for front line staff

- 4.13 Support for front line employees in Waste and Cleansing, Housing Maintenance, Grounds Maintenance and Sports Development continues to be provided.
- 4.14 The development of skills within our front line workers promotes continuous improvement, as well as demonstrating our commitment to the workforce and reaffirming their value to the Council.
- 4.15 Activity during 2014/2015 has included qualifications in First Aid, engagement in Health & Safety training programmes and a whole variety of tool box talks.

- 4.16 A flexible approach to training delivery is taken to ensure it is arranged to fit in with working patterns and service needs.

Modern Apprenticeships

- 4.17 The Council has continued to support the development and engagement of young people in local government careers. In 2014/15, upon completion of their apprenticeships, the Council has recruited two young people as qualified tradesmen at the Housing DLO. Their original modern apprentice posts are currently vacant.

Work Experience

- 4.18 The Council continued to support local schools by providing 11 work experience placements for pupils from years 10 and 11, university students and the unemployed. This provides a valuable opportunity for young people to gain an insight into local government, and raises the profile of the Council within the community. These are generally for short periods of up to a week, although longer placements have also been provided when required.
- 4.19 In addition to this the Council also provided longer term placements for three long term unemployed through a partnership with the Jobcentre Plus, as part of the national "Get Britain Working" campaign.

Key Outcomes

Leadership and Management Development

- 4.20 In October 2014, Penna have designed a number of modules It is expected that in the next three years this programme will further enhance the skills and capabilities of the managers to help improve the productivity of the workforce.
- 4.21 Following on from the previous formal training programmes for all managers, their skills are being utilised and developed by greater involvement in service planning and strategic planning of the Council. This has included further "Planning for the Future" sessions that have been attended by senior and middle managers across the Council.
- 4.22 Courses on Performance and Development Reviews, Capability, Recruitment/Selection and Managing the Disciplinary Process courses were rolled out as part of the "Manager Toolkit" set of training courses.
- 4.23 A new course on Investigation Skills was designed and delivered to managers that will be applicable in any number of situations, from disciplinary and harassment claims to customer complaints.

Health & Safety

- 4.24 As well as regular Health and Safety Awareness, Manual Handling, Accident Reporting and Investigation courses, a series of job specific toolbox talks were provided for Housing Maintenance staff throughout the year.

Vocation / professional training

- 4.25 Support has been provided for employees in a number of career graded posts and modern apprenticeship positions to progress towards vocational or professional qualifications. This provides opportunities to develop talent within the Council and is a positive approach towards succession planning.

Investors in People

- 4.26 Following its reassessment in October, the Council has successfully been accredited as “Investors in People” employer. This nationally recognised benchmark is for effective management, development and deployment of the workforce. The Council has held this status since 2002 and reflects on the continued importance given to the learning and training by the Council.

5.0 Priorities for 2015/16

- 5.1 The Council's Workforce Development Strategy aligns the development of people with the improvement of services. A review of the Strategy for 2014/15 is detailed in **Appendix 1**. The following priorities have been identified for inclusion within the Council's Corporate Training Plan for 2015/16.

Leadership and Management Development

- 5.2 “Planning for the Future” sessions will continue to increase closer working for managers across different levels.
- 5.3 A new programme for Aspiring managers has been designed and will commence in 2015 / 2016. This illustrates the Council's approach to talent; developing its own people wherever possible.
- 5.4 Leadership and management development programmes launched in early 2015 will continue for managers.

Health & Safety

- 5.5 Through Northgate, the Council will continue to deliver a rolling programme of Health and Safety training, which includes health and safety awareness, training for risk assessors, and manual handling techniques.

Employment Policy

- 5.6 Training will continue to be provided for employees in employment practices used by the Council. This will include continued training for managers in attendance management, recruitment and selection, performance development reviews and disciplinary processes.

E-learning resources

- 5.7 There is a range of e-learning opportunities made available to employees, such as E-induction, Equalities and Fairness, together with Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.

- 5.8 The Environmental Awareness e-learning course will be reviewed and updated in 2015/16.

IT Training

- 5.9 With the support of Northgate, the rollout of further modules will involve the creation of training / user guides and briefing sessions for all staff. In particular , this will focus on security and the proper use of technology.

Soft Skills

- 5.10 Training courses on Customer Care, handling complaints, together with time management, assertiveness and handling conflict will continue to be available to employees.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Training will be delivered with departmental and corporate training budgets, supported by Northgate resources.

7.0 Corporate Implications

- 7.1 The development of a learning culture within the Council is a key aim. However, to a certain extent, employees must also take some responsibility for their learning and development; line managers maintain a key role in developing and managing talent in their service areas.
- 7.2 Local Government is continually under pressure to improve. Effective leadership is critical to such improvement. The continued focus on leadership and management development will support the development of effective leadership in the Council.
- 7.3 The Council should also ensure mandatory training requirements are met, to protect both employees in health and safety, for example, and to foster good employee relations.

8.0 Community Implications

- 8.1 Having a suitably skilled and trained workforce enables the continued improvement of Council services.

9.0 Background Papers

None

**Workforce Development Strategy 2009 – 2015
2014 / 2015 Annual Update**

Introduction

The Council's Workforce Development Strategy links the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives as set down in its Corporate Plan with the planning, organisation and development of the workforce. This is supported by an action plan that details the various actions that will be undertaken and the outcomes expected. This action plan is reviewed on a regular basis to measure progress and where necessary to reassess priorities to reflect the on-going needs of the Council.

The Corporate Plan for 2011 to 2015 came to an end in March 2015. Following the recent elections and the formation of a new Council, a new Corporate Plan will be developed in 2015. This update therefore looks solely backwards over the last twelve months, and does not set specific objectives for the forthcoming twelve months as it has done previously, pending the formulation of a new Council Plan.

Executive Summary

Although the rate of change slowed in 2014/15 and the financial position stabilised, the Council has continued on a programme of change during 2014/15. This has been in order to respond mainly to financial demands placed on it through continued reductions in funding from Government, higher expectations from Customers, development of new technology and changes to service delivery, together with the Council's aspiration to 'cut costs and not services'. This has had an impact on all services and on identified priorities for the Workforce Development Strategy.

Progress on the 2014/15 Priorities

During 2014/15, work has been progressed in line with the Workforce Development Strategy action plan and an overview of progress is summarised below.

For the five year Workforce Development Strategy there was 37 actions under the five national headings, nine of which were viewed as key priorities for 2014/15. Of these nine, six have been completed as required, with work on the other three still being progressed.

Develop Leadership Capacity

1. *Sustain leadership and management development through delivery of leadership programmes*

Following an extensive tendering process, the Council offered the contract to Penna, who launched the programme as part of a "Planning for the Future" event in November 2014, and have since delivered the first two modules of the programme.

There is also an on-going bespoke programme for the Council's directors, and plans for a programme for aspiring managers for the following year has been agreed and designed.

Develop Skills and Capacity of the Workforce

2. Development and implementation of a structured corporate training programme

As illustrated in the Annual Training Report, building on previous years, a varied programme has been provided by the Council.

3. Review usage and subsequent development of the corporate Competency Framework

The Framework for individuals is reviewed on a regular basis and tailored to individual jobs in accordance with the needs of the individual. The framework is also used in drawing up person specifications when recruiting to all posts.

Develop the Organisation

4. Reviewing Council Structures

The Council continued to review its service structures to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. In 2014/15, a major review of Housing and Environmental Services was carried out, affecting five of the six service areas within the directorate. A review of Planning Services was also completed to meet additional demand in the service area.

5. Maintain Investors in People accreditation

Following the inspection in November 2014, the Council once more obtained accreditation, and has now held it since 2002.

6. Ensure working practices are safe – through the achievement of Corporate RoSPA Gold award status

The Council once again obtained the Corporate RoSPA Gold Award, and the next annual application to retain it for another year is already under way.

7. Maximise the use of current HR systems by introducing Timesheet and Other Expenses MyView modules

This will be subject to review once the Payroll service is transfered back to the Council.

8. Members online MyView for payslips

This will be subject to review once the Payroll service is transfered back to the Council.

Develop Pay and Rewards Structures

9. Progress Pay and Grading Review

This will be undertaken in 2015/16 as approved by the Council.

Conclusion

The Workforce Development Strategy is an integral part of the Council's strategic management framework. It provides the roadmap for workforce development in the achievement of the Council's vision of 'Making South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit'.

Continued progress with the key priorities has been made delivering a number of outcomes for the Council as set out above.

Following the formulation of a new Council Plan during 2015, the Workforce Development Strategy will be reviewed to ensure that it complements the new Plan.