

**East Cambridgeshire District Council**

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## **Workforce Development Plan**

**2009 - 2012**

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Human Resources  
October 2008

**East Cambridgeshire District Council**  
**Workforce Development Plan**

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## Summary

The workforce profile of East Cambridgeshire District Council can be summarised as follows:

- 68% of staff are employed on a full time basis and 32% part-time. 87% of staff are employed on a permanent basis and 13% fixed term. This reflects the makeup of local government nationally.
- 65% of staff are female and 35% male. The gender breakdown in local government nationally is 70.1% female and 29.9% male.
- 3 females and 6 males within the top 5% of earners.
- 1% of the Council's employees consider themselves to have a disability.
- 85% of the Council's employees are White, 3% are of mixed ethnic origin and 12 % have declined to state their ethnicity. In comparison, 91.8% of the local government workforce nationally is white and 97.7% of the East Cambridgeshire population is white.
- There are no Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff or disabled employees at senior grades.
- The age profile of the workforce is representative of the district's population and is typical of local government workforces generally. The majority of employees are within the 40-49 age group. The average age is 43.
- Only 1% of Council staff are within the age range of 16-19 (e.g. school leavers), this may be because East Cambridgeshire has the lowest share of its population in the 16-19 age band. Across the district, 3,600 people in the 16-19 category make up 4.7% of the total population.
- Over the next 6 years, 23 employees (11.5% of the total workforce) will reach retirement age.
- The average length of service for an employee is 6½ years.
- The average rate of staff turnover for 2007/08 was 17%.
- In both 2006/07 and 2007/08 voluntary reasons, i.e. promotion, career development, career change, education and training were the main explanation for staff leaving.
- Spending on recruitment for 2007/08 was £48,700.
- The skill level of staff can only currently be determined through application details and training records. More information is required to develop a fully informed view on the skill level/skill needs of the Council.
- The average gross training expenditure for 2007/08 was £390.00 per employee.

### Key Findings:

- Improving the Council's current approaches to workforce planning by building up a complete picture of current and future needs, labour market developments and staffing costs, will help to achieve key corporate priorities such as service transformation, efficiency gains and equal opportunities.
- The Council has now achieved Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and is now working towards achieving level 3 by 2010.

- The Council has difficulty in employing a workforce that is diverse in relation to ethnicity, and religious beliefs. One reason for this is due the very low proportion of BME people within the East Cambridgeshire population.
- The Council also experiences difficulties in recruiting people of school leaving age despite attending annual career fairs to promote the Council as an employer, and providing opportunities for apprenticeships. However, the difficulty recruiting people of school leaving age could be attributable to the low proportion of 16-19 year olds across the district.
- The Council also has difficulty in employing people with disabilities despite an estimated 15% of the district's population reportedly having some sort of disability. However, this high proportion of disabled staff is for the most part elderly people over the age of 65 years. In order to address this, the Council has entered into an agreement with the Papworth Trust to help to increase the proportion of Council staff with disabilities, by providing opportunities for disabled persons to work for the Council.
- The Council has already taken action to improve the recruitment pages on its website and has produced a new job information pack promoting East Cambridgeshire and the Council as a place to work.
- Recruitment and retention of employees from a wider pool will become increasingly necessary as the East Cambridgeshire population becomes more diverse. This will require the Council to monitor local demographics and engage with existing and new communities. The Council will need to collect new data where gaps have been identified, i.e. on the race and religious profile of the East Cambridgeshire population.
- One way to encourage more BME and disabled staff to apply to the Council for employment, is to develop more innovative recruitment and retention strategies and working practices to attract a more diverse workforce.
- There is growing recognition of the important role that flexible working arrangements can play in retaining and recruiting staff and the Council has extended the right to request flexible working to all employees. In the last 3 years, the Council has received 33 flexible working requests for part-time working, changes to work patterns, compressed hours (i.e. 9-day fortnights), annualised hours and retirement extensions.
- Further work is still required in relation to flexible retirement arrangements.
- Council affected by national shortages in three key areas - Planning, Building Control and Environmental Health.
- Need to consider introducing more collaborative working, sharing staff between Council's and more imaginative and responsive employment arrangements to address recruitment and retention problems.
- The Council has a strong ethos of training and development, however, the lack of a skills audit and training needs analysis makes it difficult to identify the gaps between current skills levels and future requirements.
- The Council has done well to reduce sickness absence in the last 3 years below the average of 8.4 days (per employee) for district council's nationally. Maintaining this level of sickness absence will be an ongoing priority for the Council.

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose of the plan**

The Workforce Development Plan produced by East Cambridgeshire District Council helps to identify and implement effective people strategies that will ensure that the Council employs the right people with the relevant skills, knowledge and capacity to meet the key challenges facing the Council over the next three years.

### **What is Workforce Development Planning?**

Workforce Development Planning is about making the links between the business strategies (e.g. Corporate Improvement Plan, Community Strategy Action Plan, Service Plans etc) and people strategies (e.g. Pay and Workforce Strategy, recruitment and retention, staff development and training). Essentially, it is about analysing our current workforce in terms of headcount, length of service, skills, turnover and diversity and then extending this analysis to identify the future requirements of the Council (e.g. the number of staff and the skills and competencies needed to deliver new and improved services and meet the corporate objectives).

At its simplest, workforce development planning is about *getting the right number of people with the right competencies in the right jobs at the right time.*

### **The Benefits of a Workforce Development Plan**

Workforce development planning is vital in helping the Council to:

- Ensure employees are used more effectively and efficiently;
- Decide how many employees will be required over the next three years, with the right skills, to deliver the Council's objectives;
- Provide realistic staffing projections for budgeting purposes;
- Respond to the increasing recruitment and retention challenges in key occupational areas;
- Ensure that sufficient and appropriate training and development is provided;
- Cope with peaks and troughs in supply and demand for different skills;
- Improve service delivery through committed and skilled staff;

- Retain employees;
- Implement diversity policies effectively and respond to equality and diversity issues;
- Ensure that the benefits of using new technologies are exploited to the full;
- Respond proactively to efficiency drivers;
- Manage staff performance and attendance management;
- Address the demands of external inspections e.g. Investors In People (IIP); and
- Deliver other corporate objectives/initiatives.

#### **How this Plan is structured**

This report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 outlines the key demographic statistics for the East Cambridgeshire population.
- Chapter 2 examines the Council's current workforce and compares it to both local and national labour markets.
- Chapter 3 looks at how well the Council manages its workforce in relation to staff turnover, recruitment and retention, partnership working, training and development, flexible working, sickness absence, equality and diversity and Investors in People (IIP).
- Chapter 4 outlines the main conclusions arising from the report.
- Chapter 5 examines the future needs of the Council and identifies an action plan to address the challenges faced.

## 1. Key Demographic Statistics for East Cambridgeshire Population

According to *The Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report for East Cambridgeshire* produced by Cambridgeshire County Council (May 2008):

- The resident population of East Cambridgeshire in mid-2006 was 76,300.
- The population has grown by 7.6% between 2001 and 2006, the highest growth in Cambridgeshire, and is forecast to increase by 5.8% over the next 15 years.
- The number of households in East Cambridgeshire was estimated at 32,600 in 2006. An increase of 9% since 2001. Households are forecast to increase by 15.3% by 2021.
- East Cambridgeshire is the third most expensive district in Cambridgeshire to live.
- 87% of the working age population in East Cambridgeshire is economically active.
- The unemployment rate is 2.9%
- 28% of East Cambridgeshire's population had no qualifications in 2001. 18% of the population was educated at Level 1 (1 O-Level/CSE/GCSE, NVQ Level 1 or Foundation GNVQ) and 20% was educated to degree level or more.
- 93.5% of the resident population were White/British, and a further 4.2% White/Irish and White/Other.
- 49% of the resident population were male and 51% were female (National Statistics, June 2005).
- East Cambridgeshire is an ageing population. The percentage of population aged 65+ is forecast to increase from 16.6% in 2006 to 18.1% in 2011. Women are expected to live until 83 years and men until 78.3 years.
- By 2010 the 45-54 age group will be the largest age group in the workforce and local authorities need to make sure their skills and experience are used (Employers' Organisation, 2004) .

- An estimated 15% of the district's population have some sort of disability, with most of these being elderly people over 65 years. This is higher than the county average, due to the high proportion of elderly people in the East Cambridgeshire population (Source: Cambridgeshire County Council Research Team).
- The chart below shows the current and predicted age profile of East Cambridgeshire:

Age	2006	2011	2016
<b>Under 16</b>	19.66%	19.1%	18.57%
<b>16 - 19</b>	4.72%	4.22%	4.03%
<b>20 - 24</b>	4.98%	5.33%	4.52%
<b>25-39</b>	19.27%	17%	15.65%
<b>40-64</b>	34.73%	36.23%	36.06%
<b>65-75</b>	8.65%	9.55%	11.49%
<b>75+</b>	7.99%	8.56%	9.66%

- Employment Figures:

	East Cambridgeshire	National Figure
Economical active (Working or seeking work)	87%	79%
Jobseekers allowance claimants	1.0%	2.1%
Unemployed	2.9%	4.3%

- The 2001 Census shows that about 51% of the employed residents in East Cambridgeshire work in the district while 17% work in Cambridge.

## **2. The Profile of East Cambridgeshire District Council's Workforce**

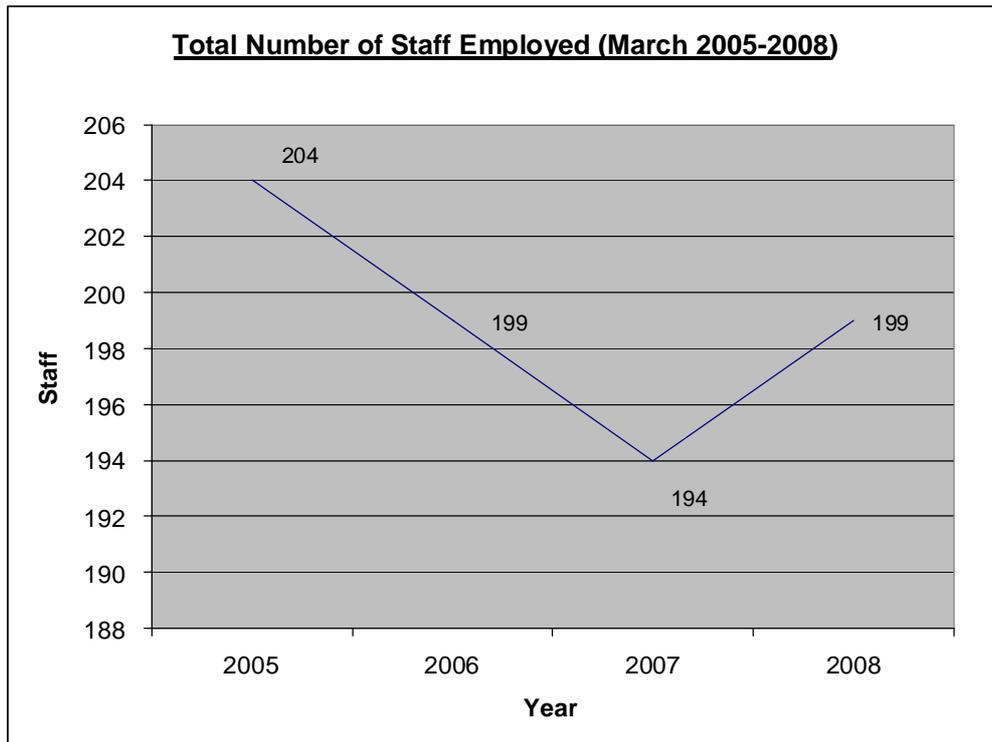
The workforce profile was produced by taking a 'snapshot' of the workforce on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. The sample of data used for this workforce study was collected from information that already exists within the Council's HR department and held either in electronic or manual form. This data provides an 'overview' of the whole authority.

### **2.1 Size of the Authority**

2.1.1 As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008, East Cambridgeshire District Council employed 199 employees (171.27 full time equivalent (fte) employees).

2.1.2 Between 2005 and 2008, the Council's headcount has remained relatively stable year on year. Table 1 demonstrates the Council's headcount as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008.

Table 1: Total Number of Staff Employed (March 2005-08)



2.1.3 For the purpose of this plan, the authority has been divided into 5 departments, comprising of a total of 20 sections, see Table 2 (pg.11).

Table 2: East Cambs District Council, Departments as at 31/03/08

<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>SECTION</b>
<b>Chief Executive</b>	
<b>Development Services</b>	Economic Development Forward Planning Development Control Building Control
<b>Environmental &amp; Community Services</b>	Strategic Housing Waste Management Domestic Commercial Corporate Strategy Leisure & Tourism
<b>HR, IT and Facilities Management</b>	Human Resources Information Technology Customer Services Facilities Management Secretarial Emergency Planning
<b>Finance, Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>	Finance Legal Democratic Services

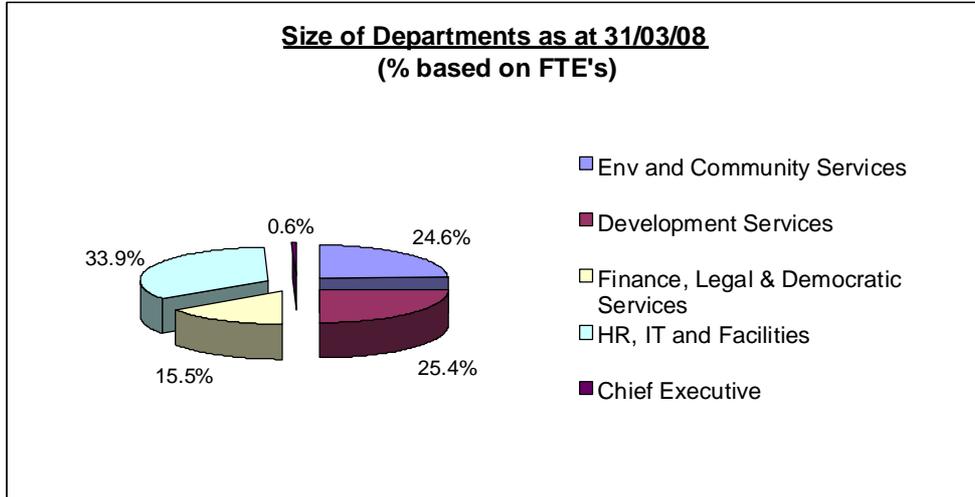
2.1.4 Table 3 shows the number of male and female staff employed by department as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.

Table 3: Number of Post Holders by Department

<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>MALES</b>	<b>FEMALES</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Development Services</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Finance, Legal and Democratic Services</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>HR, IT &amp; Facilities Management</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Environmental &amp; Community Services</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>199</b>

2.1.5 Table 4 shows the percentage of staff (fte's) employed by each department.

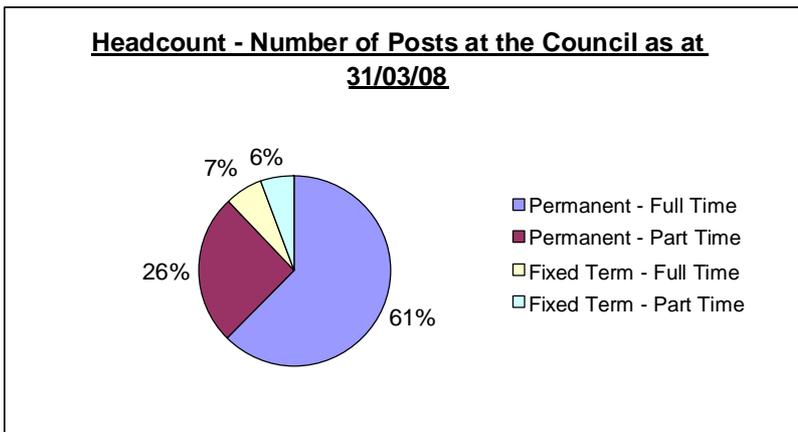
Table 4: Department %



2.1.6 Human Resources, IT and Facilities Management is the largest department, employing 33.9% of staff. Development Services is the second largest department employing 25.4%, followed by Environmental and Community Services (24.6%) and Finance, Legal and Democratic Services (15.5%). In addition, the Chief Executive accounts for 0.6% of staff.

2.1.7 Table 5 shows the split between full time and part time posts across the Council and whether staff are employed on a temporary or permanent basis. The chart shows that the majority of employees (61%) are employed on a full time, permanent basis.

Table 5: Headcount %



2.1.8 In addition, the authority also employs 25 casual members of staff. All staff employed on a casual employment contract (i.e. as and when required) have been

excluded from this data collection. Casual contracts exist mainly for Tourist Information Assistants, Visitor Guides and Town Centre Rangers/Market Operatives, although the authority does employ other staff on casual contracts to cover for other key positions within the authority.

2.1.9 This reflects the makeup of local government nationally. According to the Local Government Workforce Strategy 2007, local authorities in England employed 2,204,000 people as at June 2007. 60.4% were full time and 39.6% were part time. 91.3% were on permanent contracts and 8.7% were on fixed term contracts.

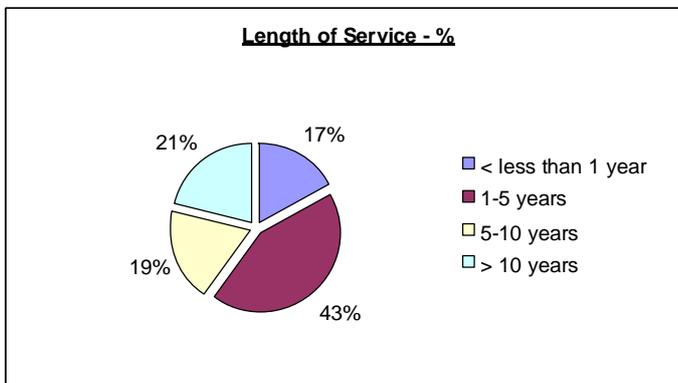
## 2.2 Length of Service

2.2.1 Tables 6 and 7 demonstrate the length of service for all staff employed at the Council as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. From the tables it is evident that the majority of staff (43%) have been employed by the authority for 1–5 years. The average length of service for all employees is 6½ years. However this figure is distorted by the high number of staff (21%) that have over 10 years service with the Council. The median length of service is 4 years.

Table 6: Length of Service (No. of Staff)



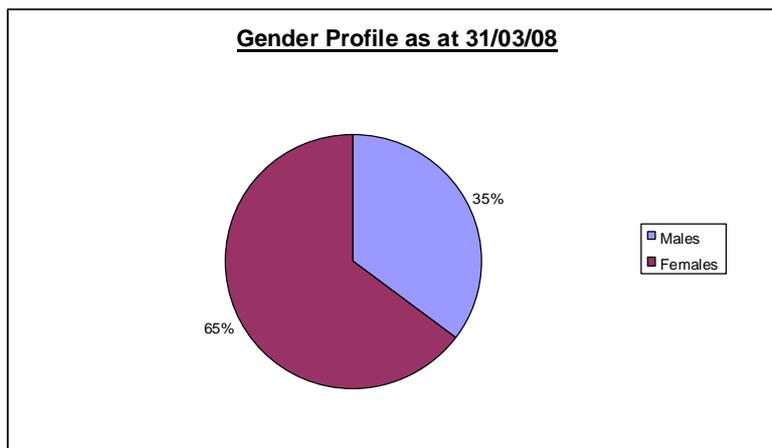
Table 7: Length of Service (% all staff)



## 2.3 Gender

2.3.1 Table 8 shows the gender profile of the Council. As evident from the table, the Council employs a much higher proportion of females (65%) to males (35%). This appears to accurately reflect the gender breakdown across local authorities nationally with the Local Government Workforce Strategy 2007 showing a gender profile of 70.1% female and 29.9% male.

Table 8: Gender Profile



2.3.2 The greater percentage of females to male employees is reflected through all sections of the Council.

2.3.3 There are 3 females and 6 males within the top 5% of earners at the Council.

## 2.4 Ethnic Origin

2.4.1 Tables 9 and 10 (page 15) show the ethnicity profile of the Council.

2.4.2 As at 31st March 2008, 85% of the Council's employees are White, 80% White/British, 1% White/Irish and 4% White/Other. This accurately reflects the Office of National Statistics Labour Force Survey (2007) which suggests that nationally 91.8% of the local government workforce is white. In addition, it appears to accurately reflect the 2001 Census data which shows that in East Cambridgeshire 93.5% of the population were White/British, and a further 4.2% were White/Irish and Other.

2.4.3 The rest of the Council's workforce is made up of 1% Mixed - White and Black African, 1% Mixed - White and Asian and 1% Asian/Other. This again reflects the 2001 Census data for the East Cambridgeshire population, which indicates that there with fewer than 1,570 people identified as from minority ethnic groups.

Table 9: Ethnicity Profile

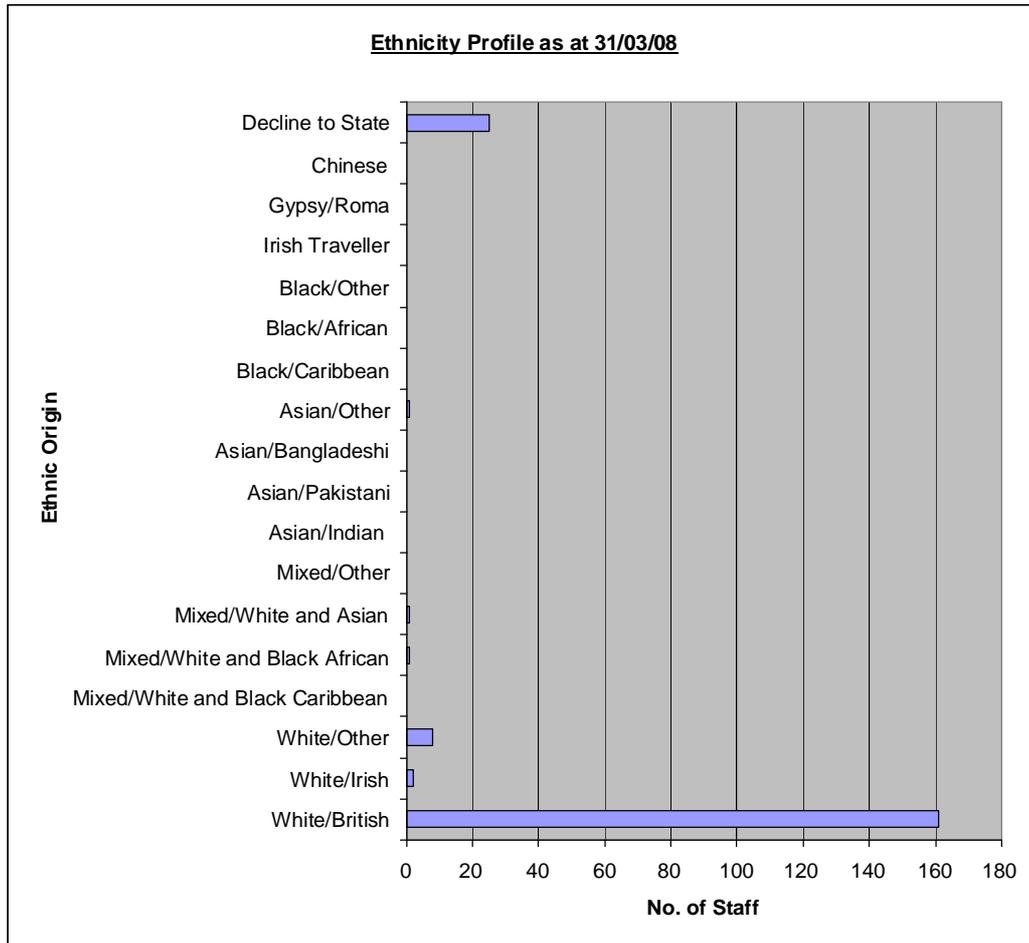
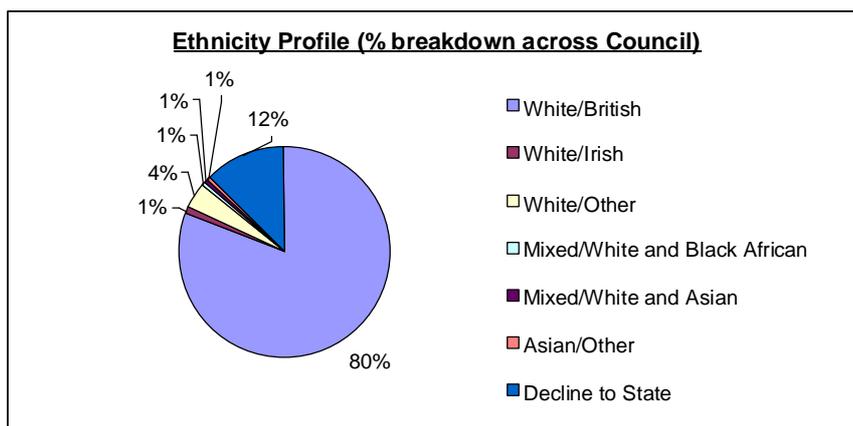


Table 10: % Breakdown across Council



2.4.4 The remaining 12% of the Council's workforce have declined to state their ethnicity.

2.4.5 None of the Council's top 5% of earners are from an ethnic minority background.

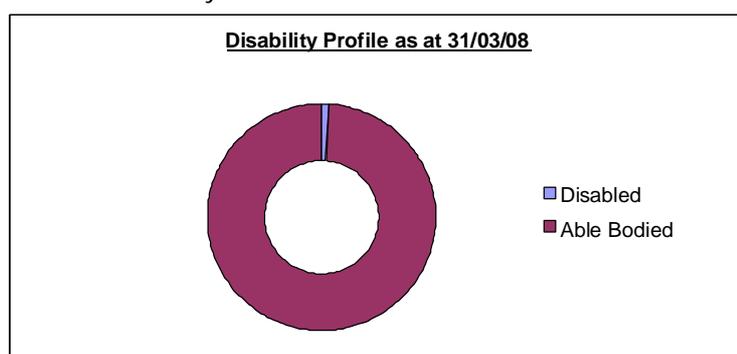
2.4.6 This information demonstrates the difficulty that the authority has in employing a workforce that is ethnically diverse.

2.4.7 Although not reflected in the ethnicity profile of the Council's workforce, one important thing to note in relation to the ethnicity population of East Cambridgeshire, is the high proportion of Gypsy/Travellers. The Cambridge Area Travellers Needs Assessment 2005 has estimated that in East Cambridgeshire there are 1,060 Gypsy/Travellers, equating to 1.4% of the district's population and making them one of the largest minority ethnic groups in the area.

## 2.5 Disability

2.5.1 Table 11 shows the disability profile of the Council.

Table 11: Disability Profile

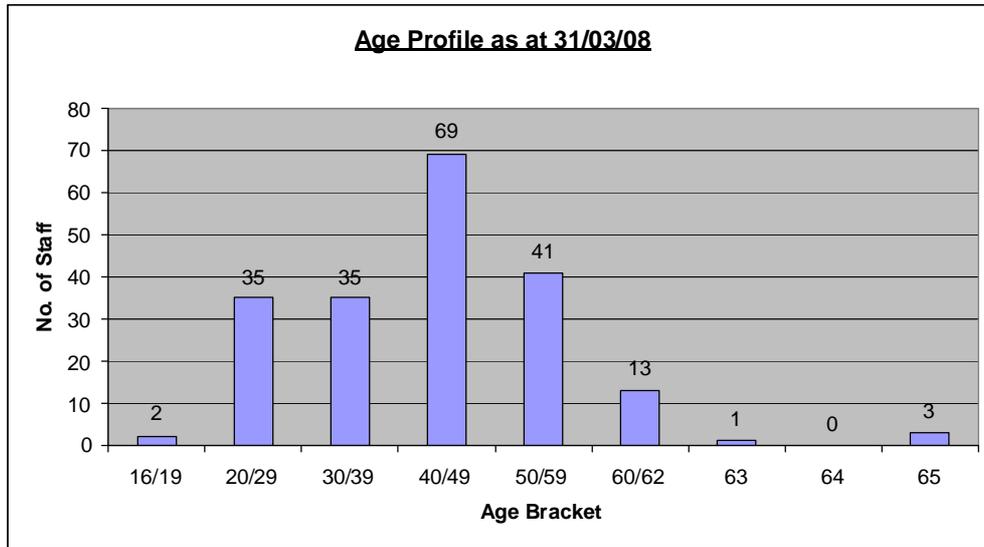


2.5.2 1% of the Council's employees consider themselves to have a disability. This is equivalent to 2 employees. As a benchmark, Cambridgeshire County Council have estimated that 15% of the district's population have some sort of disability, with most of these being elderly people over 65 years. This is higher than the county average, due to the high proportion of elderly people in the East Cambridgeshire population.

## 2.6 Age

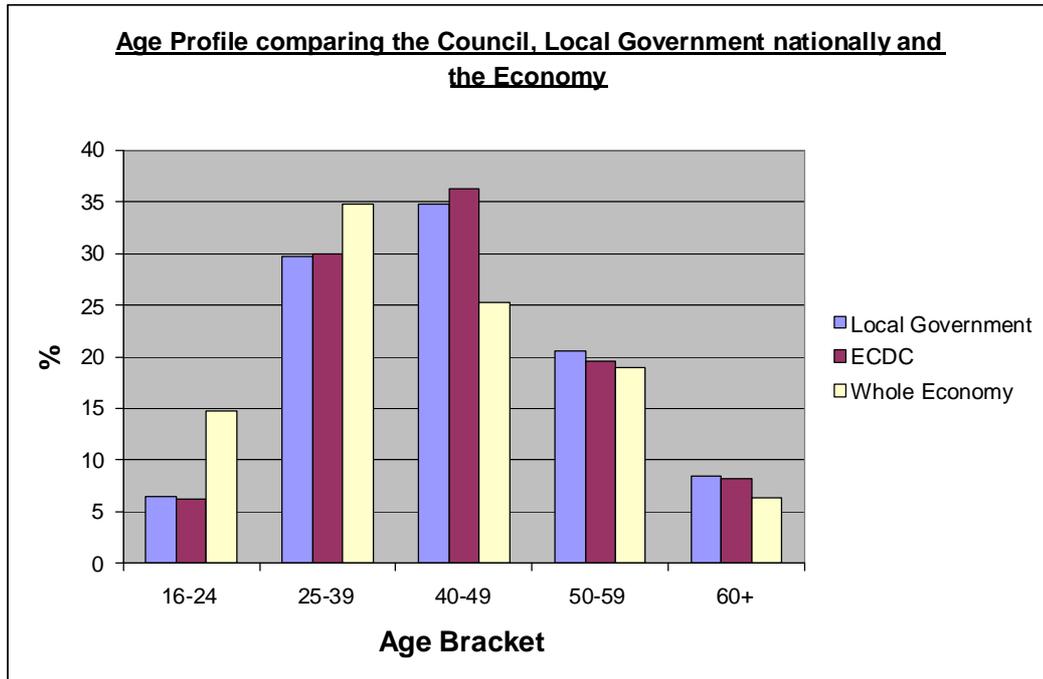
2.6.1 The Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report for East Cambridgeshire produced by Cambridgeshire County Council (2008), indicates that East Cambridgeshire has an ageing population. Analysis of the age structure of the population reveals that in future the percentage of children and young people is forecast to decrease whilst the percentage of population aged 65+ is forecast to increase significantly. This appears to quite accurately reflect the age profile of the Council with a lower number of staff aged 16-39 in comparison to staff aged 40-65 (see Tables 12-14).

Table 12: Age Profile



- 2.6.2 As shown, the majority of the Council’s workforce is within the 40–59 age bracket. 35% of the employees are 40–49; 21% of the employees are 50–59. The average age of an employee at East Cambridgeshire District Council is 43 years old.
- 2.6.3 This is reflected through all sections of the Council, with the exception of Development Services where there is a higher percentage of staff aged between 20–29.
- 2.6.4 This information also shows that the Council does not employ many of school leaving age (age 16–19) – 1%. According the Cambridgeshire County Council report, East Cambridgeshire has the lowest share of its population in the 16–19 age band. Across the district, 3,600 people in the 16–19 category make up 4.7% of the total population. A similar figure can also be found in other Cambridgeshire Districts, such as Cambridge City.
- 2.6.5 There are equal numbers of employees between the ages of 20–29 (18%) and 30–39 (18%) in the Council’s employment (total 36%).
- 2.6.6 The local government pay commission report (October 2003) indicated that the age profile of those in local government is over represented by older workers compared with the whole economy. The recent figures reported by the Office for National Statistics, Labour Force Survey (2007), proves that this trend is continuing (see Table 13).

Table 13: Age Profile comparing the Council, Local Government nationally and the Economy



## 2.7 Retirement

2.7.1 The following projections can be made regarding employees who may wish to retire in the next six years (these figures are based on a retirement age of 65). This equates to a total of 23 employees, 11.5% of the total workforce (see Table 14).

Table 14: Retirement Projections

<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
1	2	6	6	5	3

These positions are:

Year	Post No.	Department
2009	HFE080	Environment & Community Services
2010	HFE175	HR, IT & Facilities Management
	HPT003	Environment & Community Services
2011	HFE091	Environment & Community Services
	DPE097	Environment & Community Services
	DPE077	Development Services
	HFE145	HR, IT & Facilities Management
	HPE011	Environment & Community Services
	DPE075	Development Services

2012	HPE010	Environment & Community Services
	HPT064	Environment & Community Services
	DPE088	Development Services
	CFE047	HR, IT & Facilities Management
	CFE038	HR, IT & Facilities Management
	HFE106	HR, IT & Facilities Management
2013	DPE083	Development Services
	DFE013	Development Services
	DFE071	Development Services
	CPE099	HR, IT & Facilities Management
	DPE042	HR, IT & Facilities Management
2014	DFE038	Development Services
	CFE002	HR, IT & Facilities Management
	HPE110	HR, IT & Facilities Management

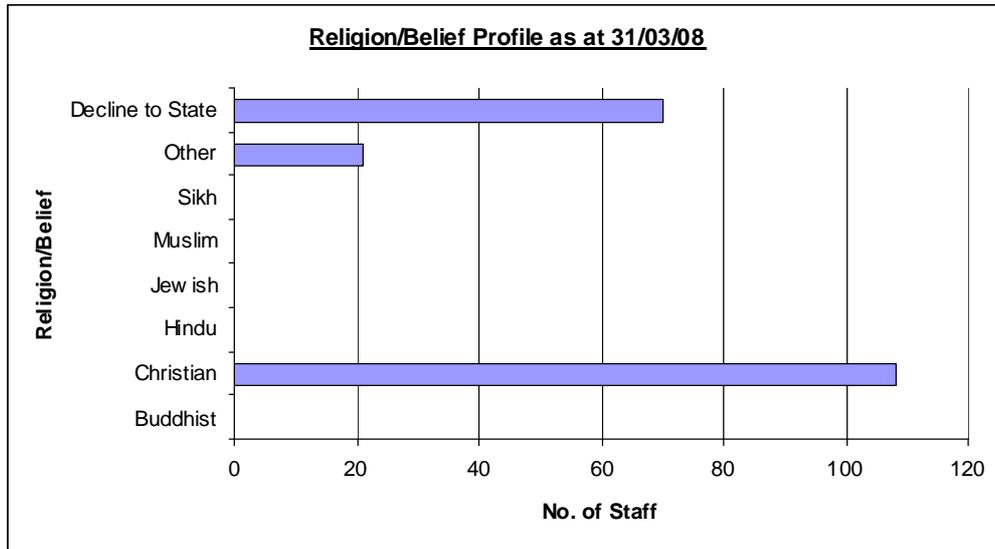
2.7.2 According to the Cambridgeshire County Council report (2008), the proportion of the East Cambridgeshire population aged over 65 was 16.2% in 2001. In 2006 the proportion of people aged over 65 was 16.6%. This represents a slight increase from 2001. However, from 2011 on, the percentage of older population is due to increase considerably. The population aged 65+ is forecast to increase to 18.1% in 2011, 21.1% in 2016 and 23.7% in 2021.

2.7.3 This highlights the important role that workforce planning will play at the Council to prepare for the high proportion of future retirements. In accordance with the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, the Council has a responsibility to notify all employees reaching the normal retirement age of 65 of their retirement date and their right to request to work longer. The Council is also required to consider all requests to stay longer and to accommodate wherever practicable.

## 2.8 Religion/Belief

2.8.1 Discrimination law on religion was only introduced into British law in December 2003, and many organisations are now only beginning to capture information about the religious views of their workforces and their local populations. Therefore, at this time, it is difficult to provide a comparison of the Council's workforce profile for religion and beliefs against the profile for local government nationally or the local population. During 2007/08 the Council improved its current diversity monitoring practices to include religion and beliefs, and Table 15 (pg.20) shows the data collected for all staff. As clearly evident from the data, the largest proportion of the Council's workforce is Christian (54.3%). All other Council staff fall within the 'other' or 'decline to state' categories.

Table 15: Religion/Belief Profile



2.8.2 Whilst the Council embraces good employment practices regardless of race or religious beliefs and recognises that different views, perspectives and ideas are vital, this information clearly demonstrates the difficulty that the authority has in employing a workforce that is diverse in relation to people’s ethnic origins and religious beliefs. One way to address this may be for the Council to develop more innovative recruitment and retention strategies and working practices to attract a more diverse workforce.

**2.9 Skills & Qualifications**

2.9.1 It is very difficult to paint an accurate picture of the current level of skills, qualifications and training of Council employees. This information is currently held in many different places (application forms, personal development plans, HR database, etc.) making it virtually impossible at this stage to take a fully informed view on the skill level/skill needs of the Council. However, better performance is the greatest challenge facing every local authority in the country. The delivery of consistent, efficient and effective service improvement relies on the skills and capacity of the workforce. Councils need to be confident that they have, or can build, a highly skilled and flexible workforce to meet existing and future requirements.

2.9.2 In order to better understand the skills and capacity of its workforce, the Council intends to introduce a Competency Framework in 2008/09 to:

- (1) detail skills standards for all members of staff to work to;
- (2) link the Council’s training and development programme to the agreed skills standards;

- (3) facilitate the development and improvement of Council services by investing in the development of all members of staff;
- (4) support the learning and development of individuals and teams with all members of staff being supported to learn;
- (5) enable staff and managers to be clear about what is required within a post; and
- (6) promote equality for all staff, with all employees (up to Heads of Service) working to the same skills standards.

2.9.3 The Council also intends to conduct a skill audit across the authority during 2009/2010.

### 3. How well is the Council managing its Workforce?

#### 3.1 Staff Turnover

3.1.1 In total, 34 employees left the Council's employment in the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 (in comparison to 36 leavers in 2006/07). This figure includes 4 members of staff who left due to the expiry of their fixed term contracts. 21% of leavers left within their first year of employment, 56% with 1-5 years service, 8% with 5-10 years service and 15% with over 10 years service.

3.1.2 The level of turnover for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 was:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Leavers in specified period}}{\text{(Total number of staff on payroll on final day of period)}} \times 100 = \frac{34}{199} \times 100 = 17\%$$

3.1.3 This compares with a turnover rate of 18.5% for 2006/07 and 13.5% for 2005/06.

3.1.4 For all organisations, high staff turnover can harm services and create problems in terms of continuity. But low turnover brings its own problems, including an inability to recruit new staff and refresh skills. There is no right level of turnover. The Council must assess what is appropriate in relation to its own circumstances. As a benchmark, Table 16 below demonstrates how the Council's turnover compares with Local Government nationally and the overall UK labour market.

Table 16: Labour Turnover Comparison

Period	Turnover rate at ECDC	Local Government Turnover Rate	UK Labour Market Turnover Rate
2005/06	13.5%	13.6%*	15.7%***
2006/07	18.5%	**	18.3%***
2007/08	17%	**	18.1%***

\*Data from the Local Government Workforce Strategy (2007).

\*\*Information not yet available.

\*\*\*Data from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) annual Recruitment and Retention Surveys (2005, 2006 and 2007).

3.1.5 The evidence suggests that the turnover rate for the Council (13.5%) was virtually the same as the turnover rate for local government nationally (13.6%) in 2005/06. Unfortunately it is not possible to make a more up-to-date comparison for 2006/07 and 2007/08 because the official statistics for local government nationally is not yet available.

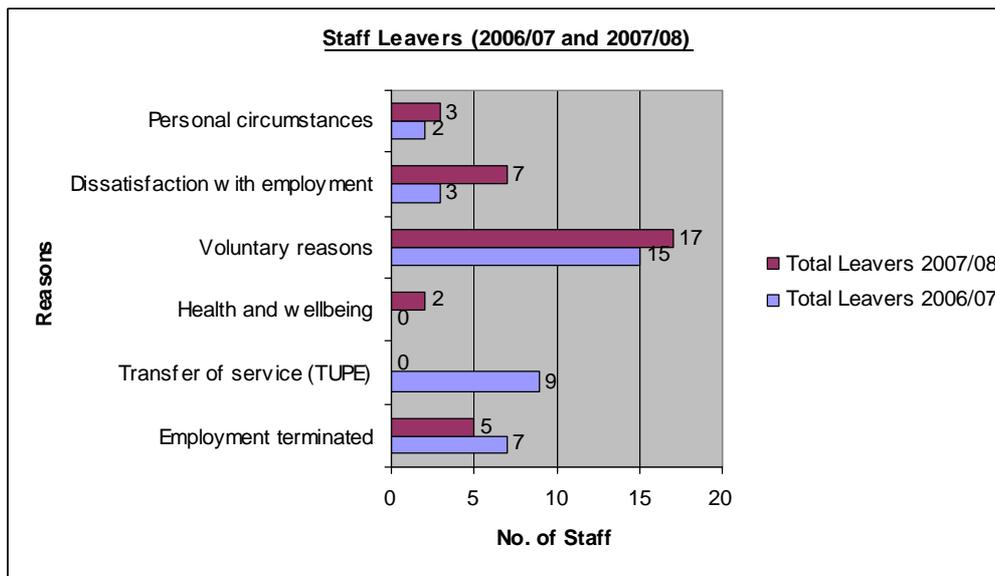
3.1.6 Much like the UK labour market, the Council's turnover rate was at its lowest in 2005/06 (13.5%), it reached a high in 2006/07 (18.5%) and reduced again in 2007/08 (17%). On the whole, this is comparatively lower than the turnover rate for the UK labour market, with the exception of the Council's high turnover in 2006/07 which appears to have been distorted by the high proportion of Active Sports staff who were transferred to the employment of Cambridgeshire County Council in October 2006, accounting for 25% of the Council's leavers for that year.

3.1.7 The CIPD survey – A Barometer of HR Trends and Prospects (2008), estimates that the cost of labour turnover averages £7,750 per job leaver.

### 3.2 Reasons for Leaving

3.2.1 All staff leaving the Council's employment are invited to attend an exit interview. Table 17 shows the reasons for staff leaving for the periods 2006/07 and 2007/08.

Table 17: Reasons for Leavers

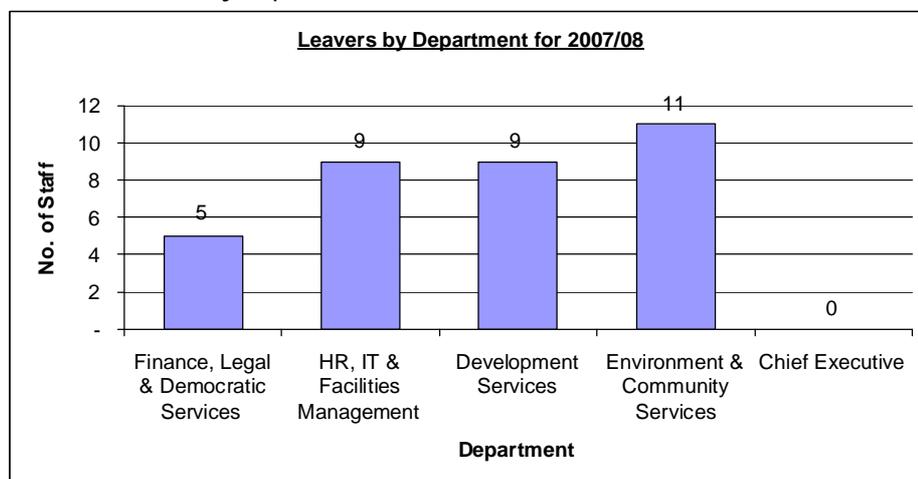


3.2.2 In both 2006/07 and 2007/08, exit interviews conducted by the Council highlighted voluntary reasons, i.e. promotion, career development, career change, education and training, as the main explanation for staff leaving the authority.

3.2.3 As previously mentioned above, the transfer of the Active Sports service to Cambridgeshire County Council in 2006 represented 25% of the Council's leavers for that year.

3.2.4 Table 18 shows the number of staff leavers by department for 2007/08.

Table 18: Leavers by Department



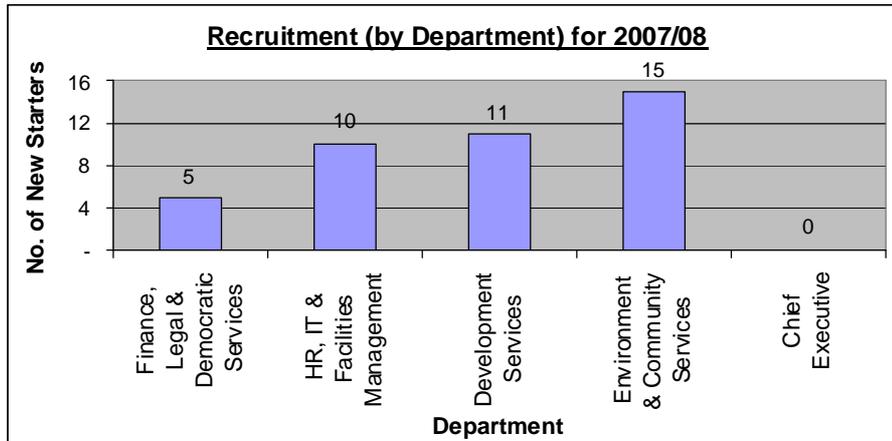
3.2.5 From the table it is clear to see that Environmental & Community Services had the highest proportion of staff leavers (32.3%) for the period 2007/08, closely followed by Development Services and HR, IT and Facilities Management, both with 26.5% and Finance, Legal and Democratic Services with the lowest number of staff leavers (14.7%).

3.2.6 This closely reflects the proportion of leavers for each department in 2006/07, with Environmental & Community Services again having the highest proportion of staff leavers with 61.1% (22 leavers) due to the transfer of the Active Sports service, followed by Development Services with 22.2% (8 leavers), Finance, Legal and Democratic Services with 11.1% (4 leavers) and HR, IT and Facilities Management with the lowest number of staff leavers at 5.6% (2 leavers).

### 3.3 Recruitment and Retention

3.3.1 Table 19 shows that 41 new starters were recruited to the Council during the 2007/08 year. From the table it is clear to see that Environmental & Community Services had the highest proportion of starters (36.6%) for the period 2007/08, closely followed by Development Services with 26.8% and HR, IT and Facilities Management with 24.4%. Finance, Legal and Democratic Services had the lowest number of starters (12.2%).

Table 19: New Starters



- 3.3.2 Spending on recruitment for 2007/08 was £48,700.
- 3.3.3 Competition for skilled workers increases the challenge of recruitment. It also has an impact on retention. Local authorities compete with each other and with employers in other sectors for skilled labour. This is no longer an issue only for generic business or administration skills. The mixed economy of provision extends this competition to areas such as planning and leisure that were traditionally associated mainly with public sector employers.
- 3.3.4 According to the Audit Commission report *Tomorrow's People* (2008), currently the most widespread occupational shortages across local government are among social workers, followed by occupational therapists, environmental health officers, planning officers and educational psychologists. Similarly, those most likely to receive market supplements are social workers, building control and environmental health.
- 3.3.5 At East Cambridgeshire, Planning and Building Control are two areas where the Council faces recruitment and retention issues, particularly from staff movement into the private sector where they are promised more varied workloads and better prospects for pay progression. According to the report by the Audit Commission *Tomorrow's People*, "In 2006, more than half of all Councils in England reported problems with recruitment in planning and building control sectors and around a third reported retention difficulties." The Audit Commission's report, *The Planning System: Matching Expectations and Capacity*, found that this situation was putting considerable strain on Councils charged with responding to growing user and government expectations and dealing with a high number of increasingly complex planning applications each year.

- 3.3.6 The Audit Commission report *Tomorrow's People* has forecast that Councils failing to address the current shortage of planners could result in a 46% national shortfall of qualified planners by 2012. Failure to address this shortage could result in:
- 35% of planning applications not being processed on time;
  - an inability to meet the government's house building targets;
  - a shortfall in the number of affordable homes delivered;
  - a potential increase in:
    - (a) the number of households living in temporary accommodation, and
    - (b) homelessness and overcrowding; and
  - a widening of the social and economic divide between those able to access market housing and those excluded from it.
- 3.3.7 The government has already taken action to ensure that the effects described above are mitigated by, in partnership with professional bodies and the education sector, introducing a culture change programme to make the profession more attractive to school leavers and graduates. They have also extended the Permitted Development Rights Order which will potentially reduce the workload of development control departments.
- 3.3.8 In an attempt to recruit and retain planning staff, the Council has introduced a structured career grade for planning staff to develop their skills. This has helped to retain staff who would have previously left the Council's employment due to the inability to develop their workloads and increase their pay.
- 3.3.9 In addition to this, developments in technology, including the use of on-line planning applications has helped to improve efficiency and reduce workloads.
- 3.3.10 Environmental Health is another area where the East Cambridgeshire District Council faces recruitment and retention issues. According to the report *Tomorrow's People* by the Audit Commission, "in the context of an expanding national workforce, the environmental health workforce fell by nearly 8% between 1995 and 2005." For the Council, failing to attract and retain environmental health staff poses a significant risk in relation to its ability to protect the public health of its local community.
- 3.3.11 According to the report *Tomorrow's People*, Council's are developing innovative ways to attract environmental health staff. These include 'grow your own' schemes, traineeships and outreach work with schools to raise the profile of public protection work.

3.3.12 Some Council's, especially smaller districts such as South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council are working together to address the problem and have found that the shared services agenda applies to frontline services such as environmental health as well as to back office functions. These flexible and responsive approaches to partnership working allow better use of scarce expertise, increase efficiencies and provide additional experience.

3.3.13 Another post at the Council which has experienced recruitment and retention difficulties is the Town Centre Ranger/Deputy Market Supervisor. This appears to be due to a number of reasons, but particularly the repetitive nature of the work and having to work outdoors.

### **3.4 Partnership Working**

The Council has engaged in various forms of partnership working to achieve workforce benefits, including:

#### **3.4.1 Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP)**

From April 2007, the Council joined the Anglia Revenues Partnership with Breckland District Council and Forest Heath District Council for the provision of its Revenues and Benefits service. The decision to transfer the service was made in relation to expected savings and improvements in the quality of service provided as a result of consolidating the management structure of the Partnership and rationalising the way the ICT requirements of the service are delivered. In addition the potential to develop and share resources geographically are expected to present real service improvement options.

#### **3.4.2 Secondment of Deputy Chief Executive**

From May 2007, the Deputy Chief Executive was seconded to South Cambridgeshire District Council to act as a member of their Management Team to lead and deliver their improvement plan. This provided the opportunity for staff at the Council to take on additional responsibilities and develop their own skills in Acting Heads of Service positions.

#### **3.4.3 Interchange Scheme**

Interchange is a scheme for the East of England and is being run for the Local Government Family. The family comprises the 54 Local Authorities, 6 Fire and Rescue Authorities, EERA, Go-East and EEDA. Interchange is the exchange of personnel and good practice between organisations and can only be used by organisations within the family and their employees.

Interchange opportunities can take a variety of forms:

- o **Partner Search** - a mechanism for finding other organisations who might want to jointly commission seminars and longer training programmes, consultancy or jointly work on some kind of project;
- o **Contact/Discussion groups** - ad hoc group meetings to discuss issues of the day and matters of common interest.
- o **Twinning/buddying** - regular meetings with someone as a buddy at a similar level in a different organisation for mutual benefit and support. Like a discussion group but just for two people.
- o **Shadowing** - accompanying someone throughout their working day/week. This could be to gain an understanding for your existing role or to look at possible career development.
- o **Attachments** - normally less than 3 months (although the period can be split and or done as part weeks), to undertake e.g. short term projects or studies. This can be helpful for project work in a different area that may contribute to a qualification or could be the loan of an expert with particular skills for a one off project.
- o **Secondments** - between 1 and 12 months (or longer by agreement) on a full or part-time basis, without affecting employment status. This could be a short-term cover for a sudden vacancy or a planned development as part of succession planning. The secondee will learn about different ways of working and will be able to take that knowledge back into their own workplace. It is often an opportunity to “have a go” at a job with different or more senior responsibilities and the individual should be given adequate support and feedback.
- o **Emergency Trouble Shooter** - individuals may register on the system under this category if they would be interested in helping out in another organisation in the event of a sudden emergency. This can be really useful development experience and can provide an opportunity within their own authority for someone to act up.

#### **3.4.4 HR Partners Consortium**

Quarterly HR Consortium meetings are held at sub regional level between the HR managers for Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, Huntingdon District Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and Fenland District Council to discuss current HR issues and to consider new ways of partnership working.

In a joint arrangement with the consortium, the Council has engaged in a 3-year contract with Tribal Resourcing for the provision of its advertising services. The advertising contract covers both recruitment and non-recruitment advertising, i.e. public notices, in national and local publications.

This has had the benefit of:

- 8% discount on all advertisements;
- clear accountabilities for service provision;
- development of individual branding;
- advice on cost effective recruitment methods and media;
- detailed management information, including breakdown of costs;
- professional and timely service ensuring continuous improvement;
- joint working between consortium members on the development of the Cambridgeshire jobs website, which the Council will be joining in 2009/10 ([www.jobsincambs.com](http://www.jobsincambs.com)).

In another joint arrangement with the consortium, the Council has access to a list of preferred recruitment agencies for temporary agency staff. This has had the benefit of providing a more standardised and efficient approach to the recruitment of agency staff across the consortium members, including more adequate vetting of temporary staff for compliance standards and reduced costs.

#### **3.4.5 Papworth Trust**

The Council has engaged in an agreement with the Papworth Trust that identifies the Trust as a key source of disabled candidates for employment opportunities within the Council and provides support to employees who develop a disability or health related issue that constitutes a threat to their continued employment.

This agreement will actively demonstrate the Council's commitment to equal opportunities and help make its workforce more representative of the community it serves. It will also assist the Council to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

Under the agreement:

- Papworth Employment Advisers will scan the Council's vacancy list on a weekly basis and if they have a disabled individual interested in the post, the advisor may, if appropriate, make contact with the recruiting line manager (as stated on the advert), to get more information and/or to inform them that an application will be made.
- Papworth Trust can offer services in support of Council employees who develop a disability or health related issue and whose employment is at risk. As issues arise, Papworth Trust will work with selected teams to raise awareness and understanding of a particular disability that affects a colleague within their team.
- There may be occasions where Papworth Employment Advisers have clients that they think might be interested in an advertised vacancy but feel that, initially at

least, work placement (usually 6 weeks max) is the preferred approach. In this case, the process mirrors that for permanent employment, except that:

- o The Council's HR Department will encourage the recruiting line manager to take Papworth clients on work placement.
  - o While in work placement the vacancy is treated as live so, if the individual is interested in the job, they should submit a job application. There is no guarantee that the job will be offered at the end of the placement.
  - o If required, travel expenses and a daily meal allowance will be provided by the Council/Papworth Trust. This will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- 
- If the Council's HR Department is advised of an ad hoc work placement opportunity, this will be referred to the Papworth Helpdesk for cascading to the Papworth Employment Advisors team. If they have a disabled client that would benefit from the work placement within the Council, and there is no appropriate vacancy advertised, the Advisor will liaise with the Council's HR Department.
  - Profiling will be undertaken to identify prospective candidates, prior to discussing a possible job match. Where necessary, Papworth Trust will provide advice and support regarding the individual needs of any disabled candidate selected for interview.
  - The Council will be responsible for risk assessments for sites and job content, and for arranging and paying for CRB checks. Where necessary, Papworth Trust will provide advice and support.
  - Job offers will be made on the same terms and conditions as other employees.
  - If an individual is being supported by a Papworth Employment programme and on-going support is required, an appropriate Individual Development/Progression Agreement will be drawn up between the Papworth In Work Adviser (IWA), the Council's HR Department, the employee and the responsible line manager, defining agreed training, development objectives and support arrangements. This plan will include timetabled progress meetings between the Papworth employment advisor, the employee and their line manager.
  - Adjustments to work patterns, equipment etc will be discussed and agreed between the employee, their line manager and the Council's HR Department. The Papworth Trust will assist in this process as required.
  - Where required, Papworth trust will support the employee to access an Access to Work grant.

### 3.5 Training & Development

3.5.1 The Council has a strong ethos on training and development. A corporate training budget is used to provide short and subject specific training, core training courses (key training courses for all staff) and post entry training. The Council has also introduced an Induction course for all new employees and a Management Development Programme for Principal Officers and one for new or aspiring managers, which are both linked to a recognised formal qualification (e.g. NVQ in Management).

3.5.2 For 2007/08, the average gross training expenditure per employee was £390.00.

### 3.6 Flexible Working

3.6.1 Whilst there is a legal obligation to allow working parents with a child under 6 years of age or 18 if disabled and carers of adults the right to request flexible working, the Council has extended this right to all employees who:

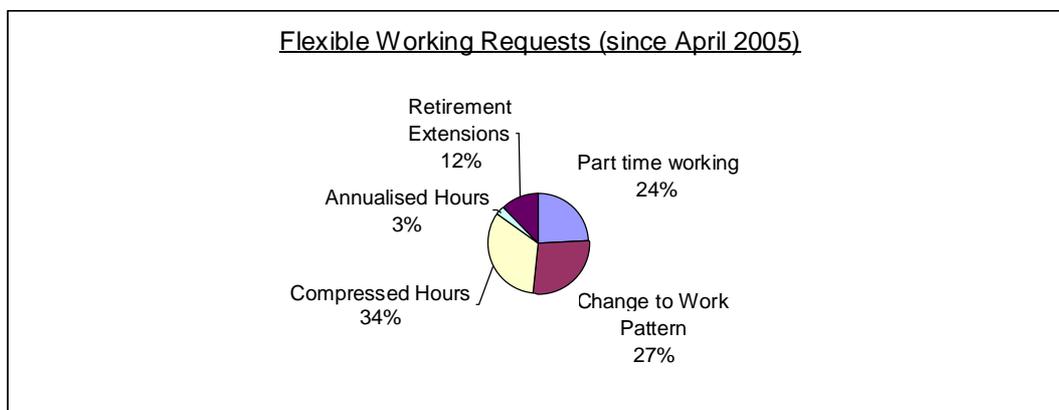
- a) have worked continuously as an employee of the Council for at least 26 weeks; and
- b) have not made a request to work flexibly in the last 12 months.

3.6.2 All employees can request to:

- o change the hours they work;
- o change the times when they are required to work; or
- o change the place at which they are required to work.

3.6.3 In the last 3 years (since April 2005), the Council has received 33 flexible working requests for part-time working, changes to work patterns, compressed hours (i.e. 9-day fortnights), annualised hours and retirement extensions, see Table 20.

Table 20: Flexible Working Requests



3.6.4 Of the 33 requests, 31 were approved.

### **3.7 Sickness Absence**

3.7.1 Managing sickness absence effectively is another important factor in improving retention rates and the attractiveness of working for the Council.

3.7.2 In a national report by the Audit Commission *Tomorrow's People* (June 2008) it states that local authorities have been successful in reducing time lost to sickness over the last 5 years, and that on average, district Council employees take 8.4 days of sickness absence a year.

3.7.3 In comparison, the average number of days sickness absence per year for East Cambridgeshire District Council employees for the last 5 years is as follows:

Year	Average Days Sickness Lost
2007/08	8.29
2006/07	8.28
2005/06	6.07
2004/05	9.20
2003/04	7.13

3.7.4 According to the report by the Audit Commission (June 2007) the equivalent figure for metropolitan district councils is 11 days.

### **3.8 Equality and Diversity**

3.8.1 The Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities, providing equal access to Council services and making sure people have equal opportunities in getting jobs and in career development.

3.8.2 The Council actively seeks to create an environment in which services and employment are provided without fear of discrimination.

3.8.3 The Council continues to make progress in its approaches to improving equality and diversity and this progress is assessed against the Equality Standard for Local Government. The Standard is a five-level framework developed by the Employers Organisation for Local Government in consultation with the relevant equalities bodies to mainstream equalities into Council policy and practice at all levels.

- 3.8.4 The Council achieved Level 1 of the Equality Standard at the end of 2004. To achieve Level 1 the Council was required to adopt a Corporate Equality Policy to demonstrate its commitment to review and change local authority equality practice, and to set out how it would be implementing the Equality Standard.
- 3.8.5 The decision was reached by the Council's Equal Opportunities Working Group in January 2008 that the Council has now achieved Level 2 of the Standard. In order to achieve Level 2 the Council has demonstrated that it has:
- initiated an equality action planning process;
  - embarked upon an impact and needs/requirements assessment (INRA) process;
  - started to develop self-assessment, scrutiny and auditing mechanisms;
  - set about developing information and monitoring systems; and
  - started the process of consulting with community, staff and stakeholder groups.
- 3.8.6 The Council will now be working towards achieving Level 3 of the Standard, a key requirement of which is for the Council to continue to develop and improve these monitoring, consultation and self-assessment systems.
- 3.8.7 According to the report *Tomorrow's People* by the Audit Commission, 90% of Councils have now adopted the equality standard for Local Government.
- 3.8.8 As at 2006/07, 4 Councils had achieved the top performance of Level 5 and 13 Councils level 4, the majority of Councils had only achieved Level 1 (105 Councils) or Level 2 (181 Councils).

### **3.9 Investors In People (IIP)**

- 3.9.1 In December 2005, the Council was awarded the prestigious national standard – Investors in People (IIP). The IIP Standard provides a framework that helps organisations, like the Council, to improve performance and realise objectives through the effective management and development of its people.
- 3.9.2 Achieving the accreditation involved an on-site assessment, where 44 members of staff plus the Chief Executive and Chairman on the IIP Project Group, were required to meet with an external assessor. Following the assessment, the Council was awarded the standard, and the external assessor commented that "the good practice exhibited in this organisation would suggest that the Council would be a good IIP Champion particularly, but not exclusively for the public sector".
- 3.9.3 The IIP Standard is awarded for a three year period and the Council is set for a review against the revised Standard in December 2008.

## 4. Conclusion

- 4.1 In conclusion, the workforce profile of East Cambridgeshire District Council can be summarised as follows:
- 68% of staff are employed on a full time basis and 32% part-time.
  - 87% of staff are employed on a permanent basis and 13% fixed term.
  - 65% of staff are female and 35% male.
  - 1% of the Council's employees consider themselves to have a disability.
  - 85% of the Council's employees are White, 3% are of mixed ethnic origin and 12 % have declined to state their ethnicity.
  - The majority of employees are within the 40-49 age group.
  - The average age is 43.
  - Only 1% of Council staff are within the age range of 16-19 (e.g. school leavers).
  - The average length of service for an employee is 6½ years.
  - The average rate of staff turnover for 2007/08 was 17%.
  - Spending on recruitment for 2007/08 was £48,700.
  - Over the next 6 years, 23 employees (11.5% of the total workforce) will reach retirement age.
  - 3 females and 6 males within the top 5% of earners.
  - There are no Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff or disabled employees at senior grades.
  - The skill level of staff can only currently be determined through application details and training records. More information is required to develop a fully informed view on the skill level/skill needs of the Council.
  - The average gross training expenditure for 2007/08 was £390.00 per employee.
- 4.2 In order to better understand future workforce issues, the Council needs to build up a complete picture of current and future needs, labour market developments and staffing costs. By improving the Council's current approaches to workforce planning it will help to achieve key corporate priorities such as service transformation and efficiency gains.
- 4.3 More often the Council relies on transactional approaches within service departments to make efficiency gains, i.e. transferring staff to other employers or replacing professional staff with administrative staff or technology. But increasing pressure to create additional gains and deliver new services has led the Council to adopt more transformational approaches, considering transfers and replacements within the context of a much wider-ranging consideration of business processes and design, i.e. merging the Council's revenues and benefits services with two other local authorities in the form of the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP).

- 4.4 Adopting a more strategic approach to workforce planning can also help to achieve wider objectives such as the promotion of equality and diversity. The Council, as an employer and a public authority has general and specific legal duties to promote equal opportunities and remove discrimination in our workforce and service provision. The Council needs to attract the best candidates from all sections of the local community.
- 4.5 The Council has now achieved Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. In order to achieve Level 2 the Council has demonstrated that it has:
- initiated an equality action planning process;
  - embarked upon an impact and needs/requirements assessment (INRA) process;
  - started to develop self-assessment, scrutiny and auditing mechanisms;
  - set about developing information and monitoring systems; and
  - started the process of consulting with community, staff and stakeholder groups.
- The Council will now be working towards achieving Level 3 of the Standard, a key requirement of which is for the Council to continue to develop and improve these monitoring, consultation and self-assessment systems.
- 4.6 Whilst the Council embraces good employment practices regardless of age, race, gender, disability or religious beliefs and recognises that different views, perspectives and ideas are vital, this report clearly demonstrates the difficulty that the authority has in employing a workforce that is diverse.
- 4.7 One reason for this is due to the very low proportion of BME people within the East Cambridgeshire population. Across East Cambridgeshire, 97.7% of the population is White.
- 4.8 The Council also experiences difficulties in recruiting people of school leaving age despite attending annual career fairs to promote the Council as an employer, and providing opportunities for apprenticeships. Currently the Council employs one Apprentice Gardener. However, the difficulty recruiting people of school leaving age could be attributable to the low proportion of 16-19 year olds across the district. Reports indicate that 3,600 people in the 16-19 age category make up 4.7% of the total population.
- 4.9 The Council also has difficulty in employing people with disabilities despite an estimated 15% of the district's population reportedly having some sort of disability. However, this high proportion of disabled staff is for the most part elderly people over the age of 65 years.

- 4.10 By failing to attract traditionally under-represented groups, the Council faces a number of risks:
- ineffective community engagement;
  - damage to the Council's reputation;
  - disadvantaged or minority groups having poorer access or lower satisfaction with services;
  - a limited pool from which to recruit; and
  - failing to comply with legal requirements.
- 4.11 The Council has already taken action to improve the recruitment pages on its website promoting East Cambridgeshire and the Council as a place to work. It encourages any potential candidates to apply on-line for a particular post as well as register their future interest in opportunities. The Council has produced a new job information pack which is available on-line, or is sent out to those candidates who express an interest over the telephone or in-person at the Council's offices.
- 4.12 Recruitment and retention of employees from a wider pool will become increasingly necessary as the East Cambridgeshire population becomes more diverse. This will require the Council to monitor local demographics and engage with existing and new communities. The Council will need to collect new data where gaps have been identified, i.e. on the race and religious profile of the East Cambridgeshire population. One way to encourage more BME, disabled and 16-19 year olds to apply to the Council for employment, is to develop more innovative recruitment and retention strategies and working practices to attract a more diverse workforce, i.e. recruitment drives aimed at particular population groups using, for example interactive and accessible websites and adverts placed in specialist media.
- 4.13 In addition, the Council's new agreement with Papworth Trust will help to increase the proportion of Council staff with disabilities to help make the Council's workforce more representative of the community it serves. This agreement demonstrates the Council's commitment to equal opportunities and will assist the Council to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- 4.14 There is growing recognition of the important role that flexible working arrangements can play in retaining and recruiting staff and this is certainly evident at East Cambridgeshire District Council where a high proportion of staff have already successfully established new patterns of working. Further work is still required in relation to flexible retirement arrangements, however, at present, staff of all ages are able to make a request to vary or reduce their hours of work, or the place at which they are required to work, through the Council's Flexible Working scheme.

- 4.15 In order to address recruitment and retention problems, particularly within the three areas where national shortages have been identified - Planning, Building Control and Environmental Health – the Council needs to consider the following:
- introducing more collaborative working and sharing staff between Council's, particularly those with specialist skills; and
  - more imaginative and responsive employment arrangements, this may include 'grow your own' schemes, traineeships and outreach work with schools.
- 4.16 The Council has a strong ethos of training and development, however, the lack of a skills audit and training needs analysis makes it difficult to identify the gaps between current skills levels and future requirements.
- 4.17 The Council has done well to reduce sickness absence in the last 3 years below the average of 8.4 days (per employee) for district council's nationally. Maintaining this level of sickness absence will be an ongoing priority for the Council with the potential to increase productivity. Reductions in sickness absence can deliver savings.

## **5. Recommendations for Future Action**

Having examined in detail the main characteristics and 'hot spots' in the current workforce, it is now essential that the Workforce Development Plan examines the way that the Council is developing and forthcoming priorities.

The 2007 Local Government Workforce Strategy sets out five strategic priorities for local authorities, regional bodies and national bodies to meet their workforce challenges over the next few years.

These five priorities are:

1.     Organisational Development     Effectively building workforce support for new structures and new ways of working to deliver citizen focused and efficient services, in partnership.
2.     Leadership Development         Building visionary and ambitious leadership which makes the best use of both the political and managerial role, operating in a partnership context.
3.     Skill Development                 With partners, developing employees' skills and knowledge, in an innovative, high performance, multi agency context.
4.     Recruitment and Retention       With partners, taking action to address key future occupational skills shortages; promote jobs and careers; identify, develop and motivate talent and address diversity issues.
5.     Pay and Rewards                     Modernising pay systems to reflect new structures, new priorities and new ways of working and to reinforce high performance, including encouraging a total rewards approach.

These five strategic priorities are broken down into key priorities that the Council needs to address (see Appendix 1).

In order to meet these five strategic areas identified in the Local Government Workforce Strategy, it will be important for the Council to align these key areas for action alongside it's corporate objectives and service priorities.

The Council's corporate objectives for the period 2008-2011 are as follows:

1. High Quality Services

To champion accessible public services to protect and enhance a high quality of life for all residents and ensuring effective and efficient use of resources.

2. Partnership

To work with our partners to deliver continuous improvement through effective challenge and learning and achieve the development of an informed, involved and united community.

3. Sustainable Growth

As one of the fastest growing districts in the country, we aim to stimulate and properly manage the social, economic and environmental impact of growth to meet the needs and aspirations of the whole community.

Table 21: The Council's service priorities for the period 2008-2011, include:

<p><b>Development Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing and implementing the Local Development Framework to set a sustainable strategy for the management of growth for the benefit of the community.</li> <li>▪ Encouraging and promoting business growth and the creation of quality employment opportunities across the district.</li> <li>▪ Developing and maintaining vital town centres in order to retain retail expenditure.</li> <li>▪ Working in partnership to promote an accessible, integrated and affordable transport system.</li> <li>▪ Working in partnership to close the skills and education gap between and within different sections of the community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>HR, IT and Facilities Management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Achieving Level 3 of Equality Standard for Local Government.</li> <li>▪ Moving to the National Joint Council 'Green Book' job evaluation scheme to achieve equal pay structures.</li> <li>▪ Achieving external accreditation to improve quality in services e.g. Investors in People re-accreditation.</li> <li>▪ Improving and developing the management and maintenance of open spaces.</li> <li>▪ Planning for business continuity to reduce risk.</li> <li>▪ Improving service delivery through e-government, i.e. more online services for Planning, Building Control and Environmental Health.</li> <li>▪ Providing accessible services to customers and resolving enquiries (single and multiple) at the first point of contact with the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.</li> <li>▪ Reviewing the corporate complaints procedure to improve customer service.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Environmental &amp; Community Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing the supply of affordable housing.</li> <li>▪ Preventing homelessness and ensuring adequate housing and support is available to homeless households.</li> <li>▪ Working in partnership with other agencies to meet the housing and support needs of vulnerable people.</li> <li>▪ Planning for new leisure provision to enable residents of East Cambridgeshire to access high quality sports, leisure and recreational facilities.</li> <li>▪ Supporting the development of arts and heritage activities.</li> <li>▪ Building Partnership working through the Local Strategic Partnership.</li> <li>▪ Reducing the incidence and effects of pollution to air, land and water.</li> <li>▪ Investigating complaints of public health nuisances, abandoned vehicles, and stray dogs.</li> <li>▪ Ensuring residents of East Cambridgeshire are adequately housed in dwellings which are safe, healthy and suited to their needs.</li> <li>▪ Providing a high quality service for refuse collection, street cleansing and recycling.</li> <li>▪ Promoting waste prevention, minimisation and recycling and working with others in the development of an integrated waste management strategy.</li> <li>▪ Improving the standards of food and food safety and reducing the incidence of illness related to the consumption of food and drink.</li> <li>▪ Improving the health, safety and welfare of people at work and protecting other persons from the risk arising from work activities.</li> <li>▪ Ensuring premises, vehicles and activities licensed by the Council are operated and maintained in accordance with Statutory requirements and licensing conditions.</li> <li>▪ Improving communication within the Council and with the public and partners through improved consultation mechanisms.</li> <li>▪ Developing a data quality strategy to set a context for the operation of the Council's electronic performance management system and reviewing staff requirements in respect of data quality skills.</li> </ul>
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<b>Finance, Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improving the electoral process by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrating the elections system with the Council's corporate Customer Relationship management system; and</li> <li>- Introducing internet/telephone registration for 'no changes' to electoral details.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Improving client service and obtaining and maintaining Local Land Charges charter mark and LEXCEL accreditation (Legal Excellence Award).</li> <li>▪ Introducing a facility for personal searches to be undertaken at a kiosk in reception or on-line.</li> </ul>
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Whilst it is not possible to state with certainty what the workforce of the future will 'look like', these objectives/priorities will guide the Council's workforce issues.

## 6. References

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**East Cambridgeshire District Council**  
**Workforce Development Plan (2009-2012)**

This action plan deals with each of the priority areas in turn and identifies the action that the Council needs to take in response.

1. **ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

<b><u>Key Priorities</u></b>	<b><u>How will we do it?</u></b>	<b><u>Action to take?</u></b>	<b><u>When will this be achieved?</u></b>
Anticipate and tackle current and future workforce challenges.	Identify the key current and future workforce challenges for the Council.  Take effective action to address these challenges.	Identify current and future challenges through the Council's Workforce Development Plan.  Consider new ways to address these challenges, i.e. collaborative working, sharing specialist skills, 'grow your own' schemes, apprenticeships and outreach work with schools.	September 2008  As they arise
Develop an organisational climate that encourages innovation, including engaging staff positively in service transformation.	Communicate and engage with staff during the implementation of large scale change programmes, i.e. CRM/DMS, restructures etc.	Individuals and service areas to identify wasteful processes, bureaucracy and rigid practices and to re-develop job roles and ways of working.	On-going
Support staff through organisational change.	Ensure that key staffing information is communicated to relevant individuals/groups and effectively manage staff anxieties.	Identify best practice in relation to consulting with staff.  Review current consultation processes and recommend changes to Management Team.	January 2009  April 2009
Progress up the levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government.	Equal Opportunities Working Group (EOWG) to continue to meet bi-monthly to review the Council's performance against Level 3 of the Standard.	Bi-monthly updates to the EOWG and quarterly updates to Management Team and Personnel Committee.	December 2010
Achieve Investors in People (IIP) re-accreditation.	Work towards the full requirements of the new IIP standard.	Re-establish IIP Group. Assess current performance against the new standard. Implement change as appropriate. Hold assessment for re-accreditation.	August 2008 August 2008  October 2008 December 2008

2. LEADERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT

<b>Key Priorities</b>	<b>How will we do it?</b>	<b>Action to take?</b>	<b>When will this be achieved?</b>
Foster the development of leadership skills and leadership behaviour at all levels in the authority.	Introduce a set of leadership competencies.	Report recommending leadership competencies to Personnel Committee.	October 2008
	Develop the Council's existing Management Performance Indicators to ensure consistency with the new leadership competencies.	Report revised management performance indicators to Personnel Committee.	October 2008
	Develop and improve leadership and management skills to ensure that staff performance/disciplinary issues are dealt with effectively.	Provide all managers with effective disciplinary investigations training.	April-June 2008
		HR to coach Managers to deal with performance/disciplinary issues that arise.	On-going
Take effective action to attract, develop and retain new leaders.	Take effective action to attract and develop leadership skills at all levels of the Council.	Develop training programme aimed at improving leadership skills in line with the leadership competencies.	July 2009
		Continue to offer New and Aspiring Managers training which is linked to a formal qualification (e.g. NVQ in Management).	Annually
Embed policies, cultures and practices that effectively increase the percentage of people from ethnic minority background and people with disabilities in leadership positions.	Monitor local demographics and engage with existing and new communities.	Collect up-to-date equalities data where gaps are identified.	April 2010
	Encourage more BME and disabled staff to apply to the Council for employment.	Develop more innovative recruitment and retention strategies and working practices.	April 2010
		Engage with Papworth Trust.	On-going

### 3. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

<b>Key Priorities</b>	<b>How will we do it?</b>	<b>Action to take?</b>	<b>When will this be achieved?</b>
Define current and future skills needs.	Develop and introduce a competency framework as part of the Council's Performance Management Scheme.	Identify best practice. Recommend Framework to Management Team. Personnel Committee to adopt Framework. Amend Performance Management Scheme.	August 2008 December 2008 July 2009 March 2010
Assess the Council's current capability, so as to identify the most critical skills gaps.	Develop and introduce a skills audit across the whole Council and identify critical gaps in the skills needed for future success.	Identify suitable methodology for audit. Obtain approval from Management Team. Analyse results and identify skills gaps. Report results to Management Team.	August 2010 April 2011 August 2011 October 2011
Take action to attract, develop or share the skills which the Council needs.	Take effective action to develop or build a highly skilled and flexible workforce to meet existing and future requirements.  Look at opportunities to share 'skills' with local partners.	Use the Competency Framework to detail skills standards for all members of staff to work to (to be used as part of recruitment process).  Consider new ways to address any workforce challenges, i.e. collaborative working, sharing specialist skills, 'grow your own' schemes, apprenticeships and outreach work with schools.  Continue to promote the Regional Interchange Programme.	December 2011  On-going  On-going
Develop the 'skills for life' of the workforce and offer qualifications to those who have none.	Actively support staff in developing 'skills for life'.	Offer 'skills for life' training where a need is identified.	As required.
Ensure equal access to development opportunities.	Support the learning and development of individuals and teams with <u>all</u> members of staff being supported to learn.  Ensure that the training needs identified through the appraisal process are met each year.	All staff to continue to be informed of training opportunities.  Line managers/individuals to arrange.	On-going  On-going

4. RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

<b>Key Priorities</b>	<b>How will we do it?</b>	<b>Action to take?</b>	<b>When will this be achieved?</b>
Identify future workforce requirements as part of partnership, corporate and service planning.	Service areas to continue to use the Council's service planning process to identify future workforce requirements.	Completion of service plans and submission of improvement/change proposals for Management Team review.  Develop employment equality targets for recruitment and staff retention.	Annually
Analyse age profiles, turnover rates and diversity profiles across service areas to anticipate and take action to address significant current and future issues.	Reduce the turnover of voluntary leavers.  Reduce the turnover of leavers within their first year of employment with the Council (07/08:21%)  Ensure a fair and consistent recruitment process.  All service areas to set equality targets based on completed INRAs and community consultation.	Monitor turnover quarterly and report results to Management Team.  Review no. of leavers within their first year of employment and propose action to address this.  Take care in drafting and placing advertisements to avoid discrimination. Be sensitive when arranging interviews. Indicate if any genuine occupational requirements apply.  All service areas to develop a departmental diversity profile and equalities action plan.	Quarterly  April 2009  On-going  April 2010
Promote future jobs and careers to schools, colleges and universities.	Attend careers fairs and promote the Council as an employer of choice.	HR to improve the Council's job/career displays and to attend local careers fairs.	As required.
Run school work experience and trainee programmes, student placements and skills pathways.	Continue to develop the modern apprenticeship scheme across the Council where service areas have the capacity.  Continue to encourage and support work experience placements with local schools and colleges and to run annual recruitment campaigns for 10-week student placements.	Service areas to identify through service planning process if they have the capacity for an apprentice.  HR to liaise with schools and colleges and to work with individual departments to identify the demand for student placements.	Annually  On-going

5. PAY & REWARDS

<u>Key Priorities</u>	<u>How will we do it?</u>	<u>Action to take?</u>	<u>When will this be achieved?</u>
Complete the introduction of equal pay structures in line with 2004 national agreement.	Move to the NJC 'Green Book' job evaluation scheme to address 'equal value' issues and to achieve equal pay structures.	Identify and train job evaluation panel members. Complete job evaluations. Take action to address any equal pay anomalies identified from the Council's Equal Pay Review. Inform staff of results and introduce new pay structure. Consider appeals (as appropriate).	March 2008  October 2008 January 2009  January 2009  March 2009
Introduce a total rewards approach to pay.	Investigate the introduction of a new remuneration and benefits package that brings together components such as learning and development with aspects of the working environment.	Identify best practice. Present report to Management Team for consideration.	September 2010 April 2011
Invest in training managers to appropriately and fairly manage the performance of employees.	All staff with management responsibility to receive training in reward and performance management.  All staff with management responsibility to receive training in effective coaching of staff.	Work with our partners to identify and establish joint training in reward and performance management.  Work with our partners to identify and establish joint training in coaching.	April 2011  December 2010
Improve the quality of workforce related data to assist with performance management and cost control.	Workforce related data will be monitored through the Council's HR database.	Monitor and register data	As required