APPENDIX I

The Moray Council – Housing Service

Training and Development Strategy

2009 - 2012

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THE MORAY COUNCIL – HOUSING SERVICE

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Training and Development Strategy

Section 1

Introduction

The Moray Council's Single Outcome Agreement identifies the overall aims and priorities for the authority. To deliver the priorities agreed within this plan, the need for effective staff training is recognised and commitment is given to ensure Housing training strategies focus on supporting staff and managers to meet the regulation framework of The Scottish Housing Regulator known as 'Regulation and Inspection'.

Assessing performance within this regulatory framework requires commitment to ensure continuous improvement and effective resource management.

The Training and Development Strategy also fits within the concept of Best Value being adopted by The Moray Council. Best Value places an emphasis on continuous improvement and highlights the need for training and development to support organisations and services that seek to build improvement into all that they do and to support a culture of learning within the workplace.

The European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) approach, also being adopted throughout the Council, reinforces the importance of training and development. This is reflected within the wider framework of corporate personnel policies and procedures that will influence this strategy.

Section 2

Aim of the Housing Service Training and Development Strategy

The overall aim of the Training and Development Strategy for housing is:

'to seek to achieve best value from staff resources for the maximum benefit of the organisation, the service, service users and the staff themselves by equipping staff with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to work to meet the Council's business needs'.

The aim of the strategy will be supported by the following objectives:

Objectives of the Housing Service Training and Development Strategy

1. To identify the training and development needs of all housing staff annually, or as specific issues arise, and to take action to meet the identified requirements.

2. To monitor and evaluate the extent to which individual training and development needs are achieved.

3. To encourage personal development and to meet the requirements of the service.

These objectives will be pursued through the actions described in Section 3.

The basis for the Housing Service Training and Development Strategy is the positive experience and commitment that has been made over a number of years to facilitate and encourage training opportunities for staff within the service.

By setting out objectives and actions, the Strategy can be monitored and evaluated in a more formal way than was previously possible. Equally, training becomes more open and accessible by staff, and the training provided is more responsive to the changing needs identified by staff and the service.

Section 3

Achieving the Objectives

To achieve the objectives set out in this strategy we will carry out a range of actions. Where we can do so, we will set targets for the achievement of these actions and these are detailed in the Appendix to this document.

Objective 1: To identify the training and development needs of all housing staff annually or as specific issues arise, and to take action to meet the identified requirements

Action 1: We will enable every member of staff to discuss training and development needs with their manager

Even when we are doing well there will be scope to do better. Improvement frequently comes from harnessing the fresh thinking and creativity of staff, and identifying the scope and method that will help them to improve their performance. Employee Review and Development Programme (ERDP) is the corporate tool for this purpose, and for a more general review of an employee's performance. It is already being used to good effect within housing.

ERDP provides the means for each member of staff to assess their performance with their manager and to identify their training and development needs for the coming year. Implementation of the ERDP process is well developed within housing and although the content of ERDP interviews remains confidential, the outcome from this process leads to an assessment of service-wide training and development needs.

Together with a review of feedback from monitoring and evaluation of the previous year's Training Programme, this forms the basis of the next year's Training and Development Plan, ensuring that individual staff training and development needs are met as well as those of the service.

Action 2: We will co-ordinate training to support the introduction of new policies, procedures, etc to meet the needs of the changing service delivery

Housing has recently seen the introduction of legislation that brings with it new and varied responsibilities. This along with natural service development has meant there have been a great deal of new policies and procedures introduced or being revised. The need for training to be linked to this is seen as crucial to support staff. This will allow them the ability to meet the needs of

changing service delivery and ensure successful implementation of the policies.

Action 3: We will develop opportunities for planned and structured workplace learning (including feedback from the corporate complaint procedure)

If we are working, we are learning. Whether the learning is effective or not depends on whether specific learning outcomes are intended and whether the activity is designed to yield those outcomes. To do this well, activities or projects need to make a real contribution to the way a service works, while being carefully matched to the learning needs of the employee(s).

The Council has adopted the European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) approach. Within this, it is intended that all staff should be able to relate what they do and how they do it to the wider goals and values of the organisation. The Moray Council Single Outcome Agreement sets out the key priorities to be addressed by the Moray Community Planning Partnership from April 2008. Our Local Housing Strategy supports the delivery of the housing priorities set out in the Single Outcome Agreement and Community Plan and contributes to the wider Community Services Service Development and Improvement Plan produced annually. The Housing Service Improvement Plan sets out more specific actions and timescales for staff on areas of housing service development. These will influence and support the development of the ERDP and link into, and take into account, other corporate and departmental plans.

Action 4: We will provide opportunities for managerial/supervisory staff to acquire and/or develop training, coaching and mentoring skills

Learning at work (workplace learning) will happen whether it is a managed process or not. When it is managed well, it can assist effective performance and team working. Importantly, it can also integrate learning with workplace activities. For the value of workplace learning to be maximised, there needs to be a planned and sustained programme using real workplace activities and projects at an individual level. It needs highly developed managerial and supervisory capability and commitment to be fully realised. Busy managers will need particular skills and awareness to deliver Action 4.

Action 5: We will encourage an increase in the number of qualified staff in the housing service and will provide financial and other support to achieve this. We will ensure that staff obtain professional or occupational qualifications that are mandatory for their service.

Where an employee wishes to acquire or enhance a professional qualification, we will support this within available resources and the broader framework of corporate policies on training and post-entry professional education.

Where it is a mandatory service requirement for specific staff groups to hold a professional or vocational qualification, we will expect staff to undertake the

appropriate training courses and we will provide resources to enable them to do so.

Course fees, travel, subsistence and study time are all offered to staff studying for professional qualifications.

Action 6: We will enable staff to attend training events and will evaluate those events

There will be learning objectives that are best achieved through formal, classroom events. We should enable staff to attend such training and, where justified, should arrange in-house provision. Managers should brief staff before the event as to the aims of the training. After the event managers and employees should discuss and assess the merits of the training.

Action 7: We will identify areas of skill and knowledge that are relevant to all staff and ensure that staff have access to training in these areas

Formal training events will continue to provide an important means of achieving our training and development objectives. We will ensure that information on the availability of training events is circulated within the housing service. Managers will ensure that staff are able to access places on training events where these fit within agreed training and development plans.

Action 8: We will identify those areas of operational skill and knowledge that are relevant to specific groups and individual members of staff and ensure that staff have access to such training

As employees' duties and aspirations will vary, so too will their training and development needs. For example only people who participate, or are likely to participate, in interviews will need Recruitment & Selection training. At the same time there are likely to be areas that are relevant to all staff in the service. The Training and Development Action Plan (that will flow from this Strategy and ERDP) will be structured to provide both common and role-specific training.

Training targets will be set for individuals to ensure that each member of staff has equal access to training and that they can increase their knowledge base and that their progress can subsequently be monitored.

Action 9: Access to training will be monitored to ensure fairness

To underpin the objectives of the Training and Development Strategy, it is important to ensure that access to training is determined only by fair and defensible criteria and; for example an employee's role, their realistic aspirations, the needs of the service and customers, and the fair distribution of resources.

We will promote equality of access to training in accordance with the Council's Equalities Strategy.

Objective 2: To monitor the extent to which individual Training and Development Plans are achieved

Action 10: We will develop Targets and Measures of Success and use these to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy. We will monitor the strategy annually.

The actions, responsible person/team, target times and measures of success which form the action plan of the Training and Development Strategy, will be continually reviewed and the training plan's effectiveness monitored to facilitate continuous improvement. We will produce a summary of each team's training and development needs to accompany the Team Service Plan and monitor its progress every three months.

Action 11: We will at least annually review the extent to which the individual training and development plan of each employee has been achieved

As part of each individual's ERDP programme a review of the training that they have participated in during the year will take place. Feedback from these interviews will assist in the evaluation of the Training and Development Action Plan. We will provide each member of staff with a personal training plan to enable them to record progress towards agreed training and development objectives.

Action 12: By collating information from Actions 7 & 8, we will annually review
the extent to which the service Training and Development Action Plan has been achieved, and adapt the plan as required

It will be for each employee and their manager to ensure that the employee obtains or attends the agreed training. Each employee and their manager should review periodically, and at the end of each year, the extent to which the individual's plan has been achieved. The individual needs identified through ERDP will, of course, need to be collated and prioritised, and reflected in the housing service's Training and Development Plan. This work will be carried out by the Service Development Manager. It is at this point that training providers can be identified, who may be departmental, corporate, other housing services, professional institutes, or commercial trainers.

Action 13: We will invite all staff to comment on the ongoing implementation of this Strategy and upon any amendments following the review at Action 12

The monitoring and review of individual and service training plans will, to a large extent, assess the effectiveness of this strategy. Nonetheless there should be an annual review of the extent to which this Strategy is supporting

the achievement of Corporate, Department and Service objectives and necessary amendments made.

Staff will have an open invitation to offer comment at staff meetings or individually.

Objective 3: To encourage personal development

Action 14: We will explore opportunities for extended learning through, for example, secondments to other services within the Council or other organisations

We work in a climate of change. Therefore the skills and knowledge that we require to enable us to perform our jobs can also change. National Government is keen to encourage 'joined-up working' within local government. As part of an employee's personal development programme there may be skills and areas of knowledge that could benefit the individual and the housing service as a result of secondments to other related disciplines within the Council, or with partnership organisations and agencies. This could be managed with the assistance of Personnel Services. It would need a rigorous assessment of the learning potential of a proposed secondment, and co-operation between donor and receiving managers.

Action 15: We will examine means of meeting personal development aspirations using a range of techniques

The way in which we develop the potential of staff within housing will influence our achievement of the Council's corporate objectives and the strategic objectives of the housing service. Personal development is therefore not simply about creating opportunities to meet individual needs but is also about creating opportunities that integrate the needs of the service and those of the individual. In maximising the potential and opportunity for individual members of staff the, Training and Development Action Plan will seek to include a range of appropriate learning techniques including: workplace learning, in-house training sessions, formal training events and access to professional qualifications.

Section 4

Training and Development Action Plan

As previously stated, by setting out objectives and actions the Strategy can be monitored and evaluated in a more formal way than was previously possible. Equally, it can respond to the changing needs identified within the service.

However, it is essential that we set out achievable targets and measure how successful we are in meeting the training and development needs of our staff and service. The attached action plan sets down how we aim to meet our objectives, who is responsible, identifies time-scales for achieving targets and sets out measures of success for our plan.

Appendix: The Moray Council Housing Service Training and Development Strategy Action Plan

	Action	Action By	Target & Time scale	Measures of Success
Objective 1 – To identify the training and development needs of all housing staff annually, or as specific issues arise, and to take action to meet the identified requirements				
1	We will enable every member of staff to discuss training and development needs with their manager	Housing Management Team (HMT) Managers	Training and development plans agreed for all members of staff by April of each year (through the ERDP process) and reflected in the annual Housing Service Training Plan	Individual training needs of staff identified are met Improved staff performance
2	We will co-ordinate training to support the introduction and review of housing service policies, procedures, etc. prior to their implementation. We will provide ongoing training as required on existing policies/procedures	HMT Managers SPM	Training will be programmed to match the introduction and review of policies and/or procedures Annual Training Plan to reflect priorities of policy/procedure training	Staff confidence in dealing with any issues/ queries that arise due to the introduction of new policies/procedures Staff confidence in working with procedures
3	We will develop opportunities for planned and structured workplace learning (including feedback from the corporate complaint procedure)	Housing Planning Group (HPG) HMT	Workplace training requirements identified and integrated into annual Training and Development Plan	Workplace training events planned and successfully completed in the year
4	We will provide opportunities for managerial/supervisory staff to acquire and/or develop training, coaching and mentoring skills	HMT Managers SPM	All first line managers to commence Corporate Management Module by March 2009. All new managers within one year of appointment. All managers/supervisors encouraged to undertake appropriate training	Number of places taken up Managers ability to develop and deliver workplace training programme
5	We will encourage an increase in the number of qualified staff in the housing services and will provide financial and other support to achieve this. We will ensure staff undertake qualifications that are mandatory for their	HPG HMT	Training Budget to be targeted to ensure 5 members of staff commence CIOH training courses each year Training Budget for professional qualifications to reflect	Staff undertaking professional housing qualifications

	Action	**Action By**	**Target & Time scale**	**Measures of Success**
	service	Managers SPM	the requirements of the service All housing support staff to commence appropriate SSSC level by March 2009	Housing Support staff undertaking SSSC courses
6	We will enable staff to attend training events and will evaluate those events	HPG SPM	We will carry out ongoing Customer Evaluation Feedback surveys on all training sessions and report on results annually in April Staff to report to managers and, at managers request, to team meetings on the benefits of external training and on any service improvements opportunities arising from the training	Learning objectives achieved for staff and Housing Service Learning disseminated to colleagues and to Housing Service
7	We will identify areas of essential awareness and knowledge that are relevant to all staff and ensure that staff have access to training in these areas.	HMT Managers SPM	Introduction of essential awareness/knowledge module for Housing Service by November 2008. Review to be carried out annually Review customer care training requirements for Housing staff by November 2008 Encourage housing staff to participate in the Council's annual Equal Opportunities/social awareness training programme	Number of staff who have received training in skill/knowledge areas Incorporate customer care components in essential skills/awareness module **Incorporate Equal Opportunities/social awareness training in essential skills/awareness training** Improved planning and monitoring of staff training records and needs
8	We will identify those areas of operational skill and knowledge that are relevant to specific staff groups and ensure that staff undertake training in these areas.	HMT Managers SPM	SDT to identify essential operational skills training module for key service groups by November 2008. Components to be agreed in consultation with service managers.	Establishment of staff skills modules for each service group Number of staff who have received training in the essential operational skills module components

	Action	**Action By**	**Target & Time scale**	**Measures of Success**
				Improved planning and monitoring of staff training records and needs
9	Access to training will be monitored to ensure equality of opportunity for all staff groups	HMT TDWG	Staff questionnaire to be devised by March 2009 for completion and collation by May 2009, and annually each year thereafter	Numbers of staff/staff groups who feel they have access to training opportunities Diversity of staff representation in training opportunities
Objective 2: To monitor the extent to which individual Training and Development Plans are achieved				
10	We will continue to develop Targets and Outcomes and use these to monitor and annually review the achievement of the strategy	HPG TDWG	The Training Strategy will be reviewed at least once a year We will review our existing targets and outcomes by March 2009 and annually thereafter	Action Plan updated annually to reflect achievements and changing priorities
11	We will review, at least annually, the extent to which the individual training and development plan of each employee has been achieved	TDWG Managers Staff	Review to be carried out (through ERDP) by November each year. Reports provided quarterly to Managers on individual staff training record	ERDPs undertaken for all staff by November of each year and more frequently at 1:1s if appropriate. Improved monitoring of staff Training & Development Plans Revisions to individual T & D plans and the wider Service Training Plan
12	By collating information from Actions 7 & 8, we will annually review the extent to which the service Training and Development Action Plan has been achieved and adapt the plan as required	TDWG SPM	Annual review of Training Plan in March of each year	Annual review completed Updated Training Plan in place by March of each year

	Action	**Action By**	**Target & Time scale**	**Measures of Success**
13	We will invite all staff to comment on the ongoing implementation of this Strategy and upon any amendments following the review at Action 12	HPG HMT TDWG	Consultation on the implementation of the strategy to take place with staff at team meetings Staff are advised of significant proposed amendments	Minutes from team meetings reflect consultation Staff fully endorse the contents of the strategy
Objective 3: to encourage personal development				
14	We will explore opportunities for extended learning through, for example, secondments to other services within the Council or other organisations	HMT Managers SPM	Secondments to take place when the opportunity arises	Secondments taking place
15	We will examine means of meeting personal development aspirations using a range of techniques	TDWG	Continue to develop a range of methods and approaches to staff development and training, including mentoring, job swap	The range of development and training options available to staff Positive feedback from staff on range of options

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