

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 23 SEPTEMBER 2003**

#### **TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT**

##### **Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources**

### **1. PURPOSE**

To inform the Committee of the progress and current priorities of the restructured Training & Development function and seek its approval of the draft Training & Development Policy and the supporting Training & Development Action Plan.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Corporate Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 24 September 2002, members approved structural proposals for the Council's Skills Training and Development functions and related staffing proposals arising from the introduction, by Scottish Enterprise, of a new model for the delivery of training services to young people with additional support needs; and the business advantage to be gained in greater integration of some of the activities of the Skills Training Unit with those of the Training and Development team, particularly in the light of the Scottish Executive's Lifelong Learning agenda.
- 2.2 As of the 1st April 2003, a new structure for the Training & Development function was implemented. The intention was to bring the service closer to the point of delivery and in so doing become much more customer focussed so that the specific needs of Client Departments would be the main driver for future training initiatives. From a strategic point of view the first two items which needed to be addressed were to develop a clear direction led by service departments' priorities and set this out in a policy document, and to develop an action plan to ensure progress towards the broader objectives.
- 2.3 Whilst it is too early to make a long-term judgement, the new structure is considered to be working well. Feedback from senior management colleagues has been good with positive feedback on the fundamental objective of the new structure and training activity being located closer to service needs. Similarly, the Training and Development staff are enjoying the new role and recognise the opportunity of designing and delivering training which is increasingly led by their host department.

### **3. INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1 Training has a number of key elements including:

- training policy;
- action planning;
- identification of training needs;
- training and delivery plans;
- training design and delivery;
- Management Development Programme

- training evaluation.

3.2 This document will examine each of these key components and explain the work that the Training & Development function is planning to undertake in relation to these components over the next nine months.

#### **4. TRAINING POLICY**

4.1 A statement of East Ayrshire Council's training policy is the first component that needs to be put in place. This policy informs the role of training in the whole organisation context, and has an impact on all subsequent decisions made about training.

4.2 A revised Training Policy Document (which has been included in this report as Appendix 1) takes account of the restructuring of the Training & Development Group and the consultation that has taken place thus far. The Policy is shaped by the Council's four Core Values of Quality, Equality, Access and Partnership.

4.3 The Policy has been agreed with and endorsed by the organisation's senior management. It then needs to be widely publicised and clearly explained, in order to ensure organisation-wide support and commitment.

#### **5. ACTION PLANNING**

5.1 The training policy, as described above, contains a list of broad policy objectives as follows:

- a) to help employees develop the skills and knowledge to do their jobs effectively now and in the future;
- b) to support the induction of employees who are new to the organisation or who have taken on a new role;
- c) to maximise access to learning and development;
- d) to maintain and enhance the quality of service in all areas;
- e) to provide appropriate management and professional development opportunities;
- f) to help ensure the health and safety of staff and others who are affected by our activities;
- g) to encourage lifelong learning and provide employees with opportunities for self-development; and
- h) to support recruitment and retention by fostering a positive development culture.

5.2 Some of these objectives are in step with what we do currently. Others reflect intentions of where we want to be in the near future. The overall intention is for training interventions to be driven by the skills required for effective service delivery across the Council. In order to begin to meet these broad objectives we have developed a Training & Development Action Plan, which is included in this report as Appendix 2.

5.3 This top level Action Plan is not intended to set out the entire training and development activity. The detail of training and development activities will be contained within Departmental/Service Training Plans, which will be tailored for the

specific needs of each Department or Service. The essential prerequisite to setting out a Departmental/Service Training Plan will be the identification of training needs.

## **6. IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS**

6.1 Identification of training needs at organisational, departmental and individual levels clearly needs to be a precursor to any further training activity. It is only by comprehensive analysis and identification of training needs that training can be linked to organisational objectives and, where appropriate, tailored precisely to meet the needs of specific departments/services or individuals.

6.2 Activities relating to the identification of training needs are co-ordinated and supported by Departmental Training & Development Co-ordinators. The extent and scope of a training needs analysis (TNA) can vary, depending on what is required by a specific Department/Service. However typically the data for analysing where performance gaps or performance development opportunities exist can be collected from a number of potential sources including:

- completed forms from EAGER reviews;
- management query - by asking managers for their opinions on training priorities;
- informed observation of workplace activity;
- skills audit – a detailed study of the skills and knowledge of members of a team with the purpose of systematically identifying skills gaps;
- one-to-one interviews - conducted with a representative sample of staff and managers at all levels (this could be viewed as one particular method of conducting a skills audit);
- quality records, such as non-statutory performance indicators generated for ISO accreditation or for Investors in People;
- customer complaint records;
- questionnaires and surveys, such as employee opinion survey, residents' questionnaire etc.

6.3 Some level of analysis should be carried out annually, with a more comprehensive analysis being carried out, say, every three to five years. EAGER is considered to be the appropriate annual review mechanism. Once the analysis is complete, Co-ordinators can help to form the information, gathered into a tailored Training & Development Plan for the specific Department or Service in question.

## **7. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

7.1 Departmental Training & Development Co-ordinators will play the key role in pulling together Training & Development Plans for each Department/Service. The departmental Training & Development Plans will be practical documents, renewed annually, with two main purposes:

- they will bring together all the training needs identified from EAGER review, one-to-one interviews, written records, workplace observations etc.;
- they will schedule appropriate targeted training that will be carried out, during the year, towards addressing the needs identified.

7.2 Information given about the planned training will typically include:

- the needs which have been identified;
- key issues which have led to these needs being identified;
- priorities;
- the training planned;
- types of employees included;
- the training provider;
- target dates for completing the training.

7.3 Assisting Directors in the production of these training plans is a significant contribution for the new post of Training & Development Co-ordinator. This establishes a training service that is needs driven, which is of course one of the main reasons for the recent restructuring exercise.

## **8. TRAINING DESIGN & DELIVERY**

8.1 Paragraph 6 of the appended draft Training & Development Policy makes it clear that, in line with policy aims to continuously improve methods of delivery and maximise access to learning, all available methods of delivery will be considered in terms of cost-benefit. A strong influencing factor is a general commitment that the point of delivery should be as close to the job as possible.

A range of methods will be supported where possible and where justified. The appended Training & Development Action Plan includes a number of new initiatives including:

- bespoke training interventions;
- European Computer Driving License (ECDL) training;
- online toolbox talks;
- new vocational qualifications;
- a structured Management Development Programme.

## **9. MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

9.1 Managers are critical to an organisation's performance. Their skill - in planning and organising work, and their behaviours - in the way they manage and supervise the work done by staff, are strongly influential in terms of their impact on the ability and willingness of others within the organisation, to put in the performance required.

9.2 Managers need to be developed across a wide range of both 'hard' and 'soft' skills in order to plan and delegate work effectively, whilst at the same time inspiring and motivating their staff. It is particularly important that we provide training to prepare

the managers of the future or bring new managers on line more quickly and effectively.

- 9.3 A Management Development Programme will be developed having regard to the Scottish Local Government Development Plan which has been put in place to support and improve leadership development

## **10. TRAINING EVALUATION**

- 10.1 It is obvious that training is only of value if it achieves the results required. Once training has been delivered, it needs in some way to be evaluated for its overall effectiveness and perceived value to the organisation.

- 10.2 Evaluation of training presents some challenges such as:

- sometimes the benefits are 'soft' or subjective and are therefore difficult to measure in business terms;
- there may be a considerable time lag between the training event and the beneficial outcome (this is particularly true of lengthy formal training programmes, such as university courses);
- the difficulty of isolating the effects of training from other variables means that it is often impossible to prove the direct impact of training.

- 10.3 Despite these difficulties, evaluation of training is essential. It is the only way to:

- present and state a sound business case for training within this organisation;
- assess and identify ways in which to improve the performance impact of training;
- compare and analyse the costs versus the results achieved by training in our organisation.

- 10.4 The key is to attempt to evaluate, whatever it is possible to evaluate. Sometimes the distribution of questionnaires to assess participants' feelings about the training may be one of the few practical ways to evaluate training. But, whenever it is possible, we should attempt more sophisticated methods of evaluation e.g.

- testing of knowledge at the end of the course;
- demonstration of competence as part of the course;
- workplace observation;
- post-training projects, which require the use of newly acquired skills and knowledge;
- line manager feedback on the individual's workplace performance.
- Performance indicators e.g. reductions in staff turnover, reduced costs, improved quality, positive customer feedback etc.

- 10.5 The need to develop and improve methods for the evaluation of training is addressed within the Training and Development Action Plan (See Appendix 2).

## **11. CONCLUSIONS**

- 11.1 The Training & Development team are currently undertaking work in relation to the key components of the training process which are perceived as: developing a training policy; strategic action planning; identification of training needs; development of training plans; training design and delivery; Management Development Programme; and training evaluation.

11.2 The Training and Development Policy, as drafted, will provide clear direction for the delivery of training and the accompanying Action Plan details the actions required to support implementation.

## **12.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 The employee Training and Development Policy will ensure that the Council's commitment to developing and maintaining a culture of continuous learning, linking service efficiency with personal development and organisational goals is met.

## **13.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The Action Plan has been developed within the boundaries of current financial resources.

## **14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

14. The Corporate Governance Committee is asked to:-

- (i) Recommend to Council approval of the revised Training & Development Policy and approve the supporting Action Plan; and
- (ii) Otherwise, note the terms of the report.

Fiona Lees  
**Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources**

16 September 2003

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

Anyone wishing further information should contact Fiona lees, Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources, Tel. No. (01563) 576019.

Implementation officer : [joe.rafferty@east-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:joe.rafferty@east-ayrshire.gov.uk)



East Ayrshire  
COUNCIL

## **EMPLOYEE TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

### **DRAFT REVISION (JULY 2003)**

#### **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1 East Ayrshire Council is committed to developing and maintaining a culture of continuous learning, linking service efficiency with personal development and organisational goals. Appropriate training and development opportunities will be provided for all categories of employee, who are encouraged to update their knowledge, develop their skills and broaden their experience through a variety of channels. The objectives of the policy are:
- a) to help employees develop the skills and knowledge to do their jobs effectively now and in the future;
  - b) to support the induction of employees who are new to the organisation or who have taken on a new role;
  - c) to maximise access to learning and development;
  - d) to maintain and enhance the quality of service in all areas;
  - e) to provide appropriate management and professional development opportunities;
  - f) to help ensure the health and safety of staff and others who are affected by our activities;
  - g) to encourage lifelong learning and provide employees with opportunities for self-development; and
  - h) to support recruitment and retention by fostering a positive development culture.
- 1.2 The Training & Development Policy is shaped by the Council's four Core Values of Quality, Equality, Access and Partnership. These values, and all other policies linked to equality of opportunity, will also affect the design and delivery of all learning events and other training interventions associated with this policy.

#### **2. EAST AYRSHIRE GENERAL EMPLOYEE REVIEW (EAGER)**

- 2.1 EAGER is an employee development process which aims to make sure that all employees have a chance to discuss their work related training needs regularly with their line manager, so that training and development provision at an individual, departmental and council-wide basis can be planned. It is therefore the key process that underpins the Training and Development Policy.
- 2.2 Success is dependent on all managers regularly considering the training and development needs of their service and employees. Once every year, training

needs will be discussed during the EAGER meeting, and a personal development plan (Section 5 of EAGER) for the forthcoming year will be agreed between the manager and the employee. The manager holds primary responsibility for ensuring that training agreed during the review takes place. However assistance will normally be available from a local Training & Development Co-ordinator/Officer and the central training and development function, particularly in helping to put together Departmental Training Plans.

### **3. DEPARTMENTAL & CORPORATE TRAINING PLANS**

- 3.1 In order to ensure that training needs are properly met, the training interventions need to be properly planned. Each Service or Department should produce an annual training plan in line with their EAGER briefing detailing what interventions are planned, for what purpose, how these interventions will be delivered and by when. Personnel Services will support and assist in this process, where appropriate, through departmental Training & Development Co-ordinators/Officers.
- 3.2 The basis for all departmental training plans should be the personal training plans produced as a result of the EAGER process. However it is equally important that the wider organisational service needs are included in the plan. Therefore in developing training plans it is important to recognise these collective needs by consulting Service Plans where available and seeking information on current organisational development and policy development etc. Departmental Training & Development Co-ordinators/Officers can play a key role in co-ordinating this activity.
- 3.3 The Training & Development Manager is responsible for producing a corporate programme of training drawing on the priorities of the organisation as a whole, as well as reflecting those common priorities identified in Departmental Training Plans.

### **4. EVALUATION OF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

- 4.1 All training and development activities should be evaluated. Wherever possible evaluation should not be restricted to initial reactions to a learning event. Consideration should be given to evaluating the nature of the learning that took place, the transfer of learning and the final result of the learning. If possible an indication of return on investment should be sought, although it is recognised that such information can be difficult to capture.
- 4.2 A crucial element of evaluation is the EAGER interview where employees have the opportunity to discuss the perceived success of training and development activities. However it should be noted that managers have many informal opportunities to discuss with employees the usefulness of training interventions. When this happens, constructive feedback should be passed on to the Departmental Training Co-ordinator/Officer.
- 4.3 The Council is committed to evaluating inputs at the individual level, the job level and at the organisational level. The development of effective evaluation methods is a priority action for the Training & Development Team to support this policy.

### **5. RECORD KEEPING**

- 5.1 Departments are responsible for keeping training records for their staff. This is particularly important where the training is a statutory requirement e.g. certain types of health & safety training.
- 5.2 As part of our commitment to lifelong learning, all employees are encouraged to keep a personal record of their own development, especially where development is associated with a non-traditional learning activity, such as coaching or secondment. A format for this will be placed on the Intranet.
- 5.3 The Training & Development Section (Personnel Services) will keep records of all of the training they deliver.

## **6. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT METHODS**

- 6.1 In line with policy aims to continuously improve methods of delivery and maximise access to learning, all available methods of delivery will be considered in terms of cost-benefit. A strong influencing factor is a general commitment that the point of delivery should be as close to the job as possible. The following methods will be supported where possible/justified:
- bespoke training programmes
  - toolbox talks
  - short workplace based sessions
  - distance learning
  - e-learning
  - traditional classroom based off-the-job training
  - formal further education (colleges and universities)
  - facilitated focus/working groups
  - vocational education & training (Skillseekers and mainstream)
  - other competency based training
  - structured development programmes (including management development)
  - blended learning
- This list is not exhaustive.
- 6.2 In line with the aforementioned aims, and in tune with the e-government agenda, opportunities will continually be sought to make the best use of new technology in both the design and delivery of training interventions. Where information technology is the subject of the training, every effort will be made to maximise access. This issue is of such significance that a separate document relating to IT Training is being developed and will be appended to this policy at an early date.

## **7. RESOURCES**

- 7.1 A range of resources has been allocated to Personnel Services to deliver corporate training initiatives. These resources include a budget, training rooms, physical resources and professional staff. The Training & Development Manager and the Skills Training Unit Manager, under the direction of the Head of Personnel, are responsible for maximising the effective use of these resources on behalf of the Council.
- 7.2 These resources are limited and are carefully allocated and prioritised to maximise the benefit to the organisation as a whole. Individual Departments will also

supplement these resources where the benefits are clearly justified, and are specific to the service needs of the Department.

## **8. REVIEW OF POLICY**

- 8.1 It is essential that the direction set out in this policy keeps pace with good practice and with the changing needs of the organisation. Therefore this policy will be reviewed annually and brought forward for amendment as necessary.

Sign off date:

**TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT  
ACTION PLAN 2003-2004  
SUMMARY**

<b>DRAFT TRAINING &amp; DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Policy Objective</b>	<b>Timescale/Target</b>
1.	Redraft the <b>Training &amp; Development Policy</b> to reflect changing circumstances and set a clear direction.	All	Draft ready by August 2003.
2.	<p>Report on the general progress of the new T&amp;D structure and set out the overall action plan.</p> <p>Develop Departmental/Service <b>Training Plans</b> (activity to be supported by Training Co-ordinators/Officers). Each document will set out the specific Department's plan for addressing training needs highlighted through EAGER, or through other strategic documents relevant to that Department or through discussion with line managers or other stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents will include such information as the types of employees included, the training needs identified, the key issues which have led to these needs being identified, the priorities, the nature of the training, the training provider, suggested timescales etc.</li> </ul>	All	<p>General report to Senior Staff Management Team by September 2003.</p> <p>End of September 2003</p>
3.	<b>Programme training to be delivered by the Training &amp; Development Section</b> in response to collective training needs highlighted within Departmental/Service Training Plans.	All	By November 2003
4.	Where appropriate, develop <b>bespoke training interventions</b> on an ongoing basis, in order to tailor training to the specific needs of a particular Department, Service or employee group.	All	Ongoing
5.	Introduce a competency based <b>Management Development Programme</b> , initially aimed at middle management but ultimately covering all levels of management.	e	<p>Seek views on initial proposals from Senior Staff Management Team, September – October 2003.</p> <p>Develop training modules September/October - April 2004.</p> <p>Launch middle management programme by June 2004.</p>

6.	Prepare paper identifying options for <b>elected members' training and development</b> to be submitted to Members Services and Civic Ceremonial Sub-Committee .	All	March 2004
7.	Introduce opportunity of <b>European Computer Driving License (ECDL)</b> qualification for all relevant staff.	a, c, d,	November 2003
8.	Improve Training & Development <b>Web Pages</b> e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved information</li> <li>• Course descriptors</li> <li>• Online training</li> <li>• Contacts and personal profiles</li> <li>• Links (useful sites, goodpractice.net etc.)</li> </ul>	c, d	December 2003
9.	Continuously review/improve existing <b>Training Courses</b> .	d	Ongoing
10.	Pilot <b>online toolbox talks</b> . First to be piloted – “Changes to Selection Interviewing Procedures”.	a, c, d	December 2003
11.	Source and offer appropriate <b>Racial Awareness Training</b> (possible online solution currently being evaluated).	a	December 2003
12.	Introduce new methods of <b>training evaluation</b> .	d	December 2003
13.	<b>Further Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote the opportunity</li> <li>• process the yearly round</li> <li>• prepare and introduce Information Day for new FE students</li> <li>• offer training in study techniques</li> </ul>	a, c, d, e, g	April – July 2003  Offer training in study techniques by end of August 2003. Training to take place September 2003.
14.	Launch an event to <b>celebrate individual success</b> in learning and development.	d, g	November 2003
15.	Investigate the possible introduction of new <b>vocational qualifications</b> and modern apprenticeships.	a, c, d	Ongoing
16.	Develop an <b>IT Training Plan</b> .	All	End of February 2004