

Review of Learning and Development in 2008/9

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Recommendation: that the OSC Management notes the progress made to the Council's learning and development during 2008/9
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1. BACKGROUND

As part of the Council's budget preparation for the 2009/10 budget, the Chair of the OSC Management asked to review activity and outputs which the Council had been able to support from its training budget in 2008/9.

This report provides the information to members to enable them to carry out that review.

2. ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

1. Budget 2008/9 – As part of the budget preparation for 2008/9 the Council agreed that despite the requirement to make efficiencies overall, there needed to be investment over the medium term in developing capacity in the Council's services through learning and development, process improvement and IT. Investment in these areas was particularly to enable the Council to continue to work on seeking efficiencies in the way that services are provided and activities carried out. Accordingly a budget of £250,000 was approved for each of the next three years for learning and development. This was a substantial increase over the previous year's budget of £89,000.

Because of the size of the budget in 2008/9 it was thought appropriate to sub-divide it into a portion for corporate learning topics (applicable to employees in any service, such as equality and diversity, health and safety, or project management). The remainder was for the services to decide on training specific to the service needs. This part of the budget was not transferred to services' budgets, but the decision-making was devolved to Heads of Services. Apportionment between services was on a per capita basis -£322 per head.

The training budget for 2009/10 will be £180,000.

2. Employee Performance Management Scheme –At the beginning of 2008/9 a revised employee appraisal scheme was introduced: the Employee Performance Management Scheme. Following training in the scheme every employee was expected to meet their manager to set objectives and targets for the forthcoming year. At the same time agreement was reached between employee and manager on the employee’s learning and development needs. These were supplied to HR to allow a training plan to be created. A six month review of the targets and development plans was carried out in the autumn 2008. A summary of this review is that employees have taken ownership of their learning and development and most training that had been agreed is being addressed. The Employee Performance Management Cycle will continue throughout 2009/10 as below:

March 2009	Evaluation of last year Scheme to be completed Retraining for Managers and Employees on the scheme
April – June 2009	Performance Management meetings to take place
July – August 2009	Learning and Development Plan 2009/10 is produced
December 2009	Six month review of development plans
31 March 2010	Completion of 2009/10 Training Year

3. Learning and Development Plan – The size of the learning and development budget for 2008/9 allowed a project to be run to create a learning and development plan. The needs identified through the Employee Performance Management Scheme were collated and analysed. 80% of Copeland’s Learning and Development Plans were returned. An attempt was also made to calculate the cost implications of meeting all the needs expressed, which was estimated at £217,000. It is important to remember however that learning and development need not have much if any cost implication, as activities such as reading, work shadowing, coaching or working on projects offer opportunities for learning and that training can be in the form of learning opportunities presented in our everyday working environment.

The learning and development plan covered a range of different kinds of needs:

- Technical skills for qualifications
- Management development
- Skills for Life
- Traineeships
- Professional skills – negotiation, media skills etc
- IT skills and systems familiarisation
- Continuing Professional Development
- Health and safety
- Corporate Priorities- equality and diversity, customer service

- Academic qualifications where relevant
4. During 2008/9 the Council was reassessed under the Investing in People (IIP) award. The main elements of the Investing in People scheme had changed since the previous assessment and the mechanisms for providing evidence to the assessor were less reliant on written evidence and more on what employees explained during interviews with the assessor. The Council successfully retained the IIP award, with a requirement to improve in few areas notably:
- management developments including learning from internal good practice,
 - developing employee competency records,
 - introduction of mentoring arrangements,
 - introduction of succession planning,
 - use of IIP standards and tools for further developments
5. From 1 April 2008 to 28 February 2009 the Council spent and committed £126,842 training and development of employees. This includes all costs incurred whilst attending the specific course i.e. course cost, travel and expenses.

Type of Development	Number of Learning Events	Costs Incurred £
Management Development	10 (ILM, Perf Mgmt., Sickness Absence Management) *	7,359
Technical skills	114 (wide range of short courses and qualifications, including data quality workshops)	23,887
Continuing Professional Devt	24	5,000
Professional skills	11	8,975
Health and Safety	6, plus DSE, First Aid, Manual Handling	2,425
IT skills and Systems	5	13,000
Traineeships	2	1,447
Skills for Life	13	2,500
Academic Qualifications	9	17,115

* There has been no centrally organised Management Development programme in 2008/9, as in previous years. This reflects the fact that most of the team leaders and supervisors currently employed by the Council have had the opportunity to attend the ILM3 certificate course in years before 2008/9.

6. Besides the individual learning and development events summarized above the training budget in 2008/9 has supported four major requirements:
- Copeland Borough Council's contribution to ACE, now Cumbria Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (£15k);
 - Copeland Borough Council's contribution to the Cumbria placement for the National Graduate Development Programme (£12k);
 - Diversity and Equality Training (£5k);
 - Cost of re-assessment under IIP (£3k)

Please note that the total cost of travel and subsistence for Copeland employees to attend courses between 1 April 2008 and 28 February 2009 was £10,134.00.

3. CORPORATE PLAN

The 5 year Corporate Plan includes the requirement to create an annual Learning and Development Plan to meet corporate objectives. The outcome from this action states that training programmes are completed and qualifications achieved.

4 BENCHMARKING INFORMATION

Information to be presented at meeting.

5 PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

Not applicable.

6 CONCLUSION

The training budget for 2008/9 has been a significant resource for investing in the skills, competencies and capacity of the Council's workforce.

Although the budget will be under spent at the end of the financial year, there are still wide-spread unmet training needs. These will require careful planning to deliver within the limits of the budget reduced for 2009/10.

In addition approximately 8 hour per week dedicated external training resource has been allocated within the budget. The key objectives of this external resource is to advise and co-ordinate the learning and development activity at Copeland. This should therefore increase effectiveness and efficiency by ensuring that evaluation of all training is completed and that changes in behaviours after training are occurring. Lastly, and most importantly, ensuring

that there is a clear link between learning and development and Copeland's Business Strategy.

List of Appendices

List of Background Documents:

List of Consultees:

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	Learning and development activities can impact on the achievement of a range of corporate key issues, either directly through targeted learning, or indirectly through generally improved skills and understanding.
Impact on Sustainability	Learning and development activities can impact on the achievement of a range of corporate key issues, either directly through targeted learning, or indirectly through generally improved skills and understanding
Impact on Rural Proofing	Learning and development activities can impact on the achievement of a range of corporate key issues, either directly through targeted learning, or indirectly through generally improved skills and understanding
Health and Safety Implications	Health and Safety is a continuing training priority
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	Equality and Diversity continues to be a key area for learning.
Children and Young Persons Implications	Learning and development activities can impact on the achievement of a range of corporate key issues, either directly through targeted learning, or indirectly through generally improved skills and understanding

Human Rights Act Implications	Learning and development activities can impact on the achievement of a range of corporate key issues, either directly through targeted learning, or indirectly through generally improved skills and understanding
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