



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Strategic Human Resources Management Framework
<b>Date:</b>	18 April 2008
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
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### Relevant Background Information

Strategic human resource (HR) management is central to the council's improvement agenda because:

- The people who work for the council are at the heart of delivering high quality services to Belfast's citizens, visitors and stakeholders.
- Sustaining and developing our capacity to secure the success of the council to meet the challenges ahead depends on the quality, motivation and commitment of our staff to make our ambitions a reality. We need the right number of people with the right skills in the right place at the right time.
- Over the next few years, especially because of RPA, it is likely that the council's workforce will change in size and nature. Clearer alignment of the planning and development of our workforce with corporate strategic, financial asset and business planning will better optimise our workforce capacity and people management practices.

Like strategic financial planning, strategic HR management is an essential element of good corporate governance; it forms part of the foundations of the organisation, underpinning the delivery of agreed priorities; and provides the basis of accountability to members and the citizens of Belfast for the stewardship and use of resources.

The improvement agenda update report discussed by committee last month included some of the key improvement actions undertaken during 2007/08 in relation to strategic HR management.

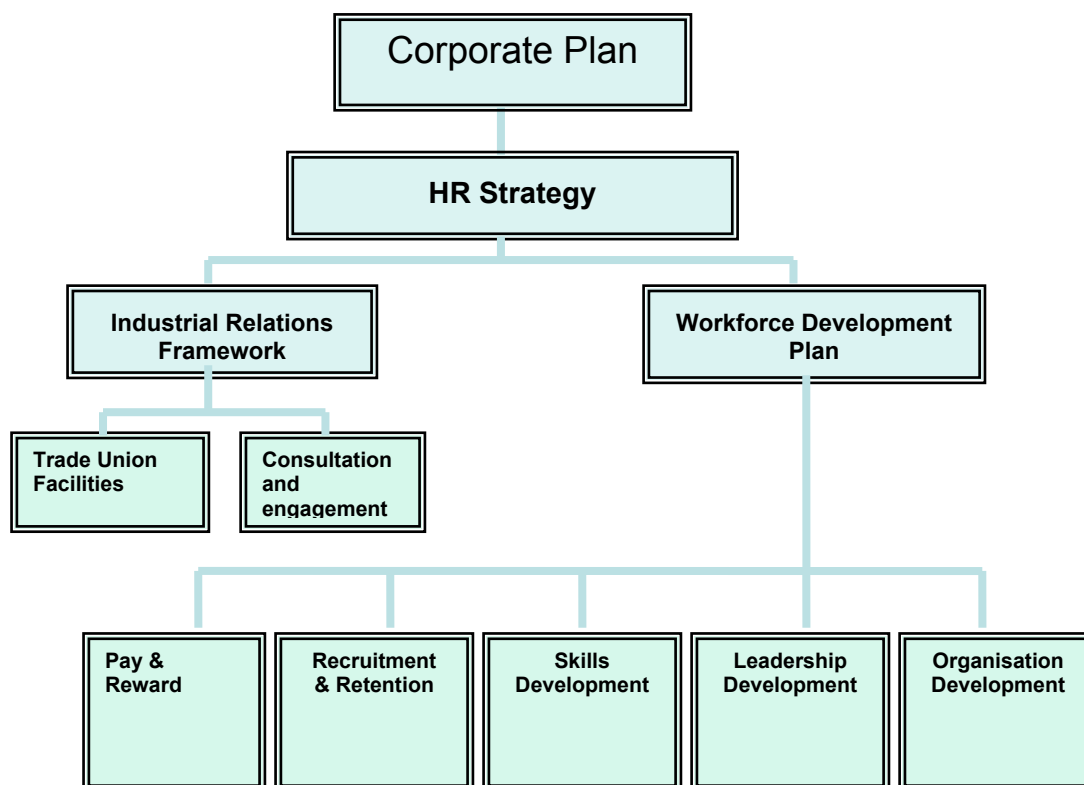
The purpose of this report is :

- To outline for members the overall strategic HR management framework of the organisation
- To agree HR reports for the committee for May and June 2008/09.

### Key Issues

The strategic HR framework of the council is set out below.

**Figure 1 Strategic HR Management Framework**



The key outputs of the HR planning processes in the council are the HR strategy and Workforce Development Plan. These plans set out what we will do to support the delivery of members' key priorities and objectives.

### **HR Strategy**

The overall purpose of the HR Strategy is to ensure that the HR function underpins both the day to day activities of the council and the achievement of its medium to longer term objectives in meeting members' vision and ambition for the future.

Key HR goals relate to achieving enhanced performance in areas such as leadership of place, customer focus, performance management etc. They were identified through an analysis of members' emerging priorities; relevant external factors; the council's value creation map (VCM); and the internal factors that will enable or hinder the achievement of the Corporate Plan.

### **Workforce Development Plan**

The Workforce Development Plan is essentially the delivery mechanism for the HR strategy and sets out how the council will recruit, support, develop and retain employees to support its corporate strategy; it focuses on improving current and developing new processes around the key themes of:

1. Pay and reward
2. Recruitment and retention
3. Skills Development
4. Leadership Development

## 5. Organisation Development

Progress on the main actions under these themes is under way. For example:

- Attendance and capability policies have been agreed and a robust performance management approach to attendance implemented.
- A review of our Occupational Health service is under way to ensure it is fit for the purpose of supporting a strong culture of attendance in Belfast City Council
- Effective processes for the staffing elements of the Scheme of Delegation are currently being reviewed
- Chief officers, heads of service/senior management appraisal scheme is being fundamentally revised.
- Timely and accurate management information is being developed to support effective people management.
  - 'Satisfactory service' has been defined for use in relation to incremental progression through our new pay and grading system.
- The recruitment aspects of the advertising review are being implemented.
- More effective community outreach measures are being developed.

Many of the approaches outlined in the HR strategy and Workforce Development Plan require the ability to specify clearly what skills and behaviours are required e.g. to underpin the culture, or when writing job descriptions, assessing performance and identifying development needs. The development of a competency framework for the council is therefore a key strategic initiative. It will identify clearly the competencies, skills and behaviours required to deliver members' priorities and corporate objectives. This will enable us to translate the various organisational requirements into what individuals need to be able to do. This will in turn help us to be specific about what we want from people we recruit, develop and promote.

More information on the HR strategy and Workforce Development Plan and their associated key actions will be brought to committee in June. Some examples of key actions are summarised in appendix one.

It is important to note that these actions are in addition to those required for continuing delivery of existing 'status quo' services.

### **Industrial Relations Framework**

Members are aware that the council's industrial relations are critical. They can be a potential block to progress, but also an enabler of change. Consequently we are monitoring and reviewing our industrial relations framework to ensure we have effective mechanisms for TU and staff consultation, negotiation, and policy-making that are linked to corporate, HR and business planning.

### **Delivery**

Finally, in relation to the delivery of the HR strategy, Workforce Development Plan, and the industrial relations framework we have an operational HR service that is trying to move to one that also supports strategic human resource management and the management of change and organisational development (OD) in the council. The review of the centre of the organisation may therefore need to prioritise the review of the HR function to ensure we can effectively do this.

**Proposed HR reports to Committee May and June 2008**

**May**

- Year-end absence analysis and agree future targets
- Report on the council's Community Outreach programme

**June**

- Report on HR Strategy and Workforce Development Plan key actions.

**Recommendations**

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and agree HR reports for May and June 2008 as outlined above.