

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

Council: 20 December 2006

Subject: Implementation of a Human Resources (HR) Management Information System

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report seeks to update the Council on the actions that are being taken to enable the acquisition of a Human Resources (HR) Management Information System for the Authority.
- 1.2** The purchase and implementation of a workforce management system has been identified and agreed as an immediate priority through the Best Value Audit Action Plan.

2. Background

- 2.1** There is a great deal of evidence that the contribution of people is the largest driver of organisational performance. Systematically collecting, analysing and communicating information on the value of this contribution is vital and will assist in the design and implementation of HR policies and practices that will maximise the impact on organisational performance. Effective utilisation of human resources is a major determinant of efficient management and the ability to manage and analyse information is a key factor in successful human resource management.
- 2.2** The HR function in the public sector is required to develop into a more visible and responsive role as a key strategic partner in the delivery of services. To do this effectively means supporting the organisation by having the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. It also means helping managers to manage the employment relationship by offering them consistent direction and support. Accessible, reliable real-time employment information is critical to the success of strategic management planning and in supporting the employment relationship through the provision of information.
- 2.3** West Dunbartonshire Council does not have a HR Information system in place, which puts the Council at considerable disadvantage in managing its human resources. This has been highlighted in the recent Best Value Audit Report and through the strategic risk analysis undertaken by the internal auditors. We require

to address this as an immediate business priority in order to manage our workforce effectively and plan for the future. The process of human resource management has undergone a technological revolution in the past 10 years and all aspects of HR management can now be improved significantly through the use of information technology and the management and analysis of information.

3. Main Issues

3.1 There is a significant business imperative for introducing a computerised HR Information system to the Council and some of the key benefits are as follows:-

- To manage applicant and employee information as required by legislation. The general and specific duties on Race, Disability and Gender (April 2007) impose obligations on public sector bodies to report annually on a range of statistics. At the moment we have difficulty in meeting our statutory duties in this respect.
- To enable the management of statutory equal opportunities monitoring in terms of the identified categories i.e., nationality and ethnicity; religion and belief; gender; sexual orientation; age; marital status and to pinpoint trends, identify bias and put in place remedial action.
- To support the accurate management of payroll information and to develop cost models across and within specific areas of the workforce.
- To provide readily up to date information on employees for establishment purposes. The analysis of our workforce in terms of contract type, age distribution, gender, pay etc is currently a monumental task e.g., the implementation of the recent Age Regulations requires us to be compliant legislatively and to manage prospectively the retirement process; the Dispute Resolution Regulations requires the careful management and termination of fixed term contracts and the implementation of the statutory dismissal process. Currently both these situations are challenging to manage.
- To manage attendance within the Council and reduce costs. Effective absence management requires managers to have access to a substantial range of information on patterns, rates, comparisons and costs. At the moment only a minimum data set is available.
- To support the implementation of specific projects e.g. single status. Ongoing pay information will enable us to control pay, staff numbers and grade drift. It will also facilitate the process of workforce planning through reprofiling and skill mix modelling.
- To provide reporting on workforce statistics to COSLA and other regulatory bodies.
- To support improved management reporting in relation to statutory and other key performance indicators

- 3.2** A computerised information system will support the collection, storage, aggregation, and analyses of a wide range of currently unavailable statistical information. The system will require to have a wide range of features but must also be able to provide full integration with other Council systems i.e., Payroll; FMIS, Document Management; Contact Centre technology. (Appendix 1).
- 3.3** There are a number of stages in commissioning and putting a computerised HR information system into operation. A small team will be established to identify the scope of the project and lead on the specification, procurement and implementation.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1** There are significant short term development costs associated with the purchase and implementation of a HR Information system however this investment will deliver benefits not only in relation to improved reporting and strategic management of the workforce but also through the elimination of manual, transactional tasks therefore allowing for the more effective and efficient use of limited staff resources.
- 4.2** Estimated project costs require to be fully determined through the project scoping exercise however they are likely to be in the region of £300k including resources, training and migration of any current system data. Purchase of any system will ultimately be subject to a comprehensive procurement exercise and hardware costs, associated database engine licences, backup media and software costs will be determined through this process.
- 4.3** The full details of the costs associated with this system will be included in the General Services Capital Programme 2007/2008 which will be presented to Members in February 2007.

5. Personnel Issues

- 5.1** The project will be led by Corporate Personnel and a Project Board will be set up to oversee the management of the project from inception through to implementation.
- 5.2** A Project Team, led by a Project Manager, will be established to carry out the day to day functionality of the project. The Project Team will comprise:-
- a Project Officer
 - representation from Finance
 - representation from ICT &BD
 - representatives from each Directorate (Manager and Personnel Officer)

- 5.3** In addition, the Account Manager from the system provider will also sit on the project Team.
- 5.4** It is anticipated that there will be a requirement for additional temporary staffing resources to undertake project management of such a business critical project which will be required to integrate with all areas of the Council.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1** It is imperative that the project commences as soon as possible in early 2007.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1** The Council is asked to note the actions that are being taken to enable the acquisition of a Human Resources Management Information System to support effective people management practices.
- 7.2** A future report will be submitted to the Corporate Services Committee to update the Council on the progress of the overall project.

David McMillan
Chief Executive
Date: 20 December 2006

Wards Affected: N/A

Appendix: Basic Specification of a Corporate HR System

Background Papers: Nil

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Basic Specification of a Corporate HR System

Human Resources - core - legislation, HR set up, basic employee details, equal opportunities records, employee pay and bank details, employee benefits, job position history, previous employment history, employee history, education and academic qualifications, skills and competency management, succession and manpower planning, e-human resources, employee self service, manager self service, employee portal, HR professional portal, WTD (working time directive), exit interview, employee correspondence, employee identity card, HR specific reports and analytics, integrated links, statistics and volumes

Recruitment - vacancy recording, selection process, application forms, applicant details, applicant selection, applicant tracking, letter production, convert applicant to employee, e-recruitment and selection, recruitment reports, integrated links, statistics and volumes

Training administration - records for training providers, funding arrangements, training employees, training course arrangements and course evaluation, employee personal training records, employee CPE / CPD records, IIP (Investor In People) accreditation, e-training (e-learning), integrated links, statistics and volumes

Time and attendance - time data and data capture, additional equipment installation, timesheet design, time data - display, monitoring and analysis, rostering, WTD (working time directive), NMW (national minimum wage), reports, integrated links, statistics and volumes

Absence management - absence details, personal data, holiday entitlement, tracking holidays, maternity leave, adoption leave, paternity leave, other authorised and unauthorised absences, sickness recording, absence cost, absence reporting, e-absence and workflow, integrated links, statistics and volumes

HR - additional public sector requirements - job posts, grading structures, shift rota, additional requirements for schools and social services, reporting, analytics, integrated links, statistics and volumes

Discipline and appraisal - discipline, appraisal, e-appraisal, reports, integrated links, statistics and volumes

Health and safety records administration - health tests, accident recording and reporting, risk assessments, integrated links, statistics and volumes

Car administration - vehicle details, vehicle details for taxation purposes, ongoing vehicle usage and costs, driver details, statistics and volumes

Systems operations - system reliability, operational efficiency, system performance, user productivity assistance, data processing and systems control, data volumes and quality, security, backup and recovery

Technology requirements - application software, databases, database administration and monitoring tools, operating systems (required servers, clients, networks), XML, network types and

cabling, wireless (LAN) networking, ASP (Application Service Provider) / hosting organisation, internet access and hosting, hardware platforms (mid range, server, workstation, client), hardware (wireless / portable devices), other hardware requirements

Software / system support - sources of support, supplier quality accreditations, vendor / support organisation expertise and reputation, implementation assistance, training, maintenance and support

System selection - selection process, shortlist phase, detailed selection phase

Product Implementation – project management, project planning, detailed resource allocation, testing, go-live, review