

Employee Development Strategy

Version 1
1 July 1998

1. Introduction

Corporate Services, in consultation with a small team of Chief Officers, produced this cornerstone document to provide an approach to employee development within the Highland Council.

The strategy is presented within the context of the Council's goals and values. The implications of adopting and implementing the Employee Development Strategy will be the minimisation of waste and the maximisation of the potential contribution of every employee of Highland Council towards the service provision the Council seeks to provide. It also recognises the need for continuous improvement and value for money. This will only come through maximum utilisation of all our employees and is what the strategy seeks to address.

2. Application and Implementation

The strategy applies to all employees, full-time, part-time, APT&C, Manual and Teaching staff.

It examines and challenges our attitude to employee training and development recognising that such activities are fundamental to business results and business success.

To support the effective implementation of the Employee Development Strategy, the Corporate Services Management Team will develop a series of guidance notes. These will include:

Policies and Procedures for:

- Qualifications
- Secondments
- On the job training and development
- Coaching and mentoring

3.

The Principles

Training and development is vital to service delivery and to achieving our performance targets.

Training and development involves all of us, regardless of our role in the Council, in:

- a. Identifying the skills, attitudes and capabilities that we need.
- b. Planning how to meet these needs.
- c. Continuously developing ourselves in anticipation of our changing requirements.
- d. Accepting responsibility for addressing these needs.

The opportunities for training and development may include:

- Formal Course Attendance Learning At Work
- Pursuit Of Appropriate Qualifications Coaching
- Secondments Mentoring
- Study Tours Competence Assurance
- Research Fellowships Networking
- Attendance At Conferences & Seminars Distance Learning

All of this may contribute towards continuing professional development and/or the pursuit of appropriate qualifications.

4.

Resources

We will match our commitment to training and development by providing the appropriate resources at corporate and service level.

These resources include our Training and Development Team. The team is part of Corporate Services, and works at corporate, service and individual level.

Appendix One details the role and remit of the Training and Development Team.

5.

The Processes

Our employee development strategy is driven by the Council's short term, medium term and long term plans. All of us will know exactly what our current job requires of us and what new demands are emerging. This will enable us to develop focused Individual Action Plans which will be closely linked to the Performance Management Review Process. The Action Plans will feed into the Area and Service training and development plans and thereby enabling the Areas and Services to meet their Business and Service Plan outcomes.

A vital part of this whole process will be:

- the development of plans
- the actioning of those plans and
- subsequent evaluation and review

The whole process is continuous and is driven by our Council's business needs.

6.

Priorities

We acknowledge that there will always be competing priorities and that there will need to be annual corporate priorities.

Corporate priorities will emerge from time to time but in no way take away from the need for a systematic approach to maintain our current capability. Our approach is driven by the need to seek continuous improvement and involve all of us in the achievement of our Council's results.

There will be a sustained programme of mandatory training, statutory training, and skills training, to enable us all to perform our roles.

7.

Results

This approach will bring employee development to the centre of our planning process. It will involve all of us, ensuring the delivery of the best possible service for the Highlands. It will also allow us to measure our practices against external standards such as Investors in People, Charter Mark and others where the Council considers recognition will offer benefits.

This strategy will be supported by guidelines which will include:

- The management of qualifications within the Council
- The management of secondments, study tours and research fellowships
- Training needs identification, training needs analysis and the development of training and development plans
- The annual training and development programme for the Council
- The Council's management development programme
- The development of a coaching culture within the Council

The Role and Remit of the Training and Development Team

The team is one of the critical resources of the Council, working to enable us to implement our employee development strategy. The team performs the following functions:

- a. Offering advice and guidance to help identify and analyse needs.
- b. Planning how best to meet your needs.
- c. Developing specific initiatives at Area and Service level.
- d. Facilitating the implementation of policy decisions.
- e. Designing, delivering and evaluating training and development solutions.
- f. Sourcing and managing externally presented training and development activities.
- g. Sourcing and managing our investment in traditional and vocational qualifications for all employees.
- h. Managing statutory and mandatory training.
- i. Offering employee counselling and support on training and developmental issues.
- j. Identifying new and relevant developmental possibilities.
- k. Managing our scheme for secondments, study tours and research fellowships.
- l. Providing information on training and development opportunities.
- m. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of all training and development activities.
- n. Developing a coaching culture and facilitating organisational development.
- o. Managing our management development programme.