

## SUCCESSION PLANNING FRAMEWORK

### 1.0 Introduction

Succession Planning is a major aid to business continuity management and is a process by which one or more successors are identified to replace business critical and leadership roles within the organisation. The process aims to recognise future business requirements and provide development opportunities and career pathways within teams and departments to maximise learning and development investment.

The procedure will link workforce supply and business demands with the overall aim to ensure that the right people are in the right place at the right time with the right skills to meet the needs of the people and communities we serve. The procedure complements and supports the approved Organisational Development Strategy.

### 2.0 Aim

This procedure is intended to provide a strategic framework to ensure the Council has identified its key posts and has considered issues of resilience in support of the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2020-24. It details the definition of succession planning, the roles and responsibilities of those involved, how to identify successors for vacant posts and how to recruit and select successors.

### 3.0 What is Succession Planning?

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) describes the process as follows:

*'Succession planning is the process of identifying and developing potential future leaders or senior managers, as well as individuals to fill other business-critical positions, either in the short- or the long-term. In addition to training and development activities, succession planning programmes typically include the provision of practical, tailored work experience relevant for future senior or key roles.'*

Succession planning is about addressing and minimising risk through dealing with potential critical gaps in the organisation. It is also about developing internal talent and reducing reliance on expensive external recruitment. Succession planning sits inside a much wider strategic framework encompassing areas such as resource management, skills analysis and career development, which are covered in more detail in the Council's Organisational Development Strategy. In very simple terms it is about ensuring the Council has the right people in the right place at the right time.

Traditional succession planning involves identifying senior and other business critical roles and then identifying potential successors and equipping them with the knowledge, skills and experience to take up these positions within a certain timescale. However this approach assumes a degree of stability in the management structure. It assumes that the roles that are likely to be needed in the future are reasonably static. Clearly in more changing and ambiguous times the roles that we will need to fill going forward are likely to be different from those we do currently.

However we do have a framework which describes the behaviours that we need both now and in the future at each level within our organisation and we can make some reasonable assumptions about the types of roles we are likely to need to fill in the future.

#### **4.0 Methodology**

This procedure relies on two key elements.

- i. Identification of critical roles
- ii. Identification of available / suitable officers capable of filling those roles

#### **4.1 Identification of critical roles**

There are a number of questions to consider, detailed below, that will assist managers to identify those posts that are necessary for the continuation of essential services. The latest establishment reports can be used to inform thinking on which posts are deemed to be essential to maintaining services. An assessment tool is detailed at the end of this document with a scoring guide (0-5 with 0 strong disagreement and 5 being strong agreement) to assist with this process. The results can then be fed into a mapping document, which mirrors the questions and also forms part of this guide.

The questions are as follows:

1. If this position were left vacant, it would cause serious difficulties in delivering on commitments and corporate priorities and achieving operational and strategic goals at department level.
2. If this position were left vacant, it would cause serious difficulties in meeting legislative or regulatory requirements.
3. If this position were left vacant, it would be detrimental to the health, safety or security of the public.
4. The skills and competencies required to perform this position are highly sought after in the labour market.
5. This position tends to have a high turnover rate.
6. There is a significant likelihood that the incumbent will leave this position within the next 2-3 years.
7. This position would be difficult to fill because it requires specialised expertise and experience that is not readily available in the organisation or the labour market.
8. This position requires a high degree of specialised/corporate knowledge

## **4.2 Identification of available / suitable officers capable of filling critical roles**

In addition to identifying those business critical posts using the methodology outlined above, potential successors need to be identified and the following areas are suggested for appraisal.

i. **Performance** – refers to the employee's current level of performance and whether they are meeting / exceeding their performance goals and objectives set out in their current position and personal development plan.

ii. **Readiness** – reflects an employee's ability to take on greater levels of responsibility in a higher level position or in a more complex role, based on demonstrative behavioural and technical competencies assuming reasonable opportunities for development are available.

iii. **Willingness** – indicates the degree to which the employee has expressed an interest in, and is prepared and willing to assume a new role, as well as the Council's capacity to accommodate this.

## **4.3 Succession plan: Skills Profile**

Successors, once identified, will be asked to complete a 'Skills Profile' document that captures their career and personal aspirations. The profile will tell us more about them, identifying current skills, knowledge, qualifications and experience.

The skills profile comprises of three main elements.

i. **Personal Statement** – this provides an opportunity for potential successors to highlight key strengths and achievements.

ii. **Baseline** – this provides information on career history, skills, qualifications and experience.

iii. **Succession Development Plan** - this will be used to identify and record any gaps in specialist or technical knowledge, skills and experience that may require learning and development interventions.

The Skills Profile is the tool that will identify any gaps in specialist or technical knowledge, skills and experience that may require learning and development intervention to ensure that we have the right skills and competencies to support the officer's succession plan.

It should be noted that selection under succession planning arrangements does not automatically provide a guarantee of any form of release from the individual's substantive role. Whilst it may be necessary to seek temporary release to complete a project or undertake specialist training, this is not available as a right and would require support of the existing line manager. If an individual is refused release from their local line manager, the matter will be referred to the General Management Team, who will then determine whether release is in the greater corporate interest, or whether an alternative development approach would be appropriate.

Should it prove impossible to resolve, then the second placed candidate will be appointed or a further selection process will be undertaken. The decision of the General Management Team in such cases is final and not subject of appeal.

When the anticipated vacancy occurs, it is not permissible to simply select the individual who has been subject to support under the succession planning arrangements. Whilst they will hopefully be a strong candidate having undertaken role specific development, the job will be advertised under normal recruitment arrangements, with selection being based on ability, not potential.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements using the 0-5 scale, where 5 means you strongly agree.	Strongly disagree (0)	Disagree (1)	Disagree somewhat (2)	Agree somewhat (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
<b>Essential to service delivery</b> 1. If this position were left vacant, it would cause serious difficulties in delivering on commitments and corporate priorities and achieving operational and strategic goals.						
2. If this position were left vacant, it would cause serious difficulties in meeting legislative, statutory/mandatory or regulatory requirements.						
<b>Public Safety</b> 3. If this position were left vacant, it would be detrimental to the health, safety or security of the public.						
<b>Labour shortage</b> 4. The skills and competencies required to perform this position are highly sought after in the labour market.						
5. This position tends to have a high turnover rate.						
<b>Likelihood of leaving</b> 6. There is a significant likelihood that the incumbent will leave this position within the next 2-3 years.						
<b>Difficult to fill</b> 7. This position would be difficult to fill because it requires specialised expertise and experience that is not readily available in the organisation or the labour market.						
8. This position requires a high degree of specialised/corporate knowledge transfer to ensure continuity in the performance of the function.						
<b>TOTAL CRITICALITY SCORE (SUM OF ALL SCORES)</b>						

Score	Category	
33-40		Critical
25-32		Important
17-24		Discretionary
0-16		Not urgent