



CONFIDENT, COOPERATIVE AND HIGH PERFORMING PEOPLE



CITY OF YORK COUNCIL WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2012 - 2015

Workforce Strategy 2012 - 2015

Contents

- 1 Foreword from the Cabinet Member & Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services**
- 2 Introduction from the Chief Executive**
- 4 Background**
- 6 The vision and strategy**
- 9 Strategic themes and objectives**
 - 9 Skills and Behaviours Development
 - 11 Recruitment and Retention
 - 13 Pay, Reward and Recognition
 - 15 Wellbeing and Engagement
 - 17 Performance and Change

Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the City of York Council's Workforce Strategy for 2012-2015.

As stated in our Council Plan, the work of the council continues to shift and change, more so now than at any time in our history. This is a period of change and transformation and it is vital that York's Workforce Strategy clearly and succinctly sets out how we will develop and harness everybody's skills to deliver our priorities for the City.

This Workforce Strategy will enable us to focus and continue our efforts to become a confident, cooperative and high performing council in every aspect of our work addressing the needs of our customers and our local communities.

We face tough challenges and decisions across York and to achieve high-quality services for the City, it is vital that we continue to develop and support our workforce.

This Workforce Strategy sets out the necessary actions to support and develop our aspirations and in doing so, it provides a clear, supportive and cohesive way forward.



Cllr Julie Gunnell
Cabinet Member &
Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Introduction

One of my job titles - as well as Chief Executive and Town Clerk - is 'Head of the Paid Service', which gives me lead responsibility for the employment, leadership, management and support of staff who work for the council. This is a role I take very seriously. Without great professional and committed staff, who are trained and supported to do their jobs well this council will not achieve its objectives. This strategy spells out what we will do to ensure that this is the case.

This is a challenging time for us in the public sector. We are having to examine all aspects of what we do as we deal with the consequences of a significant reduction in funding from central government. We need to focus resources and the work of ourselves, the employees, on the key issues for people in this City. This means that we will be living with change for some time - changes to what we do, how we do it and some reductions in the numbers of staff employed in the council.

Against this backdrop our commitment is to be a decent and fair employer that recruits and supports people to be confident in their work and give of their best. We will be an employer that involves and engages staff in shaping proposals for change. We will provide development opportunities for staff so that people have the skills required for roles as they change. Where post numbers have to be reduced or where it is proposed to transfer services to other providers we will work through all the options for staff and prioritise vacancy management, retraining and redeployment so that compulsory redundancies are a last resort. I want to thank you all for the way in which you have worked through the changes we have made so far. Your commitment and professionalism means that we continue to deliver great services to the people of this city.

When we recruit we will recruit the best person for the job. We will be seeking to encourage recruitment from all communities in the city, so that we can become more reflective of the communities we serve particularly in terms of age, race and disability.

In the last year we have been working as part of a pilot authority on 'open innovation' which invites everyone - across all sectors of the city and tiers of the workforce - to be involved in finding new ways to tackle some of the challenges we face. We will take the learning from this to work together as 'Team York', collaborating across boundaries to find solutions for our residents. We are a member of the co-operative councils network and we will be building co-operative ways of working and also supporting employees who want to think about the option of employee owned mutuals and social enterprise.

In the following pages you will find more about the priorities and commitments of the workforce strategy. I will be reviewing delivery on a regular basis and I want to know from you too how you think we are doing. You can contact me as ever on kersten.England@york.gov.uk .

I look forward to hearing from you.

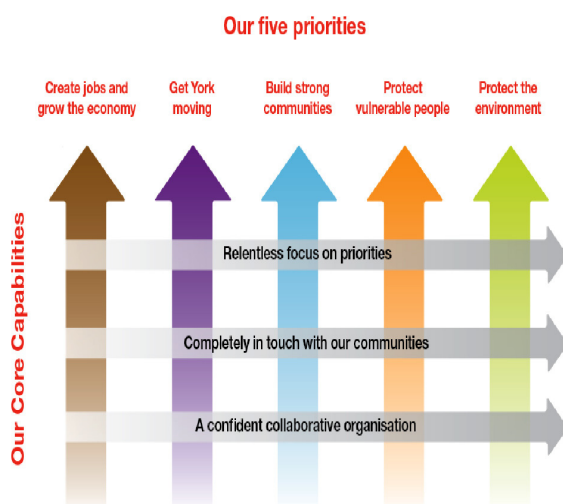


Kersten England
Chief Executive

Background

As with all public sector organisations we are facing very challenging times ahead. We need to respond to significant constraints in funding whilst remaining effective and motivated, as well as be willing to adapt and respond to the changing work and services we need to deliver.

To focus us on what we need to do to meet the challenges ahead we have a Council Plan that sets out five priorities for the next 4 years:



These priorities will shape and give focus to everything we do as a council but we must be equally clear about how we as a workforce need to adapt to new styles of working and changing capabilities.

This Strategy makes clear what we need to do, sets out our vision for the workforce and identifies what we need to focus on to achieve this. It takes into account our own particular workforce composition and this context has guided some of our priorities and actions.

Change is likely to affect all of us in some form or other. It is important that our plans and actions are made with a clear understanding of how they will impact on all groups and that they do not lead to disadvantage or inequity.

So what are we like as a workforce?

We have a workforce of around 7,400 people and provide services to around 200,000 people. As a unitary authority we are responsible for providing all local government functions (except fire and police) and because of this we have one of the largest and varied workforces in the city.

We are currently spread across 16 different locations but a major project is underway to reduce this to fewer sites in the city and move to a new civic headquarters building in 2012.

The majority of us are female (74%), 71% of us work part time and the average salary is the equivalent of £20,700 per annum (£10.76 per hour), and yet we only have 13% of women senior managers.

Only a small number of us are from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background , (4%) and 2% of us are disabled. We are a mature workforce, over 68% of us are 40 years of age or older with only 3% of us between 16 and 24.

The vast majority of us live within the council's boundary, with 80% of us being customers as well as employees.

So how do we compare to our community?

We employ significantly fewer disabled people than there are in York but have a closer match to the proportion of people from black or minority ethnic backgrounds.

Our biggest mismatch compared with the population of York is in the employment of people under 25 years of age.

So, to be more reflective of our community we would need to employ more women in higher paid roles, more people from a black or minority ethnic background, more disabled people and they would need to be in the younger age

bracket, particularly within the 16 to 24 age band. The population figures for York show that the 20-24 age group rose by 52% in 2010 so there is potentially an increased number of people in the labour market in this age range to target.

We have a more qualified population than the rest of the region to draw upon. The number of people in York with NVQ level 4 qualifications or above is 13% higher than the region as a whole and nearly 81% of our young people attain 5 GCSEs at grade A to C, which is higher than both the regional and national average.

York is in the fortunate position to have an unemployment rate below the regional average, this is excellent for the city but means there is greater competition for attracting and retaining the most skilled people.

The Vision and Strategy

Our Vision

Our vision for York is to have a workforce that understands our priorities, is innovative and creative, diverse and inclusive, flexible, ready and willing to respond to changes in the work we do and how we do it. We want everybody to feel involved in how we operate and how we deliver our services and to work together effectively to deliver what our customers need.

At a time of transformation in local government we will continue to review our organisational design and look to operate in future on a more “matrix” or cooperative style of structure which reduces bureaucracy and allows staff to operate more flexibly. We will simplify transfer arrangements and other means to allow staff to move outside the organisation when appropriate and to work more closely with partners to plan and deliver services across traditional boundaries. We will also require more flexible terms and conditions and reward systems.

This in turn means that we will be clearer on responsibility and accountability with a more disciplined focus on outcomes.

Performance management will be key and will extend throughout the organisation. We will develop, implement and maintain a consistent framework which ensures that all staff understand their role and responsibility within the organisation and how they are accountable for their actions and behaviour. We will ensure they are supportively led and managed to be able to perform well.

We will engage more with our staff. People need to be appreciated and we will encourage ideas and innovation from everybody. Engaged and productive staff enable the delivery of excellent services whilst disengaged staff incur a loss of productivity, higher absence and lower performance. Our staff will know that they are part of the solution, not the problem as we deal with transformation and constant change. Innovation often flourishes at such times and we will ensure that we provide the opportunities for this to happen.

We will provide inspiring and effective leadership at all levels of the organisation with our staff being empowered to make decisions to fulfil their customers' needs. York will develop leaders who can work in a collaborative way to achieve goals using shared knowledge and who can motivate, lead and manage our staff to deliver services in the most effective way.

We will put policies and practices in place that drive and support performance management and change to fulfil our vision for the workforce of the future. We will have a relentless focus on this priority and identify the key actions that will help us to achieve it. One of the measures of our success in delivering this strategy will be in meeting the principles of the Investors In People Standard.

Our Strategy

To achieve our vision we will focus on:

1. Skills and Behaviours Development

to have visionary and ambitious managers and leaders who can develop, motivate and lead our workforce to deliver our services effectively in challenging times. To further develop our teams so that in providing our services they can demonstrate flexibility, innovation, decision-making and at all times excellent customer service.

2. Recruitment and Retention

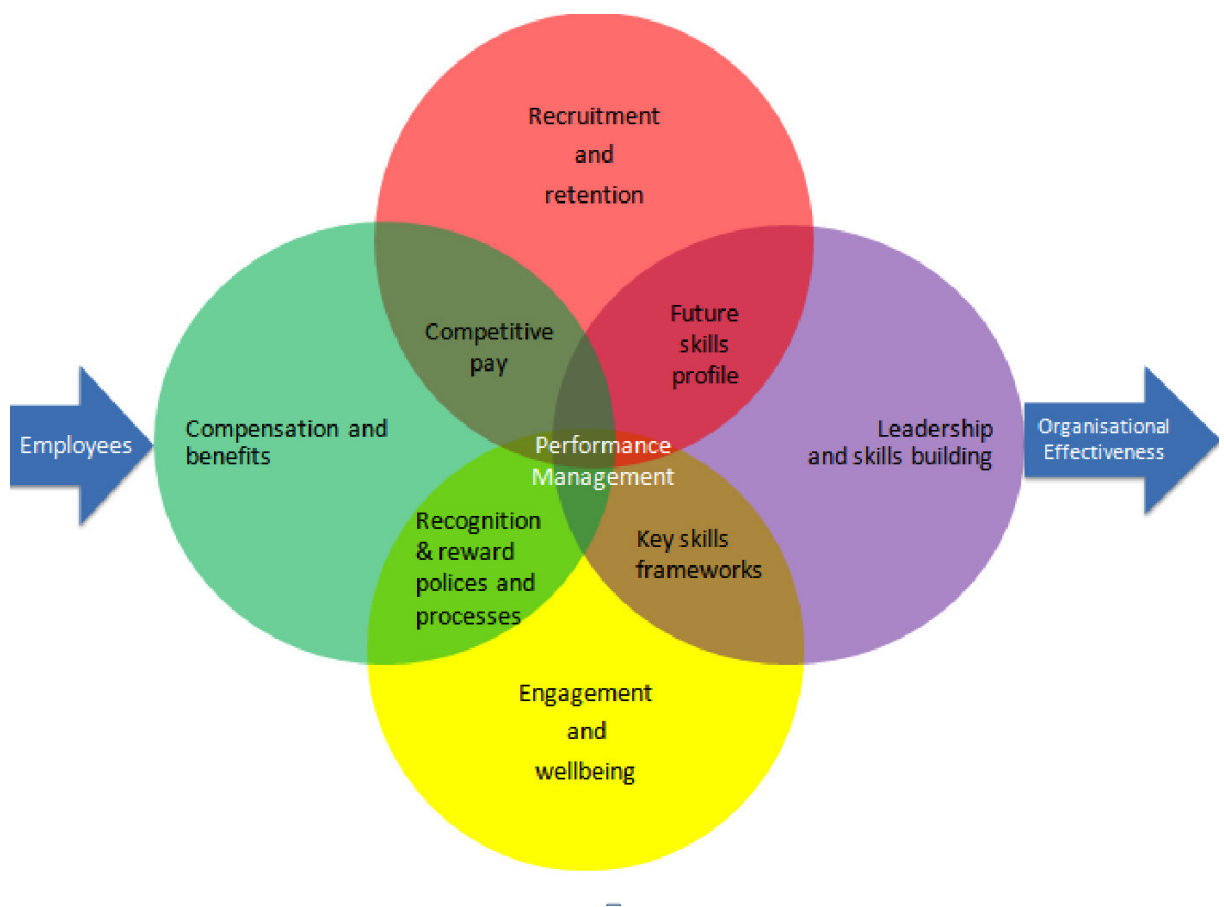
to recruit and retain a workforce with the skills and values we need, promote jobs and careers as an employer of choice, and identify, develop and motivate talent. To develop and maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce, actively challenging and addressing accessibility barriers and issues.

3. Pay, Reward and Recognition

to provide good and flexible reward packages within the current financial constraints and ensure fairness across all groups of employees. We will recognise great work and ideas.

4. Wellbeing and Engagement
to be an organisation where risks are managed sensibly and proportionately to ensure the levels of accidents and incidents of occupational ill health are as low as possible. We will actively promote and manage wellbeing including effective and active employee engagement.

5. Performance and Change
to be an organisation that can transform quickly and effectively, that is highly productive and focussed on achievement, that values and engages with employees and has a culture that is collaborative, innovative, inclusive and creative.



Skills and Behaviours Development

What do we want to achieve?

We will have inspiring and ambitious managers and leaders who can develop, motivate and lead us to deliver our services effectively in challenging times. We will be effective at identifying and nurturing our leaders of tomorrow so that we can maintain a continuous high performing leadership team.

To further develop our teams to have the skills to deliver those services in a manner which demonstrates flexibility, innovation, decision-making and at all times a customer focussed approach. To contribute to the development and delivery of the priorities laid down in a city-wide Learning & Skills Strategy.

We are committed to driving up basic levels of attainment in essential skills (literacy, numeracy & IT) in the council or in preparation for employment elsewhere in the city.

Why is this a priority?

Our ability to lead and manage through the challenges of transformation will be critical to meeting our priorities. We will strengthen our focus on the skills required to do this at the very top levels and with all our managers responsible for leading staff.

In this challenging environment it is more important than ever that learning and development is absolutely focussed on what is critical to effective performance and delivery of priorities. We will deliver this in the most responsive and cost effective ways.

What actions will help us to respond to these needs?

- Identify the skills and behaviours required at the different levels in the council.
- Provide programmes to develop the skills and behaviours of leaders and measure the learning through effective 360° performance management feedback.

- Develop talent management programmes to develop and retain those with potential making sure that under-represented groups are targeted as part of this.
- Design a competency framework to help identify learning and development needs of job holders.
- Develop a programme to educate employees on the skills needed to build effective partnerships.
- Produce a learning and development plan and delivery model that focuses activity on the essential and key skills, knowledge and behaviour required to meet our priorities.
- Develop toolkits and use positive and inclusive examples to ensure fairness in access to skills and opportunities.
- Outcomes of learning and development activity can be clearly linked to the delivery of our priorities and key workforce objectives.
- Performance of staff is increased through development of essential and key skills.
- Increased fulfilment of staff's development aspirations.

Our existing framework of leadership and management standards (LAMS) has been in place since 2007 and was developed to support the aims of the council at the time.

We now need to revisit these standards and check whether they remain fit for purpose and support the new vision and strategy.

The challenges of working in the council of the future may need different skills and behaviours and a review in 2012 will be vital to identify what will make our leaders and managers effective in this new environment.

Key outcomes

- Leadership skills are clearly demonstrated and performance improved.
- Learning and skills activity across the council and the city is delivered in a way to maximise provision in the most cost effective way.
- Potential future leaders have been identified, the diversity profile of the group is representative of the workforce and people are engaged on a talent management programme.

Recruitment and Retention

What do we want to achieve?

We will have the right people in the right place at the right time with the essential skills and values needed to meet our goals and their aspirations. We will be reflective of the community we serve, at all levels of our organisation, allowing us to be completely in touch with them. We will balance the buying in of talent to refresh our workforce with opportunities for existing staff to progress and develop.

Why is this a priority?

We will continue to change as the council continues to respond to financial challenges, service redesign and changing needs of customers. So, it is vital that we provide resources in the most cost effective ways and retain our talented people.

We will look at retention in the broadest way to enable us to retain as many of our talented people delivering services to our customers as we can. We will consider all options, including employee mutual or social enterprise service delivery models.

We will undertake more effective workforce planning so that we can predict future workforce needs and prepare for changes in the size and composition of the workforce .

What actions will help us to respond to these needs?

- Develop an approach to organisational design which identifies key future staffing requirements and how best to resource this.
- Create opportunities for younger people to join the workforce through pre-apprenticeship work placements, apprenticeship and other programmes such as internships.
- Create job structures and pathways such as talent pools and secondments that enable our staff to progress and encourage under represented groups to apply for opportunities.



We have made the five commitments regarding recruitment, training, retention, consultation and disability awareness to have attained the disability symbol.

- Identify barriers to under-represented groups applying for jobs in the council and look for ways of removing them.
- Promote and embed flexible working practices across the organisation to support different styles of work and help attract the widest possible range of people.

Key outcomes

- The shape and size of the organisation is flexible to respond to priorities.
- An effective vacancy management strategy is in place.
- The number of young people gaining basic skills, completing apprenticeships and securing onward employment has increased.
- Employees are more satisfied with opportunities to progress.
- Talented people are delivering our services through direct employment or other service delivery models.



The 'Apprenticeship Challenge' aims to create places for 100 apprentices within 100 days in the city. We have risen to the challenge by offering 34 of the 100 places to young people.

Our apprentices are working towards the Level 2 qualification and the first entrants started on the scheme in September 2011.

The council is one of the key partners of the challenge programme in York and it is also being supported by the National Apprenticeship Service and The Press.

Pay, Reward and Recognition

What do we want to achieve?

We want to be able to recruit and retain a diverse range of effective people, and pay, reward and recognition is a fundamental part of this. We will work hard to provide the best reward package for employees we can within the difficult financial constraints we face and ensure fairness across all groups of employees within the council. We will recognise great work and ideas, and will provide opportunities to our employees to help improve morale.

Why is this a priority?

Balancing the pay bill with fair and motivating reward is particularly challenging in the current financial climate, but we still want to be competitive enough to retain the best people and at the same time maximise support for those who experience financial challenges.

Having modernised and simplified some of our pay arrangements we will work with the trade unions to review the remaining groups to ensure consistency in treatment and, where practicable, harmonise terms and conditions between groups. As part of these packages of changes we will seek to minimise the financial impacts on our workforce and will seek to

agree ongoing support packages and initiatives which give employees other benefits which may be financial or non-financial.

We will ensure benefits such as flexible working practices are fair and maximise accessibility for all of our diverse communities.



Launched in August 2009 the staff lottery was created to help fund the development of staff benefits as well as offering cash prizes to employees. The funds raised are split 50/50 between the two.

The lottery has funded lunch time wellbeing workshops such as Alexander technique, Kinesiology, reconnection healing.

The council choir “**CANsing**” is supported by the lottery and a range of new spend suggestions are being considered.

Our first lottery winners

Dave Meers, a care manager in the Learning and Disabilities team at Systems House, and **Janine Higson**, housing options advisor, both in HASS, each struck lucky in the council's new Staff Lottery winning the top

prize of £500 in the August and September draws.

Dave was initially troubled by the phone call from Human Resources: "It's not often I get a call from HR so I thought it couldn't be good news - but I was absolutely stunned and delighted to hear I'd won the top prize in the first lottery draw - I never usually win anything. I'd joined it straight away (I have two numbers) when it was introduced, as I work with a lot of colleagues in the health service who have their own lottery and heard how good that was. I've treated myself to some new golf clubs and I'm going to spend the rest on a holiday."

Janine Higson, who also has two numbers, was in the perfect setting when she got her good news. Sitting on a balcony sipping a glass of wine on the last night of her holiday in Turkey, she got a call from one of her colleagues at work. "I thought they were pulling my leg at first as I'd been convinced I'd win the first draw because it was on my birthday. It was a nice ending to the holiday and couldn't have come at a better time - my old laptop was nearing its end. I also had to buy cakes for the office... we've all been doing a national lottery syndicate for ten years and only won the odd tenner."



What actions will help us to respond to these needs?

- Carry out an ongoing review of the terms and conditions of employment for the whole organisation to ensure fair, consistent and efficient practice.
- To review options to address low pay in our workforce.
- Develop a total rewards approach to pay and benefits including widening of salary sacrifice schemes.
- To develop schemes of support to secure future opportunity and employment.
- Develop an ongoing scheme to recognise outstanding work in our organisation building on the success of the 2011 eXtra Factor Awards.

Key outcomes

- Our employees understand the total value of their employment package.
- We know and recognise our outstanding teams and people and they feel valued.
- The cost of the employment package is sustainable for the future but is fair within the current economic climate and does not financially exclude individual members of staff.
- We are confident in the fairness of our pay and reward practice.



We launched our first Benefits Booklet in 2009 in partnership with the NHS. The Shepherd Group have since joined the scheme and we are looking at increasing our partners to maximise benefits potential.

We have expanded the range of discounts available year on year and are committed to introducing more voluntary benefits and salary sacrifice schemes over the next year.

Wellbeing and Engagement

What do we want to achieve?

We will manage risks sensibly and proportionately to ensure the levels of accidents and incidents of occupational ill-health are as low as possible. Staff wellbeing will be an integral part of our employee support mechanism and will be actively managed and promoted. We will have a strong and positive employee relations and engagement culture to ensure our employees feel well informed, involved and have a way of feeding back their views in a variety of ways.

Why is this a priority?

We need to do all we can to ensure that we are fit, ready and able to attend work. We will move beyond traditional boundaries of health and safety and encompass both the physical and mental wellbeing of staff particularly where new service delivery models are introduced. We will continue to work towards the ultimate goal of achieving a level of wellbeing that is consistent with the best organisations and we will work in partnership and city wide to achieve this.

What actions will help us to respond to these needs?

- Provide policies and practices that reflect the requirement for new ways and styles of working and service delivery.
- Ensure safe systems of work are in place.
- Ensure managers have the knowledge and skills to carry out effective risk assessments within a Health & Safety culture.
- Improve incident reporting and investigation.
- Improve the provision of health surveillance and occupational health services to focus on improving attendance, wellbeing and proactive support.
- Develop a programme of wellbeing activities & initiatives accessible to all of the workforce and responds to Wellbeing Surveys.
- Develop a Dignity at Work policy.
- Review how we interact with employees through both collective employee relations and directly.
- Develop ways of increasing engagement and morale to make the best use of the talents and involvement of staff.

Key outcomes

- A healthier workforce with:
 - A reduction in number of days lost through workplace accidents
 - A reduction in occupational ill-health.
- Employees know how to carry out their work safely and managers promote a health & safety culture.
- Employees are more satisfied with their work/life balance.
- Flexible working practices are more wide spread.
- A suite of 'good employer' support exists for all staff.
- Bullying and harassment is not tolerated or accepted in any part of the organisation.
- We have a strong and positive employee involvement and engagement culture.

WORKPLACE WELLBEING SURVEY

From 4 April to 6 May

DON'T BOTTLE IT UP!

Please take part
YOUR views are important

How do you feel about working for the council? What issues are affecting your physical and mental wellbeing? The Workplace Wellbeing Survey is your chance to tell us.

Your views will help us create a structured programme to support your health and wellbeing at work.

The confidential questionnaire takes about ten minutes to complete and includes questions about work-related issues and your general health and lifestyle.

You can complete it online from any internet-enabled computer - at home, the library or at work - or ask your manager for a paper version.

Contact the Health and Safety Team if you need help or advice on 0541 331 or healthandsafety@york.gov.uk

PRIZE DRAW FOR STAFF TAKING PART, COURTESY OF ENERGISE

Win a three-month gym membership, an e-reader, a digital camera or 100 worth of vouchers

energise

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

The 2011 employee wellbeing survey took place over the summer. The Joint Health & Safety Committee and the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team are now working with services to deliver their action plans.

Performance and Change

What do we want to achieve?

We want to be able to transform quickly and effectively, be highly productive and focussed on achievement. We will be clear about the council's priorities and how our own fit into these so we can champion everything it stands for. We will value each other and have a culture that is collaborative, innovative and creative.

Why is this a priority?

We are facing rapid change, the transformation of services is being driven by increasing customer demands and the need to reduce the cost of provision. We will have to be flexible and able to adapt our services quickly to meet these challenges. Service delivery models may need to be very different to what we currently have with employee mutuals and social enterprises being developed to ensure the retention of employment within the city .

What actions will help us to respond to these needs?

- Develop effective change management processes and ensure managers understand how to manage the different types of change and how to support employees through them.
- Build links with partners and other organisations, in the city to identify common workforce issues and develop a shared approach to addressing these.
- Develop a consistent performance management framework through staff appraisal that links to business plans, ensures staff understand their role and priorities and that they are supportively.



In July 2011 we secured recognition as an 'Achieving' authority for

our commitment to, and delivery of, equitable services and outcomes for our employees and the people of York.

Our ambition is now to reach the 'Excellent' level in two years time and to do this we must ensure that our commitment to equalities is fully embedded in everything we do.

- Ensure that diversity best practice is incorporated into all employment and employee activity and that the workforce is monitored carefully to drive improvement. Any barriers to creating a diverse and inclusive workforce are identified and clear actions to counter these are implemented.

Key outcomes

- Staff understand the Council and their own priorities and know what they need to do to achieve these.
- The council has an approach to change management and all managers are trained.
- Increased collaboration and partnership solutions on workforce issues.
- The workforce profile more closely matches that of the community.
- Staff are more satisfied with the opportunities for them to contribute to how the council works.
- Increased customer satisfaction with effectively delivered services.



We have just attained a 'Carer Friendly Employer' chartermark in recognition of

the support we offer to carers in the workplace.

To achieve the chartermark we needed to show that we considered and supported carers in all relevant employee policies or had an action plan in place to do so.

Our Human Resources team and Staff Equalities Reference Group are working to develop new support material for line managers in respect of managing and supporting carers at work .