GREAT PLACE; GREAT OPPORTUNITY; GREAT PEOPLE

WORK FORCE STRATEGY

2013 – 2015

1. **Introduction**

Workforce Planning is a continual process through which the Council aligns the needs and priorities of the organisation with those of its workforce. We do this to ensure that we can meet our organisational objectives and specific service delivery, legislative, and regulatory requirements.

The Workforce Strategy and Workforce Plan set out here reflect the refreshed strategic plan and corporate priorities adopted by the Council in 2011; they have a very different look and feel to the 2008 Council People Strategy. This is a reflection not only of changes to our strategic objectives and priorities, but also work force trends such as the changes to the retirement age and demands for more flexible work patterns.

The Council's vision is:

We want Maidstone to be a vibrant, prosperous 21st century urban and rural community at the heart of Kent, where its distinctive character is enhanced to create a safe, healthy, excellent environment with high quality education and employment where all people can realise their aspirations.

To achieve this we have three priorities, each with an over-arching ambition:

>   For Maidstone to be a decent place to live (GREAT PLACE)
>   •   To be the best place to live in Kent
>
>   For Maidstone to have a growing economy (GREAT OPPORTUNITY)
>   •   To have the highest employment rate in Kent
>
>   Corporate and Customer Excellence (GREAT PEOPLE)
>   •   IiP Gold by 2015

The specific details of what will be delivered to achieve the priorities are set out in the Strategic Plan (Appendix One) and these will influence aspects of the Workforce Strategy.

The aim of the Workforce Strategy is to ensure that the council has the most effective human capital in place to deliver its priorities now and in the future. This Workforce Strategy sets out the details of the council's current organisational culture and how we aim to build on this for the future; the national and local context and how this impacts on the workforce and identifies the key themes for development. The Workforce

Plan is the action plan that will deliver the objectives in the strategy (Appendix Two).

2. Organisational Culture

Organisational culture is about the way we work and the values we have. We are an ambitious organisation in which performance and achievement of our priorities is our primary aim and our priorities are driven by the needs of our customers. This means that it is important to ensure our workforce is engaged and clear about their role in the organisation and that we work together as One Council.

Our values set out what is important to us in the way we work, these are:

STRIVE
Superb Customer Service
Teamwork
Responsibility to deliver our promises
Integrity and high standards of Corporate Governance
Value for Money and efficiency
Equality within a diverse organisation

Our values are reinforced using our performance management tools and individuals that demonstrate the values in exceptional ways are recognised in the annual staff awards.

The council uses several mechanisms to measure culture and attitude amongst the work force; the tools that we use are the Best Councils Survey, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Stress Survey and the Investor in People (IiP) assessment. These surveys enable the council to identify changes over time and the most recent results will provide a direction for future actions.

Best Councils Survey

The last Best Councils survey was conducted in 2010 and showed an improved employee engagement score from 586.2 the 2008 survey result to 602.9 which placed us into the 'ones to watch' category which essentially means that the organisation is moving towards an accredited standard for the level of employee engagement.

The Best Councils survey measures the factors that are directly linked to employee engagement. There are eight factors, Leadership, My Manager, My Team, My Company, Personal Growth, Giving Something Back, Fair Deal and Wellbeing, The areas of improvement were in Leadership, My Company and Giving Something Back. The areas that fell from the

previous survey were My Manager, Well-being and Fair Deal; the other factors remained the same.

There were interesting trends in the detail which indicated that staff were most engaged in the first two years of their service and again after fifteen years but engagement reduced in the periods between. There were also marked differences in levels of engagement within different units within the council, highlighting the importance of line managers and one of the specific questions which could underpin some of the perceptions regarding line managers was ' managers in my organisation would rather avoid conflict than deal with issues'. Finally one very consistently held view related to the high level of anxiety felt by individuals because of the economic climate.

The survey results indicate specific areas for the Workforce strategy and plan, particularly in relation to the development of line managers.

Investors in People

The council was reassessed in March 2011 and successfully gained re-accreditation. The feedback highlight areas of good practice including the variety and frequency of corporate communications, performance appraisals well embedded into the culture and people findingthem useful and the flexibility of working practices including home working and job share were appreciated.

The assessment also highlighted areas for development including the clarity of communication during periods of change, the options for managing and motivating people with 'plateau performance', the consistency with which new objectives and target were set when changes had been implemented and the inconsistency of communications from different line managers.

The recommendations from the assessment are included in the workforce plan.

Stress at Work (HSE Survey)

This survey was conducted in 2011; unlike the other barometers of organisation culture this showed a significant decline since the previous survey in 2009. The previous survey indicated that overall the organisation did not have any real areas of concern, although there were some pockets where stress levels were higher. The recent position showed that in all of the seven factors monitored there was a decline in the opinions expressed by staff. Of most concern in this feedback is the level of bullying reported by employees; this combined with low scores on

support from managers and peers and on an understanding of the individual's own role within the organisation gives a compelling reason for culture change. One interpretation of the results of the stress survey is that the reduction in headcount and increased demand has had a significant impact on perceived stress levels. The council has developed several actions to address these concerns which are reflected in the Workforce Plan.

3. Workforce Strategy - The National Context

3.1 Political and Legal Changes

In May 2010 there was a change to government at a national level with the Conservative/ Liberal Democrat coalition. This change has inevitably brought with it a change of policy direction that has an impact on the Council's business. The coalition government has stated their top priority is cutting Britain's budget deficit, "with the main burden of deficit reduction borne by reduced spending rather than increased taxes".

The government has announced the intention to combine the various benefit systems into one Universal Credit which will see the combination of work from various national and local government departments. It is not yet clear precisely how these changes will take effect but will be phased in during the period 2013 – 2017 and will bring significant change to some of our services.

There is an indication that the government is intending to reduce the burden on employers through changes to employment legislation which will increase the length of service for unfair dismissals and introduce a charge to claimants in an effort to reduce vexatious claims.

Perhaps the greatest change to local government is that proposed by the Localism Act 2011 which seeks to place services as close to the citizen as possible and to open up opportunities for the community to deliver services themselves. This may potentially lead to significant change for local government as it becomes a facilitator of services rather than a delivery organisation. One other aspect of this facilitation is to increase the transparency of public expenditure; this necessitates the publication of all expenditure over £500 and all salary details for employees earning over £58,200. The council is also required to publish its pay policy and ensure that there is clarity regarding the mechanisms used for staff reward and remuneration.

3.2 Economic Changes

Probably the most obvious impact to the changes in the economy is the government's drive to reduce the cost of the public sector. In October 2010, the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) determined the spending budgets until 2014-15. For local government this meant a reduction in funding by an average of 28% over the four year life of this plan, with larger savings having to be achieved in the first year. Maidstone Borough Council has a programme of reviews, to consider how services are delivered and these have had an impact on the workforce, which is likely to continue during the life of this strategy.

One of the clear indications of the need to control workforce costs is the strong control over pay inflation at both national and local level, within local government as a whole there has been a wage freeze for three consecutive years. The council has local pay determination and has used the national position as a lever for change to its own pay scales and other terms and conditions.

One controversial aspect of change in the public sector has been the government's process of consultation on the changes to the pension schemes offered to public sector workers. Pension schemes have become very expensive with increased life expectancy and a reduced rate of return from investments. The consultation on change has had an impact on the industrial relations climate within the public sector and is seen by many employees as an erosion of their terms and conditions. This is likely to have an impact on the ability to recruit and retain when the economy becomes more buoyant.

A less obvious impact of the recession is the increased demand for many of the council's services from our residents. The council has seen a significant increase in the number of homelessness applications received and households assisted over the last two years. This increase in demand for service is likely to continue even once the economy begins to recover. Not only are first time buyers finding it increasingly difficult to access mortgages and affordable homes but existing mortgages are highly susceptible to even the smallest changes in interest rates. For both staff and applicants an increase in mortgage interest rates may be the tipping point for unmanageable debt and with a more buoyant housing market lenders may be more willing to repossess properties in order to realise their assets.. In the area of planning and building control the impact has been to reduce fees income as large scale planning applications decline but an increased level of small applications; this has led to diminished resources but a continued volume of work. The introduction by the Government of a local Council Tax discount scheme and planning processes have increased the burden of work for the council.

3.3   The National Work Force Strategy for Local Government

The first national work force strategy for local government was published in 2004 and has been refreshed regularly since then; the most recent version being in 2010. The key themes have remained consistent throughout this period but the emphasis has changed to reflect the economic and political developments, these are set out in summary below:

Organisational development - Addressing the workforce dimensions of organisational transformation to deliver citizen-focused and value for money services, in partnership.

Leadership development - Building visionary, ambitious and effective leadership to make the best use of political and managerial roles, in a partnership context.

Skills development - With partners, developing employees' skills and knowledge, in an innovative, high performance, multi-agency context.

Recruitment and retention - With partners, taking action to: recruit and retain the right workforce; address key future occupational skill shortages; promote jobs and careers; identify, develop and motivate talent and address diversity issues.

Pay and rewards - Implementing effective approaches to reward the workforce while controlling employment costs to reflect budget and efficiency requirements as well as new ways of working and innovative working patterns. Encouraging a total reward approach to promote high performance.

The national strategy identifies actions at all levels of local government and these have been reflected within this strategy and the plan

4.   Workforce Strategy - The Local Context

4.1   Work Force Changes and Challenges 2008 to 2012

In this section of the Workforce Strategy some of the most significant workforce changes are presented; the graphs indicate:

- An 18% headcount reduction which is considerably higher than the 8-10% reduction experienced by other Kent Districts;
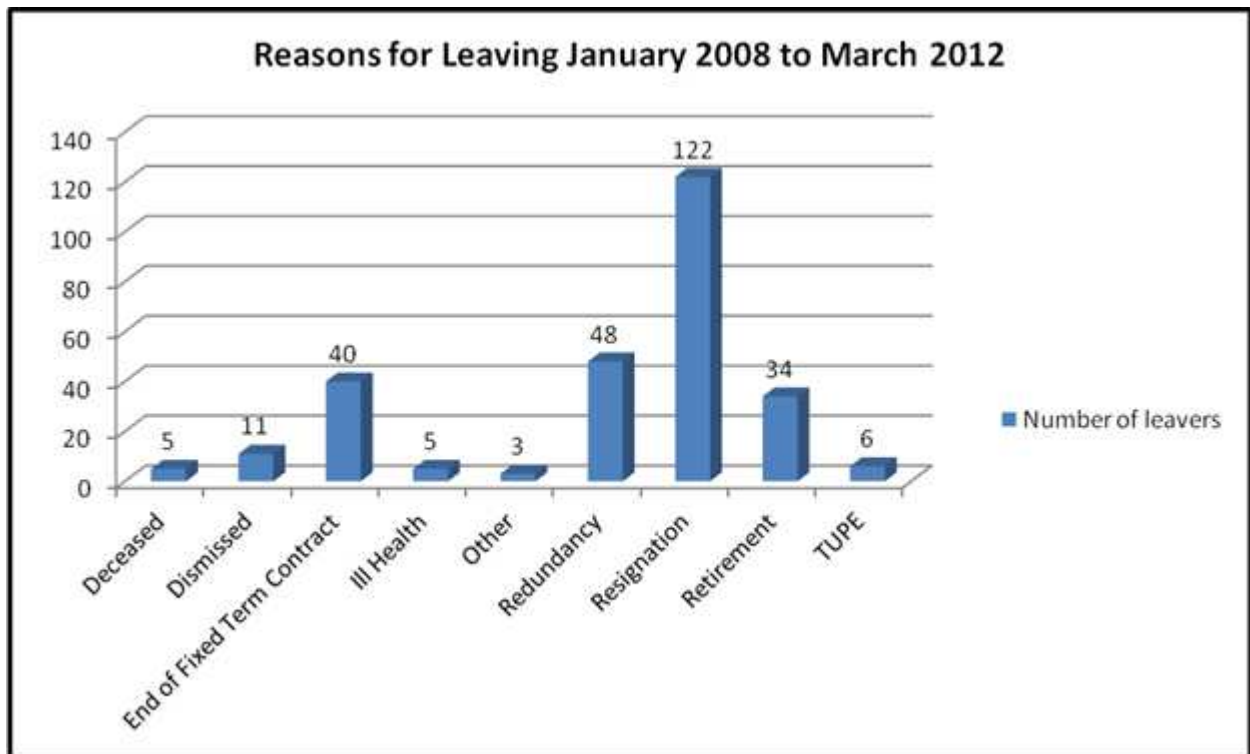- A reduction in the pay bill from £18.6 million to £14 million; and

- 17% of turnover during this period was attributable to redundancies;

These changes have only been possible because the council has established different ways of working including:

- Cessation of some lower priority services;
- Use of new technology;
- Flexible use of existing resources and multi-skilling;
- Service delivery through partnership with other councils or agencies.

Throughout this period demands for service have continued and this places a greater pressure on the teams, the Workforce Strategy recognises this as an on-going scenario.

Workforce FTE April 2008 to January 2012

Reasons for Leaving January 2008 to March 2012

A bar chart titled "Reasons for Leaving January 2008 to March 2012" showing the Number of leavers by reason:

Reason	Number of leavers
Deceased	5
Dismissed	11
End of Fixed Term Contract	40
Ill Health	5
Other	3
Redundancy	48
Resignation	122
Retirement	34
TUPE	6

One of the consistent themes throughout this period has been the management of change. The council experienced its most significant political and managerial change for a decade in this period with the move to a majority administration and a change of Chief Executive plus a reduction from three to two Directors.

Heads of Service identify the biggest current workforce challenges as:

- Managing workloads with decreased resources;
- Managing performance and sickness absence to maximise available resources and productivity;
- Managing customer expectations;
- Managing change – particularly re-structures, redundancies and the training required for new roles;
- Managing shared services across multiple cultures.

There was a shared view that this was not the same as in the past where in many areas the issue had previously been about recruiting and retaining staff in high skill shortage areas and the consequent training and induction where there was high turnover. The changes were seen as an inevitable consequence of the budget reductions and the recession and there was a strong sense that the performance culture was more strongly emphasised than in the past.

5.   The Workforce Strategy 2013 – 2015

The aim of the Workforce Strategy is to ensure that the council has the most effective human capital in place to deliver its priorities now and in the future. The Workforce Strategy has been developed taking into consideration where we are now and the council's strategic direction set out in the strategic plan. There are several assumptions in the workforce strategy which will need to be assessed during the period of the plan to check that they are still valid, these are:

- There will be no significant growth in the UK economy during this period;
- There will be no significant policy shift at either national or local level;
- Central government funding of local government will continue to shrink;
- Current proposals for Welfare Reform will be implemented.

The consequence of these assumptions mean that the Workforce Strategy has a focus on productivity, particularly 'doing more with less' whilst continuing to have ambitious aspirations for what we can achieve.

The workforce strategy is aligned to the priority areas of the national strategy for ease of reference, although the areas of focus relate to the analysis of the issues of relevance to local circumstances.

5.1   Organisation Development

Within this context of change the council will need to consider its **Future Shape** so that the organisation is designed to best suit the role and function it must deliver. As these requirements evolve the organisation structure and boundaries will need to adapt.

There are multiple factors that will impact on the environment all of which will play a part in determining what will fit the organisation best in the future.
One of the major influences has become the level of partnership work that the council is now involved with, some of these are set out below.

Mid Kent Improvement Partnership

The most well established partnership for the council is the Mid Kent Improvement Partnership (MKIP) which is set up with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council to find ways of increasing efficiency, saving cost, resilience and delivering better services to the public. This partnership has resulted in several shared

services to date and this trend is set to continue. The shared services at the beginning of 2013 are:

- Audit (MBC;TWBC;SBC with Ashford Borough Council)
- Revenues and Benefits (MBC;TWBC with SBC on systems only)
- Legal (MBC; TWBC; SBC)
- Human Resources and Payroll (MBC; SBC)
- Parking (MBC;SBC)
- Licensing (MBC; TWBC with Sevenoaks District Council)
- ICT (MBC; TWBC; SBC)

In addition there are partnerships within some of the MKIP councils that are outside of the MKIP boundary, for example Swale Borough Council has a Building Control Partnership with Gravesham and others.

There are several other services within MKIP that are in the process of implementation, for example Environmental Health and Planning administration. There are significant organisational and workforce issues emerging from the partnerships. As the MKIP has developed the initial shared services did not transfer staff to one employer and thus minimised some of the consequent employee relations issues however this resulted in continuing ambiguity and loss of management control of resources within the service. The principle for future partnerships will be to TUPE transfer to one employer giving greater control over resources but this approach will also need to be carefully thought through as there are implications for the residual support service costs in a situation where, for example all transfers go to one of the three councils leaving the other two with smaller numbers.

Kent Forum and Locality Boards

The increased emphasis on partnership working with other organisations is likely to continue.

The Locality Boards will be the forum within which agencies (for example NHS, police, and district and county councils) can focus on improving one particular area with a 'joined up' approach so that resources are maximised and duplication minimised. The council has been successful in securing funding from both the police and NHS to deliver some of these priority areas and this will have implications for recruiting and managing people with different skill sets.

Corporate Improvement Programme (CIP)

The council has a small team that work alongside of line managers to introduce change in a way that ensures services streamline and become

more efficient. The mission is to "Enable smarter services and a leaner organisation"

With this embedded into the council's culture the 'norm' is to constantly look for new and better ways of delivering services which will inevitably require organisational development. A corss-cutting team of senior managers meet quarterly to monitor the corporate improvements across the organisation.

Approaches to Service Delivery

With a greater emphasis on partnership work and diminished budgets the Cabinet has given some thought to the council's approach to service delivery. There is recognition that in some cases the council can have greater impact through the commissioning of other agencies to deliver a service rather than the direct delivery by council employees. In the process of the development of the strategic plan agreement was reached on the principles for service design:

1. Residents and businesses are the starting point for services; every service must be considered from the perspective of the citizen and delivered at the lowest possible level – a bottom-up approach.
2. We will enable service delivery and seek to commission services rather than deliver them ourselves wherever appropriate.
3. We will work with partners where there are economies of scale and to identify common solutions and shared services.
4. Services must achieve our priorities.
5. We will manage our services so no-one is disadvantaged because of where they live.
6. We will concentrate on delivering our core services, whilst recognising that there are areas we need to influence and work with others on to bring about change.
7. We will work together as one Council and with our partners to deliver change and manage expectation.

Central Government

One of the most significant changes within the period of this strategy will be the implementation of the governments 'Universal Credit' which will see the amalgamation of different employees from district councils, the Department of Work and Pensions and the HMRC into one organisation. This could affect almost 10% of the council's workforce but as yet it is unclear how this process will be implemented or the impact it will have on individuals or the organisation. There is an added complexity to this for us

as the affected group is also part of the Revenues and Benefits shared service.

Localism

The Localism Act 2011 has many facets; the areas that could have the greatest impact on the workforce are the devolution of services to communities and the transfer of assets to communities. This could result in a challenge to the current service design which would lead to a transfer to community provision resulting in TUPE transfer of employees or a reduced need for particular services.

One further area of impact of the Localism Act 2011 is the requirement for all councils to publish an annual Pay Policy Statement setting out the key terms and conditions for officers; this level of openness and transparency has an impact on the culture as staff benefits are regularly scrutinised in a public arena.

Organisation Development – Workforce Plan

The aim of this priority is to ensure that the organisation is designed to optimise its resources to enable the achievement of the vision and priorities in a manner that aligns to its values.

To respond to the issues identified and achieve our aim there are several actions and outcomes within the workforce plan.

Drive/Need	Outcome	Action
Need to review and change organisation structures	Facilitate smooth organisational change	Review the current organisation change policy and minimise difference between MKIP partners
Need to review and change organisation structures	Facilitate smooth organisational change	Establish clear processes and support mechanisms for managers and staff
Increased partnership work in MKIP	Strategic employment models agreed	Options evaluation of different employment models, agreed model applied to current and future partnerships.
Increased partnership work.	Flexibility in workforce movement.	Secondment policy developed.
Maintain and develop the organisation culture to be consistent with the values and priorities	Measure levels of employee engagement	Best Councils survey and engagement plan up-dated.
Maintain and develop the	Monitor health and well-	HSE Stress Survey.

organisation culture to be consistent with the values and priorities	being	

It is clear from the preceding narrative that the number of direct employees is likely to change during the life of the plan. In any workforce plan there will be factors that have a known quantifiable impact on employee numbers, factors identified that will have an impact but are not yet quantifiable (known unknowns) and factors that are not yet anticipated.

5.2   Leadership development

The council has given significant investment and focus to leadership development for both political and managerial leaders. During 2011 the senior managers took part in a development programme that was designed to enhance the organisation's leadership team in order to take the organisation forward into the future. One of the aspirations that arose from this development programme was to find ways to devolve decision making to the lowest level and reduce bureaucracy. This will inevitably require the development of managers to be able to respond positively to increased freedoms and flexibilities. The council will need to engage all employees to ensure that discretionary effort is maximised and it is clear that the role of the leaders and line managers are vital to success in this endeavour.

Within any political environment there is an on-going need to develop the political leadership skills within the elected member group and following the publication of the Localism Act 2011 there is a particular requirement to support them to develop the role of 'community leader'. Elections are held in every three years of four which necessitates a rolling programme of inductions for new members as it is at this point that they start to understand their role. The Cabinet have regular away days which form part of their development and there is a thorough process in place for member development at all levels which will be increasingly necessary as the requirements of members change in the future.

Employee engagement is a key to the successful future of the organisation and the approach to leadership of the organisation through the senior leadership team and line managers is fundamental to creating an engaged workforce. It is the council's ambition to be recognised at gold standard by Investors in People by 2015 and this process will be used to facilitate cultural change and engage our workforce. The role of line managers in this process will be fundamental to its success and this will require real support to develop them to deliver the requirements. The current employee engagement plan is at Appendix Three and this gives a clear programme of actions that are designed to strengthen the role of

the line manager working with their teams to deliver the council priorities, this programme is known as 'One Council'.

Health and Safety

In 2011 the council agreed the Health and Safety Strategy:

It has sensible health and safety at the heart of its business, it is integral to the culture and decision making processes of all aspects of the organisation.
The six key themes to deliver the strategy are:

- Strong **leadership** in championing the importance of, and a common-sense approach to, health and safety in the workplace;
- A **healthy** and **productive** workforce;
- **Everyone** involved in the provision of Council services trained to the appropriate levels of competency to **accept** and **deliver** their health and safety **responsibilities;**
- A strong framework of **policies** and **Safe Operating Procedures** (SOP) that underpin the vision and meet our legislative requirements;
- **Robust** and rigorous **monitoring**, **recording**, and **investigation** of health and safety matters and **communication** of best practice and lessons learnt from internal and external organisations;
- A **forward looking** approach that ensures the organisation is **flexible** and **adaptive** to meet the changing environment.

The development of the organisational culture to integrate health and safety into the way of working is one of the clear goals and this will also impact on the development of the organisation. Well–being factors have a clear link to employee engagement and as this is one of our main leadership aims the commitments made in the Health and Safety strategy and Action Plan that need to be delivered.

Leadership Development – The Workforce Plan

The aim of this priority is to ensure that the organisation has effective leadership at all levels and that the senior leaders are visible and consistent in leading the workforce to deliver on priorities.
To deliver this aim there are several actions and outcomes within the workforce plan.

Drive/Need	Outcome	Action
Senior Leadership is visible	Employees feel that senior leaders are approachable and live	Through actions in the engagement plan e.g. leading One Council

	the values	briefings
Develop line managers as leaders	Line managers know how to engage teams	Coaching framework delivered
Employees are engaged with the organisation	Employees behave in a way that is consistent with the values	See engagement action plan
Members are supported in their role as community leaders	To increase community involvement and representation	Development sessions available for Members supported by party leaders.

5.3   Skills Development

The council has a very thorough approach to the identification and support of learning and development needs for staff and members and works in partnership with other councils to ensure a cost effective delivery of requirements.

There will be an on-going need for professional and technical skill development which would be considered to be 'business as usual'. The focus of the skill development theme within the Workforce Strategy are those areas which need to particularly support the response to the changing environment in the future.

Skill Development – The Workforce Plan

The aim of this priority is to ensure that the organisation has people with the right skills now and for the future to deliver the council's visions and priorities in a manner that aligns to its values.

With the changing environment there will be a need for further development of the skills of the workforce whether these are direct employees of working in partner organisations; those identified through the workforce planning process are in the table below.

Skill area	Outcome	Target audience
Change management	Managing the increased pace of change	All line managers
Customer consultation & insight	Localism and improved resident perception	All line managers, front line staff
New technology	Improved efficiency, channel shift, social media	All staff and Members
Commercialism, business analysis &	Services may have technical expertise but	Line managers in areas of opportunity for

development	not the business skills to develop a commercial approach	selling services
Project & programme management	To secure most effective approach to high level change	Line managers
Negotiation and influencing	Increased work with partners need to influence outside of direct control	Roles interacting with partners
Coaching	Develop line managers to be able to get the best from their teams in a supportive way	Line managers
Facilitation skills	To assist in the management of change with team work	Project members in areas of workforce change
Managing 'remote' workers	Develop teams with increased partnership split site working and home working	Line managers

With the reduction in turnover and decreased levels of recruitment but increased level of redeployment the need for skill based training has increased with the need for basic induction to the work of the council decreased. The challenge is to be able to enhance the existing workforce to adapt to new ways of working and to gain the additional discretionary effort.

5.4   Recruitment and Retention

This strategy is based on the assumption that the level of economic growth will remain relatively static during the period. If the economic climate changes quickly so that there is a demand for skills within the area of the built economy (Planning and Surveying) the council will need to quickly consider the use of market supplements for retention, however it is not anticipated that this will be necessary in the life of this plan.

The reducing size of the work force has largely been due to the deletion of posts when they become vacant. This presents more of a challenge because it means that either a replacement person has to be found internally, which may well necessitate a greater level of training or processes have to be streamlined to enable the re-distribution of work. More work needs to be undertaken to look at how people can plan for moves around the business as part of the career planning processes, this

increases the need for horizontal movement between posts rather than the vertical 'promotions' that were expected in the past.

One area of direct recruitment that will continue is apprenticeships. The council has a long tradition of using trainee schemes to attract younger staff into employment and then retain them. The development of apprenticeships is consistent with one of our key priorities – Great Opportunity – which supports the growth of opportunities in the borough and apprenticeships are being encouraged in all businesses.

The age group under twenty five years is under-represented in the council and the apprenticeships help to redress this problem. However this is one of the few areas of equality imbalance that we are able to directly tackle through recruitment. In the past we have been able to target particular under-represented groups when we have recruited new staff but with a reduced number of new recruits this is more difficult.

Recruitment and Retention – The Workforce Plan

The aim of this priority is to ensure the right people, with the right skills are in the right roles to deliver the achievement of the council's vision and priorities in a manner that aligns to its values. The outcomes and actions in the Workforce Plan are set out below.

Drive/Need	Objective	Action
A representative and balanced workforce	Increase the % of employees under the age of 25	Apprenticeship programme
A flexible workforce	Internal recruitment and selection enables horizontal movement to develop careers and give employment stability	Streamline processes for internal re-deployment.
A flexible workforce	Develop a range of skills from other organisations	Secondment opportunities with other organisations encouraged and a secondment policy agreed.
Develop skills in partner organisations	Support partner organisations to develop skills	Offer secondment opportunities to partners when opportunities arise.

5.5   Pay and Reward

In 2012 the council made changes to the pay scales which addressed historical anomalies and strengthened the link of pay for performance for

senior managers. The council has had a Total Reward approach since 2007 but it is clear that some of the benefits and flexibilities that are in place are not fully utilised by managers. The main developments in this area will be to strengthen the use of the available benefits and this will include the revision of the Staff Handbook so that employees are aware of what is on offer.

With the introduction of 'High Performance' increments for grades 13 and above there will need to be robust development of the process for agreeing high performance increments where they are applicable.

With the move to the new pay scales particular attention will be upon the impact of the changes on equal pay, this work will be combined into the annual pay policy statement published by the council.

Pay and Reward – The Workforce Plan

The aim of this priority is to ensure that we are able to attract and retain talented people and that employees feel that they have a fair deal whilst maintaining cost efficient services for the public. The outcomes and actions in the Workforce Plan are set out below

Drive/Need	Outcome	Action
Compliance with Localism Act	Open and transparent regarding the council's use of resources	Publish the pay policy statement annually
Retain competitive position as an employer	Ensure that pay scales remain at the market median	Benchmark salaries – particularly for hard to fill posts.
Retain competitive position as an employer	Reinforce benefits package so that employees feel they are fairly rewarded.	Update and re-issue employee handbook
Retain competitive position as an employer	Reinforce benefits package so that employees feel they are fairly rewarded.	Health initiatives developed
Retain competitive position as an employer	Reinforce benefits package – pensions are understood and valued	Auto enrolment implemented
Retain competitive position as an employer	Staff feel valued for their contribution	Awards ceremony continued and strengthened
Retain competitive position as an employer	Staff feel valued for their contribution	Mechanisms developed to increase the ways

		for recognising staff

6. Summary

This workforce strategy sets out the context within which the council operates and identifies the key factors that will influence the workforce issues in the future. Although there is a general acknowledgement that it is not possible to give absolute certainty to the size and shape of the council in the next few years there are clear requirements for skills and flexibilities to enable the appropriate and timely response to change. The plan will be reviewed as needs emerge and as more up to date feedback is received from staff surveys, a summary of the actions are set out in Appendix Three.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY OUTCOMES

GREAT PLACE – to be the best place to live in Kent

For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

Has decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures.

- Develop sustainable communities
- Increase choice and improve the quality of life for vulnerable people
- Improve our existing homes
- Improve access to housing advice and work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in Maidstone

Is a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough.

- New waste management arrangements
- Development of commercial services –including business case for commercial waste
- Completion of "new" cleansing model – area working, deep cleaning, enforcement
- Improve perception of cleanliness in the borough
- Reduce the Council's energy consumption
- Implement Air Quality Management Area Action Plan

GREAT OPPORTUNITY – highest employment rate in Kent

For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Has a growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy.

- Creating the right planning environment
- Development of key infrastructure
- Business expansion
- Inward investment
- Development of stronger business relationships
- Tackling worklessness

Has a transport network that supports the local economy.

- Integrated transport strategy with KCC
  - Sustainable transport approach
  - Behavioural change/modal shift
  - Maidstone town centre as a regional transport hub
- Consultation February/March 2012 alongside Core Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan

- Integrated parking strategy (including detailed proposals for park and ride) – completion April 2012

GREAT PEOPLE – **Investors in People - Gold by 2015**

Corporate and Customer Excellence

Residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced;

- Long term strategy - early intervention preventative approach to tackle disadvantage
- Medium term strategy – intervention with families with multiple needs; key criterion – intergenerational worklessness
- Other intervention including community safety
- Maidstone's Community Budgets project will focus on families who have:
  - Household unemployment/NEET 16-18 year olds
  - At least one adolescent aged 13-18 experiencing difficulties (school non-attendance, exclusion, emotional/behavioural, and offending)
  - Parental need or existing involvement in adult services (Police, Probation, mental health, social services)

Has value for money council services that residents are satisfied with.

- Strategic Plan – Medium Term Financial Plan alignment
- Improvement Journey
- Customer centred organisation
- Localism and "Bigger Society"
- Future Shape of the Organisation – including structure and governance
- Workforce Strategy

Appendix Two

Engagement Plan MBC

A number of One Council Briefings have already taken place, together with a follow up workshop with HOS

Planning - CLT > SMT meetings

Delivery - Unit Managers > Core brief/Team Meetings > Staff Forum > One Council Briefings > Ad Hoc Activities

Feedback – filter back into planning phase

Date	Session	What/Topic	How	Who
July (3)	Staff Forum	Feedback from the One Council Briefing Up date from Health Champions	Share feedback and ask for feedback from the group – asked prior to the event to seek feedback from their teams and they can then bring this to the forum. Especially interested in the 'Not sure' category and what we could do to turn that to a 'smiley' Health Champions – what they did in the training, what the plans are – share some of the well being sessions planned – how can staff forum contribute	CEX or Dir Health Champs
July (9)	Unit Managers	Overview of the Engagement agenda and the journey so far – bring Unit Managers up to date How we will take it forward Get feedback Intro difference/learning styles etc	• CLT / SMT Dev work Masterclass • Why so important • Link to Best Companies • Update from One Council Briefing • Link to the key role that managers play in delivering employee engagement • Update on methodology – PET – what we intend to do and why • Living Great People - Explore difference / Learning styles activity • Place capacity building for Equality • Link to IIP feedback – inconsistencies in delivery & effectiveness	CLT DS/TE
August/Sept	Core Brief /	Update from One Council	Activity around difference Learning styles	Unit

	Team Meetings	Living Great People Understanding difference unique individuals	L&D to provide outline and tools for managers to use	Managers
September	IIP	IIP benchmark review	IIP internal review to establish work areas and specific	HR External
September	Eng	Issue of updated staff handbook and possibly the update of the Greats on the new promotional materials	Create an opportunity for staff to ask questions and raise issues whilst also sharing the updated handbook/promo materials	HR
Sept/Oct	Core Brief / Team	Team building	Unit managers to be offered materials for team building on relevant topics where they want to keep the momentum created by the learning styles activities	Unit managers HR
Sept (17-21)	Well Being	Equality sessions	Theatre & - sessions to be run for the whole council with unit managers trained as facilitators	HR Unit Managers
October (1-5)	Great People	National Customer Service Week	Games Activities http://www.csweek.com/customer_service_week.php	Contact Centre HR Unit Managers
October (2)	Staff Forum	Feedback from the Equality sessions & the Learning Styles sessions IIP review and contribution to actions Ideas for the Mental Health Awareness Day	Group activity and involvement – some pre questions to gain feedback from teams	HR Health Champs
October (10)	Well-being	Mental Health Awareness Day	Promotion of support available in Maidstone, promotional materials, activity (e.g. walk round Mote Park, Yoga)	Kate Pomphrey
October (17)	Unit Managers	Develop materials for DVD on 'Great Place' Develop materials for 'One Council' briefing IiP – review information from assessment, where are we now and what do we focus on	Before event – send info about what we will want from them; send links to good examples of type of thing we want to develop for Great Place ensuring this also includes rural areas. In session – write questions to be used for interviews by staff in the 'One Council' briefings; develop storyboards for the DVD content specifically to be used to bring to life the 'Great Place' theme and the outcomes we have to deliver. The DVD to be used	CLT/SMT HR

			in team briefs & to enable the discussion around where each team fits into this. IiP review	
November (8,9,12, 13)	One Council	Feedback from staff on the journey so far Bring Great Place to life	Where are other great places, what makes them great – how does that compare to Maidstone and how can we make that happen here Exploring what is meant by Great Place through a game show, looking at the town centre and borough and where they work well & need further development.	CLT SMT HR
October/Nov	Core Brief / Team Meetings	To follow from Great Place activities of the One Council – Team perspective	Final video presentation shared with staff Q&A Where does our team fit in to this priority What can we do to make the biggest impact	Unit Managers
November	Core Brief / Team	Great Place	Further development of the great place work Maybe a quiz from the previous months DVD or output from analysis work undertaken at One Council briefings (and by Policy team) What should we do to try to improve as a council What are we being told What would make the biggest impact	Unit Managers
November (7)	Well Being	National Stress Awareness	tbc	Kate Pomphrey
November (14)	Well Being	National Diabetes Day	Awareness and promotion Testing – to schedule at Depot as well as Maidstone House	Kate Pomphrey
December (1st week)	Ad Hoc	Great People	Leadership visibility and engagement - Back to the floor up and down Christmas preparations	CLT / SMT
December (1st Week)	Ad Hoc	Great People – Stress Survey	Gauge Impact of the strengthening of priorities and how roles fit in, bullying session etc	CLT/SMT A Barker
December	Team/ Core Brief	Great Opportunity	Through the Key hole DVD	

January (8)	Staff Forum			
January	Core Brief / Team	STRIVE – living the values	Living the Values and setting examples as to how they are demonstrated – who are good role models within the council and how can they be emulated	Unit Managers
February	Well Being	World Cancer Awareness day		
February	Core Brief / Team			
March (13)	Unit Managers			
March	Core Brief / Team			
April (16)	Staff Forum			
April	One Council	Great People	Volunteering Prep for Best Companies – how are we doing	HR
July 2013	Ad hoc	Great People	Best Companies survey	

Appendix Three

Workforce Plan 2013 - 2015

All actions in the Workforce Plan link directly to the corporate priority 'Corporate and Customer Excellence' and support the other key priorities indirectly.

Key Theme	Need / Driver	Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Organisation Development	Need to review and change organisation structures	Facilitate smooth organisational change	Review the current organisation change policy and minimise difference between MKIP partners	HHR	Dec 2012
Organisation Development	Need to review and change organisation structures	Facilitate smooth organisational change	Establish clear processes and support mechanisms for managers and staff	H&S Officer	Dec 2012 Mar 2013
Organisation Development	Increased partnership work in MKIP	Strategic employment models agreed	Options evaluation of different employment models, agreed model applied to current and future partnerships.	MKIP Programme Manager	March 2013
Organisation Development	Increased partnership work.	Flexibility in workforce movement.	Secondment policy developed.	HR Manager	July 2014
Organisation Development	Maintain and develop the organisation culture to be consistent with the values and priorities	Measure levels of employee engagement	Best Councils survey and engagement plan up-dated.	HHR	Survey July 2013
Leadership Development	Maintain and develop the organisation culture to be consistent with the values and priorities	Monitor health and well-being	HSE Stress Survey.	HHR	Dec 2012
Leadership Development	Senior Leadership is visible	Employees feel that senior leaders are approachable	Through actions in the engagement plan e.g.	HHR	Ongoing

		and live the values	leading One Council briefings		
Leadership Development	Develop line managers as leaders	Line managers know how to engage teams	Coaching framework delivered	HHR and CLT	Ongoing
Leadership Development	Employees are engaged with the organisation	Employees behave in a way that is consistent with the values	See engagement action plan	HHR and CLT	Ongoing
Leadership Development	Members are supported in their role as community leaders	To increase community involvement and representation	Development sessions available for Members supported by party leaders.	Dem Services Group Leaders	May 2013
Skills Development	To develop skills for the changing context of the organisation	See skills development plan section 5.3		HHR	Ongoing
Recruitment and retention	A representative and balanced workforce	Increase the % of employees under the age of 25	Apprenticeship programme	HHR	March 2014
Recruitment and Retention	A flexible workforce	Internal recruitment and selection enables horizontal movement to develop careers and give employment stability	Streamline processes for internal re-deployment.	HHR	March 2013
Recruitment and Retention	A flexible workforce	Develop a range of skills from other organisations	Secondment opportunities with other organisations encouraged and a secondment policy agreed.	HHR	March 2013
Recruitment and Retention	Develop skills in partner organisations	Support partner organisations to develop skills	Offer secondment opportunities to partners when opportunities arise.	Heads of Service	Ongoing
Pay and Reward	Compliance with Localism Act	Open and transparent regarding the council's use of resources	Publish the pay policy statement annually	HHR	March annually

Pay and Reward	Retain competitive position as an employer	Reinforce benefits package so that employees feel they are fairly rewarded.	Update and re-issue employee handbook	HHR	Dec 2012
Pay and Reward	Retain competitive position as an employer	Reinforce benefits package so that employees feel they are fairly rewarded.	Health initiatives developed	HHR Community Develvlopment	Ongoing
Pay and Reward	Retain competitive position as an employer	Reinforce benefits package – pensions are understood and valued	Auto enrolment implemented	HHR	Nov 2013
Pay and Reward	Retain competitive position as an employer	Staff feel valued for their contribution	Awards ceremony continued and strengthened	HHR	Feb 2013
Pay and Reward	Retain competitive position as an employer	Staff feel valued for their contribution	Mechanisms developed to increase the ways for recognising staff	HHR	ongoing