People need People
Releasing the Potential of People Working in Social Services

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
The National Assembly for Wales
The Joint Review Team provides an independent assessment of how well the public is served by social services in each council in England and Wales. The rolling programme of reviews is undertaken on behalf of the Social Services Inspectorate (Department of Health in England), the Social Services Inspectorate (Wales) and the Audit Commission. Reviews cover how councils organise and deliver services to meet the needs of vulnerable people in their communities, including their human resource management. At the end of each review, a judgement is made about how well local people are being served by their social services and the capacity of the council to sustain and improve performance.

While many of the councils reviewed received positive comments on their human resource performance there is significant room for improvement in every aspect of human resource management. Above all, most councils need to re-evaluate their ‘culture’ and approach to their staff. Successful social service agencies are those that are open, self-critical, listen to users, carers and front line staff and involve them in setting and monitoring clear objectives. Most councils have some way to go before they can claim all those characteristics. Yet these characteristics are not new; they underline the basics of good management. Our recommendations are consistent with the TOPSS training strategy, Investors in People standards and other external benchmarks and have already been implemented to a greater or lesser extent in the most effective councils. They are within the grasp of all councils.

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Key Messages

Effective social service agencies manage their staff well.

Most councils could improve their services by applying known human resource principles more consistently.

This overview report on the management of people delivering social services summarises the strengths and weaknesses that have been found in councils that have been reviewed by the Joint Reviews Team. It proposes four key messages, set out below, that emerge from these findings, and from other work on human resources. The report does not aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of all the human resource challenges facing local councils but is intended to encourage debate and action on these challenges. It suggests in Appendix 1 some questions that will enable councillors and senior managers to scrutinise their own organisations. Section 1 indicates why people matter in getting the best from organisations, while Sections 2 and 3 present some straightforward principles of good practice and recognise the changing context for modernising social services. Section 4 summarises findings from Joint Reviews. In Section 5, we offer some practical suggestions for improvement in practice.

The findings from Reviews highlight four key areas for securing improvement in people management and, therefore, in services for users:

1. Becoming a learning organisation that delivers results.
2. Planning longer term to attract the right people.
3. Using qualifications and training to retain good people.
4. Implementing good practice consistently to drive up quality.

The performance of the best performing authorities suggests that implementing existing standards effectively can make a big difference. Good people management is the key to quality services and effective learning organisations value staff contributions.

The findings from Reviews offer both encouragement and a challenge to those responsible for social services. The findings show that those councils that are performing best in service delivery and the management of performance and resources are also those who score highly on their management of staff. Those who are not doing well enough overall invariably need to improve their management of people.

The Joint Review Team provides an independent assessment of how well the public is served by social services in each council in England and Wales. Over 70 councils have now been reviewed [completed or in process]. General findings are published in an annual report. The Joint Review Team is also compiling reports of findings on specific areas of social services management and practice. The first, on services for children, was published in October 1999. Human resources is the focus of this, the second report.

We are grateful to the many individuals and organisations that have assisted with this project and to the staff of the reviewed councils for their co-operation. I hope that this report will help councillors and managers to focus on the changes needed in human resource management to assist modernisation and improvement.

John Bolton
Director, Joint Reviews of Local Authority Social Services
Contents

Key Messages 1

1 Getting the Best – Why People Matter 3

2 Principles of Good Practice 6

3 The Changing Context 8

4 Findings from Joint Reviews – Applying the Principles 10

5 How to Achieve Results 16

Appendix 1: Questions for Councillors and Managers 20

Appendix 2: Key Facts About the Workforce 23

Appendix 3: The Process of the Review 25

Appendix 4: Bibliography, Resources and Contacts 26
1. Getting the Best – Why People Matter

People make organisations work and change

People make organisations work and they determine the quality of the output. The effectiveness of services provided is largely dependent on the way in which the organisation supports and leads those people employed to do the work. Personal social services agencies are no exception.

How councils manage the people they employ – their human resources – is crucial to their ability to improve the quality of personal social services. This is why reporting on the effectiveness of human resources management remains a core part of the Joint Reviews approach to assessing resource and performance management more generally. Improvements are sought both by local authorities [their councillors, staff and managers] and are expected by service users. While the importance of staff would be readily acknowledged by most councillors and senior managers, the evidence from Joint Reviews, from inspections and external studies and from analysis of comparative expenditure on training investment suggests that few councils have given sufficient attention to the effective management of the people that they employ. Most councils could significantly improve the quality of their services, even within existing resources, by strengthening their approach to managing and supporting people, both recognising achievement and confronting unsatisfactory performance. This may require changes in approach but is well within the grasp of all councils.

The provision of personal social services cannot be a production line. Users and carers now expect a personal response to their circumstances [individual packages of care] and that individual views and wishes will be taken into account. Skilled and motivated people are therefore needed at all levels to assess, deliver and monitor services if commissioners and service providers are to satisfy the expectations of users, carers and the wider public. Recruitment problems demonstrate that people with these skills are increasingly difficult to recruit and retain as the labour market becomes more competitive.

Responding to these challenges demands effective and sensitive management of the people doing the work. Local councils need to ensure that they have the people, policies and practices that they need and that their staff are well prepared and supported to meet these high expectations.
Making relationships work

The basic elements of all good human relationships apply to effective relations in work. The Joint Review Team observes that the more effective councils manage to achieve consistency in their approach both to service users and to their staff.

Five core characteristics of successful relationships [CAIRE] emerge from research on counselling, social work and industrial relations. They still come top in surveys of what is appreciated by people who use council services:

1. Consistency and fairness.
2. Acceptance and respect.
3. Integrity and honesty.
4. Reliability and trustworthiness.
5. Empathy and understanding.

Most people can accept difficult messages, and even severe disappointment, if the person giving the message or information is seen to be upholding these principles. CAIRE are tough and demanding standards for personal behaviour, force difficult choices by staff and organisations and require that organisational principles and operational necessities are reconciled at all levels. However, it is worth the trouble because they are also more likely to support effective and lasting decisions.

Ensuring transparency in the application of these principles throughout the organisation is especially important in the human services, where there are explicit expectations that frontline staff follow them in their relationships with service users. They are likely to be included in any codes for employers and employees laid down by the General Social Care Council (GSCC) and Care Council for Wales. The values that drive working with users need to be linked to those that apply to staff. Where this is not the case, the motivation of staff is demonstrably undermined, tensions between service users and the agency are harder to resolve, team working becomes more difficult and communication becomes less effective. People are less likely to listen to the experience and learning of others, confidence is undermined and games playing rather than collaboration becomes the main way to achieve personal objectives. An organisation that lacks internal trust and respect has lost coherence and direction.

This places significant obligations on members and senior managers in local councils. These obligations are, however, entirely consistent with the traditional ‘public service values’ that research suggests still motivates the majority of those working in the public service. In common with leaders of any organisation, effectiveness and success demands that members articulate a clear ‘vision’, ‘mission’ or ‘service objectives’ for their social services. This must be done in a way that demonstrates the transparency of these core human values and that enables the whole organisation to come together around a common purpose and way of working.

Employees need to have a commitment to the aims and values of their organisation. On this basis there can be clarity about how their individual contributions support those aims, the freedom to exercise responsibility and authority and support and reward for the job.

Implementation of the vision and these principles requires policies, procedures and processes – and persistence (EXHIBIT 1).
EXHIBIT 1

Structuring the management of human resources

Source: Joint Reviews
2. Principles of Good Practice

Characteristics of councils that are doing well

Personal social services have to be people focused in two senses.

1. They exist to meet the needs of the users they serve and must focus on the best way to deliver appropriate services.

2. They need to be organised to lead and support the staff at the frontline who are delivering the services.

In the most effective councils, Reviews have found that the same values and principles guide dealings with both groups of people.

The Joint Review Team has now reviewed almost one-half of the councils in England and Wales. This experience, combined with findings from inspection and review work in the Department of Health, the National Assembly for Wales and the Audit Commission and other studies of organisations and management, has lead the Joint Review Team to conclude that councils that are doing well have the following attributes:

- They ensure that people at risk are supported and protected where necessary, by co-ordinated services.
- They comply with regulatory requirements.
- They involve service users and their carers in decisions about their lives and in shaping local services.
- They design and deliver services which recognise the diversity within the communities that they serve.
- They are able to specify users’ and carers’ needs, and then purchase services from the best provider for the job.
- They make it clear to the public how people can get access to their services.
- They work in partnership with all stakeholders to design and deliver services.
- They have good information on their performance and their costs.
- They have clear standards, that are understood by the public, against which their work can be measured.
- They support and develop their staff through good communication, training and supervision.

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Strategy is used throughout this report to convey the sense of a longer-term policy and action plan with realistic targets and timescales extending beyond the year in question.
• They are committed to learning from users and frontline staff about what works in practice.

• They demonstrate leadership in delivering quality services and a commitment to change and improvement.

These characteristics are consistent with the principles set out in Section 1. The first and last four characteristics, in particular, point to the significance of the management of people. They all rely on effective leadership. The relationship between the organisational characteristic and human resource levers is shown below (EXHIBIT 2).

EXHIBIT 2
Human resource tools and levers supporting successful social services

Source: Joint Reviews
3. The Changing Context

The government is aiming to drive up the quality of social services by modernising the framework for the management of social care and the monitoring of standards. Developing a quality workforce is a key element in the new strategy.

The new framework includes the creation of statutory councils in both countries to regulate the qualifications and practice of social workers and social care staff, the establishment of a Care Standards Commission in England and a Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales to regulate service delivery and the setting of targets to achieve an appropriately qualified workforce (EXHIBIT 3).

When set alongside the introduction of Best Value reviews across local government, the Children First/Quality Protects initiative to improve childcare services and the new Performance Assessment Framework for
social services in England [with a range of targets], this presents a formidable agenda of improvement for local political leaders, senior managers and staff.

Analysis of the main characteristics of the current workforce, alongside demographic and labour market trends, underpins the strategy. The data present a significant challenge (Appendix 1).

- Around one million people are employed in social care in England and Wales.
- Almost 80 per cent have no relevant qualifications.
- The largest group of unqualified staff are in domiciliary and residential/nursing home care.
- Overall, the annual rate of sector growth in staff employed during the late 1990s was around 3.7 per cent.

- There is a need for continued workforce growth of around 3 per cent per year.
- There is staff turnover of around 25 per cent in parts of the sector.
- There is an ageing workforce in comparison with the total population.

The projected workforce need therefore requires continued and faster recruitment growth in a static employment market to offset turnover and retirements. There are similar trends in teaching, nursing and related professions that are ‘competing’ for new entrants. Recruitment will become more difficult, requiring employers to review service provision and the skill mix of staff.

The successful implementation of these varied initiatives in this tight labour market requires a focused approach to the management of the people who are essential to delivering improved services (EXHIBIT 4).

EXHIBIT 4
Policy initiatives driving social services

Source: Joint Reviews
4. Findings from Joint Reviews – Applying the Principles

A positive approach to human resource management makes a difference to the experience of service users and the capacity of the organisation. Councils have made a reasonable start on responding to new human resource expectations but must increase the pace of achievement. The Joint Review Team has observed that, to be effective, councils need to take a holistic view of these basic management systems and that focusing on single elements to the exclusion of the connections is ineffective and a waste of resources.

**Becoming a learning organisation that delivers results**

In the vast majority of councils, we find that social services staff are committed and want to provide a good service. This is an excellent resource for change and development but the full potential has not been released. There are big differences between councils in the quality of management – staff relations and scope for improvement. Overall, few councils can show that they have established an open, supportive and self-critical structure and staff relationships; a learning culture is not yet secure in most councils.

In a rapidly changing world effective and responsive public services need to be able to learn from a range of sources, and the organisations that provide them need to be capable of supporting learning at individual, team, service and organisational levels.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

**Kingston: reputation for innovation**

Kingston has a strong evaluation and learning culture, with good links to universities and research bodies and a national reputation for innovation. Staff development is a priority, with access to qualifications and development. Staff are encouraged to evaluate services and developments and senior management encourages continuous development. The enthusiasm and creativity of staff is clear to see. The council is found to be serving people very well.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

**Wiltshire: a learning organisation**

Wiltshire has a long history of involvement in action research and with external researchers. The Director is Chair of the Centre for Evidence-based Social Services at the University of Exeter, involving all departments in the South-west; practitioners have direct access to research findings and support for applying research in practice. The department is a founder partner in a research unit jointly sponsored by the Health Authority, Social Services and Bath University. Several initiatives have external evaluation. Staff are encouraged to monitor work and to use learning to improve practice. This protects a stable workforce from stagnation. The council has demonstrated that it has excellent prospects.
Planning longer-term to attract the right people

Strategic workforce planning is new for most councils. Few elements of strategic workforce planning seem to be in place and most are only just engaging with this challenge as recruitment difficulties develop. Development of this plan needs to be linked to the social regeneration agenda of the area.

National qualifications targets have not been built into local service plans in England so far, although this seems likely to follow approval of the TOPSS workforce plan. These need to be related to likely scenarios of future service development.

The involvement of members and staff in developing and approving human resource planning is very variable. Members need to be more consistently involved in the overview and development of this essential resource.

Using qualifications and training to retain good people

The majority of councils are now developing social services qualifications targets for themselves. Most are also developing role competencies for the majority of posts. There are signs of encouraging progress in introducing National Vocation Qualifications and supporting staff to achieve awards, although there is some way to go to achieve the appropriately qualified workforce that the public expects.

Management, post-qualifying and joint training is not consistent, with considerable variations between councils.

GOOD PRACTICE

Blackburn with Darwen: management learning sets support cultural change

Blackburn had a strong corporate identity before unitary status. The new SSD had to establish its own identity and service culture very quickly within the borough. All managers now follow a departmental training programme provided by Lancaster University. This is linked to NVQs in management (Management Charter Initiative) which validate the competence of participants and offer a formal qualification in management as a departmental benchmark. 15 senior managers are registered for NVQ 5 and 53 are so far registered for NVQ 4. The learning sets have encouraged development of a service-led culture and significant departmental and personal development which is beginning to generate consistency in management.

GOOD PRACTICE

Westminster: member involvement

Westminster has a strong planning and review culture with members involved in the annual cycle with managers and staff. In order to achieve Investors In People (IiP) status, Westminster set up divisional groups to help the implementation, identified specialist posts to troubleshoot and ensure overall co-ordination, and established monitoring systems to check on overall progress. IiP status underlines the importance that the members attach to staff training and development within the service development and business planning framework. Westminster was found to be serving people very well.

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Support for personal assistants employed by disabled people is an evolving human resource focus. A few councils have developed imaginative schemes to support these quite isolated people, sometimes through local voluntary organisations or carers’ networks. Support and advice for both users and their support staff is needed.

Joint Reviews will focus more consistently on the important qualifications partnerships, in line with Government policy.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

Gateshead: personal assistance pilot project

Begun in April 1997, with three-year Lottery funding and run by Gateshead Council on Disability, its aim is to provide support, training and advice to disabled people, to enable them to participate fully and spontaneously in the life of the community – living in their own home, enjoying personal and social relationships on equal terms, with access to work, training or education.

Advice is given on finding and employing a personal assistant, and accessing the Independent Living Fund. A 10-week training course was provided to 30 people, and training is also being arranged for personal assistants and a register of trained PAs will be maintained. Guidelines have been prepared on:

- an introduction to independent living;
- DIY self-assessment for disabled people; and
- recruiting a personal assistant.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

Redbridge: private sector NVQs to boost quality

Redbridge has been proactive in promoting quality among providers. The Quality Homes network is designed to encourage the provision of leisure and social activities for residents, thereby raising health standards. An NVQ training scheme – part-funded by East London TEC – is being run for staff. A similar approach – called Childminder Plus – is under development for children’s day care providers.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

Sefton: NVQ assessment centre

To increase the proportion of trained staff in the department, Sefton Social Services has had an NVQ Assessment Centre for three years and, more recently, a similar centre for management training. Initially, the focus was on care and administrative staff, although it is now extended to cover drivers and IT.

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In general, equal opportunity employment practices are not ensuring that the workforce reflects the local population. Councils could also improve job specifications and the skill mix of their staff to ensure that the most skilled people are directed to the areas where they can be most effectively deployed.

Supervision arrangements were generally found to be effective, although there were exceptions. However, performance management presents a real challenge for all councils. There is evidence that councils are beginning to define the quality of outcomes that they expect and they are more willing to

GOOD PRACTICE
Manchester: equality of opportunity in action
Manchester Social Services has a Black Workers Forum that has been a powerful engine of change for staff from minority ethnic communities. The Forum identified blocks to career development in 1998 followed by two one day events for 80 black staff, organised by training and development staff. Special efforts were made to attract low-paid and marginalised members of the workforce. Major themes that emerged included organisational barriers to advancement such as poor supervision, and the need for career planning. Implementation of the departmental action plan is overseen by a steering group of operational managers, members of the Forum, human resources managers and senior management. Feedback so far has been very positive.

GOOD PRACTICE
Liverpool: positive action strategy
Liverpool has developed a positive action strategy to ensure that staff from minority ethnic communities, those with special needs and more isolated staff get appropriate access to training. This includes management training for black staff, courses for potentially ‘marginal’ staff, such as drivers and escorts, and the use of accessible venues. The target for the employment of staff from minority ethnic communities is 10 per cent and 5 per cent for people with disabilities compared with current levels of 7.5 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively. This compares well with other similar authorities. Representative groups have been set up to promote recruitment and contributions from these staff and to provide work-based support.

GOOD PRACTICE
Bristol: “I really really wanna be a group worker”
This pack of training materials has been put together to enable centre managers to give comprehensive induction training to newly-appointed group workers, identifying the core knowledge and skills required by such staff, as well as covering the key policies governing their work. This reinforces the required shift in approach that these centres are seeking to achieve.

GOOD PRACTICE
Manchester: staff induction
The Joint Learning Disability Service has developed an information pack for new staff with full details of the services available, plus access to a comprehensive procedure manual. New staff are given mentoring support, in addition to timely induction training and regular supervision. Managers remain in touch with staff concerns through two-way briefings and such media as a recent organisational climate questionnaire, which has further refined their management approach. This has left them with a broadly similar staff turnover rate to other services of 10 per cent per year, but most are leaving for promotion, so it still has a positive effect on staff morale.

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confront poor staff performance and poor attendance. However, the tools to do this effectively are often missing, such as clear, published quality expectations, which means that a small number of competence cases can take up a disproportionate amount of senior management time. This area needs further work, which will be supported by the GSCC/Care Council for Wales and TOPSS.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

**Kingston: challenging poor performance**

Kingston has a coherent corporate approach to performance management that is called Team Planning. Managers and staff identify sub-standard performance and persistent absence early and aim to support individuals to improve their performance through training and supervision. Kingston has very low absence rates. Confidential counselling is available for staff. If timetables for change are not met, formal proceedings are initiated and ultimately dismissal may follow. This is all within a supportive human resource management culture. The Department has a corporate reputation for effective management of poor performance and personal problems, good take-up of personal counselling, and a very low rate of appeals and tribunals.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

**Solihull: integrating human resource management in service planning and review**

Solihull has long recognised the importance of human resource management to corporate planning and service delivery and review and integrates this awareness in its daily activities. It was among the first councils to adopt a Business Excellence approach and to achieve Investors in People status; it ensures that these processes are more than ‘badges’. Solihull SSD has a management development programme that involves all managers and supports them in the significant change process that they must implement. The department established an internal post-qualifying framework for recognition of the competence of social workers undertaking more complex child protection work; it has been going for several years and was easily adapted to the national post-qualifying award. There is a comprehensive supervision policy and effective review of staff performance. This is reflected in the quality of frontline work and corporate management.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

**Devon: integrated performance monitoring report**

This is a bi-monthly publication that pulls together key performance indicators to analyse how well Social Services is delivering across six critical success factors. These are: achieving financial plans; meeting statutory requirements; achieving service quality; promoting staff development and welfare; developing effective partnerships; and impact on the community. Indicators are more developed for some factors than others.

During the time of the Review, this report was evolving into a rich source of information and promises to be a useful tool in improving the effectiveness and performance of Social Services.
In most councils, the human resource infrastructure does not meet current needs. There is a need for improved data systems in general and HR systems in particular.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

**North Yorkshire: staff counselling**

Between September 1996 and April 1997, 61 staff made use of this confidential scheme, receiving 191 counselling sessions. Of those contacts, 39 per cent are because of work problems, 25 per cent because of domestic problems, and 36 per cent a combination of both.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

**Oxfordshire: personnel, administration performance indicators**

There is an annual report covering: turnover and sickness, accidents and violent incidents, disciplinary proceedings and there is also:

- an analysis of exit interviews with staff that gives information on reasons for leaving and opinions on the quality of supervision and training;
- information on the proportion of staff receiving appraisals; and
- an analysis of staff support enquiries by division of absence.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

**Rochdale: integrating administrative and professional staff helps to deliver more responsive services**

This approach was widely reported to be working well and local administrative managers were playing an important role in taking forward developments in their local areas. The administrative service has been regularly reviewed to further improve its operation. This has included analysis of team resources and workloads, which helps to balance the distribution of support across teams.
5. How to Achieve Results

In order to develop their strategy and translate that into practical and achievable tasks, councils need to pay attention to a range of factors that fit together (EXHIBIT 5). A slower but integrated plan of implementation will be more effective than hurried and disjointed activity. A piecemeal approach will not be effective.

Becoming a learning organisation that delivers results

The delivery of services by the staff of the council and the conduct of business should be guided by, and consistent with, a statement of vision and values that applies to all aspects of the organisation.

Elected members and senior managers need to exercise leadership in ways that:

- are consistent with the vision and values of the organisation;
- inspire high standards in service delivery; and
- set a clear path for continuous improvement in services and efficiency.

The organisation needs to be self-confident, open and self-critical in ways that:

- encourage listening and learning;
- support communication between teams and networks; and
- demonstrate confidence and balance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good practice</th>
<th>Pitfalls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing vision for short and longer-term service improvements</td>
<td>Crisis management is dominant – not thinking ahead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting service values with operational practices by members and staff at all levels</td>
<td>Comparison and learning not valued – uncritical self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abiding consistently by the values – members, senior management and staff</td>
<td>Benchmarking with similar organisations not undertaken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Planning longer-term to attract the right people

Councils need to take an overview of the workforce requirements for social care provision in their area, including voluntary and private as well as statutory services.

- Strategic workforce requirements must be related to longer-term community needs, service objectives and local economic development strategies.
- Strategic staff development plan should be derived from the workforce projections.
- Strategic networks for workforce planning are essential to deliver and sustain planning at this level.

Using qualifications and training to retain good people

Local councils need to invest in qualifications and training for staff that is linked with the service development targets. Qualifications are a key indicator of the outcome of investment in training and the calibre of the workforce. Service users and carers have important perspectives and experiences to contribute to training.

The elements need to include:

- a qualifications and competences action plan for all posts, linked to national occupational standards.
- “involvement” at an appropriate senior level in the range of qualifications partnerships that underpin the strategy; and
- data on the outcome of investment in training including qualifications achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good practice</th>
<th>Pitfalls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking a longer-term view of workforce requirements</td>
<td>Recruitment not foreseen and workforce not prepared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making strategic planning connections – regional networks</td>
<td>Inclusion and regeneration objectives not integrated into plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging with related sectors [eg Health, Housing, Education]</td>
<td>Trends in related or competing sectors not taken into account</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good practice</th>
<th>Pitfalls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustaining a qualifications strategy for the whole workforce</td>
<td>Significant training not supporting qualifications or credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving service users and carers in delivering training</td>
<td>Participation in qualification partnerships not a priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocating TSP(^\text{1}) funding to support the achievement of qualifications</td>
<td>Qualifications strategy not backed by members and managers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^\text{1}\) Training Support Programme – Government funding for specified training provision matched by 30 per cent of local funding
Implementing good practice consistently to drive up quality

Effective day-to-day management of staff is crucial to the achievement of quality services and business targets. Performance management is central to the management agenda and must be linked with the service objectives and planning requirements. Elements that should be present include:

- clear and consistent service objectives, standards and quality expectations;
- a competence framework for all posts to support management processes and develop staff;
- effective management of staff performance in delivering service objectives and consistent response to unsatisfactory performance;
- effective monitoring of the day-to-day management of staff;
- promotion of equal opportunities for all and recognition of diversity;
- attendance rewarded while ill-health and non-attendance are tackled as they arise;
- regular communication with staff and their representative bodies;
- care of staff in action including effective health and safety arrangements;
- information on human resources collected, analysed and used to inform action;
- staff remuneration is monitored against national and local trends; and
- Investors in People or equivalent standards used to support these processes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good practice</th>
<th>Pitfalls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementing and reviewing competence framework</td>
<td>Job descriptions and role allocations not clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Investors in People framework to support practice</td>
<td>Personnel and staff development frameworks not connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting equality of opportunity and encouraging diversity</td>
<td>Workforce not reflecting the balance of the local population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing attendance and performance consistently</td>
<td>Standards for performance and conduct not explicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting staff care, including counselling &amp; whistleblowing</td>
<td>Risk assessments of staff roles not undertaken and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting workforce data to meet local and national needs</td>
<td>Data not analysed and acted on by managers and Members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXHIBIT 5
Users, performance and strategy
Gearing staff to deliver improving services

Source: Joint Reviews
Appendix 1: Questions for Councillors and Managers

**Becoming a learning organisation that delivers results**

- Do you have a statement of purpose and values? Does it guide your planning, services, internal decision making and relationships within your service at all levels and with other departments? Do people see that Councillors, managers at all levels and staff apply these values in practice?

  *Evidence – mission and values statement; examples of where it has been applied and made a difference at different levels of the organisation (involving Councillors, senior management and frontline staff).*

- What steps are you taking to ensure that you can provide effective services and achieve best value in the years ahead? Do you have strategic plans that make connections between services and systems, both internally and in the wider environment?

  *Evidence – realistic, outline plans that are approved by Councillors setting out options for the years ahead, drawing on informed knowledge of the area and consultation.*

- How do you judge how well managed your services are? How do you use existing business and human resource standards (such as the Excellence Model and Investors in People), which provide frameworks to support good management?

  *Evidence – clear management and service standards; benchmarking of standards with others; progress towards achievement of Investors in People or a reasonable alternative; implementation of external and internal standards in letter and spirit.*

- Does your organisation learn from research and experience to improve planning and the delivery of services?

  *Evidence – policy on knowledge management; examples of changes introduced as a result of research and experience; the use of outside consultants and trainers.*

**Planning longer term to attract the right people**

- Have you taken a broad overview of the workforce requirements for social care provision by all sectors in your area?

  *Evidence – a report on likely service needs for the next few years; consideration of local and regional labour trends; information about, and future projections for, private, voluntary and council sectors.*

- Do you have realistic service plans to support implementation of your longer-
term objectives that link financial and human resource requirements to service objectives?

Evidence – costed service plans making explicit how the plans will be achieved.

• Do your service plans spell out the people requirements? Are they brought together in a workforce plan including a staff development strategy?

Evidence – human resource requirements explicit in service plans; realistic evaluation of current and future human resources and needs, linked to a staff development strategy; evidence of consultation and Councillor approval.

• Have you anticipated your longer-term workforce requirements from your longer-term service projections and related them to local economic development strategies?

Evidence – scenarios or options for the future development of services in response to anticipated local needs and requirements; local development strategies inform and are informed by service requirements, workforce scenarios and strategic plans.

• Do you have a staff development plan for the medium and longer-term derived from your identified workforce requirements?

Evidence – a costed plan with targets and deadlines to support staffing requirements derived from strategic plans; national workforce and qualifications targets are built into local planning.

• How do you participate in strategic networks for workforce planning? How do these help you to deliver and sustain planning and development at this level?

Evidence – participation in appropriate local and regional planning fora, including Regional Development Agency and TOPSS structures; effective relations with voluntary and private sector representative bodies and with related public agencies.

Using qualifications and training to retain good people

• Do you have a qualifications and competences action plan for all posts, linked to national occupational standards?

Evidence – plan approved by Councillors setting out targets, timetables and resource requirements to achieve national qualification targets and the implementation of a competence framework for the whole workforce (with explicit links to national occupational standards).

• Do you use qualifications as an essential indicator of the calibre of the workforce and the outcome of investment in training?

Evidence – data on progress towards qualification targets; information on links between staff development expenditure and qualification achievement.

• Is your council involved at an appropriately senior level in the range of qualification partnerships that underpin your local plans?

Evidence – contributions to appropriate qualification provider partnerships relevant to all staff (NVQ, social work and occupational therapy qualifications, post-qualifying structures, management and health service consortia).

Implementing good practice consistently to drive up quality

• How do you know about the effectiveness of the day-to-day performance of staff in
delivering quality services and meeting business targets?

Evidence – agreed policies, procedures and data covering recruitment, retention, attendance, health, performance and the competence of staff; policies, procedures and data on implementing equality of opportunity; surveys and other indicators of staff morale. Targets cascaded from council plans.

• Do you have competence frameworks for all social services posts to support the basic human resource management processes?

Evidence – existing or developing competence framework linked with national occupational standards.

• How are the Investors in People standards guiding workforce management?

Evidence – implementation of Investors in People standards; progress towards achievement of the award or councillor agreement on an alternative strategy.

• How do you ensure that your employment practices promote diversity and equal opportunities for all in the local population?

Evidence – policies, procedures and monitoring data on age, gender, ethnic origin, disability and the sexual orientation of staff; policies and procedures supporting family friendly employment practices.

• How do you ensure the effective management of staff performance?

Evidence – explicit workforce standards including a competence framework; policies, procedures and data on staff support and supervision and on dealing with unsatisfactory performance or incompetence, including formal proceedings, appeals and industrial tribunals.

• How do you improve and reward staff attendance?

Evidence – policies, procedures and data on performance review and appraisal; policies, procedures and monitoring data on attendance [including promoting good health and responding to ill-health]; rewards and recognition schemes.

• Are communication and staff care central to your relationship with your staff and helping you to deliver consistent services?

Evidence – policies, procedures and data on supervision and communication; examples of communication with staff; policies, procedures and data on health and safety at work and violence to or ill-treatment of staff; confidential counselling arrangements.

• Do you collect and analyse staffing data that meet national requirements and good practice standards?

Evidence – systems of data collection and recent reports, include best value performance indicators.

• How do you ensure that staff remuneration remains competitive and that you are able to attract staff with the right experience and skills for the job?

Evidence – data on workforce turnover; local and national pay data.
Appendix 2: Key Facts About the Workforce

The following information has been provided by the Local Government Employers’ Organisation that provides the secretariat to the Social and Health Care Workforce Group. These key facts are intended to provide managers and councillors with some broad indicators, and to provide a benchmark against which local performance can be measured.

**Employment overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>%Qualified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>local government</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independent sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>residential &amp; nursing</td>
<td>467,000</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent sector</td>
<td>114,000</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domiciliary care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual sector growth in the late 1990s: 3.7 per cent pa
Forecast sector employment growth to 2006: 3.0 per cent pa
Forecast labour market growth to 2006: 0.5 per cent pa
Staff turnover in residential homes: c26 per cent
Staff turnover in domiciliary care: c32 per cent
Ageing workforce in most groups – projected retirements higher than replacement rate
Vacancy rate in 1998 around 8 per cent [rising trend]

- 30 per cent of councils report occupational therapist shortages [1998]
- c70 per cent of residential homes report recruitment problems [1998]
- c45 per cent reduction in applications to social work qualifying courses, but output sustained
- c35 per cent independent sector early years employers report recruitment problems

**NVQtakeup**

Total ‘care’ sector registrations (1999): 441,000
Total ‘care’ sector awards (1999): 169,000 (38%)
Fastest growth (1998-9) Level 3 and 4 Early Years
Share of new qualifications (Sept 1999): 23 per cent of Reg/11 per cent of Cert

NVQ take-up by sector (Care NVQs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Registrations (%)</th>
<th>Awards (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health sector</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary sector</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services Depts</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX 2
KEY FACTS ABOUT THE WORKFORCE
Funding and time taken to complete awards (1996-8)

Care NVQs
Increase in candidates receiving external funding from 11 per cent to 25 per cent.
Increase in candidates completing within two years from 80 per cent to 84 per cent.

Childcare and Education/Early Years NVQs
Increase in candidates receiving external funding from 41 per cent to 60 per cent.
In 1998, 38 per cent of candidates completed within one year and 80 per cent within two years.

Local Authority Field Social Workers
Slump in DipSW applications.
16 per cent vacancy rate (2000).
63 per cent of authorities report social worker shortages.
Approved social workers; 11 per cent shortfall in 1998.
Sensory impairment workers; 34 per cent of SSDs and 19 per cent of independent sector report difficulty in 1999.

Local Authority Residential Child Care staff (1998)
Vacancies – 9 per cent in community homes, 14 per cent in special needs establishments.
Turnover – 12 per cent in community homes, 16 per cent in special needs establishments.

Local Authority Occupational Therapists (1998)
Vacancies – 10 per cent.
Turnover – 14 per cent.
Recruitment difficulties – 30 per cent in 2000.

Independent Sector Residential and Nursing Homes
Nurses – vacancies 10 to 11 per cent.
  Turnover 26 per cent.
  Recruitment difficulties 66 to 72 per cent of homes.
Care Staff – vacancies 4 to 6 per cent.
  Turnover 26 per cent.
  Recruitment difficulties – 35 to 38 per cent of homes.

Domiciliary care staff (2000)
Recruitment difficulties 76 per cent.
Retention difficulties 38 per cent.
Annual turnover 32 per cent.
Annual recruitment 40 per cent.

Independent Sector Early Years Workforce (1998-9)
Recruitment difficulties – 35 per cent.
Vacancies – 4 per cent.
Annual turnover – 18 per cent.
Annual recruitment – 20 per cent.
Appendix 3: The Process of the Review

This study has put a spotlight on human resource management in six reviews of local councils [enabling the piloting of some of the methodology] and involved extensive consultation with government, national representative bodies, key stakeholders and individuals.

This report is derived from:

- analysis of all the Joint Review reports published at the time of writing;
- consultation with key stakeholders, including three national workshops and bilateral discussions with central government departments;
- consultation with the Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services and the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work;
- piloting of methodological options as part of six reviews of local social services;
- workshops and discussions involving the members of the Joint Review Team;
- participation in a Council of Europe Group of Experts on Social Work;
- consultation with academic and other specialists in the field;
- involvement in consultations on the draft code of conduct for staff and code of practice for employers commissioned by Government in anticipation of the launch of the General Social Care Council and Care Council for Wales;
- publications and presentations to stimulate debate and feedback; and
- the presentation of emerging findings and draft recommendations to four human resource workshops organised by the Social and Health Care Workforce Group involving staff from most local authorities in England, and to several local and national workshops.

This report has been written by David N Jones, supported by David Ashcroft, Catherine Mangan, Kacey Charles Brown, David Pottruff and members of the Joint Review Team. David N Jones was seconded to Joint Reviews from the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) from April 1999 to May 2000. Joint Reviews is indebted to CCETSW and to David for the contribution of his knowledge of human resource management, the structures of social care qualifications and the complex national and international networks in this field and for his skill in identifying the key areas needing attention both at national and local levels.

Work on this study has suggested a number of ways in which Joint Reviews can examine human resources management more consistently. These include requesting specific data about the use of qualifications and training as part of the Position Statement, incorporating human resources issues into fieldwork interviews and as part of the assessment of corporate responses, and meeting with training partners and providers.
Appendix 4: Bibliography, Resources and Contacts

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Welsh Office 1999 Building for the future, London: HMSO

Resources and Contacts

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