

STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLANNING GUIDELINES

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Strategic Workforce Planning in the Local Government Sector

Proactive management of our current and future workforce is essential to enabling the sector respond to its strategic challenges. Effectively responding to the changing needs of our organisations, the evolving environment within which we operate and to deliver the Corporate Plan, requires workforce capacity and competence.

Strategic Workforce Planning, by comprehensively reviewing the existing workforce enables the appropriate organisation and deployment of existing skills, competencies, experience and headcount. Strategic Workforce Planning also facilitates identification of gaps in capacity and capability and the measures required to fill those gaps, such as the development of/upskilling of existing staff and sourcing new talent.

Strategic Workforce Planning is a dynamic process that enables the ongoing review and reorganisation of the current workforce capacity and capability as fresh challenges materialise and service demand evolves. The process encompasses the entire organisation and focuses on the broad perspective of the needs of the organisation taken as a whole. It informs the development of the organisation's Human Resource strategies as well as being an organisational policy and guide for line managers and senior management in workforce management and development.

Strategic Framework for Workforce Planning

A Strategic Framework for Workforce Planning for the local government sector has been developed, which is a useful starting point for workforce planning within your local authority. The purpose of the Framework is to set out the shared strategic challenges and opportunities that are facing local government and to set the context for the future direction and development of our workforce. Through its strategic actions, the Framework will assist in ensuring that our people have the capacity and capability to respond to these shared challenges into the long term. The framework also provides the broad analysis of the external environment which each individual local authority can use to assess their local external and internal environments when developing their own individual strategic workforce plans.

1.2 What is Strategic Workforce Planning?

Strategic Workforce Planning is the proactive management of our current and future workforce to support the delivery of our organisation's business strategy ensuring the following are reflected:

- the changing needs of our organisation
- the evolving environment within which we operate
- available resources
- access to and development of the right skills, competencies and experience

Strategic Workforce Planning is an essential tool for anticipating possible future developments and maintaining a well-structured workforce of an appropriate size, which has the capacity to meet the changing needs of the Council in a cost-efficient manner.

It is a process which provides a structured approach to analysing current and future workforce challenges and which allows us to plan appropriate actions to address these issues and support delivery of corporate objectives. It provides a mechanism to analyse our current workforce and to estimate future workforce requirements, and by identifying any gaps, to put in place interventions and initiatives to bridge or narrow those gaps. Strategic Workforce Planning is a regular, iterative and pro-active process that aligns the workforce capacity, both current and future, with the delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives.

As well as the Corporate Plan objectives and the current operating environment, workforce planning considers service redesign processes and supports increased organisational agility in delivering services and responding in an evolving environment.

A Strategic Workforce Plan assesses the organisation at a moment in time, but the process involved also provides a framework for the continuous review of the organisation and adaption to changing circumstances.

Strategic Workforce Planning:

- is an essential tool for anticipating possible future developments and maintaining a well-structured workforce of an appropriate size, which is able to meet the changing needs of the council in a cost-efficient manner.
- is a dynamic process that supports service delivery and the process of service redesign. This includes planning for new ways of working and development of new skill sets, competencies and behaviours and the use of a range of service delivery options.
- is a continuous process, not a one-off activity and must be flexible and agile enough to adapt to changing circumstances.
- applies not just to the current workforce but anticipates future workforce requirements.
- Its purpose is linked with the organisation's key goals and objectives and is aligned with the organisation's business planning process and should be embedded into organisational culture.
- it is not done in isolation, but is integrated with other key policies and processes within the organisation.
- is evidence based and supported by workforce, organisation and other available data.

| What is involved in Strategic Workforce Planning? | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 |
| A review of: Strategic priorities. Evolving environment. Changing needs. Corporate plan. | Identification of: High-level goals. Strategic objectives. Annual business plans. | An assessment of changes in requirements from the current workforce such as roles that have significantly changed and new roles that are required or emerging. | A current and future workforce capacity and capability gap analysis. | A plan to address the current and future workforce gaps including, up-skilling and re-skilling existing staff, bringing in new talent and managing performance. |

1.3 Key outcomes of the Strategic Workforce Planning process

There are significant benefits to the process of Strategic Workforce Planning as it:

- Aligns the Council’s workforce management and workforce planning with its high-level goals, strategic objectives and annual business planning.
- Supports the analysis of-current and future workforce needs, identifying gaps and challenges and developing ways to address these.
- Encourages cross functional communications, co-operation and collaboration.
- Ensures an efficient and effective organisation, optimising the use of resources from a collective and organisation-wide perspective.
- Fosters an agile and flexible organisation and promotes innovation.
- Develops a capable and motivated workforce, well positioned to meet challenges and achieve goals.
- Improves leadership and management development, with management more supported, informed and confident in managing staff.
- Supports employee engagement, job satisfaction, retention and wellbeing.
- Fosters a positive and inclusive workplace culture.
- Identifies strategies to attract, retain and develop talent.
- Provides a clear direction for Human Resources in supporting implementation of the Council’s Strategic Workforce Plan and People Strategy and enhances engagement between Human Resources and line management across the organisation.
- Enables the DHLGH to have oversight of workforce planning across LA sector as a whole

The Strategic Workforce Planning process provides information and insight assisting the organisation to focus on challenges and opportunities and allowing space to reflect on areas such as:

- Changing citizen and customer needs and operating environment.
- Population growth and changing demographics which may drive changes to service demands and profiles/priority.
- Future and current workforce trends.

- Innovation for more effective and efficient service delivery.
- Workforce deployment, flexibility and organisational agility and resilience.
- Workforce demographics.
- Knowledge and skills gaps for present and future workforce requirements/staff development and re-skilling/upskilling as a response to strategic challenges.
- Succession planning, talent acquisition and management and people development.
- Diversity and inclusion, employee wellness, work-life balance and retention.
- The importance and impact of governance as an important driver of change.
- Future of work trends, technological change and new ways of working.

1.4 New Streamlined Sanction request process

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage is obliged to manage employment numbers in the local government sector in accordance with a delegated sanction granted to the Minister by the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform. One of the conditions attaching to the delegated sanction is the requirement for local authorities to undertake strategic workforce planning. The delegated sanction further provides that local authorities are required to seek sanction from the Department before recruiting staff outside of agreed workforce plan numbers, i.e. new posts.

The completion of strategic workforce planning by individual local authorities provides an opportunity to revisit workforce plan numbers and to agree revised numbers to reflect the outcome of the strategic workforce planning exercise. It is essential that strategic workforce plans are in place in each local authority.

While it is clear that a Strategic Workforce Planning exercise is about much more than identifying new staffing requirements, it is appropriate that this process should facilitate the submission of a composite request for additional staff to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Section 3 of this guidance document (New Streamlined Sanction Request Process) therefore outlines the steps which a local authority should take, following the conclusion of the work force planning process where additional resources are sought.

1.5 Timelines

Strategic Workforce Planning:

- considers longer term horizons, rather than focusing on short term needs and requirements.
- looks at the medium (3-5 years) and long-term (5+ years) timelines and the totality of the workforce resources.
- offers an opportunity to identify the themes, trends and requirements of the future workforce, as an alternative to concentrating on day-to-day operational or functional requirements.

It may be useful to think of operational workforce planning as relating to current workforce and budgetary cycles, whereas *strategic* workforce planning relates to longer time horizons and tries to anticipate future challenges and demands.

The drafting of Strategic Workforce Plans should occur alongside the preparation of Corporate Plans following local elections and must be submitted to the Department Housing, Local Government and Heritage within three months of the approval of the Corporate Plan.

Staffing requirements in the Strategic Workforce Plans should be reviewed every twelve to eighteen months, in line with the budget and service delivery planning processes.

1.6 Resources

These guidelines aim to provide some practical guidance to assist with the development of a Strategic Workforce Plan for your organisation and to promote a consistent approach across the local government sector. In addition to this guideline document, it is useful to consider the following resources.

- Corporate Plan – high level strategic goals and objectives
- Values, Mission and Vision of the Council
- Annual Service Delivery Plan and Targets
- Directorate Operational Plans
- Annual Financial Statements, Budget
- Public Service Agreement 2024-26
- NOAC performance indicators
- CSO data on current workforce trends
- OPS2020 Strategic Workforce Planning Guide
- Local Authority Strategic Framework for Workforce Planning
- Council Human Resources Data Reports
- Council Strategic Workforce Planning Manager Workbook
- Other relevant documentation

2. THE STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLANNING PROCESS

There are a number of steps in the Strategic Workforce Planning Process (see OPS2020 Strategic Workforce Planning Guide):

1. Consultation and Engagement
2. Explore and analyse the current internal and external operating environment
3. Understand and analyse the current workforce profile
4. Identify future workforce
5. Develop and implement the Strategic Workforce Plan
6. Suggested Review Process

The following is a suggested methodology and approach which can be adapted according to local needs and the size and scope of the project.

2.1 Consultation and Engagement

Steps to consider at this stage include:

- Engage with Senior Management Team and agree scope, timelines and resources required. Depending on the scope and size of the project, taking into account the information that should be collected as listed in the Suggested Table of Contents for Strategic Workforce Plans at **Appendix 2A**.
- Agree timelines aligned with the Corporate Planning Process. The drafting of the Strategic Workforce Plans should occur alongside the preparation of the Corporate Plan and must be submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage within three months of the approval of the Corporate Plan.
- Identify roles and responsibilities (Chief Executive, Senior Management, Line Managers, Director of Services HR, SEO HR and other HR staff) - see **Appendix 1**
- Consider a senior level cross function workforce planning team, to ensure input from each department and to increase ownership and accountability – See **Appendix 1**.
- Formulate approach and resources required in relation to engagement and participation – internal project team, workforce planning manager cohort or working group, launch, briefings, presentations, meetings, workshops, outside facilitation and/or external input (if required) etc..
- Review how information will be collected and collated and then summarised in the final Workforce Plan– see Suggested Table of Contents for Strategic Workforce Plans at **Appendix 2A** and Action Plan templates at **Appendix 2C**.
- Communicate with senior management and middle management in relation to their participation and the project plan, giving background and detail of the project and setting expectations.
- Engage at an early stage and on a continuous basis with employees and staff representatives
- Engage with unions at local level in a consultative and collaborative way ensuring all necessary information regarding current staff numbers, grades and areas be provided as early as possible. Unions have been advised at a national level that bilateral engagement on SWFP will take place at a local level.

- Ensure that the workforce plan aligns with the provisions of the Public Service Agreement (PSA) 2024-26 including outsourcing, the National Apprenticeship Plan. Timelines should be agreed at local level for these consultations and engagements
- The workforce plan should reflect the migration of water and waste water services to Uisce Eireann with effect from 1st January 2027
- Where external third parties are engaged by Local Authorities their primary role will be to support the process and supplement the direct engagement to be undertaken between local management and the trade unions

At local level, as part of the Workforce Planning process, there should be a structured approach which allows management, unions and employees at all levels to work collaboratively and proactively to enable workplace development. The development and implementation of Workforce Planning should be part of established information and consultation processes at local level. Communicating and consulting with employees facilitates employees to contribute effectively and add value. It requires meaningful participation by everybody and a strong commitment to deliver significant positive outcomes that include organizational efficiency, while at the same time improving the quality of working life.

Local authorities should utilize their existing engagement structures with unions representing local authority staff to communicate with employees and staff representatives to identify and discuss issues and concerns and to highlight the benefits of the Strategic Workforce Planning process. Engagement with trade unions should take place in an open and transparent manner and be comprehensive in line with the provisions of the PSA.

Where issues arise they will be dealt with in line with the dispute resolution process outlined in the PSA and the established industrial relations mechanisms for agreement and dispute resolution.

2.2 Explore and analyse the current internal and external operating environment

Steps to consider at this stage include:

- Engagement with management teams and Director of Services and Grade 8 and Analogous. This could be through meetings or workshops depending on the size and scope and local authorities may if they so wish utilize internal or third party facilitators to assist in this process.
- The Template Manager Workbook provides useful tools and templates for these sessions which may include the following:
 - An examination of the current operating environment, including the Strategic Priorities as outlined in the Strategic Framework for Workforce Planning.
 - Assessment of Corporate Plan objectives and their impact on future
 - Existing local and sectoral HR strategies
 - Service demand patterns and trends
 - Service delivery turnaround times and targets
 - Customer service areas, backlogs and areas of less demand
 - The Public Service Agreement 2024-26
 - NOAC performance indicators and Service delivery plan targets and objectives
 - Specific skills and competency requirements to delivery objectives and in particular any gaps

- Plans for process improvement / digital transformation / change management/review and reorganization projects and expected outcomes/impacts
 - Shared services or other alternative service delivery models
 - Department staffing structure and management issues including identification of critical posts / workforce segmentation
 - Evolving government and council policy
 - Citizen and Customer expectations on delivery models and access to services
 - Governance reviews mechanisms – Local Government Audit, NOAC etc.
- Directors of Service and Grade 8 and Analogous encouraged to engage with their own teams to explore these areas
 - Consider sharing information on current future workforce trends - new ways of working, trends in technology, artificial intelligence, social media, remote working, work life balance, climate action, employer of choice, different generational expectations from careers and work lifecycle
 - Meetings and workshop could also cover an introduction to Strategic Workforce Planning, ground rules for engagement (confidentiality, expectations, participation etc. and an overview of organisation strategy and link to divisional and departmental plans

2.3 Understand and Analyse the Current Workforce Profile

Steps to consider at this stage include:

- Human Resources to prepare Human Resources Data Reports on the current workforce see **Appendix 2B** – Recommended Data Collection for Strategic Workforce Plan, providing insight and commentary to highlight trends, patterns, risk areas. Consideration should be given to confidentiality issues relating to the Human Resources data and training/capacity building for Human Resources staff.
- Engagement with Divisional management teams, Directors of Service and SEO Grade 8 and Analogous level. This could be through meetings or workshops depending on the size and scope. The Template Manager Workbook and recommended data collection for the Strategic Workforce Plan at **Appendix 2B** provide useful tools and templates for these sessions which may include the following:
 - Demographics – age profiles, breakdown by job category, contract type
 - Turnover – joiners, leavers, turnover
 - Absence Rates
 - Retirements
 - Leave types
 - Learning and development
 - Recruitment
 - Payroll and Budget Data
 - Qualifications
 - Skills
- Directors of Service and Grade 8 and Analogous encouraged to engage with their own teams to explore these areas

2.4 Identify the Future Workforce

Steps to consider at this stage include:

- Engagement with Divisional management teams, Directors of Service and Grade 8 and Analogous level. This could be through meetings or workshops depending on the size and scope. The Strategic Framework for Workforce Planning may be useful and the Template Manager Workbook provides tools and templates for these sessions which include the following:
 - Fundamental changes occurring in the workplace
 - Workforce gaps
 - Priority skills gaps and requirements
- Summary – teams requested to summarise the action areas by workforce group to assist in drawing up Action Plans. This could include:
 - Future staffing needs
 - Current workforce issues
 - Resourcing issues, risks, gaps
 - Priority actions or options to mitigate risk
 - Comments

2.5 Develop and Implement the Strategic Workforce Plan

Steps to consider at this stage include:

- Engagement with Divisional management teams and Director of Services and Grade 8 and Analogous level to tease out issues raised at Step 2, 3 and 4 above, taking into account the information that should be collected as listed in the Suggested Table of Contents for Strategic Workforce Plans at [Appendix 2A](#). This could be through meetings or workshops depending on the size and scope.
- Common trends and cross-organisational issues identified and feedback given (HR, SMT, cross functional Workforce Planning Group)
- Draft Action Plans drafted for each Division which can contain the following:
 - Proposed strategies or initiatives
 - Priority
 - Responsibility
 - KPI and Targets
 - Timelines
 - Milestones and deliverables
 - Budget and resources
- Consideration given to the following options
 - Redesign and remodeling of jobs
 - Opportunities for joint delivery or shared services
 - Request a review of qualification and entry requirements by the department for posts that are difficult to recruit
 - Greater job flexibility e.g. more flexible working
 - Increase learning and development opportunities
 - Process redesign and improvement
 - Productivity improvement

- Re-skilling and up-skilling
- The information provided collated by the Human Resources Department across all Directorates and provided in summary to the Senior Management Team and based on information gathered, Draft Strategic Workforce Plan and Action Plans
- Development of Action Plans by Human Resources Department and development/updating of the Council's People Strategy, Learning and Strategy and Recruitment and Retention Strategy. arising out of this.
- Strategic Workforce Plan and Action Plan finalised by Chief Executive and Senior Management Team
- Engagement and communication with managers, staff and staff representatives

2.6 Suggested Review Process

To ensure the effectiveness of the Strategic Workforce Plan, it will be subject to regular review and evaluation. While the plan is aligned with the Corporate Planning cycle, it is an ongoing, iterative process which should be kept up to date through continuous engagement. The review process should reflect the initial process and include appropriate engagement with Trade unions at local level.

See **Appendix 2D** for a table including a number of review processes and reporting basis which should be considered as part of your Strategic Workforce Planning Process.

Steps to consider include:

- Include as a standing agenda item at Senior Management Team meetings to ensure plan is being monitored and that the plan is still relevant.
- Update the plan when major initiatives or changes occur or are planned.
- Integrate the review process into annual business planning
- Ongoing monitoring and oversight also involves meeting reporting requirements to the department and internal reporting regarding payroll oversight, the performance framework and possible scrutiny of internal audit, the local government auditor and the audit committee.
- Ongoing, regular engagement between Human Resources Department and senior/line managers on issues relating to the short, medium and long term plans at least annually
- Ongoing engagement with unions
- Reflection on lessons learned and improvements required to the process and approach
- Ongoing engagement and communication with employees and staff representatives on progress
- Consideration of appropriate training and development opportunities
- Agree timelines for next iteration of the process – usually aligned with the Corporate Planning cycle.

The following may assist when monitoring and evaluating:

- Business Plan targets, outcomes and performance indicators
- Business Activity levels

- Productivity levels
- Backlogs and progress made in eliminating these
- Planned actions and strategies and progress with the implementation of these
- Individual staff objectives and proposed outcomes
- Proposed system and organisational changes and progress with these
- Monitoring of actual costs and benefits against business plan estimates
- Qualitative information and performance indicators in such areas as organisational culture, values, communication and change and staff views regarding these
- Did your workforce projects achieve their objectives?
- Reflect on learning that has occurred. What worked well? What could be improved?
- Were there any unexpected outcomes?
- Were the actions and strategies completed and do they fulfil the goals?
- Did the action plan accomplish what your organisation needed?
- Have the conditions changed so that the strategies and actions need to be modified?
- Are your organisation's workforce planning assumptions still valid?
- Do the workforce gaps still exist?
- Are there new emerging specialisms which should be considered?
- Are the knowledge and skills of employees being developed quickly enough to become effective?
- Do new recruits have the needed knowledge, skills and level of expertise?
- Have all risks identified been mitigated?

Staffing requirements in the Strategic Workforce Plans should be reviewed every twelve to eighteen months, in line with the budget and service delivery planning processes.

Should disagreements arise locally which cannot be resolved, parties will abide by the PSA dispute resolution process.

3. New Streamlined Sanction Request Process

3.1 Background

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage is obliged to manage employment numbers in the local government sector in accordance with a delegated sanction granted to the Minister by the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform. One of the conditions attaching to the delegated sanction is the requirement for local authorities to undertake strategic workforce planning. The delegated sanction further provides that local authorities are required to seek sanction from the Department before recruiting staff outside of agreed workforce plan numbers, i.e. new posts.

As outlined above, the drafting of Strategic Workforce Plans should occur alongside the preparation of Corporate Plans and the local authority's Strategic Workforce Plan must be submitted to the Department within three months of the approval of the Corporate Plan - see **Appendix 2A** for the Table of Contents for Strategic Workforce Plans. Strategic Workforce Plans should be reviewed every twelve to eighteen months. Strategic Workforce Plans submitted to the Department and approved prior to June 2024 remain valid but may be reviewed during the next 5-year cycle. The strategic workforce planning process will ultimately align with the development of Corporate Plans.

3.2 Staff Sanction Requests- a more strategic approach

As part of the strategic workforce planning exercise, workforce gaps and skills gaps may be identified. While any such additional posts will have been considered during the development of the Strategic Workforce Plan, this does not negate the requirement to seek sanction from the Department for all **new**¹ posts in order to comply with the delegated sanction.

The completion of Strategic Workforce Plans by each local authority, as informed by the Strategic Framework for Workforce Planning, will enable the Department to adopt a more strategic approach to the processing of sanction requests for new posts. It is intended that the strategic workforce planning process and the staff sanction request process will become entirely interlinked and dependent on each other. This will create efficiencies for both the Department and local authorities.

Taking account of the fact that the local authority has completed a Strategic Workforce Plan, the Department will accept a combined staffing sanction request for all **new** posts that have a direct link to the Strategic Workforce Plan. Local authorities should use the Template Strategic Workforce Plan Requirements for New Posts – Local Authority provided at **Appendix 3** to group such requests and submit them to the Department.

The Department will prioritise these requests, carry out its consideration of the requests in line with current practice, including direct engagement with local authorities and other stakeholders as needed. Where the Department approves post, the Department will issue a combined sanction insofar as is possible for these posts.

¹ Current sanctioning arrangements for existing posts will continue to apply.

3.3 Additional Staff Sanction Requests outside of a Work Force Plan

Revised agreed workforce plan numbers may only be revisited if and when the Strategic Workforce Plan is reviewed.

In the event that a local authority subsequently identifies the need for additional new posts not considered in the Strategic Workforce Plan, the Department will only accept a staffing sanction request in exceptional circumstances such as for example where new work has been assigned to the local authority as a national priority by government. Otherwise, the local authority is expected to operate with the agreed revised workforce plan numbers.

Where a local authority has not completed a strategic workforce plan, the Department reserves the right not to accept staffing sanction requests for new posts.

Appendix 1: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The key roles required for the development of the Strategic Workforce Plan and their suggested responsibilities are outlined in the table below:

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---|
| Senior Management | Project Owner | Chief Executive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully accountable for workforce planning Engages the leadership of the senior management team Reviews output from the Strategic Workforce Planning Process and agrees and signs off on the final plan Ongoing review of Strategic Workforce Plan and Action Plans |
| | Project Sponsor | Director of Corporate/HR | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads the strategic workforce planning process Engages the leadership of the senior management team Leads and participates in workshops as appropriate Reviews output from the process and ensures alignment of HR strategies (people strategy, L&D strategy, recruitment and retention strategies) Drafts the output into a Strategic Workforce Plan for review by Chief Executive and Senior Management Team Ongoing review of Strategic Workforce Plan and Action Plans |
| | Project Board | Senior Management Team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides high level direction, decision making and support Approves communication and engagement strategies Leads the environmental scanning Leads and participates in workshops as appropriate Ongoing review of Strategic Workforce Plan and Action Plans |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Human Resources | Project Manager/Lead | HR Manager (SEO HR) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall project management • Profiles the current workforce – HR Data Reports, insights and commentary • Contributes to and participates in environmental scanning • Researches and provides information on current and future work place trends • Leads and participates in workshops as appropriate • Manages management, employee and trade union communications and engagement |
| | Project Team | Recruitment Workforce Planning Finance/Payroll Learning and Development Relevant person from Corporate Services Data Analyst | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR data gathering, verification and analysis • Collates HR data and prepares and provides reports to management teams • Provides relevant CSO data on workforce trends • Provides information on future workforce trends • Provides financial projections and budgets relevant to payroll • Organises and facilitates workshops • Participates in workshops • Provides secretariate and administrative support for workshops (particularly useful to capture all information from workshops) • Ensure alignment with Corporate Plan, Annual Service Delivery Plan and Business Plans • Co-ordinate data gathering and data analysis |
| Cross functional Workforce Planning Group | Representatives from different Divisions or Departments or sections | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as local champions for the process • Increase ownership and accountability. • Provide operation input to project plan and ensure each department is involved and participates • Input to design of templates, |

| | | | |
|---------------|--|---|--|
| | | | <p>reports, meeting and workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an ongoing source of expertise and commitment to the plan |
| Line Managers | | <p>Directors of Service</p> <p>Heads of Finance</p> <p>Head of IS</p> <p>Senior Managers</p> <p>Middle Managers</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translates business strategy into the activities that drive workforce planning needs • Identifies internal and external challenges for the workforce plan • Determines the future workforce skills and numbers requirement • Works closely with SWP Project Team and SMT to develop workforce plan to meet business objectives • Prepares for and participates in workshops • Contributes to and participates in environmental scanning • Provides information on trends within own work area • Works closely with WFP team and SMT to develop workforce plan to meet business objectives • Prepares for and participates in workshop • Is open to and facilitates change • Leads communications on the Strategic Workforce Plan and the process with their managers and staff |

Appendix 2A - Suggested Table of Contents for Strategic Workforce Plans

1. Introduction

- This section should include a reference to the Corporate Plan Goals and existing local and sectoral HR strategies, including the Strategic Framework for Workforce Planning and an outline of the current operating environment.

2. Workforce Profile

- This section should capture the data outlined in Appendix 2B over a five-year period and an assessment of issues and challenges identified.

3. Consultation and Engagement

- This section should outline the consultation process that took place to collect data and information as part of preparing the Strategic Workforce Plan. The results and key findings from this process should be stated.

4. Action Plan – workforce gaps, challenges and strategies

- This section should outline expected future staffing requirements as outlined in the Action Plan in Appendix 2C. An analysis should be done of skills and L&D requirements in each directorate with reference to Corporate Plan priorities. Assignment of existing resources, recruitment strategies and pathways to employment and progression should also be identified.

5. Monitoring and Review

- This section should capture the monitoring and review process and reporting process outlined in Appendix 2D.

Appendix 2B Recommended data collection for Strategic Workforce Plans

| Data Set | Description | Comments |
|---|---|--|
| Total Staff numbers by headcount | Number of staff in directorate/department | To gather current position |
| Staff numbers by FTE | Number of Staff full time equivalents | To gather current position |
| Organigram | Copy of current organigram and any proposed change | To understand organizational structure |
| Contract types | Number of staff on various contract types e.g. permanent/temporary, full-time/part-time | To gather current position |
| Staff Turnover | Employee age & years' service Turnover figures | To understand trends for turnover in terms of age and service |
| | Retirement eligibility | To understand predictions for possible future retirements |
| | Exits excluding retirements | Who exited the organisation and destinations (promotions, private sector etc.) |
| Geographic location | If staff spread across a number of offices | To help inform current position and future planning |
| Remote/in office/hybrid/blended working | | To help inform current position and future planning |
| Gender balance | Gender breakdown Gender Pay Gap information | To provide guidance for actions to build greater gender balance |
| New hires | Analysis of new hires | To understand resource pool |
| Flexible working arrangements | FTE vs Headcount | To inform the People Strategy and benchmark current position |
| Career progression | Number of internal promotions and transfers | To assist succession planning and inform the L&D strategy |
| Absence rate | Number of long and short-term absences Lost time rates | To understand trends and link to policies and people strategies |
| Learning and Development | Skills Register | To assess current talent pool skills and competencies |
| | Educational qualifications on entry and achieved post entry through refund of fees | To assess current talent pool skills and competencies |
| | Job specific training | |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| | Developmental training | |
| Equality, Diversity and Inclusion | Number and proportion of staff that fall within these categories | To gather current position and trends. |
| Performance Management | Participation rate Performance Improvement Plans | To assist with succession planning and L&D planning |
| Staff Costs | Average cost by grade Total Payroll Costs | To support budget requirements |
| Staff Survey | Survey reports | To measure staff engagement, opportunities etc. |

Note - requirements in relation to data provision may evolve as reporting systems allow.

Appendix 2C Suggested format of Draft Action Plans

The following style template may be used to outline the local authority's chosen strategies and initiatives (in order of priority) and the responsibilities, key performance indicators, timeline, milestones and resource requirements. The Action Plan should be tangible and realistic.

| Strategies & Initiatives | Priority | Responsibilities | KPI & Target | Timeline | Milestones & Deliverables | Budget & Resource Requirements |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Appendix 2D

Suggested review process and reporting basis

| Implementation and review forum | Action | Reporting basis |
|---|--|--|
| Management Team | Quarterly update by HR Manager | Standing Item on Agenda to ensure plan is being monitored and plan is still relevant |
| Ongoing liaison between HR and Finance Department | Monitoring of pay bill and staff numbers and projected exits | Ensuring adherence to projected workforce planning figures |
| Budgetary process | Participation in meetings by HR manager | Oversight of budgetary expenditure including pay bill to give effects to actions of SWFP |
| WFP returns to DHLGH | Workforce Planning iterations to DHLGH Completion of updates as requested | Oversight by DHLGH |

Section 1 – Local Authority Profile

Name of Local Authority:

Address of Local Authority:

HR Manager & contact details:

Other internal stakeholders contact details:

Sign off date:

SWFP* in place:

Yes

SWFP submitted to the Department:

Yes

Review date(s) of SWFP:

* Please note requests for new posts will not be accepted unless they have been considered as part of the SWFP

Section 2 - Resourcing

Summary of additional posts identified in the Strategic Workforce Plan (Add rows as required for additional grades)

| New Post | | | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|------------------|-------|
| Directorate | Grade | Title | Ref. No. of Post | Total |
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Section 3 – Staffing Sanction Request form (Form SSRSWFP1) for new posts arising from SWFP

Please complete the following form in respect of all new posts identified as a result of the SWFP process. It is possible to group posts in the one application form **but only** where they are the same grade and same directorate.

| Local Authority Staffing Sanction Request Application Form (Form SSRSWFP1) – New SWFP Posts only (Please note: The form must be fully completed to allow the form to be processed – an incomplete form will not be processed and will be returned to the local authority) | |
|--|--|
| 1. Contractual Arrangement | |
| Local Authority Name (Employer) | |
| Title of Post for which sanction is sought | |
| Grade, Salary level and Ref. No. of Post | GRADE: |
| | SALARY: |
| | REFERENCE NO. OF POST: |
| Declared Qualifications to be used | DECLARED QUALIFICATIONS² TO BE USED: |
| New Post (i.e. additional post not included in agreed WFP numbers) | YES <input type="checkbox"/> |
| What contractual arrangement is requested (please tick box) | PERMANENT: <input type="checkbox"/> ACTING UP ³ : <input type="checkbox"/> CONTRACT: <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed duration of contract: _____ OTHER: <input type="checkbox"/> Please supply details: _____ |
| What terms are requested for the post (please tick box) | FULL TIME: <input type="checkbox"/> PART-TIME: <input type="checkbox"/> |

² Qualifications as declared by the Minister under section 160 of the Local Government Act 2001

³ Circular 08/2012 outlines the very limited circumstances in which acting-up arrangements are permitted

| 2. Organisation of Work – Strategic Workforce Plan | |
|--|---|
| <p>This post will have been considered under the Strategic Workforce plan.</p> <p>Please provide a narrative that links the post to the Strategic Workforce Plan and include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What reallocation of work, if any, has been undertaken? • What redeployment of staff, if any, has been undertaken? • What posts, if any, have been ceased or suppressed? • Where in the organisation chart will this new post be located? | |
| <p>Is the proposed post project based?</p> | <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(if YES, please give details of the project name, type of scheme and duration of scheme)</p> |
| <p>What is the justification for filling of the role?</p> <p>Does the post directly contribute to meeting a Statutory or Health & Safety Obligation?</p> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Please explain why existing staff cannot be redeployed to perform the role? (see suggested rationale below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of Post • Degree of Specialisation (please identify specialist skills req'd) • Other (please state) | |
| <p>Please provide rationale as to why the work cannot be performed on a shared basis</p> <p>e.g. through sharing posts part time with another local authority</p> <p>e.g. through performing the work on a shared service basis with other local authorities</p> | |

| 3. Resource Management | |
|---|--------------|
| <p>How will the post be funded?</p> <p>Please attach supporting documentation for non-LA funding sources</p> <p>If there are multiple sources of funding, please provide % breakdown of each</p> <p>* Documentary proof of funding from non-LA Sources must be submitted with this request in order for it to be processed. Failure to do so will result in the SSR being returned to the local authority.</p> | |
| <p>Please state the extent to which revenue is increased and costs reduced by filling the post</p> <p>(e.g. revenue generation etc)</p> | |
| <p>Please provide any additional supporting information you consider appropriate (including relevant documentation)</p> | |
| <p>Please satisfy yourself that you have included all the available details, and then sign and date the form.</p> | |
| <p>Signature / Position:</p> | <p>Date:</p> |
| <p>This form should be forwarded by email to: lgpersonnel@housing.gov.ie Local Government Human Resources Department of the Housing, Local Government and Heritage Newtown Road Wexford Y35 AP90</p> | |