

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Corporate Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>2 July 2008</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Corporate Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>The Council's People Strategy - 'Connecting through People'</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise the Committee of the development of the Council's People Strategy, 'Connecting through People'.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the Council's People Strategy be referred to the Executive Committee for approval; and
- (2) that the outcome of the workforce monitoring exercise be noted.

## 3. Background

3.1. South Lanarkshire Council is committed to improving the quality of life for everyone and our people are the key to delivering this vision. The People Strategy outlines how we deliver services through our employees and demonstrates the links to the values of Connect. The Strategy is attached as Appendix 1.

3.2. The Council has a wide range of personnel policies, processes and initiatives which demonstrate good practice and the forward thinking approach adopted by the authority. In reviewing these policies, processes and initiatives, we felt that it was imperative that they reflected the Council values and demonstrated how we would support our people over the life of Connect.

3.3. The strategy outlines 'Where we are now', 'What we want to achieve' and 'What we need to do' against each of the values, and the actions will be incorporated into Resource and Service Plans over the period. The majority of these actions are contained within the Corporate Resources, Personnel Services Action Plan.

3.4. As part of the People Strategy, it was identified that an analysis of the population of South Lanarkshire and our workforce would provide us with the data required to assess any implications arising from projected changes to the demographics. The Central Research Unit delivered a presentation to the Personnel Managers and outlined both the current population statistics and the projected figures to 2031. Details of the current workforce were extracted from the Oracle Human Resources Management System and analysed according to age band.

#### 4. Current Position – workforce analysis

- 4.1. The table below details the makeup of South Lanarkshire Council's permanent and temporary workforce as at 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008. The breakdown shows that slightly less than 70% are between 16 and 50 years old, 30% are between the ages of 51 and 70 with the remaining employees falling into the 70+ age group.

Age	Gender	Community	Corporate	Education	Enterprise	Finance & IT	HAT	Social Work	Total
16-20	Male	68	2	9	14	1	54	5	153
	Female	17	10	25	13	8	31	43	147
21-30	Male	284	13	191	63	14	148	29	742
	Female	138	42	813	58	27	199	223	1500
31-40	Male	316	13	164	98	40	217	80	928
	Female	389	53	858	52	59	246	497	2154
41-50	Male	469	16	165	166	43	326	132	1317
	Female	627	55	1198	59	43	300	885	3167
51-60	Male	366	14	212	121	20	280	143	1156
	Female	554	21	846	27	29	202	715	2394
61-70	Male	143	5	54	22	3	50	27	304
	Female	165	7	129	4	0	30	162	497
70+	Male	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
	Female	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>		3549	251	4666	697	287	2083	2941	14474

#### 5. Future demands

- 5.1. Demographic research is undertaken and published by the General Registrar of Scotland (GROS) on a bi-annual basis. Using this information, the Council's Central Research Unit were able to provide a level of reassurance with regard to the available workforce in coming years. Overall, despite a reduction in the number of children being born, an increase in the number of housing developments is projected to bring a corresponding increase in the number of people of working age to the South Lanarkshire area.
- 5.2. There will be a significant increase in the number of people over the age of 65 and this is projected to be as much as 65% over the next 25 years. The population is projected to increase from 49,000 in 2006 to 83,000 in 2031. The impact on services for older people has been considered by the Resources and, in particular, Social Work, Community and South Lanarkshire Leisure have taken steps to address these issues through their Resource and Service Plans and are linked to the priorities of Connect.
- 5.3. Each Personnel Manager has been tasked with reviewing requirements for their respective Resource to ensure that any hotspots are identified at an early stage. They will use the workforce analysis and the projected demographics to inform decisions and identify potential skills shortages. Corporate Personnel and the Resource Personnel teams will work together to ensure the Council has the skills, experience and personnel in place to deliver services relevant to the changing population.
- 5.4 This exercise will be repeated annually via the Personnel Managers, with a subsequent report being submitted to the Corporate Resources Committee.

## **6. Employee Implications**

- 6.1. The associated employee implications are minimal as the Council has already taken steps to expand the available options to encourage more people to remain in work, such as offering a wide range of flexible working arrangements, the introduction of the flexible retirement policy, and increasing the Council's normal retirement age to 70 years thereby allowing employees to work on should they choose to do so.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1. None.

## **8. Other Implications**

- 8.1. None.

## **9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 9.1. An equality impact assessment has been carried out on the recommendations contained in this report and, where issues were identified, remedial action has been taken. The assessment is that the proposals do not have any adverse impact on any part of the community covered by equalities legislation, or on community relations, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council website.
- 9.2. Consultation has taken place with the Resources, through the Personnel Managers, and with the Trades Union.

**Robert McIlwain**  
**Executive Director (Corporate Resources)**

9 June 2008

## **Link(s) to Council Objectives**

- ◆ Accountable, effective and efficient
- ◆ Excellent employer

## **Previous References**

- ◆ None

## **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ None

## **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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**Corporate Resources  
Personnel Services**

## **Connecting through people**

### **1. Foreword by the Chief Executive**

In South Lanarkshire Council, we are committed to working together to improve the quality of life for everyone. Our People are the key in terms of delivering this vision. There is a much-used saying "People are our most valuable asset", but the reality is, if we do not have the right people, with the right skills, available to deliver a service at the right time then our delivery will not match our vision.

This Strategy outlines how we deliver services through our employees and demonstrates the links to the values of Connect, the Council Plan. There is a clear vision of where we want to be and what actions we need to take to get there.

Working together in partnership with our Trade Union colleagues, we can continue to take a lead in delivering best practice in our people policies and procedures. We are the area's "natural leader" and we aim to set a good example for other employers.

I hope you will join with me in being proud to work for South Lanarkshire Council and ensuring that we can work together for the benefit of all.

### **2. Introduction**

The Council's values influence the way in which we work and how services are delivered. They underpin the Council's objectives and priorities. In reviewing our people policies and processes, it was essential that they were reflective of the Council values and the new Council Plan. In order to demonstrate how we will lead, manage, develop and support our people for the duration of Connect, we have identified 'Where we are now', 'What we want to achieve', and 'What we need to do' against each of our values. The actions identified will form part of Resource and Service Plans over the period.

We could not deliver against these values without the support of our Trade Union colleagues. Through Partnership Working South Lanarkshire Council has delivered modern personnel policies and working practices. There is shared vision and a real appetite for ensuring the Council is a place to be proud to say you work in.

South Lanarkshire Council will continuously seek performance improvement in this area. There is no room for complacency in our approach, we must be ambitious in our policies to ensure we are attracting, developing and retaining employees who can deliver the Council vision.

### 3 Council values

#### 3.1 Council value: Fair and open

##### Value description

- The Council will be honest, open and consistent in all our dealings with people, so that we can earn and maintain their trust.
- We will demonstrate decisive and impartial leadership.
- We will promote the development of a just and equal society.
- We will recognise and respond to the diverse needs of communities and individuals.

##### Where we are now

The Council deals with employment related concerns and complaints under one of the following policies/procedures: Grievance Policy and Procedures; Recruitment Complaints Procedure; Disciplinary Handbook, Policy and Procedures; Confidential Reporting Procedures. These policies are supported through appropriate learning and development opportunities. All complaints raised are monitored, analysed and reported through the Council's robust committee arrangements and the Corporate Management Team.

Decisive and impartial leadership is developed through participation of our senior managers in the Council's Leadership Development Programme; middle managers in the Management Development Programme; and frontline managers in the Front Line Manager and Practical Supervision programmes. These are accredited programmes which receive excellent feedback from participants. Additionally, there are 3 Management Competencies within the Performance, Development and Review process against which each manager is assessed.

We promote the development of a just and equal society and recognise and respond to the diverse needs of communities and individuals through the effective implementation of our Equal Opportunities Policy and practices, and by encouraging a culture of tolerance within our workforce. The importance of Equal Opportunities is recognised and actions in this area are detailed within the Council's Equal Opportunities Strategy.

Through the Exit Interview process, leavers from the Council are encouraged to be open and honest about their reasons for leaving and what they think of the Council as an employer. This forms an important part of our improvement process, and the interview results are closely monitored for developing trends.

Improvements in the area will directly impact on the level of trust between Employee and Employer. The actions required to achieve this are:-

Where we want to be	What we need to do
Ensure managers are dealing with employment related complaints and concerns consistently and in line with Personnel policies/procedures.	Improve management information relating to the application of policies and outcomes through Oracle HRMS (Personnel/Payroll IT system).
	Increase sign up to relevant training courses and monitor through Oracle HRMS.
Confidence in our managers to lead by example in a fair and effective manner.	Measure success through the annual PDR process and analyse ratings through Oracle HRMS.
Respond to the diverse needs of	Develop a customer satisfaction survey for

### 3.2 Council value: People focused

#### Value description

- We will listen to and consult with people including those who use our services, including individuals, community groups, voluntary organisations and employees and we will act on their views and aspirations.
- We will encourage people to comment on our services, using their preferred channels of communication.
- We will consult people on major changes and involve them in decisions on developments in their community.

#### Where we are now

The Council employs over 16,000 people, many of whom live in the South Lanarkshire area and help us develop our policies to meet our priorities and objectives. We have a number of initiatives which allow us to involve employees, including: 'Ask Archie', suggestion schemes, the development of our equality schemes, Employee Attitude Survey, Partnership Working, Chartermark, Investors in People, various employee forums, and the Employee Panel.

We are keen to find out the views of our employees in specific development areas such as sustainable development, and have increasingly used online surveys.

Additionally, we have asked members of the public for their views on areas of personnel delivery which affect them, in particular in relation to the ways in which the Council carries out recruitment and selection. We did this through a survey about online recruitment and the findings from this survey formed part of an improvement action plan.

We need to continue to involve employees in the improvement and delivery of our services as a Council, but additionally, to use the views of employees and members of the public in developing our personnel policies and procedures. The actions required to achieve this are:-

Where we want to be	What we need to do
Listen to and consult with employees, and act on their views/aspirations.	Increase the use of a range of survey techniques to encourage full employee participation, and consult with employees regarding developments within Personnel.
	Conduct a regular employee survey.
We will encourage people to comment on our services.	Develop an online survey for members of the public to comment on our recruitment and selection process and publish this on the internet.
	At the end of each recruitment exercise, issue the survey to each candidate asking for feedback.

### 3.3 Council value: Working with and respecting others

#### Value description

- We will work with our partners in delivering services where appropriate.
- We will work with others to achieve change and to improve quality of life for all.
- We will behave with courtesy, decency, dignity and tolerance.

- We will ensure that officers, members, partner organisations, contractors and our citizens work together to achieve a common purpose and that each understands their role.

### **Where we are now**

The Council's Dignity at Work Policy outlines the standards of behaviour expected and provides a specific vehicle for employees to raise complaints of bullying or harassment. Complaints under this policy are closely monitored and reported. Similarly, the Employee Code of Conduct provides clear direction on the standards expected from employees. This Code has been regularly reviewed and revised based on experience.

Through the PDR process, employees have 'co-operating with others' and 'equal opportunities' as 2 of the 5 core competencies. Performance against these competencies is discussed with the line manager as part of the annual process, and training is available to support both manager and employee.

As part of the Council's equality duties, there is an ongoing programme of equality impact assessment for relevant policies, strategies or functions. Employees receive training and support in undertaking this work.

Partnership working with the Trades Union is key to the success of our people strategies. This arrangement ensures that change to improve services is a shared goal and has enhanced our ability to implement new working practices for the benefit of all. Trades Union representatives are invited to attend the same core corporate training programmes as managers to ensure consistency of message and a shared understanding of goals. Actions required to maintain our performance in this area are:

<b>Where we want to be</b>	<b>What we need to do</b>
Working with our Trade Union partners we will review and revise our Dignity at Work policy and the Code of Conduct.	Carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Dignity at Work policy, revise and reissue if required.
	Carry out a review of the effectiveness of the employee Code of Conduct, revise and reissue if required.
Review and continue to improve our Partnership Working arrangements.	Carry out a review of Partnership Working arrangements in conjunction with the Trade Unions and implement any recommended actions.
	Further develop the shared training approach with Trade Union colleagues.

## **3.4 Council value: Excellent employer**

### **Value description**

- We will be an excellent employer, leading the way in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.
- We will ensure that both our employees and elected members have the skills and knowledge required to do their jobs well, and have opportunities to develop.
- We will treat our employees fairly and we will not tolerate unfair discrimination.

### **Where we are now**

Personnel policies within South Lanarkshire Council are reflective of best practice and are modern in approach. This is particularly evident with the recent changes in recruitment methods, which have reduced both recruitment costs and time taken to fill posts, and presents a modern vision of local government employment.

There is an award-winning suite of family friendly policies, which allows parents and carers to effectively combine work with family commitments. The range of policies covers home working, flexible working, special leave, career breaks, buying/banking annual leave, and term time working.

Through our Maximising Attendance Policy, employees are supported by a range of early interventions, ensuring a swifter return to health. Employees have immediate access to physiotherapy and counselling services. The effectiveness of the policy is evident in our excellent attendance figures.

South Lanarkshire Council takes learning and development for employees seriously. It is clearly understood that, in order to deliver services which improve the quality of life for everyone, employees must have the skills, knowledge and attributes to enable them to undertake their roles to the best of their ability. The Learning and Development Strategy, as managed through the Learning and Development Board ensures that opportunities are available to all.

Our commitment in this area is recognised through gaining and retaining Investors in People status for the whole organisation. Individual commitment and endeavour is recognised through our employee award and recognition schemes.

In meeting this value South Lanarkshire Council cannot be complacent. Our Conditions of Service and policies must remain under review to ensure that they represent best practice and deliver against the organisational needs. The actions required are:

Where we want to be	What we need to do
Be recognised as an Excellent Employer.	Retain liP status and extend Chartermark status within Personnel Services.
Lead the way in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.	Review our family friendly and equal opportunities policies and develop to ensure South Lanarkshire Council can attract and retain a diverse workforce.
	Continue to develop and extend online recruitment and the use of non traditional recruitment methods.
	Complete the roll out of competence based recruitment and PDR.
Ensure that our employees have the opportunity to develop and progress.	Review the accessibility of core corporate training courses and extend availability.
	Through the Learning and Development Board, ensure standard application of the PDR process and access to training.
To treat our employees fairly.	Continue to develop a range of opportunities under Delivering a Fairer Future aimed at reducing gender segregation.
	Review the Conditions of Service package and implement any recommended changes.



### 3.5 Council value: Accountable, effective and efficient

#### Value description

- We will keep our promises, be accountable, and take responsibility for our actions.
- We will work to become an excellent Council – outward facing, forward looking and consistently seeking to develop and improve services.
- We will learn, develop, and work effectively and efficiently, acting as one Council to deliver services for the benefit of South Lanarkshire's people.
- We will promote and demonstrate good standards of conduct and behaviour.
- We will take informed and transparent decisions which are subject to scrutiny and appropriate management of associated risks.

#### Where we are now

South Lanarkshire Council can demonstrate effective performance reporting and management. Following the development of Connect, the Council 4 year plan, the reporting framework has been realigned to demonstrate the “golden thread” from vision, to Resource Plan, Service Plan and individual PDR. Performance is monitored from both an individual and organisational perspective.

Through effective ‘Workforce Monitoring,’ the practical application of our personnel policies is scrutinised by both Senior Management and Elected Members. Reports are provided on a regular basis to Resource Committees, the Employee Issues Forum and Corporate Management Team, detailing current management information and analysing trends.

Standards for employees are clearly set through the Code of Corporate Governance, Employee Code of Conduct, personnel and IT policies, and both corporate and local inductions. These are demonstrated via the regular provision of management information and participation in national initiatives such as the National Fraud Initiative. Risks are identified, managed and reported in accordance with the Council's Risk Strategy.

Performance in this area is strong but South Lanarkshire Council needs to keep an eye to future workforce developments and service requirements, while ensuring that the delivery mechanism for Personnel Services is as effective as the Personnel Policies. In particular, the following actions are required:

Where we want to be	What we need to do
Consistently seeking to develop and improve services.	Best Value Reviews of Learning & Development and Recruitment Administration completed and implemented.
	Lean Thinking Reviews scheduled in discrete service areas and the results shared with all Resources. This will be co-ordinated via the Continuous Improvement Working Group.
	Implement Self Service HR within Oracle HRMS.
Review future workforce requirements to ensure delivery of services for the benefit of South Lanarkshire's people.	Annual review of demographic trends and results fed into the Resource Planning process.
	Anticipated skills gaps identified and addressed via the Learning and Development Board.

	Projected workforce shortages or surpluses highlighted via Personnel Managers group and a regular CMT report developed.
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### 3.6 Council value: Tackling disadvantage and deprivation

#### Value description

- We will work to improve the economic, social and physical factors which result in deprivation.
- We will bring forward a package of measures to address rural disadvantage and the problems of the rural economy.

#### Where we are now

This Council seeks to recruit and retain excellent employees, and takes pride in leading by example.

Our Vocational Development Strategy targets secondary school pupils throughout South Lanarkshire and offers opportunities for extended work experience and vocational training in areas of skills shortage. Evaluation of this programme which now extends to 1000 pupils has been extremely positive from participants, parents, teachers and employers.

In addition, the Council, with a view to being able to participate more fully in the labour market, gives young people with additional support needs intensive vocational guidance and support. The “Work it Out” programme can demonstrate successes both within the Council and with other local employers.

The Council supports ‘Routes to Work’ (South) initiatives which provide pre-employment support to those people in the community who are farthest removed from the labour market.

We encourage people from all backgrounds to join the South Lanarkshire Council workforce, and make specific arrangements to encourage participation in employment from under-represented groups. This includes guaranteeing an interview if they meet all the essential criteria in applying the ‘Double Tick’ standards for disabled applicants. As part of our ‘Delivering a Fairer Future’ initiative, we encourage applications from men and women into occupations where they are traditionally under-represented.

Our inclusive approach had led to regular consultation with the workforce and supporting the establishment of forums for specific groups of employees. The Black and Minority Ethnic Employee Forum, Disabled Employee Forum and the Working Parents and Carers Forum meet regularly to discuss workforce issues which impact on them.

As an organisation we are keen that people maintain their employment with us as their lives and responsibilities change. We offer a range of flexible working arrangements, which accommodate employees changing circumstances.

Where we want to be	What we need to do
Increase participation in the Vocational Development Programme from South Lanarkshire Council secondary schools.	Regular consultation with stakeholders, evaluation of impact of programme, publicity and awareness raising events.
Increase the numbers of occupational areas covered by the Vocational	Engage with schools and colleges to identify skills gaps and ways to

Development Programme.	meeting them.
Increase successful outcomes for young people in supported employment programme.	Encourage local employers to offer work experience and employment to these young people.
	Set example of good practice as Council.
	Encourage flexibility around job tasks and contractual arrangements.
Ensure workforce reflects make up of community.	Monitor workforce effectively.
	Encourage self disclosure of disabled status. Encourage applicants from all backgrounds. Monitor uptake of flexible working.
Employee Forums take ownership of issues and contribute solutions.	Develop capacity of employee forums.

### 3.7 Council value: Sustainable development

#### Value description

- We will be environmentally responsible and will secure a balance between economic, social and environmental wellbeing in our activities and decisions.
- We will ensure our impacts do not compromise future generations and will pursue long term sustainable benefits over short term gains.

#### Where we are now

The Council is committed to promoting sustainable development and this is one of the 6 identified priorities for the Council for 2007 - 2011. A number of policies and initiatives contribute to this value such as corporate standards (encouraging use of double-sided printing), Recycling/green initiatives, Travel and Subsistence Policy, Workplace Transfer Scheme, Employee Travel and Cycle to Work Schemes.

The administration of Personnel activities has historically been paper driven but, through use of the intranet, online recruitment and electronic forms, South Lanarkshire Council have been making inroads to becoming more environmentally friendly.

An assessment of Personnel delivery against the National Electronic Services Delivery Standards was carried out and confirmed that substantial improvements could be made in this area.

This is a new work stream for the Council but one where individual employees can make a real difference. The actions required to support this area are.

Where we want to be	What we need to do
Ensure our impacts do not compromise future generations and pursue long term sustainable benefits over short term gains.	Increase the online recruitment process, only using paper based system where necessary.
	Introduce self service via Oracle HRMS by April 2010 enabling employees to update their personal information electronically and managers to make changes to employee details electronically.
	Ensure all employees are trained to understand the impact their job can make on the environment and how they can make changes to reduce this impact.

	Explore the introduction of new Personnel Policies and employee benefits which support the sustainable development agenda.
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#### **4. Reporting and monitoring arrangements**

Progress against each of these values will be reviewed quarterly through the Personnel Managers group and will form part of the Resource and Personnel Service Plan objectives. Additionally, each Resource and Service Plan will reflect their actions from the Strategy during the period to 2011.

There are established frameworks used to report workforce monitoring and progress on the baskets of measures and this will continue in the current format. Regular reports to all Resource Committees and relevant officer/member forums are in place and will be used to update Elected Members and the Corporate Management Team on each individual area.