



AGENDA

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Friday, 30th January, 2009 at 2.30 pm
Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone

Ask for: **Geoff Mills**
Telephone **01622 694289**

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

A. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Substitutes
2. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
3. Minutes - 11 September and 22 December 2008 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Local Pay Bargaining (Pages 7 - 10)
5. Health Wellbeing Activity and Health Check Update (Pages 11 - 18)
6. Health Wellbeing and Attendance (HWA) Action Plan (Pages 19 - 34)
7. Employing Young People (Pages 35 - 54)
8. Member Appointments (Pages 55 - 56)
9. Interim Managers Report (Pages 57 - 64)
10. Reporting and Monitoring (Pages 65 - 66)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
(01622) 694002

Thursday, 22 January 2009

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at County Hall, Maidstone, Kent on Thursday, 11 September 2008.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr N J D Chard, Ms A Harrison, Mr D Hirst, Mr A King, Mr K Lynes and Mr G Rowe.

ALSO PRESENT: Mr R J Parry.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Wild, Director of Law and Governance, Mrs A Beer, Director of Personnel and Development and Mrs M Cooper, Democratic Services Manager, Legal and Democratic Services.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

13(a) The Chairman declared that he had agreed that Items 5, 6 and 7 be taken as urgent in order that, if agreed, the proposed changes could be put in place, he had also agreed to take Items 5 – 11 as urgent as these items had all been requested by the Committee and would keep Members up-to-date prior to their next meeting on 30 January 2009.

(b) Ms A Harrison requested that a report on the Members' role in appointments be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee.

14. Membership

The Committee noted that Mr C Hart had replaced Mr T Birkett.

15. Declarations of Interests

(Item A2)

There were none.

16. Minutes

(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2008 are correctly recorded, subject to the initials of Mr Parry being changed to R J, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

17. Dates of Future Meetings

(Item A4 – Report by Director of Personnel and Development)

RESOLVED that the meetings for 2009 be noted as follows:-

30 January at 2.30 pm

13 May at 10.30 am

29 September at 10.30 am

18. Interim Managers Report

(Item A5 – Report by Director of Personnel and Development)

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the usage of agency staff, interim managers and consultants in KCC at 30 March 2008 be noted, and
- (b) future reports to provide further breakdown by Directorate to give fuller information on how agency staff are used and the reasons for their employment together with the use of ex-employees as consultants.

19. Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations

(Item A6 – Report by Director of Personnel and Development)

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the changes in the Pension Scheme be noted; and
- (b) Regulations 12, 13, 18(1), 30(2) and 30(5) include the words “in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member” and, for officers on Grade M or above, the Section 151 officer to be notified;
- (c) the Director of Law and Governance to make the necessary changes to the Constitution; and
- (d) a report be submitted to the Committee annually on exceptions to Kent County Council’s policy.

20. Family Leave Pilot Evaluation

(Item A7 – Report by Director of Personnel and Development)

(Miss N Lodmore, Personnel Policy Manager, was in attendance for this item)

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the pilot study should run for a further year;
- (b) a further report be submitted to the Committee at its meeting in September 2009; and
- (c) contractual paternity pay and leave be renamed, ‘maternity support leave’.

21. Cause of Sickness Absence – Briefing Note

(Item A8 – Report by Director of Personnel and Development)

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the details be noted; and
- (b) a more detailed report on sickness showing trends and the actions being taken to reduce levels of absence be submitted to the Committee at its next meeting.

22. Recruitment and Retention of Young People

(Item A9 – Report by Director of Personnel and Development)

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the report be noted; and
- (b) a further report on action being taken on Kent Success apprenticeships to alter the age profile of the Council’s staff, be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

23. Joint Review of Harassment and Grievance Cases 2008
(Item A10 – Report by Director of Personnel and Development)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

24. Health Check Presentation
(Item A11 – Report by Director of Personnel and Development)

RESOLVED that this presentation be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 22 December 2008.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr N J D Chard, Ms A Harrison, Mr C Hart, Mr K G Lynes (Vice-Chairman), Mr R J Parry (Substitute for Mr A J King, MBE) and Mr G Rowe.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms A Beer (Director Of Personnel & Development), Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership) and Mr G Mills (Democratic Services Manager (Executive))

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

25. Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

(Item 3 – Report by Mr A J King, Deputy Leader and Mrs Amanda Beer, Director of Personnel and Development)

(1) On 1 October 2008 the Department for Communities and Local Government issued a consultation paper on proposed revisions to the Code of Conduct for Members, together with a new proposed model Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees. Mrs Beer said that the report was being submitted to the Personnel Committee at the specific request of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee. The Kent Code relating to KCC officers had been revised over the past 12 months, and had previously been considered by the Personnel Committee. Also The Kent Code was embodied in the Constitution and therefore Mrs Beer did not see the need for Kent to adopt the proposed DCLG model Code of Conduct.

(2) Ms Harrison said that she believed that members and officers should be treated the same and therefore should be subject to the same code of conduct. She also said that if not already representatives from outside bodies and co-opted members who served on KCC Committees and Groups should be made subject to CRB checks. She also said with the closing date for responses to the DCLG being 24 December 2008, Members should in future be given more time to make their views known on consultations of this nature. Mr Sass said that he would ascertain if under the terms of their appointment co-opted Members were automatically given a CRB check and would advise Members of the Committee accordingly. Mrs Beer said that as part of their induction new members of staff automatically have the terms of the Kent Code brought to their attention and confirmed that the terms of the Kent Code were more comprehensive than the terms proposed under the DCLG model Code. She also confirmed that the trades unions had been consulted and that the normal procedure on consultations such as this would be to clear the response with the relevant Cabinet Member.

(3) Following further discussion the Committee RESOLVED that the proposed response to Chapter 3 of the Department for Communities and Local Government's Consultation Paper on a proposed model Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees be approved as detailed in Appendix 3 of the Committee report.

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By: Director of Personnel & Development
To: Personnel Committee
Subject: Local Pay Bargaining – 2009/10
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This paper outlines the process undertaken and the current stage of this year's Local Bargaining agreement. Endorsement of the proposed settlement is sought from Personnel Committee, prior to that from full Council.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the fifth year of Local Pay Bargaining. Consultation began back in September 2008, and has continued to be undertaken in an honest and constructive manner. The current financial climate with the challenges Kent County Council face now and in the medium term have been key factors in the discussion with our recognized Trade Unions.
- 1.2 Last years national settlement was although still not formally agreed has been paid at 2.45%. There have been clear indications from trade unions nationally that their expectations in terms of pay settlements reflect the Retail Price Index. This measure however reached a high of 5% in September. The Government's preferred measure, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) peaked slightly higher than this at 5.2% but forecasts predict the continued fall of both measures and may even reach negative values in the forthcoming year.
- 1.3 As last year, approximately two thirds of employees will be eligible for pay progression under Total Contribution Pay which has an average value of 2.7% for those who receive it.
- 1.4 The current rates of inflation in Table 1 together with the relative analysis of awards for the past 3 years between Kent and the National Joint Council are attached in Table 2, as Appendix 1.

2. LOCAL PAY BARGAINING ELEMENTS

2.1 Pay award level

The County Council has made budgetary provision for a cost of living award of 1.0% effective 1 April 2009. As in previous years, the Trades Unions have expressed their view that there has been a shortfall in awards compared to inflation, and it is this aggregate issue that requires addressing. The submission from trades unions is for 8%, but cost of living should be at least close to the rate of inflation, as indicated by the Retail Price Index (RPI). Anything less than RPI will not be recommended for acceptance to their memberships. This is not therefore a jointly agreed recommendation, and discussions will continue with trades unions.

The TU submission has also included the request to remove Kent Scheme Grade 1. This is due to the low rates of pay within this grade, relative increase of other public sector pay ranges at this level and to make a greater distinction between the lowest Kent Scheme pay point and the national minimum wage. Analysis of the costs for implementing this proposal by moving everyone on KS1 to pay point 4, as it becomes the new minimum, indicates a cost of £327k, comprising of £243k for schools and £84k for non schools. Figures include on costs.

Payment of registration fees for the forthcoming Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) is also part of the TU submission. Kent Adult Social Services estimate that this will be £200k however if this is paid it would be reclaimed by installments from the individual and therefore not a cost to the directorate. Within Children's, Families and Education including Schools the costs are £544k per annum for years 2010 -14 and £431k per annum thereafter however these figures include CRB checking.

Carer Leave has been introduced on a pilot basis since June 2007 and has been very positively received by staff, trade unions and their membership. In September 2008 Personnel Committee agreed to continue the provision of Carer Leave on a pilot basis. Although only a short period of time has elapsed since this decision was made it would be beneficial to include the substantive provision of Carer Leave within our Terms & Conditions, particularly since there is no financial impact.

3. COST SAVINGS

A review of a wide range of allowances has taken place in order to identify where potential cost savings can be made. Two key areas were identified.

3.1 Essential User Car Allowance

It is estimated from the claims made over the period of a year that approximately 1800 of the 3500 essential users fall outside of the 2500 business miles per year requirement for eligibility. Transferring these individuals to casual user status would save the £825 lump sum payment, and increase the mileage further to 40p per mile, equating to an overall saving of £0.9m. Individuals are being written to individually informing them of the withdrawal of the allowance but have the ability to appeal should there be a substantive reason.

3.2 Recruitment management

Vacancy management can offer a substantial source of saving. Last year we actively recruited to approximately 2500 posts excluding schools with an average annual salary of £19,500 per post, or £25,300 with on costs.

Given this level of recruitment, by holding each vacancy for a fixed period initially for 1 month (regulated by the Recruitment Services Team), this results in potential savings of **£2m**. This estimate includes an assumption that some posts will be critical to service delivery in the short term, i.e. within 4 weeks, and that this could be as much as 1 in 4 posts.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1** The proposed award of 1.0% does not meet the trade union expectation or the current RPI rate of inflation, but does take into account the rapidly changing economic conditions and is believed to be the best that can be achieved considering the Council's financial pressures.

5. RECOMMENDATION

That the Personnel Committee agrees to endorse and recommend to Cabinet and Council:

- i) The adoption of the 1.0% pay award as the settlement for 2008/9.
- ii) Carer leave becoming a substantive provision within our Terms and Conditions.

The Personnel Committee give consideration to:

- i) Payment of Independent Safeguarding Authority registration fee
- ii) Removal of Kent Scheme Grade 1.

These are currently the subject of ongoing discussion with the Trades Unions.

Amanda Beer
Director of P&D
Ext 4136

Paul Royel
Employment Strategy Manager
Ext 4608

Appendix 1

Table 1. Current key economic data (Office of National Statistics)

Measure	Rate (%)
RPI	0.9
CPI	3.1
Average Earnings Index (AEI) Whole Economy	3.3
AEI Public Sector	3.8

Table 2. Comparison of National Joint Council (NJC) Cost of Living increases

Scheme	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9
NJC	2.95%	2.475%	2.45%
KCC	2.83%	2.0%	2.5%

**By: Alex King, Cabinet Member - Policy and Performance
Amanda Beer, Director of Personnel & Development**

To: Personnel Committee – 30 January 2009

Subject: Work & Wellbeing Activity and Health Check Update

Classification: Unrestricted

SUMMARY: This paper informs Personnel Committee of (i) the Work & Wellbeing Framework (ii) the fit4health programme 06/08 (iii) plans for 2009/10 to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of KCC staff and (iv) Staff Health Check update

1. Context

1.1 KCC recognises that providing high quality services to the people of Kent is dependant on the performance of staff and therefore has promoted and addressed staff wellbeing since 2002 when the initiative was introduced through to the new framework and action plan for 2009/10.

One part of our Strategy for Staff commits us to fostering a healthy, lively and vibrant organisation where the physical environment, the nature of the job and the balance between home and work enable staff to work effectively, safely and to have fun.

2. The Work & Wellbeing Framework in Kent County Council

2.1 The outcomes to continuously improve organisational performance expected from investing in staff wellbeing include:

- staff feeling valued as individuals and for their work contribution
- high levels of staff morale, motivation and job enjoyment, improving staff and organisational capacity, capability, resilience and performance
- improved ability to recruit & retain high calibre staff that reflect the Kent community
- reducing sickness absence (led through the Health Wellbeing & Attendance Project)
- meeting our employer's duty of care responsibilities towards staff.

2.2 Work and Wellbeing activity is clustered around the 5 themed areas of:

1. Physical Health & Wellbeing
2. Mental & Emotional Health & Wellbeing
3. Social & Economic Wellbeing
4. Health Promotion
5. Organisational & People Management

- 2.3 Underlying principles drive Wellbeing activity based on the belief that:
- Taking a holistic and long term approach is the best way to achieve sustained improvements in staff wellbeing and performance
 - Focusing energy on getting the right balance across the dimensions of our lives (work, home, family, community, self) empowers staff to high performance (a high performance organisation needs its staff to deliver optimum performance when at work) not necessarily spend long periods at work
 - A high performing organisation deals robustly with poor performance, but does not focus on weaknesses because engaging staff interest and focusing on strengths is a more effective driver of positive outcomes.

3. Fit4health Programme 06/08

- 3.1 This programme was designed to offer something for everyone regardless of their geographic location or level of fitness and health. Additional support was targeted for those struggling with being substantially overweight, which addressed the personal concerns of individuals, recommendations from the select committee on obesity and the Public Health agenda. The programme covered physical activity, nutrition/healthy eating and psychological barriers to weight loss.

“The fit4health programme and its facilitators have given me so much information and support which has been useful in making diet and health, life-changing decisions” (CED)

3.2. Walking the World (April-July 2007)

275 staff took part in this virtual walking challenge, encouraging staff to walk more, including an office based member of staff clocking up 190,760 steps in one week.

“I’ll shortly be 50 the challenge has given me a push to raise my walking levels, I am so pleased to have lost a stone in weight over the 1st four weeks. It has proved a great, active fun way to get fit” (CFE)

3.3 Weight & Wellness (April 07 to July 08)

Four 12 week programmes were provided to staff with a significantly high Body Mass Index (obese/morbidly obese). The programme covered gym, group and individual support and advice. Outcomes from the first 3 programmes identified:

- 81% of participants believed their fitness had improved
- 70% that their physical activity had increased
- 95% that they feel more positive about themselves

“ I have now lost 12kgs and kept it off easily, in the past I would put any weight lost back on quickly”

3.4 Nutrition & Fitness (Sept/Nov 07)

2 weekend pilots were externally provided for staff who had nutrition/food related health conditions that linked to being overweight for example diabetes & food allergies. Due to mixed feedback this initiative was not developed further.

“The activities that I took part in gave me the opportunity to look at my lifestyle and recognise the changes I need to make. Some of these are extremely far reaching and need major changes. The activities made me realise I need to make these changes!”(CMY)

3.5 Activity Classes & Sessions

Staff needing additional support were offered a free term of an activity class provided through Adult Education Classes (salsa, exercise to music, stretch, strengthen & relax).

“I really enjoyed the stretch, exercise & relaxation class, the tutor is excellent and I have already enrolled in the September class along with another colleague from my team” (CFE)

Environment & Regeneration’s Wellbeing lead organised on site classes and sessions that staff paid for direct and included yoga, tai chi, line dancing, belly dancing, Nordic walking, Indian head massage, reflexology and chiropody.

3.6 Weight Loss Challenge (May 08 ongoing)

The challenge attracted 30 teams, with 407 staff from all directorates taking part. By November 08 the reported weight loss was an incredible 206 stone 1lb.

“one of the team members managed to lose over a stone (in just over a month) and three further members are already in double figures with their weight loss” (CFE)

3.7 Fitbug – Intelligent Pedometer & Online Support (June 08 to November 08)

70 staff who struggle with being overweight, took part in a 6 month pilot. Online recording of steps walked and food intake against targets is easily accessible with nutritional and activity advice provided on the interactive website. The pilot is being evaluated with staff saying they value the facility. A 25% fee reduction has been negotiated for KCC staff, accessible through Kent Rewards

“Of all the activities I have taken part in the fitbug scheme was by far the best and most enjoyable”

3.8 Activity/Fitness DVD Loan Service

Recognising busy lifestyles and economic factors for lower paid staff, a DVD loan service provides 45 titles for staff to borrow, covering dance, aerobic, stretch workouts, recognising lifestyle, lifecycle and diversity needs within the titles provided.

“It was great, in fact I went and bought one to use all the time and have lost 3 inches around my midriff, so you can imagine how pleased I am. I just needed a prod to get going again and at 62 it’s not easy to get motivated” (ASD)

4. Plans for 2009/10

4.1 In December 2008 the Workforce Strategy Board agreed that the priority theme for attention and resourcing during 09/10 is Organisational & People

Management, although key priorities in other themes will also be actioned as resources allow. This is a crucial theme to focus on in the current economic climate with the expectation of increased need and the necessity to make maximum use of KCC resources. This addresses the wellbeing dimension of how we do things here, through equipping managers to be confident in supporting the health & wellbeing of their staff, including through effective leadership which is vital to building and sustaining an organisational culture where staff can thrive and perform well. The 09/10 action plan is being consulted on to be ratified through the Workforce Strategy Board

4.2 Organisational Wellbeing & People Management Priority Areas

- Managing change well, recognising the people element of staff staying and leaving KCC within change initiatives
- Engaging staff at all levels, providing the time and mechanisms to address issues and ensure feedback particularly through change
- Promoting & managing a flexible environment
- Recruiting good people managers
- Leadership and management training, required elements for KCC managers
- Managing difficult conversations well – manager training
- Promoting and measuring wellbeing thorough Performance Indicators and business plans.

4.3 Priorities to be Actioned in Other Themes

4.3.1 Physical Health & Wellbeing

- From December 2008, 12 month Pilot of VirtualGym TV available to all KCC staff including those working in schools
- Continuation of the successful team weight loss challenge
- Piloting pain management & healthy backs training.

4.3.2 Mental & Emotional Health & Wellbeing

- Pilot return to work coaching, within KCC's case management approach to attendance management
- Continue provision of successful positive management of mental health training.

4.3.3 Social & Economic Wellbeing

- Continue providing FSA financial management training
- Promote wellbeing benefits in total reward communication.

4.3.4 Health Promotion

- Promote and evaluate Health check programme
- Provide annual calendar of health promotion topics with advice on Knet.

5. Health Check Programme

- 5.1 Personnel Committee requested an update on Health Check activity for the first year of the second three year programme. The health check is offered

free to staff and uptake is voluntary. The checks are conducted by a qualified nurse and cover:

- Blood Pressure
- Cholesterol test
- Urine Analysis – testing for diabetes and kidney problems
- Height, weight, Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Heart Disease Risk Score
- Stress review

5.2 Checks are provided at locations across the county usually at KCC premises. The target number of 300 health checks are now being provided each month. Health checks are not currently being provided to schools. Children, Families & Education are able to liaise with schools to enable purchase of this service for their staff from our external provider.

5.3 Statistical information January 08 to October 08

- 1,890 staff (1,410 women and 480 men) attended for a health check. This is 13% of KCC's non schools workforce. A take up of 40% for health checks is considered usual. It is anticipated that a 40% take up rate over the three year programme will be achieved.
- 12.2% of staff had blood pressure above 150/90. Normal/optimal blood pressure is 120/80mmHG. 140/90mmHg and over is diagnosed as hypertension. This is less than half of the level recorded in the general population in the South East of 26%. UK statistics for 2005 indicate that men typically have higher blood pressure than women.
- 26.6% of staff, had a cholesterol level above 5mmol, a desirable level is below 5mmol.
- 7.5% of staff smoke. This is significantly lower than national statistics with 2.6% men (25% nationally) and 4.9% of women (23% nationally) smoking. This is also a significant reduction from 11% of staff smoking (April 2006) and therefore not a major cause for concern.
- The percentage of staff declaring that their alcohol consumption exceeds the recommended level continues to be significantly lower than the national average. Alcohol consumption is therefore not a major cause for concern.
- 41.5% of staff indicated that they are experiencing a high level of stress.
- 30.7% of staff had a Body Mass Index above 25 (17.8% women, 12.9% men).

5.4 Feedback from staff and current priorities

Staff appreciate the health checks and that they are provided throughout the county and on KCC sites. Some people would like more in depth checks/advice and the checks continue to provide an 'early warning' mechanism, for example high blood pressure (stroke, heart/cardiac problems, diabetes). See appendix A for examples. Current activity to address issues highlighted include, promoting the facility to staff who would not usually consider having a health check, continuing to provide health

promotion advice and facilities through Work & Wellbeing activity (smoking, alcohol, healthy eating/lowering cholesterol).

6. Wellbeing - Additional Benefits, External Links & Acknowledgements

6.1 The Work & Wellbeing activity has created additional and unexpected benefits for example:

- Supporting environmental objectives (green travel plan) with staff walking & using their bikes more
- Staff engaging their families with activities including taking children on weekend walks and dog walking, using the fitness DVD's, thinking about nutrition and healthy eating, demonstrating that the good practice influence is spreading beyond KCC's workforce into the wider community
- Social events are planned by staff teams and groups that involve physical activity are very effective in team building and morale boosting
- Staff feeling valued and uplifted through involvement in the programmes
- Staff being encouraged to take part in fund raising activity that benefits the individual and the charity
- Improved awareness and appreciation of KCC services and Kent community, accessing Adult Education classes, county parks and Nordic walking provision
- Invitation to speak at a national conferences on KCC's fit4health programme
- Presenting to NHS, third and private sector partners through the Kent & Medway Physical Activity & Health Eating Alliance
- Media interest – People Management, Occupational Health Review publications, Radio Kent
- Advice/info requests from other local authorities on our approach and achievements
- Health Peer review – confirming staff awareness of and valuing Work & Wellbeing initiatives

7. Summary

Personnel Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

Alex King
Cabinet Member Policy and Performance (& Deputy Leader)
Ext 4335

Amanda Beer
Director of Personnel & Development
Ext 4137

Appendix A

Health Check Feedback from Staff

- Very helpful and balanced advice
- Useful having computerized feedback
- Glad to receive info on cholesterol as it is not something I have had checked before
- Good to have health check at work as I did not have to travel
- Healthchecks are useful for making people aware of the importance of healthy living
- Information given will definitely help me to sort out my weight problem
- Good advice which can be followed easily
- Very efficient and professional
- A very good programme for checking general health
- Very good. Thought provoking
- Good as an informal view of health situation and information on things of concern in the back of my mind
- A test for bowel cancer would be reassuring as it is known as a 'silent cancer'
- Outreach to pockets of KCC staff would be helpful i.e. on specific sites

Appendix B

Reference documents

- Working for a healthier tomorrow (March 2008) – Dame Carol Black's review of the health of Britain's working age population
- Improving health and work: changing lives (Nov 2008) – The Government's response to 'the Black Review'
- Mental Health and Work (March 2008) – Cross Government Health and Wellbeing Programme
- HSE Management standards – Previously Stress Management Standards
- Investors in People (5-7) – New IIP profile Indicator 3
- No one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility – Green paper (2008)
- 'Health, work and well-being – Caring for our future' strategy (2005)
- DWP Building Capacity for Work (work rehabilitation), Health, Wellbeing
- Creating a healthy workplace – guidance from the faculties of Public Health and Occupational Medicine (2006)
- Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices (2004) - DOH
- Working life: employee attitudes and engagement CIPD (2006) -Kingston University & Ipsos/Mori

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By: Director of Personnel & Development
To: Personnel Committee - 30 January 2009
Subject: **Health Well-Being & Attendance (HWA) Action Plan**
Classification: Unrestricted

SUMMARY: The HWA Action Plan 2006-10 was developed with the aim of improving attendance through better process, entitlements, interventions and communication. This report is a summary of achievement to date and activity planned.

1 Introduction

1.1 Managing health at work is a major challenge for most organisations and striking the balance between acceptable levels of sickness and maintaining productivity is the key to any effective attendance management strategy.

1.2 As part of our Strategy for Staff, KCC has always considered health and well-being as important with respect to our organisational capacity. The areas of health and safety, occupational health, well-being, sickness processing and providing management advice remain a part of core business for Personnel & Development. The introduction of the HWA Action Plan in 2006 represented a co-ordinated and concerted effort to bring together these strands through four key elements: process, intervention, entitlements and improvements with the overarching aim of improving attendance and reducing sickness. It also recognises the contributory impact of organisational culture and the employment offer on attendance and the impact of good, consistent managerial practice.

1.3 The delivery of the HWA Action Plan is contingent on the collaboration and co-operation of managers. P&D's role in developing the plan has been to generate the impetus necessary to change in the way health and attendance is managed.

2 Main challenges for KCC in 2006

2.1 When the HWA Action Plan was launched in 2006, there were a number of challenges facing the Authority in relation to its management of absence. Key amongst these was the need to

- Strengthen the confidence of the management population in handling complex cases
- Maintain the profile of managing health and attendance well as part of good people management
- Enhance and improve reporting systems
- Promote the use of the existing control framework (referral triggers)
- Get the best Occupational Health guidance for each circumstance

- Recognise the top reason for long term sickness was ‘organic nervous disease’, often stress or mental health issues
- Remove obsolete categories of reasons for sickness
- Ensure better co-ordination of specialist advice to managers
- Improve the overall analysis of the reasons for sickness absence
- Recognise the national focus on public sector sickness
- Achieve and support improvement with no additional funding allocation
- Cope with the highest volume of activity in terms of casework

3 The Approach

3.1 Changing the way sickness is viewed and managed in an organisation requires a fundamental shift and commitment at all levels. KCC’s performance in general terms (using BVPI indicators) has been slightly better than average and in terms of public sector overall the comparison has been largely positive. Research in other areas of industry showed that the context largely determined the approach to sickness management and that levels of sickness varied enormously in the private sector depending on the service area. There were also examples of incentive schemes and the use of private medical insurance (PMI) to improve absence and reduce its economic impact.

3.2 Without the benefit of incentives or PMI KCC needed to take a longer term approach to achieve any kind of sustained change in the way health at work is regarded and managed.

3.3 A seminar for over 60 people involved in all aspects of advising on the management of absence or involved in the processing of sickness took place in July 2006 at which they heard about attendance issues from a panel that included KCC’s Occupational Health Physician, Well-Being Manager, Corporate Health and Safety Manager and Policy Manager. Personnel staff, Health & Safety Advisers, Occupational Health Advisers, Schools Personnel Service and others contributed through this seminar to the development of the approach to be taken to change the way KCC approaches the management of health at work.

3.4 Priorities for the remainder of 2006-7 included:

- Devising a jointly agreed protocol for the management of complex health or disability cases, jointly agreed with Trade Unions that has resulted in more co-ordinated and targeted advice for managers.
- Modernisation of sickness reporting categories and the development of on-line and self-service sickness reporting
- Delivery of legal updates on case law judgement concerning sickness and disability to 50 Personnel Officers
- Sickness reporting to managers strengthened with follow up by P&D to ensure trigger points were observed and appropriate actions in train.
- Development of automated email alerts to managers
- Investment in positive management of mental health training for managers and review of Well-Being Action Plan
- Introduction of carer leave pilot (June 2007)

- Developing a programme of refresher training for managers on managing sickness

3.5 A HWA group was set up to review progress against the action plan and to be kept up to date with developments. The group meets monthly and is led by the Policy Manager, Corporate Employee Relations, the Corporate Health and Safety Manager and the Organisational Well-Being & Performance Manager.

4 Key Achievements to date

This approach has led to a number of measurable achievements thus far.

- Reduced Long Term Absence** - One of the most significant achievements to date under the plan has been the on-going reduction of long term sickness absence attributed to the concerted efforts of P&D staff to support managers in dealing with these cases. Cases of continuous sickness of 4 months or more have been reduced by 30% in a year (2007/8), see appendix 1, simply by actively encouraging managers to manage using the existing control framework.
- Better sickness reporting** - on-line sickness reporting went live in March 2008 which has not only achieved productivity savings in terms of processing time but will also provide a clearer picture of the causes and patterns of absence.
- Better Management of sickness absence** – managers in all directorates receive monthly sickness statistics and are actively supported by P & D to achieve timely outcomes including redeployment, dismissal or termination of contract by other means. Refresher training for managers has resulted in a higher level of ‘casework’ on sickness absence overall.
- Profiling** – part of the on-going monitoring of sickness absence has included an analysis of sickness by grade, age, length of service and gender to help identify the best ways of targeting interventions.

5 Impact

5.1 The impact of the actions implemented to date has been largely positive organisationally - we are seeing a significant and maintained reduction in long term sickness absence and much more consistent management practice in the handling of health issues. Many managers have responded positively to P&D support in this area and are gaining in confidence and willingness to tackle absence.

5.2 The greater focus on managing attendance however has not been well received by all and this has been particularly evident in the last six months when the attention has shifted to the management of short term absence. Trades Unions, individuals, staff groups and some managers have all made

representations about the approach to attendance management being taken either formally or informally. We are taking board all concerns raised and reviewing specific circumstances and challenges as they arise.

5.3 It is true to say that the approach KCC is taking with respect to the monitoring and management of sickness absence is more robust and consistent than ever before but there is no change to the policy or procedure. Our achievements to date are attributable in the main to the efforts of P&D to support managers and staff to achieve better outcomes and must be considered alongside the considerable efforts to develop a well-being programme that continues to offer health specific support to managers and staff.

6 Examples of Planned Activity

Action is on-going and the following are examples of planned activity:

- Review of stress management policy
- Development of rehabilitative work placements
- Implementation of Work & Well-Being Framework
- Implementation of Flexible Working Policy
- Implementation of automated alerts for managers
- Examination of currency of KCC's sick pay scheme
- Development of the Total Reward Statement
- Development of management training and guidance

Full details of the Health Well-Being & Attendance Action Plan is in Appendix 2

7 Summary

7.1 To sustain and capitalise upon the improvements we have achieved to date KCC managers need to appreciate the on-going impact of health on work and capacity and to be kept up to date with the range of interventions available to them. Whilst some sickness is to be expected and understandable there is much an organisation can and should do to support good health, well-being and work attendance.

7.2 The HWA Action Plan, Work & Well-Being Plan and Health and Safety Plan all contribute to the efforts to support KCC and its managers to achieve this.

Recommendations

Personnel Committee is asked to acknowledge the work underway to address health, well-being and attendance.

Nicola Lodemore
Employment Policy Manager
Ext

Amanda Beer
Director of Personnel & Development
Ext 4136

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HWA Priority One Build a process for attendance management that is clear, integrated, accurate and utilised fully by managers to manage health at work		Process		
Objective 1	Who?	Time	Tasks/Outcomes	Impact
Improve the quality and accuracy of sickness reporting making data more robust and reliable. 1.1.1 Review sickness reporting & monitoring systems	JS / NL / Reps	Dev -Summer 07 Imp – April 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sickness report categories revised to align with OMAS Accidents recorded on revised form Implement pilot of categorisation Reduce processing time for sickness Assess prospects for work streaming Ensure separate recording of DDA sickness – clear process Set annual target for sickness absence, monitor and review progress post BVPI requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparison of HR and OH sickness trends possible Correlation between incident and sickness reporting is good Managers better able to process sickness absence ES input time on sickness adjustments reduced. Greater reasons detail available Provide sickness guidance and better links
1.1.2 Improve management accountability for reporting and absence management.	BS NL/OH/BS NL/BS	On-going 07-09 07-08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers receive monthly sickness reports from Business Support Short 'refresher' sessions delivered for all managers Monthly long term absence reports followed up by directorates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers constantly aware of impact New managers adopt KCC regime BS continuously aware of levels Relationship between incidents and sickness clear.

Health Wellbeing and Attendance Plan 2006 - 10

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good links between accidents and sickness made by managers • Promote appropriate early referral to OH
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HWA Priority One Build a process for attendance management that is clear, integrated, accurate and utilised fully by managers to manage health at work

Objective 2	Responsibility	Time	Tasks/Outcomes	Impact
Strengthen management response to attendance issues				
1.2.1 Page 24 Ensure all new managers are inducted in attendance and other people management challenges	ERMS / Directorate Business Support	From Sept 07 (?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'People Management' element of induction includes focus on attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New managers adopt KCC regime
1.2.2 Promote and enhance training opportunities including * attendance management * positive mgt of mental health * speed surgeries * stress/pressure mgt	NL / Business Support/SCS/L&D	From Sept 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance Attendance Management Training promoted for non-schools managers from Sept 07 and training for HT promoted through SPS Bulletins • Develop confidence in managing staff with mental health issues (thorough training) positive mgt of mental health well course oversubscribed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers have up-to-date understanding • Staff with mental health issue have better experience – managers handling cases involving mental health well

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1.2.3	Build management confidence in handling long term / complex attendance problems	Business Support/SCS/CDT	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved focus and completeness of OH referrals made by managers Referrals occurring at trigger points Case Management Model promoted and used appropriately Additional targeted support available for high priority areas Provide guidance on managing diversity issues e.g. disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OH advice detailed and relevant to case Early, appropriate referrals take place 'long-term' sickness reduced Co-ordinated approach used handle complex health cases. Relationship between BS/OH collaborative Organisational resources directed at 'hotspots'
1.2.4	Delivery of risk assessed, timely advice to aid managers decision making	NL / Business Support / OH / HSA	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Support kept up to date with relevant case law (Update sessions) Develop good collaboration between management advisers (OH / HS / BS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel advice and knowledge current and consistent Managers receive 'joined up' advice from a single source Professional advice gives full consideration to business requirements
1.2.5	Promote positive attendance management models	Business Support/Core Group	In development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New managers 'buddied' with good people managers Senior managers to discuss attendance management during 1:1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New managers receive good support Managing attendance has same value as other management responsibilities

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Review, investigate and reframe entitlements to achieve optimum attendance contributing to better work-life balance and organizational aims.

Objective 3		Responsibility	Time	Tasks/Outcomes	Impact
Review current absence trends					
2.3.1	Examine attendance trends in KCC	NL / Core Group	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain an accurate picture of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reasons for sickness/poor attendance use of other leave provisions Develop an appreciation of relative value of current entitlement/benefits for staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trends, hotspots and areas for review known KCC can target its attentions to elements that will enhance its 'offer' data
2.3.2	Analyse use of entitlements and benefits by category of employee (age, gender, ethnicity, Disability job type)	NL / Core Group	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify possible deficiencies or obsolete provisions identified and potential areas for rationalisation / enhancement identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficiencies achieved and feeds into pay bargaining
2.3.3	Compare KCC data with other organisations	NL / Core Group	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research other organisations absence management data public and private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC's performance known.
Objective 4		Responsibility	Time	Tasks/Outcomes	

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Investigate Best Practice and Staff Preferences				Impact	
2.4.1	Research evidence based best practice in absence management, health and well-being in all sectors	NL / <u>EM</u> / Core Group	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential development areas and deficits in 'own' offer • Identify potential for partnership/ collaborative working and build on links established by work & wellbeing e.g. health, police, schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HWA approach always reflects best practice and is dynamic • Efficiencies and enhancements achieved •
2.4.2	Assess employees opinions regarding health and well-being at work	NL / EM/ Core Group	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey data used to test employee response. • Evaluation of work & wellbeing activity from representative group, staff and feedback from wellbeing mailbox 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC incorporates staff perspective in HWA development areas

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Objective 5 Reframe the entitlements policies and procedures to align strategically with broad organisational aims	Responsibility	Time	Tasks/Outcomes	Impact
2.5.1 Devise and implement contractual enhancements that can impact upon attendance and health (and incorporate priorities as part of Public Health Agenda)	ALL	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Carer and Paternity Leave pilot implemented (NL) • Adoption Leave in place (Apr 07) • Revision of Career Break / Sabbatical revised • Review of Smoking Policy (Dec 06) • Introduction of new Flexible Working Policy • Introduction of Respect and Dignity at Work statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers of all kinds acknowledged and supported • KCC's Smoking Policy reflects the law and best practice • Facility to work flexibly widely understood • KCC's communicates its expectation for the treatment of its staff • Staff record all incidents • KCC's wellbeing activities relate to identified needs

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2.5.2	Re-promote facilities within the organisation that enhance attendance	Business Support/ EM/ SCS/Management Population	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Wellbeing activity including fit4health programme • Maintain awareness of routes for resolving disputes, raising complaints and support services • Promote Support Line Services & Health check programme • Work & Wellbeing fit4health presented as best practice at national conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing dialogue between managers and staff about wellbeing. • Staff have facility to address fitness through work • KCC staff able to raise concerns and report incidents easily.
2.5.3	Review (ER) statistics and data regularly	NL/ERMs/Core Group	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain ongoing appreciation of the number and types of issues being raised by staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC able to identify trends in dispute resolution quickly
2.5.4	Review contractual sick pay provisions	NL / Core Group / Business Support	In development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review probationers access to contractual scheme • Model alternative entitlement structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation used positively to support selection decisions • Alternatives to current contractual provision explored

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HWA Priority Three Develop the range of organizational interventions to increase productivity

Interventions

Objective 1 Develop practice and direct resources according to identified needs	Responsibility	Time	Tasks/Outcomes	Impact
3.1.1	OH/NL/Core Group	2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocol agreed, in place and used appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Joined Up' advice provided to managers
3.1.2	EM	07/08 & 08/09 09/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-being actions focused on increasing exercise and reducing obesity (07/08) Design & deliver 09/10 wellbeing action plan to address priority areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC staff see positive effects on health and take proactive steps to manage health issues Resources targeted to priority areas from mgt intelligence
3.1.3	Business Support / NL / OH/ Support Line Services	On-going On going On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage managers to facilitate effective return to work reviews Examine the feasibility of rehabilitative placements/temporary redeployment Continue fast track intervention for physio Assess business case for utilising CBT (cognitive behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to Work reviews take place for <u>all</u> staff Staff on long term sick are placed in work of some kind Absence reduced for these conditions

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3.1.4	Establish feasibility of a 'multi-disciplinary, rapid response approach (core group)	ALL	Deferred Spring 09	therapy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce delay in managing attendance in priority cases • Targeted Resource solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding or support needed is made available • KCC responds proactively to identified need
3.1.5	Promote and enhance interventions to support early conflict resolutions and assisting staff under pressure	EM/SCS/NL	On going March 08 08/09		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote SCS (Mediation, counseling diagnostic servicers • Dedicated phone line in place at KCC call centre to sign post staff in support of D&R and ethical standards • Enhance management training in dispute resolution • Provide mgt training handling difficult conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are aware of and able to access right support when incidents occur • KCC management population able to manage disputes confidently

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HWA Priority Four

Develop strategy for raising and maintaining the profile of health well-being and attendance

Communication

Objective 1	Responsibility	Time	Tasks/Outcomes	Impact
Communicate HWA activity to Members, Managers and staff 4.1.1	All	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree strategy Maintain currency of plan Monitor achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic plan agreed and dynamic Plan remains relevant to the KCC HWA profile Achievements reported to DMTs and others
4.1.2	NL/EM/HB/Committees	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide narrative to accompany BVPI results (reduction in sickness absence) Work & Wellbeing action plan endorsed by workforce strategy board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members and others understand the context of BVPI results and HWA activity
4.1.3	Core Group	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop links with others to achieve better health at work practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public and related sector practice enhanced
4.1.5	NL/EM/ES ES/RP/Oracle	In development On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance payslips include number of days sick Develop 'self service' for sickness reporting Enhance health Promotion activity to encourage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff self monitor on absence Reporting accurate and owned by managers and staff People take more accountability for

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4.1.6	Promote positive attendance management	ALL	Spring 09 In development	healthy lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer 'Speed Surgeries' for managers on managing attendance/performance • Revised Guidance on attendance management for schools 	their own health and well-being (reduced sickness)
						Management population proficient at managing attendance and understand its place in managing performance

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By: Paul Carter, Leader
Amanda Beer, Director of Personnel & Development

To: Personnel Committee - 30 January 2009

Subject: Employing Young People

Summary: Informs Personnel Committee of KCC's plans to build on successes so far in employing a younger workforce.

1. What Has Been Achieved – Some Key Highlights

- A successful apprenticeship scheme that has attracted interest from the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit
- A vibrant Gap Year Programme that now attracts high calibre graduates as well as gap year students
- A high quality graduate management trainee scheme that includes Finance and Transportation & Development streams
- Well established work experience schemes that provide young people with valuable insights into the world of work
- KCC's approach to employing young people has attracted national recognition

2. What We Aim To Achieve - 2009 / 10 Targets

During 2009 /10 KCC will continue to develop and monitor the performance of the various schemes aimed at attracting a younger workforce through a new working group, *Routes to Employment*, that has recently been established and has set the following targets for 2009 /10:

- Kent Success Apprenticeship Scheme – a further 100 places, making a total of 300 by 2010. However the vision is that this will increase further following the developments that are underway (see para 5.1)
- Gap Year Programme – a further 85 appointments
- Work Experience – a further 18 places until 31 August 2009, in addition to those already arranged (continuation beyond 31.8.09. is dependent on further funding)
- Kent Graduate Programme – 12 posts

3. The Business Case

Three key drivers to employing a younger workforce:

- (ii) In common with local government, KCC has an ageing workforce. Approximately one third (33.2%) of employees are expected to retire over the next 10-15 years. In contrast 14.4% of the workforce is under 30.
- (iii) To employ a workforce that reflects and understands the community it serves.
- (iv) Continue to increase KCC's performance by employing a workforce of all talents, including younger employees.

4. Kent Success Apprenticeship Scheme

This remains a major priority for the County Council. The national context is that the government's target is for 20% of school leavers to enter apprenticeships. Macdonald's has announced that it could offer the scheme to one in eight of its staff this year and up to 10,000 from 2010. It also has been accredited as a training provider, which KCC already has and is delivered through KEY Training.

KCC's apprenticeship scheme continues to go from strength to strength and with 200 starts is well on target to achieve the 250 commitment within 'Towards 2010'. This 200 includes 18 new starters in January 2009 – a record for this time of year! For the first time Kent Highways Services has recruited a stream of 9 apprentices. This was business led, supported by Personnel in partnership with Key Training (KCC's apprenticeship provider). There are many examples of the positive impact apprenticeships have delivered.

'My apprentice Laura is willing, helpful, resourceful, eager to learn, friendly and has integrated into our team brilliantly. This is my third apprentice and I think the scheme is great'- Fiona Webb, Legal & Democratic Services

'This apprenticeship has opened up so many doors and training opportunities, I have the skills and experience to do well in my chosen career and believe apprenticeships are the best thing for young people looking to go into work' – Aimee Sutton, former Marketing Apprentice.

'I honestly believe completing a Kent Success Apprenticeship was the best life choice I have ever made to date' – Abi Ellis, former Supporting Independence Apprentice

In December 2008 a high profile event was held to showcase apprenticeships to employers in Kent. This was a huge success with a key note speech from the Leader, Paul Carter together with speeches from former apprentices who did a fantastic job promoting apprenticeships.

Further evidence of recognition is apparent by KCC being one of a handful of employers identified nationally by the Prime Ministers Delivery Unit to inform government policy. A delegation visited Kent during December 2008 and met with the Leader, Chief Executive, Personnel and other key players. As the

Leader commented at the showcase event for employers the following day, '*think they were blown away by what they saw*'

4.1 Building on Success- increasing apprenticeships

4.1.1

We will continue to build on this success by challenging ourselves to find innovative ways to enable the employment of more and more apprentices. The Highways business led approach was highly successful and we will want to replicate this in other parts of the business. For example, Commercial Services are supportive and already employ 4 apprentices including in business areas not available elsewhere in the Council. We will explore additional business specific apprenticeships such as within social care.

4.1.2

Personnel are currently developing a process that will enable managers to recruit an apprentice and hold the post against a vacancy. Apprentices will receive the apprenticeship rate during training and be appointed to the KCC post on successful completion of the apprenticeship and the probationary period. This will provide savings (as the apprenticeship rate is below Kent Scheme salaries) for managers and the commitment of a job, subject to performance, for the apprentice.

4.1.3

Following the success of the event for employers in Kent we will showcase to KCC managers the business benefits and the value of employing apprentices.

4.1.4 Pay

Apprentices currently receive £80 per week, the national minimum. This has been reviewed in order to enhance the scheme. Key drivers for review:

- There have been no cost of living increases since the Kent Success Apprenticeship was introduced in 2006
- These are KCC's lowest paid employees. Also consequently travel expenses are a relatively high proportion of an apprentice's pay
- The national minimum rate will increase to £95 per week from April 2009
- The increase should improve the attractiveness of the scheme to prospective apprentices and therefore increase applications

The rate must remain affordable to KCC, particularly in the current climate of tight budgeting restraint. It is also sensible to avoid setting a rate that would trigger tax and national insurance deductions.

It is therefore recommended that the new rate be set at £105 (the threshold at which tax and NI become payable) and that this should take effect from 1 January 2009.

This recommendation has been endorsed by COG and the Leader.

5. Gap Year Programme

Originally established to provide young people with paid placements prior to going to university, KCC's Gap Year Programme now attracts undergraduates on sandwich courses wishing to spend a year in industry, and increasingly large numbers of graduates who are looking for their first step into the job market. The programme is attractive to individuals who are unsure where they want to start their career and lack experience. It provides individuals with quality employment experience so they have a positive experience of working in Kent. Managers benefit by employing motivated individuals who bring a lot of skills but at the same time represent value for money as they are new to the job market. Individuals are both placed in KCC and with employers across Kent.

In the first year of the programme in 2004/05, 23 people were placed. This has increased to 81 so far during 2008/09, already exceeding the 75 target, of which 47 are with KCC.

Feedback from managers and employees has been very positive indeed.

'Getting in touch with the Kent Gap Year Programme was one of the best decisions I have ever made. Without a scheme like the Kent Gap Year Programme there is no opportunity to work in places like this. This scheme enabled me to gain experience and earn money for my future, meeting great people along the way'- Ben Hanson, Youth Offending Service

'The scheme is an excellent way for gap year students (and industrial placement students like myself) to be introduced to the world of work'-Bradley Johnson, Environment & Waste.

'I love it! The job is really suited to my degree and I am learning lots of new things about the tourism industry that I never knew! I have to thank the Gap Year Programme for making the whole process stress free and finding me the perfect gap year job!'- Hannah Elver, Kent Tourism

'For my first full-time job, this is exactly what I wanted. The job is thoroughly rewarding because of its nature, providing the public with a good service' – Jaspreet Gary, Canterbury Library

'Over the years I have been more and more impressed by the quality of students that we have both interviewed and taken on in our Business Unit. Jack and Matthew this year have exceeded all my personal expectations. All the students that we have taken on via your innovative and exciting programme have been dedicated to learn and their enthusiasm, dress code, punctuality and attendance records have been an example to all.'- Ian Flower, Systems Manager, Commercial Services.

Applications have increased year on year with a record of 358 so far during 2008/2009 (up 131 already from last year)

6. Kent Graduate Programme

KCC also has a well established graduate programme that has been operating since 1998. The programme attracts high calibre graduates seeking a career in local government. Last year KCC recruited Management, Finance, and for the first time, Transportation and Development graduate trainees (a total of 10) and an IT & Computing stream will be added this year. In previous years between 5-10 Management trainees and 2 Finance trainees have been recruited. Consideration will be given for places in other specialisms in the future.

Individuals benefit from a structured learning and development programme, gain a management qualification, and undertake four six month placement before being supported to secure permanent employment with KCC. Feedback from managers and trainees:

'Being on the Kent Graduate Programme was a fantastic way to start my career. My time on the programme has undoubtedly supported me to develop as a manager much quicker than I would have otherwise, and subsequently at the end of the programme I was able to secure a management position in my chosen area.' - Jenny Dixon, former Kent Graduate Management Trainee.

'My experience generally of the Kent Graduates is that they are an extremely able group. I am currently managing a new KGP - her first placement - and have been most impressed by the calibre of the work she is doing and have been able to give her a high degree of responsibility. I am confident that she will be a real asset to KCC, and a senior manager of the future. The Programme is excellent in the way it supports and develops the individuals, ensuring that they have the management and professional skills that KCC needs, now and in the future.' Debra Exall, Head of Strategic Policy

7. Work Experience

KCC's well developed work experience schemes provide placement opportunities across the council for young people aged 14-19. This includes the Kent Vocational Training Placements (KVTP) that provides young people with vocational training within the social care sector. KCC has also established Kent Works to engage with schools, colleges and employers in Kent to arrange work experience opportunities for young people. During 2008/09 143 formal (managed by KCC) work experience placements have been arranged for young people so far and during 2007/08 159. This is in addition to the Kent Vocational Training Placements (over 200 a year). The schemes have again resulted in positive experiences for young people and managers:

'Mikey's placement here has been of great benefit to him and us! The members have responded very favourably to him and it is a joy to see a young person so accepting and tolerant of others! All in all a successful outcome for everyone and we look forward to further referrals, Heather Gooch, Manager, Resource House, KASS.

I have always known I wanted to go into care and make a difference but now I know I'd like to work in a day centre for people with disabilities. Meeting them has changed my mind it has made me change my career choice.' Charlotte Sprigel-Sinclair – KVTP placement.

KCC will continue to develop its approach to work experience (will require funding).

8. Retention

We know that retaining young people long term is a challenge given that people in this group change jobs more frequently. We will continue to develop employment practices that support the retention of young people.

Greenhouse is an established staff group for employees under 30 that provides a voice for young people. A conference for young people is planned for next month and a talent management programme for young people is being developed in partnership with Greenhouse.

9. National Recognition

KCC's approach to employing young people continues to attract national interest with articles appearing in the press. We have recently been approached by *Equal Opportunities Review*, a national publication, with a request to be interviewed on KCC's approach to employing young people. This has resulted in an in depth article being published in January 2009. A copy of the article is attached for information.

10. Recommendations

Personnel Committee is asked to:

10.1 Note the progress and success so far in employing young people through a range of approaches, future developments and national recognition.

10.2 Agree the increase in pay for apprentices of £105 per week with effect from 1 January 2009 that has been endorsed by Chief Officers' Group

10.3 Advise of any additional approaches that Members would specifically like officers to research and develop.

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Appendix A

KENT SUCCESS STARTS and LEAVERS with DESTINATIONS FROM OCTOBER 06 TO DECEMBER 08

NOTE: Figures exclude 18 new starts during January 2009

Total Number of Starts: **172** - of which **50** are still in training

Total number of leavers: **122**

Total number of Framework achievers (i.e. completed the full apprenticeship): **88**.
This equates to 71.5% achievement

Destinations of those 88 who achieved the full Apprenticeship:

Job Within KCC	Job within private sector	Job Within Public Sector	Unemployed	Unknown	Continuing Study
56 (65%)	14 (16%)	4 (5%)	6 (6%)	6 (6%)	2 (2%)

Destinations of the 32 who did not complete the full framework:

Job within KCC	Job within private sector	Job within public sector	Learner continuing study	Not suited to qualification or changed their mind	Personal	Dismissed	Pregnancy	Unknown
	7		1	4	9	7	5	1

All Kent Success Leavers destinations

Job Within KCC	Job within public sector	Job within private sector	Not suited to qualification or changed their mind	Personal	Learner Continuing Study	Dismissed	Pregnant	Un-employed	Un-known
56	4	21	4	9	3	7	5	6	7

Skill areas of those 50 still in training

Admin	Customer Service	Care	Childcare
44	3	1	2

Directorates of those 50 still in training

KASS	CFE	CMY	E & R	CED
14 (28%)	11 (22%)	13 (26%)	2 (4%)	10 (20%)

Gap Year Programme Statistics

2004/05

How many students were placed? 23

How many were:

- 14 Placed in KCC
- 9 Placed in private companies

How many students applied that year? No information held

2005/06

How many students were placed? 76

How many were:

- 33 Placed in KCC
- 43 Placed in private companies

How many students applied that year? No information held

2006/07

How many students were placed? 80

How many were:

- 33 Placed in KCC
- 47 Placed in private companies

How many students applied that year? 205

2007/08

How many students were placed? 23

How many were:

- 14 Placed in KCC
- 9 Placed in private companies

How many students applied that year? 227

2008/09

How many students were placed? 81

How many were:

- 47 Placed in KCC
- 34 Placed in private companies

How many students applied that year? 358

Kent Council targets young people

With an ageing workforce, Kent County Council recognised the need to take a proactive approach to employing younger workers. Kate Godwin examines the thinking behind this move and the various initiatives the council has put in place.

Key points

- An ageing workforce means that Kent County Council needs to attract more young people to work for it. The council has therefore introduced a number of positive action initiatives specifically for younger people.
- The schemes include creating 250 apprenticeships at the council, a “gap year” programme, a graduate programme and offering a variety of work experience placements.
- The council supports a staff group for young people called Greenhouse. As well as giving young people a voice, it also allows them to contribute to policy. The group has its own site within KCC’s website, which allows members to post documents and contribute to forums.
- To encourage retention of all its staff, KCC offers career breaks and flexible retirement options. It is also reviewing its retirement age.
- Another example of using new technologies to reach young people is a recruitment website featuring young people who work at KCC. The council has distributed thousands of “credit cards” across the county to publicise the site and encourage job applications.
- The council has a graduate training programme that leads to a management qualification.
- Two-week work experience placements are offered to 14- to 19-year-olds.
- The council has a young people’s group, which gives a voice to people up to age 30 in the organisation. It has its own “virtual community” accessible only by members of the group.
- The council has a website aimed at young people to encourage them to apply for jobs with the council.
- It is recognised that once young people have been recruited, it remains a challenge to retain them. The feasibility of a career-break scheme is being investigated.
- There has been a culture change and the council has become attractive to young people, but it is acknowledged that it will take time to effect a change in the age profile of the workforce.

In common with many local authorities, Kent County Council (KCC – see box 1) could see up to one-third of its employees retire in the next decade. With 56% of its workers within the 35–55 age bracket, the council could face the prospect of being unable to deliver key services in the future. By contrast, younger age groups are under-represented at KCC, with just 6.5% of employees aged 25 or under. The local authority also recognises that due to societal ageing, the proportion of young people within the potential workforce pool will continue to diminish.

Nigel Fairburn, workforce strategy manager at KCC, explains that the council has a workforce strategy board to look at issues such as recruitment and retention and the need to address key future occupational skill shortages. The council's chief executive chairs the board, with membership drawn from HR and representatives from each of the local authority's directorates.

To ensure the sustainability of the organisation, KCC is taking action to:

- promote jobs and careers;
- identify, develop and motivate talent;
- address key future occupational skill shortages;
- address diversity issues; and
- meet the need to “grow its own” professionally trained staff.

“We look at some of the medium and longer-term actions that we need to take,” says Fairburn. “And one of those actions is the need to change the age profile of our workforce and attract more young people to work for us.” The council's workforce strategy therefore includes a number of positive action initiatives specifically for younger people.

Recruitment changes

The local authority created an “age champions” network to promote age-neutral recruitment, selection and retention policies and practices. Job descriptions and person specifications were overhauled to ensure they were age neutral. This included a review of qualifications criteria and the removal of both “desirable criteria” and the requirement for experience in lower grade roles unless there is a justifiable business need. KCC uses a “behaviours framework” called Ways to Success, which sets out behaviours, attitudes and competencies and the council is increasingly using this in the person specification for job vacancies.

“Traditionally, we focused on experience, but that's not the only criteria in terms of predicting someone's success in a role,” comments Fairburn.

All recruiting managers at KCC must undergo recruitment training that includes a diversity element and also covers permissible positive action. The council monitors all job applications, shortlisting and positions offered by age, disability, gender, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

Creating apprenticeships

In its vision document, *Towards 2010*, KCC pledged to create an additional 1,000 apprenticeships by 2010. A quarter of these are to be within the council, with the remaining 750 being hosted by public and private employers across Kent.

One reason for urging firms to employ apprentices is that while the proportion of young people in Kent who are not in education, employment or training is below the national average, the proportion in some areas is high.

The programme gives 16- to 24-year-olds the chance to gain an NVQ, a nationally recognised qualification, while being employed by KCC in a variety of departments. All apprenticeships in the Kent programme have been developed to provide more than just the formal work-based learning placement. A support package for the apprentices provides them with structured training in confidence-building, assertiveness, CV writing, KCC application forms and interview techniques. Apprentices are expected to complete training either on-the-job or at an approved training centre and are paid £80 a week for the course of their apprenticeship.

As there are no formal entry requirements regarding qualifications, the programme can reach out to young people, although apprentices do undergo an assessment process before joining. Apprenticeships vary between six and 18 months, according to the nature of the apprenticeship and how long the individual needs to complete it.

The personnel function at the council has supported the programme from the start and developed an apprenticeship contract. This ensures:

- guaranteed interviews for apprentices who meet the minimum criteria when applying for roles with KCC;
- personalised support to apprentices in the last three months of their contract; and
- that the need for experience for lower-grade roles with the council is not a requirement unless there is a business need.

As of January 2008, 79% of those who had successfully completed their apprenticeships had moved into longer-term employment with either KCC or other organisations.

Programme support

The leader of the council and the chief executive are totally committed to the apprenticeship programme. It has been supported by the personnel and development function, including the workforce strategy manager, the director of personnel and development and the council's supporting independence manager. The employee services team and recruitment team are also involved as they manage the day-to-day personnel aspects of the programme.

Key Training Services, a training provider at the council, delivers the training aspect of the programme. They also recruit the young people, set up the placements and provide pastoral support to apprentices.

KCC provided the initial funding to establish the programme and to cover the £80 a week salary of the apprentices, but the different business units of the council now cover the salary costs. The Learning and Skills Council receives funding to put the apprentices through training for the qualifications, so the council does not have to pay for the cost of the qualification and training.

KCC is confident that it will meet its target of 250 apprenticeships but Fairburn explains that the council would like to increase this number. "We're currently having internal discussions as to whether we should put targets into each directorate's business plan around apprenticeships, employment and young people."

Difficulties

Fairburn explains that initially there was a general lack of understanding within the organisation about what an apprenticeship involves, the responsibilities of placement managers, the expectations of young people and the lack of permanent positions for apprentices to apply for once they were actively seeking employment.

Following the launch of the programme, the council recognised the need for a much more coordinated approach to ensure complete "buy-in" throughout the authority, and this has now been developed.

The council feels it could have been more effective in its selection of departments at the outset, to ensure that they could accommodate apprentices. A number of areas of the council are now being targeted. "In terms of turnover, opportunities do arise," says Fairburn. "But it's a question of whether a vacancy comes up in the right place for an individual."

KCC is now considering whether it should appoint apprentices with a particular vacancy in mind. Subject to satisfactory assessment, they could then be slotted into that post. This approach is being discussed with several areas of the council.

In terms of achieving the wider objective of 1,000 apprenticeships, the council feels this is well on the way to being met and has started a further push to other public and private sector employers in Kent, with a recent event for employers launched by the leader of the council.

Gap-year scheme

Traditionally, fewer graduates return to work in Kent than in neighbouring counties in the south-east, so KCC has adopted the gap-year programme as one strategy to help overcome this issue. The council offers paid placements of between six to 15 months to gap-year students, undergraduates on sandwich courses and, increasingly, graduates who are looking for their first step into the job market. The gap-year scheme is attractive to those individuals who are not sure where they want to start their career and need some work experience, and

to those who are interested in a particular career but who lack the experience an employer would normally be looking for.

There are a variety of placements both within the council and with other employers in the county and the gap-year programme team screens and interviews suitable candidates in order to match their requirements to specific employers in Kent. The council wants to encourage Kent employers to offer short-term employment opportunities to young people in order to counter the skill shortage that will in time have a detrimental effect on Kent's economy if it is not addressed.

Fairburn reports that, in the current financial year, the council had a target of appointing 75 people under the gap-year programme, but that has already been exceeded. He explains: "It's a growing scheme and the employers taking part are delighted with the high standard of work that these young people deliver. It provides employers with motivated employees and provides the young people with quality employment so they have a positive experience of working in Kent and an established relationship with the employer.

"Young people may lack work experience but they do bring a lot of skills to business. Like many local authorities, we have emphasised experience when recruiting which can disadvantage young people. The apprenticeship scheme and gap-year programme are giving people the opportunity to get that experience and develop their careers."

Graduate programme

One way that KCC is "growing its own" professionally trained staff is through its graduate programme. Trainees have the opportunity to study for a professional qualification to ensure they gain the business skills and local authority knowledge to equip them to become managers within KCC. The council currently offers placements in management, transportation and development and finance, and it is considering offering places in other specialisms in future.

Trainees benefit from:

- project management training and experience;
- four six-month placements in different directorates over the two-year programme (three years in the case of finance), which provide excellent experience within the local authority;
- a network of support, including a mentor and a placement manager, with workshops giving an opportunity to develop personal skills, organisational knowledge and networking links within the council; and
- a management qualification.

As well as undertaking work on their placements, the trainees also have the opportunity to take part in group projects with the rest of their graduate cohort. The aim is that by carrying out discrete projects for senior managers, they will make good networking links across the whole of the organisation, develop excellent teamworking skills and get the chance to manage a real-life project.

Some of the projects that former graduate trainees have worked on include:

- creating a website to provide support and information for young carers in Kent;
- organising a two-day residential conference for schools across the county, promoting higher education and graduate work opportunities within Kent; and
- promoting the Europe Direct Information Relay in Ashford Gateway, where people can find answers to any questions they have about the European Union.

The number of places available with the council varies each financial year and in 2008 the six places that were offered, with a starting salary of around £22,500 a year, attracted 400 applicants.

Work experience

The council also offers two-week work experience placements for 14- to 19-year-olds in a variety of areas, including legal services, finance and accountancy, landscaping, social care and personnel.

The work experience placements are generally unpaid and can include job-shadowing, helping out with all aspects of a department while learning how things work, and taking part in a specific project.

KCC has also established Kent Vocational Training Placements as part of its commitment to achieving employment targets within the care industry. The object of the programme is to encourage those aged 14 to 19 years old to consider a career in social care when they leave school by providing them with real experience of the discipline of employment and the opportunities provided by a variety of work within the social care sector.

Placements are from one half day up to four days a week and last from six weeks to two years or more. Students can take part in special projects, group work or work with the care team in social care. The project is open to those in full-time education, young people who are not in school, students who are excluded or at risk of exclusion and those who have dropped out of school for one reason or another.

The council has also established Kent Works to engage with schools, colleges and employers to create first-class work experience placements for young people, as well as schemes that mutually benefit employers and local educational organisations.

“Rather than just responding to requests for placements, we want to be more proactive,” comments Fairburn. “We’re considering setting targets for a certain number of work experience opportunities, which could include volunteering, and then advertising them on the job site.”

Talent management

As part of its strategic approach to workforce planning, KCC has established its own approach to talent management. The aim is to identify future leaders, managers and employees with further potential, and provide them with the skills and experience they will need. Diversity is monitored, although the council admits the senior talent pool is not as representative as it would like it to be in terms of ethnicity and disability. The programme has two prongs – one focusing on senior leaders and the other taking a whole-organisation approach.

The council has created a senior management talent pool by asking directors and senior managers to nominate individuals for the pool and by inviting self nominations.

The whole-organisation approach is being piloted within the council's directorates and one of its outcomes is the identification of high performers with further potential.

"We've told directorates to pilot it in a way that suits their business, so directorates are doing that in different ways," says Fairburn. "For example, the chief executive's department is piloting in personnel and development and has created secondments and other opportunities which are giving people experience outside their current role. This allows us to identify individuals who have the potential to move beyond their present job."

One aim of all the different initiatives being run by KCC is to make managers aware that there are various ways to fill roles and that a number of options exist for bringing people into the organisation. "It's a cultural change to alter the way recruiting managers think about who they might consider for a job," comments Fairburn. "HR needs to set the framework and lead on the issue."

Young people's group

In 2007, the council established a formally recognised staff group for young people called Greenhouse. Nicola Lodemore, who is responsible for employment policy at KCC, explains that it came about because KCC felt there was a need to give young people in the organisation a voice that would enable them to contribute to policy and provide support to one another.

The group is open to all employees under the age of 30 – who make up 15% of KCC's workforce – and to any member of staff who can actively contribute to the aims of the group.

Greenhouse aims to be proactive in empowering younger members of staff to fulfil their potential through helping make employment and development opportunities and service provision easier for young people to access, and through seeking opportunities to expand their experiences at work.

The group holds meetings at least four times a year and aims to provide a non-judgmental, comfortable environment in which younger staff can meet, share concerns and seek advice and guidance.

As well as raising the profile of young people currently working for the council, Greenhouse also facilitates better engagement with younger members of staff as it serves as a consultation mechanism that can be used by all council directorates.

The group's activities include:

- **buddying** – trained Greenhouse members provide a buddy system to help a young person with any issues or questions they have;
- **training** – training sessions directed towards younger staff;
- **socials** – nights out to enable members to get to know each other and have fun; and
- **volunteering** – a group volunteering day once a year.

Greenhouse also has its own virtual community on IDEA's Communities of Practice website, which can only be accessed by the group's members. As well as containing details of social events, meetings, newsletters and policy consultations, the site allows people to log on to chat, post documents and contribute to forums.

Holly Strang, chair of the Greenhouse forum, says: "It's like a friendship group and we provide a support function for young people. At meetings people can bring up any issues or problems, which chairs of the group take forward."

Some of the support offered by the group concerns preparing people for job interviews and giving them interview tips. "Lack of confidence is quite a big issue for some young people," says Strang, "and we've encouraged people to apply for jobs and helped them prepare for interview."

One of the issues identified by Greenhouse is that many young people are in administrative work and are concerned about gaining the necessary skills and experience to move out of that role and progress to other jobs in the council. The group is currently working with Fairburn on developing a talent pool of young people which would help individuals move out of administrative work. Strang points out that KCC's policy decision to change its recruitment policy for lower grades – by not asking for experience unless there were really strong business reasons to do so – was informed by its consultation with Greenhouse.

Reaching young people

KCC has developed a [website](#) (opens in new window) aimed at young people who are considering their first step into work. The site gives information on the wide variety of roles and businesses that exist in local government.

"I think it's fair to say that local government doesn't have a particularly sexy image among young people," says Lodemore. "And you need to be aware of the fact that young people won't automatically be thinking of working for the council."

To this end, the site carries a number of examples of what a day at work is like for several young people at KCC. It also has advice about how to apply for jobs at the council.

To publicise the website, KCC produced thousands of “credit cards” carrying the website address. In summer 2008 these were sent to every secondary school in Kent and the Connexions career service, and were placed “in every building in the county that has a connection with the council. In addition, members of Greenhouse attended the county show to publicise the website.

“You need to be creative about how you make relationships,” comments Lodemore. “The yourfirstjob site is a great example of that as it profiles young people, has pictures of them and talks about their experiences in a way that young people can connect with.

“Similarly, the Greenhouse site is a perfect example of using technologies that young people are very comfortable with to communicate the organisation’s message.”

Lodemore reports that the council has been tracking the hits on the site and that the numbers have been rising, although it is too early to say if there has been an increase in the number of job applications received from young people.

KCC has also commissioned a school to produce a recruitment DVD for young people that will be ready in early 2009. This will be placed on the [website of Kent TV](#) (opens in new window) and will be used at events such as job fairs.

Retention

Retention is critical to the long-term health and success of a business, particularly one that faces the prospect of many employees retiring in the next decade.

While traineeships and graduate programmes can help to retain younger employees, there is a danger that individuals will take the experience and skills they have gained at KCC to other employers.

“Retention of young people is a challenge,” acknowledges Lodemore. “While we recognise that young people are perhaps less likely to stay for a very long time we also need to get something back for our investment.

“It’s also the case that while people may leave, if they have a good impression of us they may come back later in their career.”

To help deal with this issue, a graduate gap-year student is researching the feasibility of developing KCC’s career-break facility to make it more attractive to a wider staff group. Currently most breaks are taken by working mothers, but the council is considering extending the basis on which people can take extended breaks, which it feels may work as a retention tool for younger staff.

“While some people may still use it for caring responsibilities, younger people beginning a career could use it to go travelling and then return to work,” says Lodemore.

Employees are also more likely to stay with an organisation if they feel it offers development opportunities. This is an issue that Greenhouse believed it was key to get KCC to consider as many of its members are keen to progress out of an admin. role.

“Many people in Greenhouse told us they want to stay at KCC and move up, which is why we went to Nigel [Fairburn] and asked if a programme could be devised that would help with this,” states Strang.

KCC’s ageing workforce highlights the need to have enough employees with the right skills in place in 10 years’ time. The potential prospect of more than 30% of the workforce retiring within the next decade highlights the need to retain some older workers as well as the importance of attracting and keeping young people.

“We need to give a clear message, both internally and externally, that both ends of the age spectrum are important in order for us to be able to deliver services in the future,” says Lodemore.

“The best thing we can do is look at what we offer to our staff and ensure it meets the needs of both older and younger staff.”

Policy changes

The benefits on offer at KCC can make the council an attractive place to work for employees of all ages, particularly in a tight pay climate. Lodemore reports that initiatives such as a rewards website offering various discounts to staff have proved popular.

From a policy perspective, the council is considering reviewing its retirement age. Lodemore explains: “We took some time to consider our approach to the Age Regulations and at that time decided to retain a retirement age, but it was always in the back of our minds that that was a temporary decision.”

KCC offers flexible retirement options that gives its employees greater choice about the nature and timing of their retirement. Flexible retirement is a way of developing the council’s work–life and diversity policies and integrating equality principles more fully into its existing employment practices.

The council enables people to plan ahead and address career changes constructively. To do this, it offers guidance on how to prepare for the final years in the workforce and the choices that are available, such as career breaks, part-time work and stepping down a grade.

“Essentially, we’re looking at what we can do to encourage people to continue working,” says Lodemore, “and what KCC can offer that would make that more attractive.”

Employer advice

Initially KCC found it difficult to get a coordinated approach across directorates to the various schemes it introduced. Some parts of the organisation also did not acknowledge that young people require a positive-action approach.

For those employers considering similar initiatives, Fairburn stresses the importance of getting managers on board. “The benefits aren’t always that visible, so you need to strongly make the business case so people are aware that if they don’t have a fully representative workforce they may be missing out on talent.”

He points out that there is also a need to tackle underlying cultural issues and long-standing ways of doing things. KCC had to tackle managers’ perceptions that job applicants must always have direct work experience, and this is ongoing. “We should have dealt with that before we introduced new recruitment programmes.

“One of the biggest challenges is encouraging managers to be braver about their choices – that’s one of the hardest things to achieve quickly.”

Both Fairburn and Lodemore stress that while people may be impatient for change, it will be some time before the job programmes that the council has put in place alter the age profile of the workforce.

“There has, though, been a culture change in KCC being seen as a good place for young people to work,” says Lodemore. “Many of the initiatives that we’ve put in place are taking root now so we are hopeful that we’ll see their positive effects from next year.”

[Kate Godwin](#) is a research officer for *Equal Opportunities Review*.

Box 1: Kent County Council

Kent County Council (KCC) is the largest non-metropolitan local authority in England, with a resident population of around 1.4 million people. Overall, 70% of residents in the KCC area aged 16 and over are “economically active”.

KCC is the county’s largest employer, with around 46,000 staff. Excluding schools, it has 16,000 employees.

The council is divided into five directorates, each of which is responsible for a particular area of council activity.

Towards 2010 is the council’s key document, which sets out a vision for the future of the county, identifies the main challenges to be addressed and provides a strategic framework for its equality strategy.

The council has a central corporate diversity team to take the lead on key equalities issues but each directorate has its own equality group, which produces an annual action plan. Work on equalities is supported across all five directorates by the presence of 48 “equality champions”.

The council is an accredited Investor in People and has been accredited as a Two Ticks (Positive about Disabled People) Employer every year since 2002. Formal partnership working arrangements with a variety of disability organisations have been in place since 2003 and the council has been

recognised by the Employers Forum on Disability and Remploy for its good practice in recruitment and employment.

Independent group Stonewall ranked the council 29th in its list of the 100 best employers in the country for lesbian and gay staff in 2008.

By: Deputy Leader of the Council
Director of Personnel & Development

To: Personnel Committee - 30 January 2009

Subject: Member Appointments

Classification: **Unrestricted**

SUMMARY: This paper confirms the arrangements currently in place for Member appointments to senior posts.

1. **BACKGROUND**

The KCC Constitution outlines the following procedure for the appointment of Chief and Senior Officers. It defines “senior managers” as “officers (other than Managing Directors) on Grade M or above who report directly to the Chief Executive or to Managing Directors.”

Appointment of Chief and Senior Officers

4. Rules 4-9 apply to the appointment of the Chief Executive, Managing Directors and Senior Managers.
5. For all such appointments the Director of Personnel & Development or their nominee shall:
 - (a) draw up a statement specifying:
 - (i) the duties of the post; and
 - (ii) any qualifications or qualities required;
 - (b) make suitable arrangements for the post to be externally advertised to bring it to the attention of suitably qualified persons (unless applicants are to be sought only from among the Council’s existing staff); and
 - (c) make arrangements for the statement in paragraph (a) above to be sent to any person on request.
6. In all cases either all qualified applicants or a selected short-list will be interviewed as set out in the table below:

Post	Appointing Body	Adviser
Chief Executive	Personnel Committee to interview and report to Council with recommendation	As determined by the Committee
Managing Director	Personnel Committee or Member Panel (Sub-Committee)	Chief Executive

Senior Manager	Member Panel (Sub-Committee)	Managing Director or Chief Executive
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The Personnel Committee may vary these arrangements, except those relating to the Chief Executive.

7. Where no suitably qualified person has applied, the post shall be re-advertised.

8. When a Managing Director or Senior Manager ceases to hold that post or is likely to be absent for any length of time, the Chief Executive, after consultation with the political group leaders, may appoint someone to act temporarily in that capacity and determine the salary to be paid. The temporary appointment shall not extend beyond six months without the approval of the Personnel Committee.

9. No offer of an appointment as Chief Executive, a Managing Director or Senior Manager may be made until:

(1) the Monitoring Officer has recorded the name of the person to be offered the appointment and any other particulars the Committee (or other appointing body or person) considers relevant to the appointment

(2) that information has been sent by the Monitoring Officer to the Leader and all members of the Cabinet with a date and time by which any objection to the making of the offer can be made by the Leader

(3) the Monitoring Officer has confirmed that the date and time for objection by the Leader has elapsed and either:

(i) in the case of the Chief Executive, the Council has confirmed the appointment after consideration of any such objection and resolving that it is not material or not well-founded; or

(ii) in all other cases, no such objection has been made or the appointing body has considered any such objection and has resolved or decided that the objection is not material or not well-founded.

10. The Chairman of the Standards Committee shall be consulted before a new or existing officer is appointed or designated as Monitoring Officer; and his views shall be presented to the Personnel Committee.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

The Personnel Committee is invited to note the current arrangements for these appointments and consider any changes required.

Amanda Beer
Director of Personnel & Development
Ext 4136

By: Alex King – Deputy Leader, Corporate Support & External Affairs
Amanda Beer – Director of Personnel & Development

To: Personnel Committee - 30 January 2009

Subject: **Monitoring use of Interim Managers, Agency Staff & Consultants**

Classification: Unrestricted

SUMMARY: This report details the use of interim managers, agency staff and consultants across the Authority on 30 September 2008.

1. **BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Since September 2004, Personnel Committee has monitored the use of interim managers and agency staff in KCC and from September 2005, consultants have been included in this monitoring which is done on a six monthly basis.
- 1.2 The reports note the difference between consultants procured to deliver a specific piece of work and the individuals brought into the organisation to cover existing vacancies or supplement the workforce at times of peak workload, i.e. agency staff and interim managers.
- 1.3 Personnel Committee have subsequently requested that the numbers of staff being re-employed following at risk of redundancy status. These figures are as follows:

	At risk of Redundancy	At risk of Restructure	Slotted	Redeployed
Staff Nos	233	67	38	104

- 1.4 It has also been requested that any member of staff who has left the Authority with a redundancy payment and subsequently re-engaged as a consultant is noted. In the period 01.04.08 to 30.09.08 the total is 8.

2. **AGENCY STAFF AND INTERIM MANAGERS IN PLACE ON 30.09.08**

- 2.1 The figure for use of agency staff and interim managers across KCC was 3.1% of the workforce. Information on the use of agency staff in other local authorities is scant, so it is difficult to benchmark this level of usage. However, statistics show that agency use is higher in the public than private sector and higher in the South East than elsewhere. The national average for the use of agency staff is reported at “roughly 2%” of the workforce, (CIPD/KPMG Labour market Outlook survey, 2008) so given the sector and location of KCC, agency use here does not seem excessive.
- 2.2 Appendix 1 shows the number of agency staff and interim managers in place across KCC by Directorate. Appendix 2 shows comparisons since September 2004.

2.3 The use of interim managers was as follows:

CED	1	1 x County Print
CMY	6	4 x Adult Education 1 x Libraries & Archives 1 x KDAAT

2.4 The percentage use of agency staff was lowest in Communities (0.8%) and highest in Environment & Regeneration (9%). Most of the agency staff in Environment & Regeneration were in Kent Highway Services where it has been necessary to use agency staff during restructuring to avoid taking on permanent staff.

2.5 In Chief Executive's the total figure was 5.9% which is lower than March last year. Higher percentages were seen in Legal Services where there were a high number of locum solicitors, SDU there were 25 in the contact centre and in ISG there were a total of 26, a significant percentage of ISG activity is project related and not funded from base budget. In order to meet the short term requirement for specialist staff ISG makes use of the KCS agency contracts to resource projects on behalf of service directorates.

2.6 In Kent Adult Social Services, the overall figure was 2.36% a decrease since March 2008.

2.7 In Children, Families & Education the use of agency staff accounted for 3.4% of the workforce, which is also a lower figure than March.

KENT TOP TEMPS (KTT)

3.1 Personnel Committee has asked that this monitoring report include information on Kent Top Temps. The number of agents that KTT had in place on 30 September 2008 is shown in Appendix 3. This also includes the new Managed Service therefore temporary staff also sourced through KTT via the supplier list and the number of supply teachers placed through Kent Top Temps. Information on supply teachers placed by other agencies is only available by requesting each school to provide it.

SUMMARY

4.1 Personnel Committee is asked to note the usage of agency staff, interim managers and consultants in KCC on 30 September 2008.

Amanda Beer
Director of Personnel & Development
Ext 4136

APPENDIX 1

NUMBERS OF AGENCY STAFF AND INTERIM MANAGERS ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2008

Directorate	No of Agency staff (FTE)	No of interim managers (FTE)	Total Temporary Staff (FTE)	Total temporary staff as a % of Directorate headcount	No of Consultants procured between 01.04.08 and 30.09.08
Chief Executive Department	120	1	121	5.9	0
Children, Families & Education	118	0	118	3.4	76
Commercial Services	25	1	26	3	0
Communities	28	6	34	.8	11
Environment & Regeneration	66	0	66	9	0
Kent Adult Social Services	94	0	94	2.3	4

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COMPARISON OF DATA

Directorate	% Temp Staff Sept 2008	% Temp Staff March 2008	% Temp Staff Sept 2007	% Temp Staff March 2007	% Temp Staff 2006	% Temp Staff 2005	% Temp Staff 2004
CED	5.9	7.8	8.0	4.3	5.5		
Comm Serv	3	5.8	1.8				
Corp Serv						12.59	4.45
CMY	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.8		
CFE	3.4	3.7	1.8	3.4	2.0		
Ed & Lib						1.57	1.36
E&R	9	9.7	8.2	6.3	5.7	12.59	.99
KASS	2.36	3.7	4.0	2.5	4.5		
Social Services						3.32	2.0
KCC staff	3.1	4.5	2.8	3.1	3.2	4.53	2.22

Directorate	Consultants		Consultants		Consultants		Consultants		Consultants	
	Sept 2008	March 2008	Sept 2007	March 2007	2006	2005	2004	2005	2004	
CED	0	6	14	0	3					
Corp Serv		0				7				
Comm Serv	0	0	0	0	0	0				
CMY	11	23	13	20	13					
CFE	76	74	35	32	40					
Ed & Lib						0				
E&R	0	0	1	10	4					
Strat Planning						45				
KASS	4	4	3	7	5					
Social Services								22		
Totals	91	107	66	64	65	74				

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Agency Staff Supplied through KTT on 30 September 08

Directorate	No of Temps (Actual)
CED (excluding Commercial Services)	101
KASS	98
CFE	118
CMY	15
E&R	28
Commercial Services	9
Supply Teachers	8
Total	369

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By: Deputy Leader of the Council
 Director of Personnel & Development

To: Personnel Committee - 30 January 2009

Subject: Personnel Committee Reporting and Monitoring

Classification: Unrestricted

SUMMARY: This paper records the current regular monitoring undertaken by Personnel Committee and invites the Committee to confirm these are appropriate and sufficient.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A paper was submitted to Personnel Committee in February 2008 confirming the role of the Committee as defined in the Constitution and outlining the regular reports received. The paper is attached as Appendix A.
- 1.2 This resulted in agreement on the content the Committee required for its update on staffing information.

2. Monitoring of staffing information

- 2.1 The first of these comprehensive reports was submitted to Personnel Committee in May 2008. The report contained details of
 - Current staffing levels (FTE and headcount)
 - Changes in staffing levels since September 2003
 - Reasons for changes in staffing levels
 - Age profile
 - Sickness levels
 - Staff by salary
 - Turnover and reasons for leaving
 - Diversity trained panelists
 - Headcount by equality strand

It also noted that work was in progress to report on vacancies in a consistent and systematic way.

- 2.2 The report was noted and the Committee requested the following additional level of detail:
 - Reasons for absence shown by Directorate
 - Details of recruitment panels without diversity trained members
 - Further breakdown of externally funded posts with details of KCC's employment position if funding is withdrawn

- 2.3 It is proposed that a paper showing the staffing position as at 31st March 2009 is brought to the Personnel Committee in May this year. The report will include all the information listed above in paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4. It has been suggested that the report on the use of agency staff and interim managers is integrated into this paper in future.
- 2.4 This detailed paper on aspects of KCC staffing would then be reported to Personnel Committee on an annual basis at the May Committee.
- 3. Other regular reports**
The following reports are also brought regularly to the Committee:
- Disciplinary and Grievance activity (6 monthly)
 - Uptake of career's leave (annual)
 - Market premia payments (annual)
 - Apprenticeship programme (annual)
 - Pay bargaining outcomes (annual)
 - Report on cases where the Council has exercised its discretion on payment of enhancement to pension (annual)
- 4. RECOMMENDATION**
Personnel Committee is asked to:
- i) confirm that the report on staffing information intended for the next meeting of the committee contains all the information required, as outlined in paragraph 2 above
 - ii) confirm that the other regular reports outlined in paragraph 3 are still required
 - iii) agree and specify any further regular reports required

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