

# Workforce Planning Toolkit

## What is workforce planning?

Most of an organisation's success or improvement comes when the right people with the right skills and values are deployed in the right place at the right cost. Workforce planning is about helping managers achieve those matches. It does this by comparing the future needs of the organisation and your service with an analysis of the current workforce. Any difference between these two can then need to be addressed in a workforce plan.

Key features of effective workforce planning are that it is:

- future focussed;
- integrated with the organisations business strategy, financial planning, and People Strategy;
- supports the need to link service outcomes with the workforce required to deliver them; and
- understands that it is dynamic and requires on-going review and update as requirements change.

Workforce planning is not a one-off event, but a series of ongoing tasks instilled within a rolling live document. Workforce planning does not start and finish with the financial year; instead it needs to be fluid and flexible to meet changing demands.

## Workforce planning in context

The social care sector faces some significant challenges over the medium to long-term. Many of these demands are known but some are not fully understood, and others will emerge as the future unfolds. Some of these are:

- Uncertain financial future
- Increase in digital ways of working
- Population and demographic changes
- Different expectations of different generations
- Priorities shift
- The economy does unexpected things
- Non-existent data
- Workload capacity

## The benefits of workforce planning

The aim of this document is to help managers shape and change the workforce to meet future challenges. This should ensure that our people are flexible, future ready and equipped to deliver for the future as it unfolds.

Strategic workforce planning can help your services to:

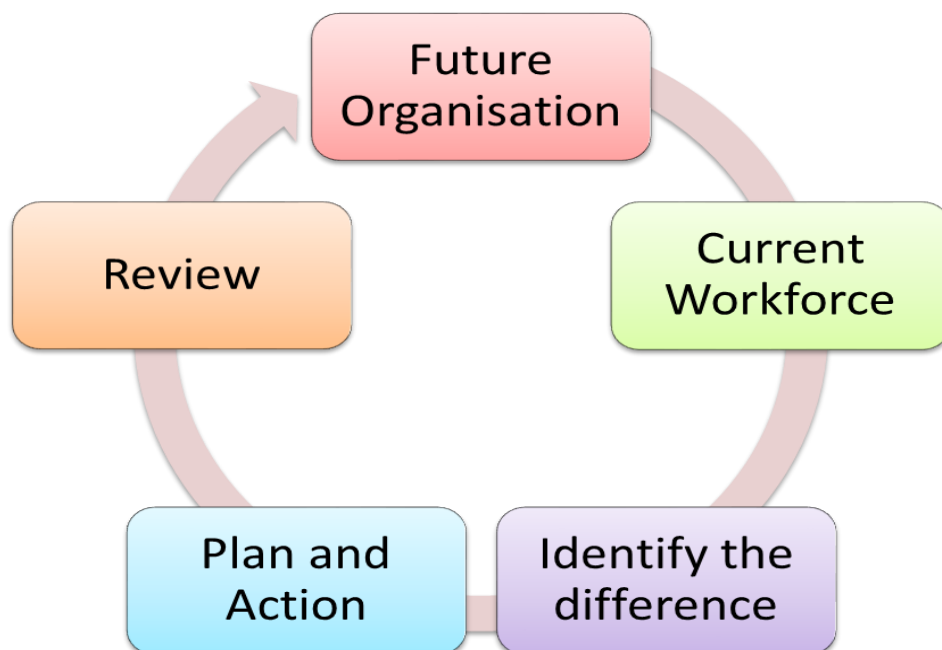
- identify and prepare for future workforce needs,
- allow a more effective and efficient use of staff,
- ensure that clients/residents receive better planned and more efficient services.

As part of business planning you need to have a vision of what your services will look like in the short, medium and long term; which is built around clients/residents' requirements and the key issues affecting service delivery. This vision needs to reflect how it will be provided and structured and therefore what staff will be required, where they will be deployed and what skills, values and knowledge they will need.

Once this is established then it needs to be compared to your current workforce. A link can then be made between where the workforce is now and where it needs to be. This will help identify surpluses or shortages and identify training and development requirements for future skills needs. Strategies and development plans can then be devised to meet these needs.

## Workforce planning – the 5 stage process

Workforce planning can be undertaken by using the 5 key stages outlined below.



## Stage 1 – Future Organisation

This stage is about assessing the future workforce requirements and you should consider any future changes that will impact upon the staffing within your service.

### Key questions to be answered:

- What are the future services that will need to be provided?
- What skills/competencies will be required?
- What new roles/working practices are needed?
- What are the potential growth/contraction areas and budgetary constraints?
- What does the structure look like now and what do you want the structure to look like in future?
- Are there plans to introduce, update or invest in new technology?

### Future Assessment Tool

The future assessment tool at Appendix 1 can assist you in identifying these issues by using a series of questions which can be used to stimulate discussion and debate. Please feel free to add your own questions to make the analysis more relevant to your service.

To assist in the prioritisation of action planning a simple 4-point score system can be used, as follows;

Scale	Indicator
1	There are no current or expected issues and no action is needed within the next 3-5 years.
2	Issue is not problematic at the moment but needs to be monitored over the next 1-3 years as it has the potential to become a problem; e.g. Medium term financial pressures.
3	Issue could cause problems now or within the next 12 months and may have an adverse effect on service delivery e.g. Budget pressures, staffing issues, planned retirements.
4	Issues that need addressing immediately; e.g. unexpected budget issues, loss of skills/knowledge through unexpected staffing issues.

Where an issue scores either a 3 or 4, this will indicate that immediate short-term action needs to be taken.

## Stage 2 – Current Workforce

This section poses key questions that should help you to develop the level of knowledge around your current workforce.

### Key questions to be answered:

- What is the current workforce profile?
- What are the current skills and competencies and values?
- Is your workforce underrepresented in certain areas?
- You can look at a variety of data such as:
  - The number of employees currently in post
  - Employee movements (i.e. turnover rates, the level of internal promotions)
  - Skills, capabilities and attitudes/values
  - Talent levels for potential future leaders
  - Where your staff are located and reside.
  - Absence levels and reasons for sickness
  - Staff opinions (i.e. survey results, leaver questionnaires, new starter questionnaires)

### Assessing the workforce tool

The assessment tool at Appendix 2 can assist you in identifying these issues by using a series of questions which can be used to stimulate discussion and debate. Please feel free to add your own questions to make the analysis more relevant to you.

## Stage 3 – Identify the difference

You should then be able to compare your results from stages 1 and 2 and identify any gaps, problem areas or potential issues between the two.

### Key questions to be answered:

- Do your staff have the right skills and abilities to meet the future need?
- Is your structure the right size and shape?
- Does it have the right level of cost?
- Are your staff based in the right location?
- Do your staff have the right attitudes and values?
- Do you need to think about succession planning?
- Will you need to outsource some services in the future?
- Will you require more partnership working and a shared workforce with other stakeholders?
- Is there a difficulty in recruiting to certain posts?

## Stage 4 – Plan and Action

You should then prioritise and plan your approach to closing the gap between these areas.

### Key questions to be answered:

- What are the future workforce priorities based on your analysis?
- Are there any more critical than others?
- What actions can you take?
- How will you know that you have succeeded?
- Are there any specific short-term actions that are required now in order to achieve a long term outcome?
- Who is responsible for delivering each action?
- Who else needs to be involved?
- What are the time frames for delivery?

### The Workforce Action Planning Template

Use the tool in Appendix 3 to capture the workforce planning and learning activities that emerge from the assessment process. This tool collates the priorities determined by the Assessment Tool and considers what actions will be required to address the issue with anticipated outcomes. Being creative in your actions here will ensure that you are considering all options. The template can be amended to suit your needs, and it may be useful to share the plan with HR and the senior management team.

## Stage 5 – Review

At this stage you should be monitoring the impact of your actions to ascertain their level of success, and then reviewing your plans, revising them as necessary.

### Key questions to be answered:

- Have we done what we said we would do?
- Are the planned actions still relevant?
- What has been the impact of our investment in specific interventions?

## Appendix 1 – Future assessment tool

Questions to be considered:	Sources of evidence	Score 1,2, 3, 4	Reasons for score
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What budget changes are you anticipating and how will this impact on your staffing requirements?</li> <li>• More? Less? New Roles?</li> <li>• What new roles need to be developed to meet changing needs?</li> <li>• Do you expect any changes in customer expectations? What skills and competencies are required because of this?</li> <li>• Will there be a need to re-structure your service/teams?</li> <li>• Is your service best organised to deliver your key responsibilities?</li> <li>• How are leadership capabilities affected by future service requirements?</li> <li>• What are the implications of partnership for your service? What working practices will be required to support this?</li> <li>• Will you have more or less customer demand?</li> <li>• What future products/services will be provided by your organisation and what are the workforce implications? More staff? Less Staff? New roles?</li> <li>• What future skills and competences are required?</li> <li>• Will you need to become more commercial, business like and cost aware? What impact will this have upon your service?</li> <li>• What action do you need to take to respond to the drive for continuous improvement?</li> <li>• How agile are your workforce to meet changing needs?</li> <li>• What talent do you need to grow and develop?</li> </ul>	<p>Medium and Long Term Financial Plan</p> <p>Business Plan</p>		

## Appendix 2 – Assessing the workforce tool

Questions to be considered	Suggested Source of Evidence	Score 1,2, 3, 4	Reasons for score
<p><b>Profile:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the current workforce profile look like?</li> <li>• What is the age profile?</li> <li>• What is the gender/BME/disability/LGBT+ profile within management posts?</li> <li>• How reflective is your workforce of the community it serves?</li> <li>• What are the evident risks from the profile?</li> <li>• How many apprenticeships do you have in your service?</li> <li>• Do you provide any opportunities for internships or work experience programmes?</li> <li>• What are your current workforce patterns?</li> <li>• Do your staff work flexibly?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Succession and Talent Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How effectively are you managing the succession of posts and the management of talent?</li> <li>• Which roles are critical to your service?</li> <li>• Are they operationally critical or strategically critical?</li> <li>• Are they unique?</li> <li>• Is there reliance upon Expert Workers, Operational or Ad Hoc workers?</li> <li>• Are these posts difficult to fill?</li> <li>• Have you identified the talent/successors within your service that have the potential to fulfil these roles? What development needs do they require?</li> <li>• Is there a need to make your workforce more flexible? E.g. multi-skilling or different models of service delivery?</li> <li>• What service areas/roles are difficult to attract good quality employees?</li> <li>• Do recruitment difficulties create issues for the provision of essential services</li> </ul>	<p>Business Strategy</p> <p>Business Plan</p> <p>Service Objectives</p> <p>Recruitment data</p> <p>Vacancy monitoring</p> <p>Turnover figures</p> <p>Exit Interviews</p>		



<p>e.g. cost of overtime, employing agency staff? Are these costs being monitored?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What problems do you have with retaining the right employees? Why do people leave your service area? Are specific skills being lost?</li> <li>• What roles within your service would be appropriate for an apprenticeship programme?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Employee Engagement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the current level of engagement in your service/team?</li> <li>• Do you encourage your team to get involved in planning and decision making around future service provision?</li> <li>• How is success and achievement recognised and celebrated within your service?</li> <li>• Are staff displaying and providing examples of the required organisational values?</li> </ul>	<p>Staff survey results</p> <p>Compliment and complaints</p> <p>Absence levels – short and long term</p> <p>Retention rates</p>		
<p><b>Learning and Development Needs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the current skills, competencies and strengths of the workforce?</li> <li>• What are the key development needs for the different staff groups in your service?</li> <li>• Are there any skill and development needs arising from the need for increased flexibility and mobility?</li> <li>• What are the skills gaps within your group/team?</li> <li>• How is personal development and growth being managed?</li> <li>• What career paths exist for staff?</li> <li>• How well do your management team work together?</li> <li>• How well do your staff work together as a team?</li> <li>• What difference would team development make to their productivity and engagement?</li> </ul>	<p>Annual Appraisal / Supervisions / 1-2-1 completion rates</p> <p>Staff survey results</p> <p>Training records</p>		

<p><b>Productivity &amp; Efficiency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you rate the current performance of your team?</li> <li>• What are the performance gaps/issues within your team(s) and what impact is this having on service delivery?</li> <li>• What is the level of Annual Appraisal completion within your service/team?</li> <li>• Are managers appropriately skilled to manage performance issues?</li> <li>• Does your team cope with unexpected absences of key/critical staff covering critical roles?</li> </ul>	<p>Staff survey results</p> <p>Compliments and complaints</p> <p>Service performance records</p> <p>Customer surveys</p> <p>Annual Appraisal records</p>		
<p><b>Leadership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do managers in your service have appropriate leadership and management skills?</li> <li>• What Leadership and Management training opportunities are currently accessed by staff and does this address their needs? What does good leadership look like in your service?</li> <li>• Do you have the right number of managers in the right areas?</li> <li>• Is mentoring, coaching, shadowing and project working being used enhance leadership development?</li> <li>• Would you have a ready supply of staff that would be willing and able to take on management positions within your service?</li> <li>• How robust are your succession plans?</li> </ul>	<p>Training records</p> <p>Recruitment data</p> <p>Vacancy monitoring</p> <p>360° appraisal feedback</p> <p>Performance management framework (PMF)</p>		
<p><b>Health, Safety &amp; Wellbeing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are workplace risks being identified and reduced?</li> <li>• Which service areas/teams are having issues with sickness absence?</li> <li>• What is the sickness absence level and how does it compare with the organisational target? What is the cost of sickness?</li> <li>• What is the biggest cause of absence in your service/team and how is it being addressed?</li> <li>• Which Managers in your service have undertaken skills training for sickness absence management?</li> </ul>	<p>Staff accident records</p> <p>Signposting</p> <p>Absence levels – short and long term</p> <p>Training records</p>		

## Appendix 3 – Workforce action planning template

Workforce priorities	Actions	Anticipated Outcomes	Lead Officer	Support	Timescale