

BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PEOPLE STRATEGY

PEOPLE STRATEGY (PS)

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BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PEOPLE STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Braintree District Council's key asset is its employees and their knowledge, expertise and experience. People are the key to successful improvements and capacity building. Having a strategic framework and approach will ensure the Authority is well equipped to manage the day to day business needs as well as addressing changing priorities. **People achieve excellence.**
- 1.2 The main aim of the Council is to improve and provide good customer service. The Council achieved a "Good" rating in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2004 and was also awarded Investors in People status for a record fourth time. The *Having Your Say* process, which includes a Staff Satisfaction Survey demonstrated improvements in leadership, communications and morale. External research has also been undertaken to determine customer satisfaction and comparisons with other local authorities. All these results indicate significant progress towards a high performing and developing organisation. Braintree District Council is developing a culture that celebrates achievements, continuously improves its performance and learns from all its experiences and working with other organisations. Essentially, it aims to become a culture that is **customer focused and performance driven.**
- 1.3 Crucial to the success of this strategy will be the role of the manager. With reducing resources, the level of support from central corporate services will gradually diminish and be given on an advice and consultancy basis only. The focus will be on improving performance and all managers will be responsible and accountable for their functions and resources, including the recruitment, management and development of staff.
- 1.4 To get the best for Members, staff, customers and the Council means developing an organisation-wide culture that values training and learning by all staff. Braintree District Council is fully committed to equipping all employees and teams with the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to improve and deliver high quality customer focussed services.
- 1.5 This strategy aims to ensure that the workforce is capable of delivering the Council's direction and ambition in a way that puts increased customer satisfaction at the centre of all we do. This will be achieved by focusing on the priority areas identified in the ODPM's Pay and Workforce Strategy.
- 1.6 The Council firmly believes that learning is key to improving customer service delivery. This can only be achieved if learning is undertaken by all to improve the ways things are done within the Authority. This strategy supports this approach as a mechanism to identify and communicate strategic aims. The Council is therefore working to develop and sustain a culture and environment where learning is recognised and celebrated as

being fundamental to its success not in isolation but with Members, customers, residents and partners.

2. AIMS

2.1 The main aim of the People Strategy is:

- ◆ **To bridge the gap between where the organisation is now and where it needs to be in the future.**

To achieve this there are 5 key priorities:

Developing Leadership Capacity
Developing the Skills and Capacity of the Workforce
Organisational Development
Resourcing
Pay and Rewards

2.2 *Developing Leadership Capacity*

Improving the quality of leadership and developing the capacity of the top teams is essential to achieving value for money and improvement in local customer service delivery. Leadership development opportunities for Officers and Members will be provided to enhance, recruit and retain leadership capacity to deliver the vision.

2.3 *Developing the Skills and Capacity of the Workforce*

Building a high performing workforce requires investment in the recruitment, retention and development of the whole organisation. People will be trained and skilled in a number of areas such as procurement, project management, partnership working as well as skills in delivering front line services. Having skills pathways and multi skilling will ensure the workforce is high performing, flexible and provides good customer service.

2.3 *Organisational Development*

The organisation will need to continuously develop to achieve excellence in people and performance management, partnership working and the delivery of customer focused services. Re-modelling of the workforce and achieving greater movement across professional and skills boundaries will enable improvements in service delivery and efficiency.

2.4 *Resourcing*

Workforce planning is essential for ensuring that high quality staff are recruited and retained and all diversity and quality issues are addressed. The supply of skilled people in shortage areas will be improved.

2.5 *Pay and Rewards*

Having a modernised pay and reward structure to attract, retain and develop high performing, skilled and flexible staff will ensure a motivated workforce while achieving value for money in improved customer service.

3. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

3.1 Braintree District Council is an organisation that values good performance. It is committed to communication, responding to others and working in partnership. It provides high quality services that demonstrate value for money and holds itself accountable for them. This applies equally to the provision of services to its customers and to the way in which it supports its employees. It recognises that staff are its most valuable asset and supports the following core values:

Perform well and get things done
Respect and value customers and staff
Improve and learn
Deliver that bit extra
Effective and efficient

3.2 The above Core Values will ensure that staff are:

- ◆ Treated fairly, with respect, courtesy and consideration in the workplace
- ◆ Treated with trust and openness
- ◆ Listened to and kept up to date on work related issues
- ◆ Managed professionally and competently
- ◆ Free from harassment, bullying or oppressive behaviour
- ◆ Set challenging, stretching targets and be annually appraised of their performance
- ◆ Recognised, supported and valued for their skills, performance and contribution
- ◆ Given opportunities to develop skills in a variety of learning styles to their full potential
- ◆ Given the tools and training to do their jobs efficiently and effectively
- ◆ Given constructive feedback about their performance
- ◆ Able to work in a safe and healthy environment.

3.3 In return, the organisation has expectations that staff will be:

- ◆ Committed
- ◆ Motivated
- ◆ Flexible and adaptable
- ◆ Receptive to change and innovation
- ◆ Skilled and professional
- ◆ High performing
- ◆ Have a customer ethos
- ◆ Have a positive attitude
- ◆ Solution oriented
- ◆ Able to develop, learn and improve
- ◆ Effective communicators

A competency framework will be implemented to ensure and enable staff to have these behaviours.

4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PEOPLE STRATEGY

There are a number of key stakeholders with responsibility for implementing the People Strategy and ensuring that services to all residents are delivered by well managed, motivated, skilled, competent and committed staff.

4.1 Employer

The Council, through the Chief Executive, is the legal employer of the workforce. Therefore, elected Members have a responsibility to ensure that the employment policies, procedures and practices they are asked to approve comply with employment and health and safety legislation, HR best practice and the Council's corporate aim of encouraging a well trained and committed workforce, developing their potential and listening to their needs and ideas. The Council also has responsibility to ensure that the aims and core values expressed in the People Strategy are reflected in all decisions it is asked to make which impact on its employees.

4.2 Chief Executive and Management Board

The Chief Executive, has a particular responsibility to ensure that the Council's human resources are managed efficiently and effectively and treated fairly, consistently and with respect and dignity. This responsibility extends to members of the Corporate Management Board who are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of morale within their areas of responsibility, where things are going well and where improvements are required, and to guide and support their managers in implementing improvements. The Chief Executive and Directors are committed to developing and improving both their own resource planning skills and those of their managers and staff and to ensure they lead and manage the Council's employees in accordance with the values, principles and aims of the People Strategy.

4.3 Managers

All Managers have direct responsibility and accountability for the Council's employees on a day-to-day basis, including performing all HR functions in relation to them. Therefore, it is critical that they have the skills, expertise and knowledge to manage their teams effectively. In particular, managers should ensure that performance is managed, addressed and enhanced by using appraisal, targets and reviews. Managers are key change agents and will need to ensure change is managed successfully.

4.4 HR Specialists – Personnel, Organisational Development and Health and Safety

The HR function, through the Head of Business Support, has a responsibility to ensure that the Council's HR policies, procedures and practices not only comply with employment legislation and best practice but reflect the Council as a progressive employer. HR Staff have a responsibility to develop their skills and knowledge to ensure they can provide high quality and expert advice, consultancy and guidance to managers and employees.

4.5 Trades Union Representatives

Recognised Trades Unions have a role in communicating and consulting their members and working in partnership with HR staff and managers to

ensure new ways of working are implemented effectively and good employee relations are maintained. They play a key role in assisting staff and managers implementing change across the organisation.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

Communication is at the heart of BDC activity. A Communications Strategy and Actions Plans ensure there is a climate of trust and involvement in which every member of staff can learn and develop. Open and honest two-way communication is promoted and involvement encouraged. A variety of mechanisms including newsletters, focus groups, e-mail and team briefings is used to encourage regular, frequent communications on staffing issues across the organisation. There is a strong partnership working relationship between all recognised unions and management to ensure good employee relations.

6. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE PEOPLE STRATEGY

6.1 The People Strategy will be implemented as part of the Business Planning System (**Appendix 1**) via the Workforce Development Plan. A summary of Workforce Development Plan Actions is shown in **Appendix 2**.

6.2 In addition, a range of key performance indicators has been developed nationally, regionally and within the Council to assess the performance of the strategic direction and ambition and will be reported to Cabinet and Corporate Management Board on an annual basis. The main indicators to be reported are as follows:

Corporate BVPIs

BV-011a % of top 5% of earners that are women

BV-011b % of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities

BV-012 Number of working days lost due to sickness including stress.

BV-014 %employees retiring early as a % of total workforce (Excluding ill health)

BV-015 % employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a % of total workforce

BV-016 % employees declaring they meet the Disability Discrimination Act disability definition compared with the % economically active disabled people in the authority area

BV-017 % employees from minority ethnic communities compared with % of the economically active minority ethnic community population in the authority area

BDC and Regional PIs

Number of Learning days per employee per annum

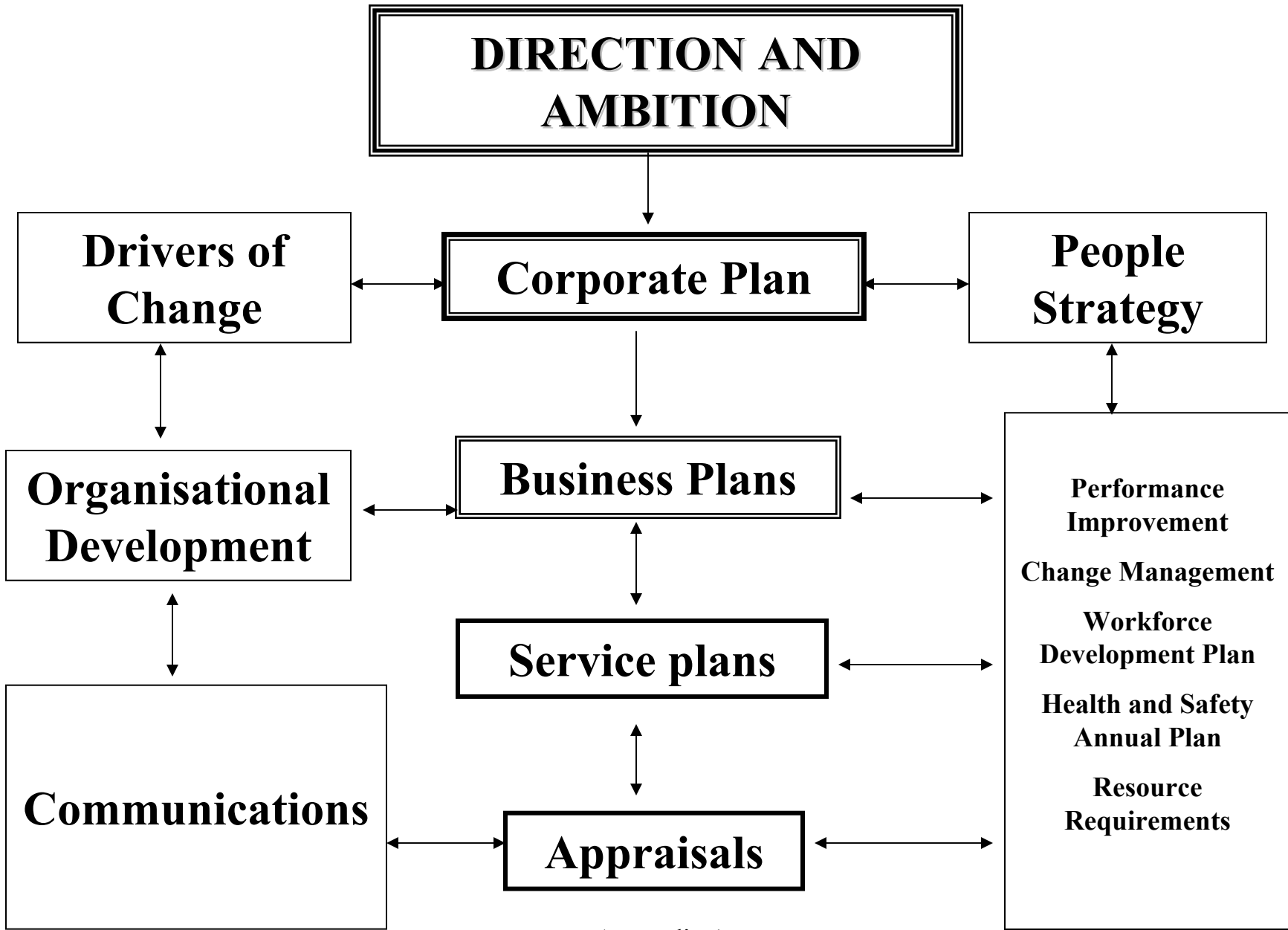
Numbers of accidents and violent incidents at work

Number of lost days due to accidents

Vacancy Rates

Employee turnover rates

Number of Leavers



Appendix 1

SUMMARY OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTIONS 05/06

Priority Area	Action	Lead Manager
<p>1 Developing Leadership Capacity</p> <p>Improving the quality of leadership and developing the capacity of the top teams is essential to achieving value for money and improvement in local customer service delivery. Leadership development opportunities for Officers and Members will be provided to enhance, recruit and retain leadership capacity to deliver the vision</p>	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist the leader in the development of the leadership capacity of the members by updating the Member Development programme in line with the achievement of the Regional Charter for member development. This will include identifying the learning and development needs of the members and providing a range of opportunities to meet those needs. The main areas for development will include knowledge of key business areas eg licensing, use of ICT, scrutiny, diversity etc • achieve Equality Standard Level 3 by 2007 • provide a management development approach programme. • develop a leadership development programme • develop a secondment programme for provision of secondments to neighbouring authorities • make use of a range of leadership development schemes such as the Essex Leadership Centre of Excellence 	<p>Greta Irving/David Triggs</p> <p>Greta Irving/Helen Krischock</p> <p>Greta Irving</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>

<p>2 Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce</p> <p>Building a high performing workforce requires investment in the recruitment, retention and development of the whole organisation. People will be trained and skilled in a number of areas such as procurement, project management, partnership working, as well as skills in delivering front line services. Having skills pathways and multi skilling will ensure the workforce is high performing, flexible and provides good customer service</p>	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify learning and development needs through the business, service plans, and PDP's • provide a range of development opportunities to meet those needs including courses, action learning, coaching and mentoring • evaluate the effectiveness of learning and development to ensure performance is improved. • Review the appraisal scheme, introduce performance ratings and withholding of increments for poor performance • Implement a competency framework to improve performance and behaviours • Provide opportunities for managers to improve their skills, expertise and knowledge and manage their teams effectively • carry out a skills audit to prove cross team working • Work with our Partners including ECC on a range of work such as recruitment, advertising, to create capacity, efficiencies and improve effectiveness • improve communication between staff and senior managers through the agreed communications strategy and action plans 	<p>Greta Irving</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>Charmaine Dean</p> <p>Charmaine Dean</p>
<p>3 Developing the organisation</p> <p>The organisation will need to continuously develop to achieve excellence in people and performance management, partnership working and the delivery of customer focused services. Re-modelling of the workforce and achieving greater movement across professional and skills boundaries will enable improvements in service</p>	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of all HR policies and procedures to improve performance, including sickness absence • encourage a culture based on mutual and shared learning by offering staff learning and development through a range of learning methods, shared learning opportunities, action learning activities, and opportunities to develop improved learning about good practice and solutions to poor performance 	<p>Helen Krischock</p> <p>Greta Irving</p>

<p>delivery and efficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead on any change management HR issues, focussed on making BDC fit for the future. This will include preparing for efficiencies and reductions resulting from the Housing Options and Customer First projects. • continue to develop the BDC culture to that of being customer and performance focussed • further develop the front office/back office model (HR Service) • encourage cross functional learning and work 	<p>Charmaine Dean</p> <p>Greta Irving</p> <p>Helen Krischock/Greta Irving</p> <p>Greta Irving</p>
<p>4 Resourcing local government</p> <p>Workforce planning is essential for ensuring that high quality staff are recruited and retained and all diversity and quality issues are addressed. The supply of skilled people in shortage areas will be improved.</p>	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruit and retain high quality, high performing, skilled and flexible staff • address diversity issues • target skills shortages 	<p>Helen Krischock</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>
<p>5 Pay and Rewards</p> <p>Having a modernised pay and reward structure to attract, retain and develop high performing, skilled and flexible staff will ensure a motivated workforce while achieving value for money in improved customer service.</p>	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review rewards and recognition processes to ensure BDC is competitive, and recruits and retains effective staff • undertake an Equal Pay Audit to ensure fairness of pay, competitiveness and 	<p>Helen Krischock</p> <p>Helen Krischock</p>