Public Sector Leadership Framework

Workforce Planning
Model (Part One: Introduction)

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Contents

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1.0 Why Plan for your Workforce?

The main objective of the Council is to ensure that it has the visionary leadership, organisational flexibility and workforce capacity required to deliver outcomes through improved services, greater efficiency and better customer focus in front line services.

To help achieve that objective it is important to ensure that the right people with the right skills are in the right place at the right time and at the right cost. It is essential that each organisation considers what sort of workforce it will need to deliver effective services to communities in the future and compare this with the workforce it has now. To manage risk around this issue, it is essential to actively plan for the workforce alongside other resource planning including financial, asset and ICT.

A simple means to identify significant gaps or surpluses is to compare the current numbers, competencies, skills and other workforce features, with the envisioned future need. Although it is impossible to predict the future with complete certainty this process enables organisations to make workforce decisions now that take account of the longer-term context. Such a comprehensive and consistent approach to workforce planning identifies local issues and challenges for councils as well as those that cannot be addressed locally and which may require resolution at regional and national level through, for example, shared service or partnership provision.
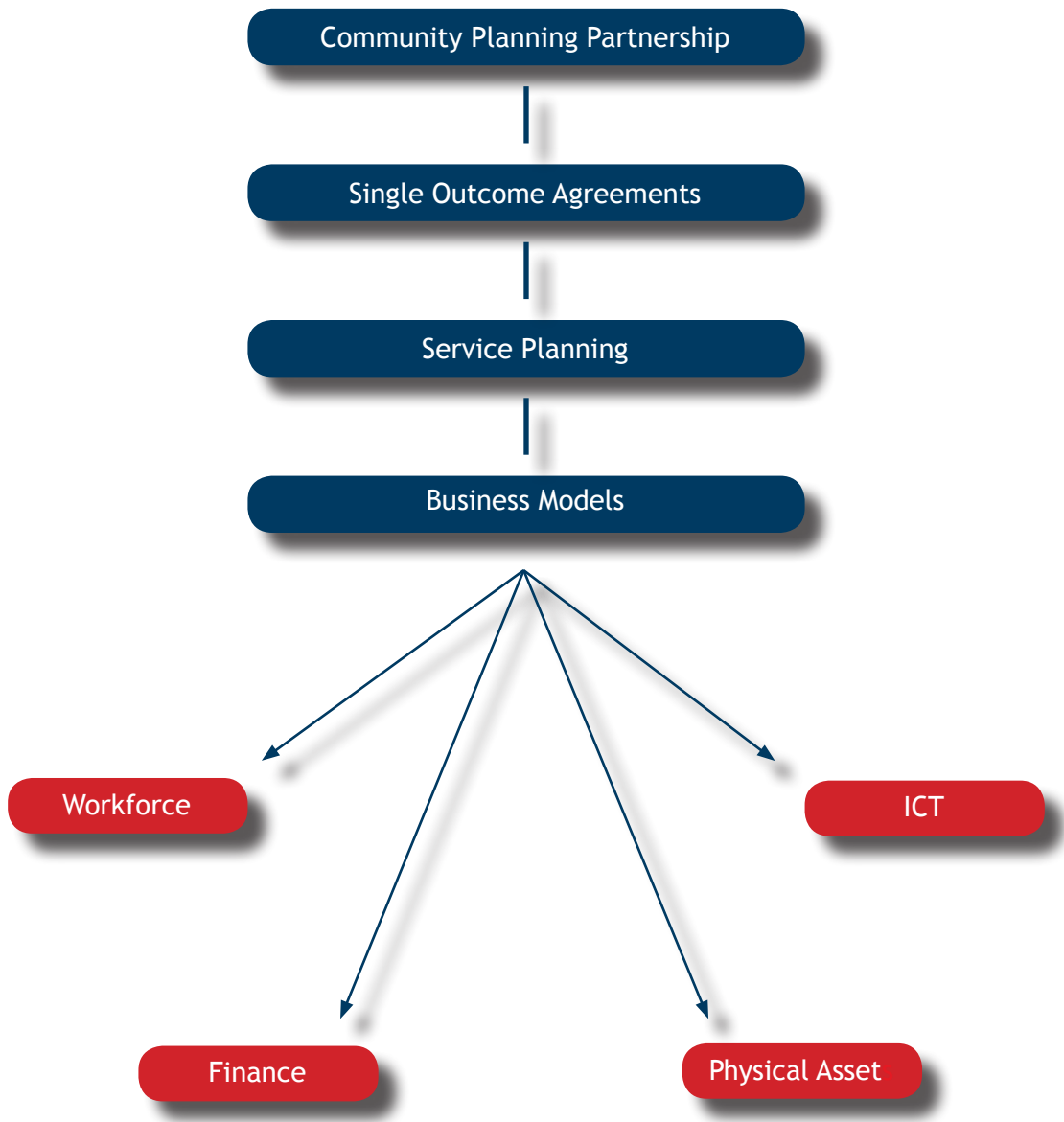
A more comprehensive definition of workforce planning is:

> *"What we need to do now to develop the workforce of the future in support of our long term business objectives."*

Workforce planning and the subsequent action plan for workforce development will help to address issues of organisational capacity and assist in the delivery or procurement of customer focussed, continuously improving and effective services to communities.
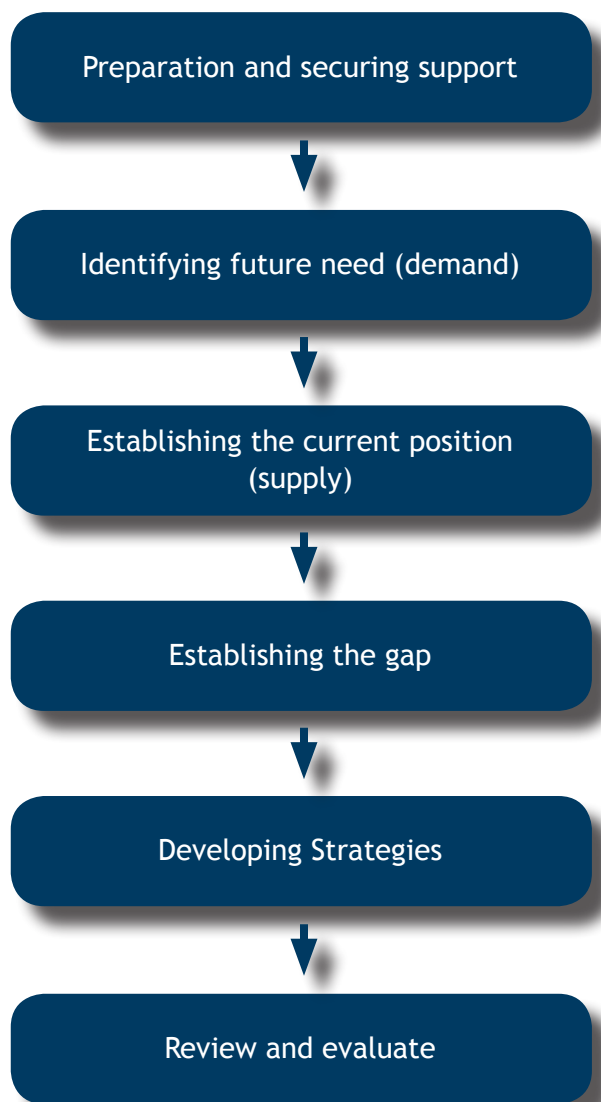
Background to the Model Process and Template

The task of planning for the workforce becomes extremely complex when it is seen as an add-on to other planning processes. For that reason a framework that enables consistent and comparable information to be produced and merged with the corporate, service planning and risk management processes is required. It is essential that workforce planning is integrated into the overall corporate planning process.

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Community Planning Partnership

Single Outcome Agreements

Service Planning

Business Models

Workforce

ICT

Finance

Physical Asset

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2.0 The Workfroce Planning Process

The process for establishing Workforce Planning:

Preparation and securing support

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Identifying future need (demand)

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Establishing the current position (supply)

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Establishing the gap

↓

Developing Strategies

↓

Review and evaluate

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Stage 1 – Preparation and Securing Support

- It is important that senior managers are signed up to planning for the workforce and provide the necessary leadership to ensure this is aligned with other planning processes and implemented effectively and consistently.

- Establish a clear understanding of the vision and what the organisation wants to achieve in the longer term, usually 3 and 5 years in the future.

- Develop the "why" message based on benefits to the service, the risks of not doing anything and the links with other strategies and plans.

- Establish how the process will be implemented and integrated with the service planning process
    - Agree the message to be communicated to managers and employees
    - Decide timescale for workforce plan – 3, 5 years.
    - Draw up an outline project plan that should indicate likely level of commitment required, timescales etc.

- Assess what internal and external information is available to enable current and future analysis of workforce and service requirements. (See checklist in Stage 2, below).

- Assess what is already known about people management issues in each service area e.g. over supply, recruitment/retention difficulties, attendance, skill requirements/shortages, levels of performance, turnover etc.

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Stage 2 – Identify Future Needs (Demand)

To ensure that the service has the right people in the right place with the right skills at the right time to deliver continuously improving services it is necessary to predict the levels, models and standards of future service delivery and the type of workforce that will be needed in the future. Although it is impossible to predict the future with any certainty, undertaking this process enables the organisation to make workforce decisions now that take account of the longer-term context.

To help make that assessment the following information will be important:

- A clear understanding of the organisational implications of the SOA.
- A clear understanding of the corporate vision and objectives.
- The likely impact of government policy e.g. efficiency review, procurement, ten year vision for local government, e-government, etc.
- The likely business models which may be adopted.
- The key objectives for each service area.
- Planned major changes/reorganisations.
- The predicted workforce profile in five/ten years.
- What initiatives are already in place to fill future skill gaps e.g. succession planning, specific training initiatives, graduate training schemes, etc.
- How effective these strategies are.
- What plans are in place to improve the level of performance and productivity.
- Future funding and any issues identified through long term financial planning.
- Areas of over supply, redeployment, recruitment and retention hotspots.
- Demographic changes which could impact on services delivery levels

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Stage 3 – Establish Current Position (Supply)

For each service area the following data is essential to enable you to complete this phase:

- Service plan
- Risk management plan
- Numbers of full-time staff employed
- Number of part-time staff employed
- Numbers of agency staff
- Staffing levels
- Grades
- Types of contracts of employment (Temporary/permanent/casual)
- Attendance
- Turnover
- Age profile –
    - 16 to 18 years
    - 18 to 24 years
    - 25 to 39 years
    - 40 to 49 years
- 50 to 59 years
- 60 and over
- Vacancies
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Overtime
- The number of staff who hold a relevant professional or vocational qualification.
- The number of staff in professional/ vocational training.
- The highest academic qualification held:
    - Below SVQ level 2
    - SVQ level 2
    - SVQ level 3
    - SVQ level 4 and above
    - Trade apprenticeship
    - Other qualifications
- Significant training needs
- Destination of leavers

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- Information you already know about people who may be leaving or starting or areas that may be at risk with the potential for redeployment /redundancy.

Other essential sources of information that will help in terms of identifying future service and skill requirements are:

- Single Outcome Agreement
- Corporate Plan
- Improvement Plan
- Financial plan
- Local social demography
- Predicted legislative changes
- Performance information indicating current level of performance in comparison with others, particularly high performing organisations. (Benchmarking)

Stage 4 – Identify the Gaps

Having established what the organisation may look like in the future (demand), including the likely business models, skills requirements and competencies that may be expected, it is necessary to compare that information with the information gathered from stage three. This will identify the gaps or surpluses between the workforce that will be needed and the supply of labour the council is likely to have. It will then be necessary to prioritise based on the relative impact on these gaps and surpluses:

Prioritisation of Gaps and Needs

Large Gap		
Small Gap		
	Low Impact	High Impact

Priority 1- High impact and large gap
Priority 2- High impact and small gap
Priority 3- Low impact and large gap
Priority 4- Low impact and small gap

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Stage 5 – Develop Workforce Strategies

Once gaps or surpluses have been identified and prioritised it will be possible to draw up plans that set out how these will be dealt with. Not all of the gaps and surpluses can be resolved locally and it may then be necessary to work with other organisations at a regional or national level to seek solutions.

The strategies should support actions, which need to take place now in order to meet future business needs. Actions may include the following:

- Downsizing and redundancy policies and action
- Process redesign and improvement
- Improvements in productivity
- Job redesign and remodelling
- Opportunities for joint delivery or shared services with other local authorities or partners.
- Enhanced role/promotion opportunities for internal employees across service boundaries particularly in roles which you wish to retain or are hard to recruit to
- Removal of recruitment inhibitors by providing greater flexibility e.g. more flexible working arrangements, cafeteria style benefits package, competitive pay levels
- Development pathways for people beginning in entry level positions
- Modern apprenticeship schemes
- Strategies to reduce the age profile of sectors of the workforce
- Alternative business models

The workforce development plan should also include performance indicators to measure progress and clearly indicate resource implications. It should also take account of other initiatives that may impact upon the plan.

Stage 6 – Review and Evaluation

For workforce planning and any accompanying workforce strategy plan to be effective it should be subject to regular review and evaluation. For effectiveness the review process should be integrated into the annual service planning process and should be updated when major initiatives or changes are planned. Any major service transformation should also contain an analysis of the people management and workforce resource implications of any proposals as well as changes to the workforce strategy plan.

3.0 Making the Process Work

For the process to work there needs to be:

- Commitment from the Council Management Team and senior Elected Members.
- An approach that is fully merged into existing corporate and service/business planning processes rather than something which is disconnected from these structures and appears to make more work.
- A willingness by managers to engage in identifying future service needs.
- A flexible approach that acknowledges that all the pieces may not be present for the "perfect" plan and that it may be necessary to improvise making best use of what is available.
- A willingness to look at a variety of different and innovative solutions to resolve any over or under supply or competency or skill gaps.

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