

# Workforce Planning Framework

A definition of Workforce Planning is

*'having the right people in the right place, with the right skills at the right time, to deliver the immediate, medium and long term objectives of the organisation'.*

It is also used to ensure that knowledge, skills and behaviours are deployed appropriately. Essentially, it is about analysing the current workforce and then extending that analysis to identify the future skills and competencies required to deliver new and improved services.

Workforce planning is about the identification of needs, and talent management and succession planning are about the development of individuals and the wider workforce, in order to be able to meet those identified needs.

# Introduction

Workforce planning has been undertaken by the Council in various forms for a number of years. Through the formal introduction of a workforce planning framework, managers will be provided with a tool to ensure the process becomes formalised and embedded within the service planning culture of the organisation along with the need to ensure succession planning and progression is in place. It will also support progress against the Council's key priority of having a workforce that reflects the community.

It is recognised that parts of the Council are already engaged in formal workforce planning and in some cases, multi-agency workforce strategies (e.g. Children's Workforce Strategy) are in place. This document is a simple framework, consisting of an eight step plan. The plan provides managers with a range of activities to undertake, which will help them to identify people requirements through the analysis of current data, and to identify future needs which are aligned to service delivery.

Workforce planning and succession planning are essentially about meeting current and future demands on our workforce. Managers need to identify what that future need could be and what skills will be required to meet this. In order to do this, managers should analyse current and future need and adopt an inclusive approach that encompasses progression (using the PDR process) i.e. identify individuals who have the right potential and who can be developed in order to meet future demand.

The demographic of the workforce is likely to change over time, with specific specialist sectors experiencing skills shortages. It is vital for the Council to put in place mechanisms and systems to ensure we are fit for purpose at all times.

Each directorate and service area will have a need to undertake some form of workforce planning, but the nature and extent to which the plans are formulated will differ. Utilising this framework will enable managers to facilitate formalised planning for the immediate, medium and long term future of services.

For the Council this means incorporating these practices into a formulated approach when planning how we can deliver services and assessing our workforce capability i.e. linking to the service / team planning process. In doing so this enables managers to identify requirements and address development needs of the workforce.

Workforce planning is not something undertaken in isolation e.g. by HR. Employee data may derive from HR & WD, but it is managers who have the required understanding and expertise of their functions, service areas and their customers, as well as knowing the current capability and characteristics of their employees. However, managers should work closely with their HR Business Partners relating to workforce issues at all levels to ensure a consistent approach.

## Workforce Planning

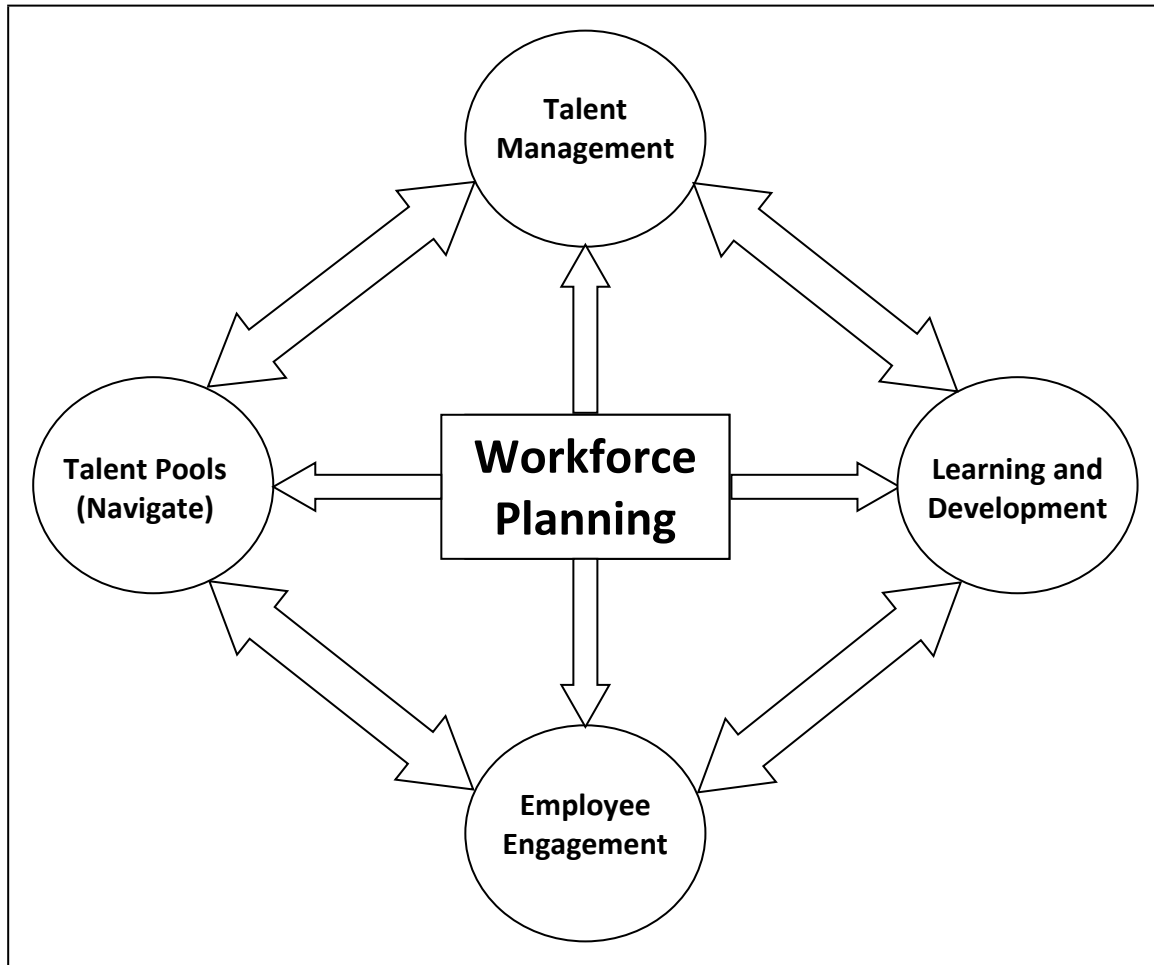
There are four main drivers for workforce planning:

- **Political and policy change** – central and local directives may change the way we deliver services; as a result we will need to adjust the way we work and plan our workforce accordingly
- **Labour Market** – trends in the labour markets may create challenges to our ability to employ in some hard to recruit areas
- **Demographic and social change** – demographic changes e.g. an ageing workforce will bring challenges in recruiting in certain specialist areas, or highlight the need for attention to be paid to succession planning
- **Technological change** – changes in service delivery and changes in the way we work and the different skills required in the Council

Managers should carry out the planning process at least once a year as part of their service and team planning. The details of the activity should be written into the team plan explaining the reasons for the conclusions together with any actions required to change or re-shape the workforce. Managers should use this tool to develop their workforce and not simply as a paper exercise.

To enable managers to engage in workforce planning the Council has introduced a simple workforce planning model which describes the steps to take to create an effective workforce plan. As with all frameworks, this should not sit in isolation - managers will need to take a holistic approach to the planning process.

# Tower Hamlets Workforce Planning Model



The eight sequential steps detailed below will enable managers to effectively plan their workforce needs. By undertaking each step, managers will be able to interpret and address their workforce needs. If managers start the process at different stages they will still need to have an understanding of the steps missed out.

A fundamental part of this process is the need to manage the talent and potential within the organisation when planning current and future workforce requirements. It is almost too easy to opt for external recruitment when a vacancy arises. Through good workforce planning, managers should start to identify potential leaders or roles where progression routes and career planning allow for capacity building and increased workforce capability.

To enable managers to do this there are a number of internal documents:

- People Strategy – provides a high level view of our vision and priorities in terms of people management
- Recruitment & Selection Policy – provides guide on recruitment processes
- Talent Management Framework – sets out seven core principles to adopt in order to embed and manage talent effectively
- Employee engagement framework – sets out what the organisation and managers should be doing to engage the workforce
- PDR scheme – allows managers and individuals to have a two way discussion regarding performance and development

To enable managers to start this planning process they should work closely with their HR Business Partners to analyse the workforce information which will support the planning process.

# Tower Hamlets Eight Steps to Workforce Planning

## Understanding the Council, its priority and direction

Ensuring that the manager is fully aware of the current context that the service is operating in (including local and national directives), what the priorities are and in particular is aware of the demand and proposed changes

## Analyse the Workforce

Using available management information, examine relevant aspects of the current workforce (age, gender, ethnicity etc), and assess key strengths any areas of development, and the likely impact to the current workforce in the short, medium and long term

## Identifying skills gap

Looking at the workforce, what skills do employees currently have, what potential gaps in skills are there in the short, medium and long term (due to staff turnover and retirement etc). Identify who has potential to develop those skills and ensure service delivery continues

## Assessing future demand

What is the likelihood that future demand in the service will increase/decrease and by how much, or that the nature of the demand will change and what potential impact will that have on your workforce?

## Succession Planning

Using the data collected assessing future demand, managers need to measure against current skills and job roles within the team. Through succession planning managers can identify potential talent and develop individuals in the longer term.

## Develop Service and Team Plans

Discuss the annual service and team plan with everyone involved and incorporate findings of workforce planning exercise, making clear how the team and service will realign it self with the demands placed on it

## PDR – Personal Learning and Development Plans

Employees who have potential to fill gaps in future skills and employment should be given the opportunity to develop by ensuring their PDR is completed with clear plans detailing how they will reach agreed targets

## Recruitment and Retention

As an organisation, it is vital to retain our best employees and to be able to recruit new employees with the right skills and attitudes. When considering how to fill vacancies, it is important to ensure that service area needs are assessed and that all internal options are considered (e.g. talent pool, secondments, job redesign – further guidance is contained in the Council’s recruitment policy) before offering opportunities externally

# Potential Outcomes

Managers can measure the success of embedding workforce planning processes as part of the performance management cycle potential outcomes could be:

- Greater achievement of strategic goals
- Excellent performance ratings
- Improved results through staff satisfaction surveys
- Improvement of performance against WFTRC targets
- An increase in internal recruitment

As an organisation we are looking to build upon our high performing workforce in order to increase skills, capability, knowledge and engagement.