

The People Plan 2009 - 2013

The People Plan has been developed to deliver Team Northampton's approach to obtaining and improving our people with the right values, behaviours and skills to help to deliver the councils aims and objectives.

The Council's aim:

- To be recognised as one of the best councils, in terms of public service by 2013

The Council's objectives:

- Provide excellent customer service
- Engage in meaningful dialogue
- Make better use of resources
- Be a single effective team
- Focus on a better Northampton

Ultimately the People Plan is about ensuring that Northampton Borough Council is an employer of choice and thus will be able to deliver the ambition of becoming one of the best performing councils in the country and also one of the best councils to work for. Also to deliver a strategic focus that helps improve the structure and the operations of the Council.

The People Plan will support the continued development and embedding of the Council's values, vision and priorities.

The 4 strands of the People Plan are:

1. Recruitment and Retention
2. Reward and Recognition
3. Learning and Organisational Development
4. Health and Wellbeing

1. Recruitment and Retention

A key factor in the council's improvement journey is the requirement to have high quality, committed staff who are available to deliver the agenda. Our priority will be to attract and recruit quality people who share our values, beliefs and support a "Team Northampton" ethos.

Retention of high calibre employees is a priority and will be achieved through the delivery of our psychological contract.

Areas for progress to support this objective include:

- Development of 'Employer of Choice' reputation
 - Excellent recruitment processes
 - Effective advertising strategies
- Establish recruitment methods and systems that ensure timely recruitment of staff
- Continuous improvement of selection methods to ensure that the candidates support the councils values and behaviours
- Develop the workforce planning agenda to reflect key issues for the future with regard to resources
- Work with partners, taking action to:
 - address key future occupational skill shortages
 - promote jobs and careers
 - identify, develop and motivate talent
- Establish effective succession plans
- Promote apprenticeship and career roles
- Review and develop a good induction programme
- Develop organisational values and beliefs that celebrate diversity and enhance our reputation as an attractive organisation.

2. Reward and Recognition

Reward is more than pay. To have a well-motivated workforce a total reward and recognition approach must be adopted. Pay or how we pay is a substantial element of that and the biggest priority on this area must to implement the Pay and Grading project. In addition, the broader reward package will be reviewed to ensure that the organisation has an approach to reward that supports all aspects of an employees life.

Recognition is key to motivating the workforce in a challenging and ambitious period of the council's own life. Recognition starts from creating a culture of appreciation to fully embedded recognition schemes.

Areas for progress to support this objective include:

- Implementation of the Single Status agreement
- Modernising pay systems to reflect new structures, new priorities and new ways of working within an affordable umbrella
- Performance - to develop and embed a performance management culture that supports continuous improvement and deals with poor performance
- Review the appraisal system
- Review and refine the council's values and behaviours to ensure that they remain consistent with Team Northampton
- Development of non financial reward mechanisms to support creativity in the organisation
- Recognition of success, personal and team achievement
- Celebration of successes at team, directorate and council level

3 Learning and Organisational Development

For Northampton to continue on the improvement journey it will need excellent leadership and managerial skills throughout the organisation, it will also require the right 'fit for the future' workforce to achieve its strategic ambitions. The responsibility of implementing many of the objectives within this plan lies with the front line managers who are key to the success of this plan and also the whole improvement agenda.

The organisation has to move towards a more focused approach to learning and to becoming an Investor of People. Skills development is key to being an employer of choice, ensures we retain the best skills within the organisation and acts as a reward and motivational tool.

By improving the skills of our workforce the organisation will also improve the capacity of the organisation, thus improving the efficiencies and productivity.

Areas for progress to support this objective include:

- Maintaining high leadership visibility
- Development of leadership skills throughout the organisation through the Change Programme and other initiatives such as the Institute of Leadership and Management programme
- Clear communication of the council's objectives in a consistent and timely manner through the creation of an internal communications strategy
- Embed Team Northampton ethos throughout the organisation
- Ensure consistent application of HR policy and procedures across the Council by developing skills for managers in the areas of: discipline, grievance, bullying and harassment, capability and absence management
- Providing advice, coaching and support for managers in managing change and service delivery
- Develop employees' skills and knowledge through a clear and consistent approach to development
- Sign up to the Skills Pledge following successful completion of the GO Awards
- Provide change management and transformation skills to support the major service reviews

- A programme of Customer Service training across the organisation to support the key objective for the council of providing excellent customer service
- Continue the focus on professional and technical development through a clear approach to career development

We will continue to develop a learning culture across the organisation that focusses on activities that directly support service delivery and improvement.

4. Health & Wellbeing

Key to having a positive culture within the organization is having a healthy and productive workforce. The organization needs to focus on health and wellbeing and being a positive role model for the community. It is important that an attendance management culture, with life balance value, is embedded into the Team Northampton approach to work.

Areas for progress to support this objective include

- Development of proactive Occupational Health provision
- Develop improvement of the attendance culture in the organisation
- Development of supportive life balance policies
- Development and promotion of a healthy and safe working environment
- Healthy workforce framework
- Reduction of work based stress
- Develop tools, policies and procedures that are simple, flexible and effective and enable excellent service performance
- Health Promotion and Education
- Provision of regular systematic process to reduce and detect early signs of work related Health concerns

Evaluation and implementation of the People Plan

The key objectives of the plan and areas for progress will be developed into project plans that will be embedded in the service planning process. The Management Board will monitor these plans on a quarterly basis.

It is key to the success of the plan that a whole council approach to its workforce is adopted and it is not solely seen as an HR activity.

Measures of success:

- Recognition of effective HR approaches and system through external assessment including direction of travel and CAA.
- Achievement of national and regional awards for HR excellence
- Quality awards such as the IIP award
- Improvement on our Local Government equalities standard level
- Continued improvement in our staff satisfaction survey
- Improvement in national and local benchmark data [such as absence reduction, turnover statistics]
- Achievement of the skills pledge
- Establish a reputation as an “employer of choice”