Scotland's public sector workforce

Good practice guide

ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

AUDITOR GENERAL

Contents

Introduction

1. In 2013 Audit Scotland carried out an audit to assess if public bodies in Scotland were effectively managing changes to their workforces. We focussed on the approaches used by councils, the NHS, the Scottish Government and other central government bodies to change their workforces from April 2009 to March 2013. Over this period, the number of whole time equivalent (WTE) staff employed by these public sector bodies reduced by 26,600 (seven per cent), helping bodies to reduce their direct staff costs by an estimated £1 billion.

2. We gathered evidence from nine fieldwork sites on the approaches they used to change workforces and used a survey of 80 bodies to gather additional information.[1] Further details on our audit approach can be found at (Scotland's public sector workforce).

3. We reported that the fieldwork bodies had made the changes they needed to their workforces to achieve their business and financial objectives. Public sector finances remain under pressure for the foreseeable future and public bodies may need to make further workforce changes. Effective scrutiny of how well public bodies are managing their workforces is as important as ever.

Purpose of the guide

4. The main audience for this guide is those involved in scrutinising workforce change programmes, such as board and elected members.

5. The guide is aimed at all public sector bodies in Scotland. However, bodies differ significantly in size and complexity, and the investment in workforce planning activity each organisation makes should be appropriate to its needs. Board and elected members should consider this when developing their scrutiny approaches and adjust the frequency and depth of scrutiny in line with the degree of risk associated with the workforce planning activity.

What's in the guide?

6. The guide is in two parts:
    - Part 1: Good practice in workforce planning; including guidance on developing an organisation-wide workforce plan; selecting different approaches to manage workforce numbers and costs; implementing workforce change programmes; and scrutiny of workforce plans and workforce change programmes.
    - Part 2: Questions to support the scrutiny and challenge of workforce plans and workforce change programmes.

7. The guide does not replace organisations' own workforce planning guidance or that produced by other relevant bodies and should be used in conjunction with these.[2]

Part 1. Good practice in workforce planning

What is workforce planning?

8. Workforce planning is the process that organisations use to make sure that they have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. This can be challenging; the size and structure of the workforce should be shaped by an organisation's current and future strategic objectives; the needs of its service users, and of potential users over the planning period; the amount and sources of funding available and the wider policy and legislative environment in which it operates.

Developing the workforce plan

9. To create the workforce plan, organisations need to consult with staff, unions and managers, use internal information and past experience to develop thinking and then look forward, to shape the new workforce structure (Exhibit 1). Where uncertainty remains when creating their plans, they should use scenario planning to help model and plan for different situations.

Exhibit 1

Key steps in creating an effective organisation-wide workforce plan

Workforce plans are of interest to many different groups within an organisation - to staff, board members and elected members, senior and line managers and union representatives. To create the plan, organisations should:

- consult with management and leadership teams across each service or departmental area

- analyse data about current workforces and examine past patterns of change

- identify and understand the external and internal factors likely to affect service delivery in the future

- analyse past forecasts relating to staffing and other financial budgets to learn lessons from this

- consult with union branch representatives and staff, as appropriate.

Having completed the above steps, organisations should then:

- undertake a full gap analysis, involving the management team, often over several sessions

- identify plans to ensure that the organisation will adopt and achieve the desired business shape

Source: Audit Scotland

10. Staff throughout the organisation should help to develop the workforce plan.

- **Board and elected members and the chief executive** should set the strategic direction of the plan and then ensure that it is delivered.

- **Senior managers and line managers** should identify the internal and external factors which may affect the future operation of the organisation and its ability to achieve its corporate objectives. They should also develop the strategies to deal with any issues and gaps that are identified.

- **HR staff and specialist workforce planners** should facilitate the development of the workforce plan through staff engagement and by providing information to help develop the plan.

- **Staff and unions** should be consulted when developing individual actions and strategies, to ensure that they are acceptable and workable.

11. We found in our audit that not all bodies were planning their workforce changes on a medium to long-term basis. As we stated in our report on S*cotland's public finances: Addressing the challenges,* to make sustainable long-term savings, bodies need to take a strategic approach to assessing the impact of spending reductions on the quality and quantity of the services that can be delivered for the money available.[3] While budgets need to generate in-year savings, savings decisions must also focus on achieving long-term financial sustainability while taking account of organisational aims, objectives and desired outcomes. This applies in particular to decisions to reduce workforces; without careful planning workforce reductions can lead to a loss of essential skills; reductions in service quality; and increased pressure on, and lack of motivation among, remaining staff.

12. Workforce plans should set out the organisation's workforce needs over the next 3-5 years. They should support the achievement of the organisation's corporate objectives and bring together the plans of individual service departments to ensure that the organisation has sufficient skilled staff in place to deliver its key priorities.

13. We found in our audit that fieldwork sites planned, at a service or departmental level, when changing their workforces. NHS bodies produced a single organisation-wide plan each year, bringing together their service-level workforce plans. None of our fieldwork sites had a long-term organisation-wide workforce plan. Having an organisation-wide plan provides consistency in the workforce planning approaches used across an organisation; it allows organisations to ensure workforce planning is built into business planning and budget cycles; and it supports employee development, succession planning and talent management.

14. The organisation-wide workforce plan should be concise and include:

- contextual information on the key services and priorities for the organisation over the next few years linked to corporate objectives. It should detail how the workforce plan was developed, to provide assurance that the views of stakeholders and, where appropriate, service users were taken into account

- a summary of planned future service provision outlining any assumptions made and the effect on the organisation's service delivery, workforce and finances and the anticipated effects on demand for services from other bodies

- an analysis of the current position (workforce numbers, costs and skills), identifying important workforce or financial pressures and recruitment difficulties that the workforce plan should address. It may be that much of the analysis carried out does not yield anything of consequence to the organisation. If so, the plan should refer to the fact that an analysis of this data was undertaken and that only the data of relevance and importance is reported within the plan

- forecast workforce numbers and skills needs, the expected shape of the workforce and costs, over the planning period, including a gap analysis that identifies what changes are needed to ensure that key priorities are met

- actions to achieve the desired workforce structure. This may include details on departure schemes, and programmes to meet training and recruitment needs

- details on who is responsible for delivering and implementing the plan and arrangements for monitoring delivery of the plan

- an analysis of where partnership working is needed to deliver the organisation's key priorities, what support the organisation needs from others and how these arrangements will work.

15. In our report we recommended that bodies should develop and use organisation-wide workforce plans, informed by a series of service plans that are consistent in their structure and content.

16. Service plans should have a structure similar to that detailed above for the organisation-wide plan. This will help the body when developing its organisation-wide plan and will make it easier to monitor overall progress. NHS Wales has produced templates to assist health bodies to integrate their workforce planning at an organisation and service (or departmental/directorate/divisional) level. The NHS Wales guidance and templates on integrated workforce planning can be found at http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/829/page/42711.

Selecting different approaches to manage workforce numbers and costs

17. Organisations may need to change their workforces for a number of reasons; for example, to reduce costs, to deliver new services or to deliver services in new ways. Workforce change may be necessary to respond to changes outwith the organisation's direct control, for example, new legislation or skill shortages, or in response to changes that the organisation itself has implemented. Regardless of the underlying reason for change, the change process should be properly planned and consulted on and the approaches used selected after careful consideration of all the options available.

Choosing and evaluating workforce approaches

18. In our audit we found that our 80 survey bodies used a range of approaches to manage workforce numbers and costs. We have listed some of the more generic approaches used in our report (pages 23-25 in the main report). But, there are often several options within each approach and bodies should identify and consider all options. For example, bodies wishing to change their employee's terms and conditions could consider a wide range of measures such as altering the allowances they pay, changing leave carry forward arrangements and expenses payments or altering the rates paid for maternity, adoption, paternity or sick pay.

19. Choosing the correct approach or mix of approaches is essential to maximise the positive impacts on staff and service quality while minimising harmful effects on staff morale and reducing costs. Bodies should evaluate the options open to them to ensure that they make the best choice and, where possible, avoid negative consequences. Evaluations should consider the benefits of each approach, any risks associated with the approach and any barriers preventing effective use (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2

Key steps in conducting an effective evaluation of different workforce management approaches

- **understand the current position;** what workforce management approaches are already being used? How effective have they been? What further change is needed?

- **set clear objectives** - what is the organisation trying to achieve? If there are a number of required outcomes, has the relative importance of each been determined, so that it is clear which outcomes are vital and which are of secondary importance?

- **set minimum criteria** that approaches must meet

- **set out all the different options** that can be used

- **make use of the minimum criteria to help filter out some approaches.** An approach may be filtered out at this stage because it is unacceptable to the organisation or because it cannot be implemented

- **evaluate the remaining options** in terms of:
  - how well each meets the objectives set
  - the impact on staff, customers and on other services that your organisation and its partners provide
  - the financial implications, (both costs and savings) and value for money
  - any legal implications
  - risks associated with the approach

- **select an approach or mix of approaches** that ensures that the objectives are met and that the required outcomes will be delivered, so that benefits are maximised and negative impacts minimised.

Source: Audit Scotland

20. If significant costs or savings are anticipated, these should be quantified to ensure that the programme is affordable. Any assumptions on which the financial and workforce estimates are based should be clearly set out.

21. Evaluations should be documented as this will allow the body to revisit the options and adapt the mix of approaches it is using in response to unanticipated changes. Where barriers are identified that led to some approaches being filtered out, the body should decide what action, if any, it will take to remove them.

22. Bodies will need to negotiate carefully with unions and staff groups to remove some barriers to workforce changes. For example, in our audit we found that some councils had given guarantees of no compulsory redundancy to their workforce in exchange for other concessions such as greater flexibility or pay constraint. One such example is the range of measures introduced by Midlothian Council towards the end of 2013 under its 'Mi Future' scheme (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3

The Midlothian Council 'Mi Future' scheme

Midlothian Council gives employees on its redeployment register priority for internal positions. They are trained and employed, whenever possible, to reduce the use of overtime or as placements on short-term projects. New career routes are explored and supported where appropriate and staff are supported by an internal career coach throughout transition periods. By the end of 2013, 27 staff had been through the process; seven found permanent positions within the council, 18 were given an opportunity to work in a different area and two accepted voluntary severance.

The council has also developed other workforce programmes. For example, they have developed a strength profile for different jobs and encourage staff to have their strengths assessed so that they can be matched to suitable jobs. Almost all posts are advertised internally and employees are encouraged to explore new career routes, as the council seeks to grow its own workforce within the context of contracting budgets and a no compulsory redundancy policy.

The aim of the programme of changes is to increase staff engagement with the council and provide opportunities for tactical change and cost reductions.

Source: Audit Scotland

23. In May 2013 Audit Scotland published its report *Managing early departures from the Scottish public sector*. The report sets out principles of good practice for one of the workforce approaches used by bodies to bring about workforce change - their early departure schemes. This work was further developed in the Accounts Commission's March 2014 report, *An overview of local government in Scotland 2014,* which sets out the principles of good governance for councillors to use when scrutinising early departure schemes (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4

Early departures - principles of good governance in early departure schemes

Framework for decision-making:

- Early retirement policies should be approved by councillors/board members and reviewed regularly.

Informing board and elected members:

- Board and elected members should receive a report at least annually that details the number of early retiral decisions, along with information on the associated costs and savings.

Decision-making:

- Public bodies should rigorously appraise individual cases to ensure the expected savings associated with a retiral outweigh the costs.

- Board and elected members should be involved in approving early retirement decisions for senior staff.

Source: Adapted from Audit Scotland, An overview of Local Government in Scotland, 2014

24. We did not find much evidence that bodies were sharing learning about the effectiveness of their workforce approaches. This represents a missed opportunity to use the relevant learning or experience of others to help when evaluating different options.

Implementing workforce change

25. To implement workforce change programmes effectively, organisations need to have a clear focus on what exactly they are trying to achieve and ensure that this is communicated clearly to those responsible for delivery. It is important also to properly resource those involved in delivering plans.

26. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has developed a model for implementing workforce planning which focuses on results and actions and is subject to review and feedback (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5: Implementing workforce planning

Source: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Workforce planning: right people, right time, right skills, 2010.

Understanding what is required

27. The CIPD model stresses the importance of having all parties agree to and understand the rationale for the actions that need to be taken to implement the workforce plan and the expected outputs and outcomes. It is important that bodies clearly define the intended benefits at the outset, identify the relevant baseline measures, and communicate these to those responsible for monitoring and delivering the plan and programmes. Without this, progress in achieving programme aims cannot be measured and programmes may go off-track.

28. In many cases identifying the expected benefits should be straightforward. For example, as part of its review of allied health professional staff (AHP)[4], NHS Lanarkshire identified how the skills mix within the service would need to change to allow it to deliver the service more efficiently (see paragraph 54, page 23, in the main report for more detail). The board's review defined the outputs expected in the following terms:

   - current and proposed staff structures for each profession and band, both as the number of whole time equivalent posts and total staff cost

   - total expected savings (£) from each professional group and as a percentage of the current staff cost

   - the expected change in whole time equivalent staff posts for each profession and band

   - the expected release of savings, year by year, given the above change in staff profile.

29. Even where identifying specific measures proves difficult, bodies should still seek to identify a number of performance indicators to allow comparisons of performance before and after the completion of the programme.

Assigning responsibility

30. The CIPD model also highlights the need to assign roles to different groups and individuals involved in delivering the workforce plan, and to ensure that they take ownership of the activity associated with their role. For example:

   - Boards, elected members and chief executives should set out the overall frame for, and objectives of, workforce planning, monitor progress against it and develop the organisational strategy, with input from others.

   - Senior managers should feed in details of future plans and service delivery and help develop business strategies for different services. They should regularly review progress against the plan, identifying risks and report on these, as needed, to boards and elected members.

   - Line managers should feed in details on skill needs, shortages and other resource needs, and required working patterns, to help develop departmental and programme plans. They also have a key role in communicating the team goals to others in the organisation and preparing monthly updates on progress for senior managers.

   - HR staff should support teams by providing specialist advice on people management, resourcing and training, for example.

   - Workforce planners should collect and analyse relevant data and provide it for reporting purposes to different stakeholder and management groups.
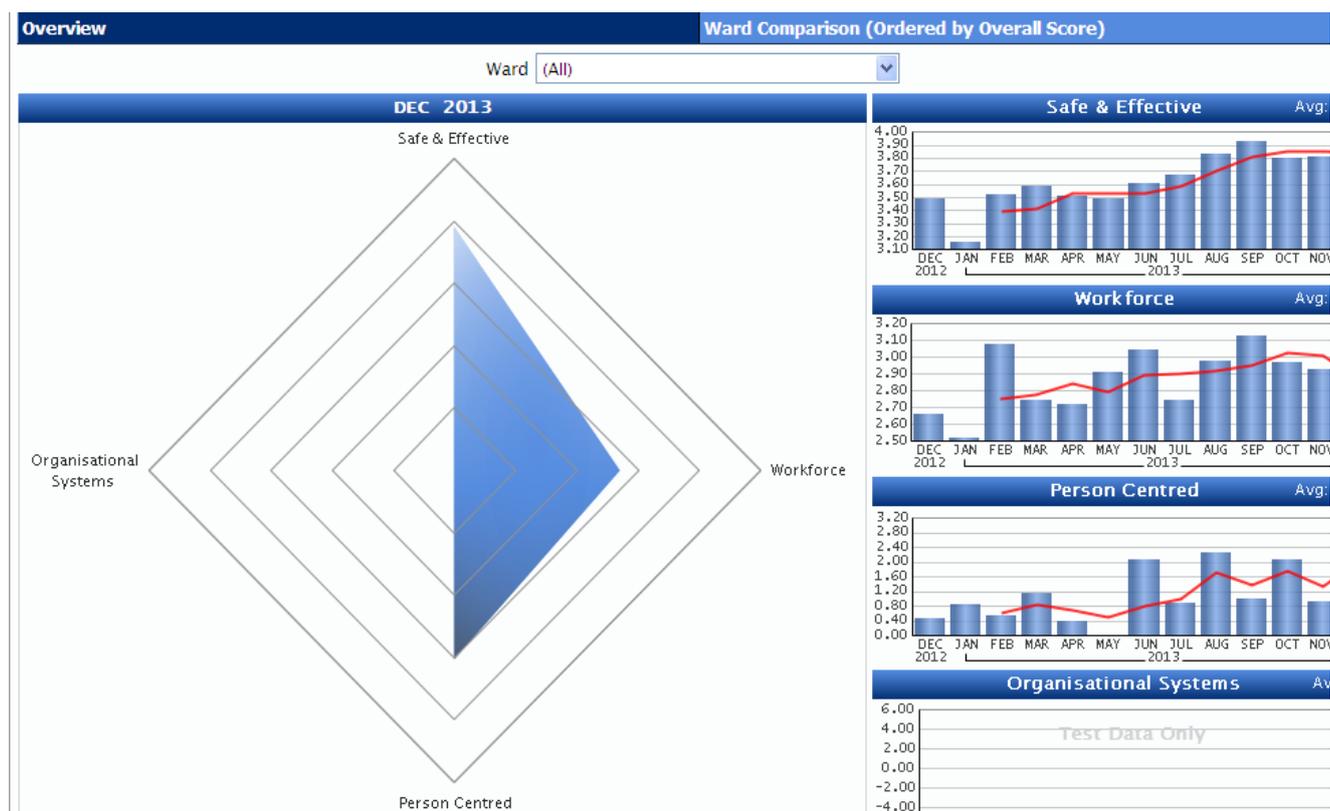
Supporting managers

31. Once they have selected the mix of workforce approaches they will use and allocated responsibilities, bodies should create a resourcing plan designed to ensure that they can make the required workforce changes cost effectively and efficiently. The resourcing plan should detail what personnel, equipment, finance, and time is needed to complete the workforce change process.

32. Where input from partners is needed, this should be identified in the resourcing plan. The body should also put in place separate agreements with each partner organisation that set out how the proposed joint services will be provided.

33. Managers involved in delivering the plan need to have the time, budgets and skills to do this. This may require: some investment in the business change skills of key individuals within the organisation; budgets to help achieve the change; and the use of different ways of working to free-up time for staff to manage workforce programmes.

34. In our audit we reported on the cost associated with designing and implementing an early departure scheme by the Scottish Court Service (SCS), as the service had monitored the amount of staff time spent administering the scheme.[5] Its work shows that the two major activities contributing to the total cost of £79,000 direct staff time were sifting applications (contributing to 77 per cent of the cost) followed by processing the acceptances and rejections (15 per cent). Most of this work was undertaken by senior managers (81 per cent) and represented a significant increase in their workload at particular points in the process. SCS

managed the workload by reprioritising, and postponing, some work, supplementing the project team with other staff from SCS and streamlining some processes in agreement with MyCSP, the pension scheme administrator.

Review and feeding back

35. The final elements within the CIPD model cover reviewing what has been achieved and learning from this to influence future workforce planning activity. It is important that bodies have a system in place that allows them to capture any learning from different programmes and feed it back into the process. Completing a review will help the body to understand how effective its workforce planning process was.

36. Bodies should plan to monitor the impact of their workforce plans and programmes at least quarterly. To do this effectively, they need to develop their monitoring processes and performance measures at the same time as they are developing their workforce plans and the individual programmes. In particular, they should:

- clearly identify the expected outcomes and outputs and identify measures for each which can be expressed in quantifiable terms (see paragraph 28, page 11)

- identify the baseline position for each measure

- put measurement systems in place to gather data on each of the expected outputs

- consider the potential for unexpected or negative outputs and put systems in place to measure these

- identify milestones against which progress will be measured

- agree a reporting plan for each programme and the plan overall.

37. Bodies should make use of existing approaches where possible to monitor the impact of workforce plans and programmes. Options that could be used include: established corporate performance monitoring systems; financial monitoring systems that track impacts on staff costs; regular engagement sessions between management teams and staff; as part of individual performance appraisal interviews; established dialogue processes with unions; and regular staff and user surveys. Bodies may wish to alter the timing of some of these events so that they have baseline measures from before a major workforce change programme is implemented and then track any changes during and after the change process.

38. Bodies may need to develop new measures to help monitor the effect of workforce plans and programmes, including short-term changes in service delivery. NHS Lanarkshire is currently developing a ward dashboard to assist senior charge nurses, senior nurses and ward teams to understand performance data and help report on this to the board and management team. The 'dashboard' is an interactive device which allows clinical staff and managers to assess how key quality measures and performance are affected by different levels of workforce input and how they change over time (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: NHS Lanarkshire - ward dashboard

Notes; the dashboard measures performance on a range of measures. These currently include workforce, safety and effectiveness and providing person-centred care. The workforce measure is compiled from a number of indicators including staff absence levels, vacancy levels, and numbers of different types of staff. The other two measures are also compiled from a mix of indicators. For example, indicators included within 'safe and effective' are number of pressure ulcers and number of falls with harm. There are plans to develop appropriate measures on organisational systems and to collect data on this which will add a fourth dimension.

The advantage of the approach is that it will provide a visual analysis of performance on all four dimensions together and can be used to show how changes in the workforce input over time, for example, impact on the other measures.

An ideal set of outcomes for the three dimensions where test data is available, would see the blue triangle, shown above, fully cover the right hand side of the diamond.

Work to develop this is continuing and the data collection approaches are still being tested. The above graphic is shown for illustrative purposes only.

Source: NHS Lanarkshire

Scrutiny of workforce plans and workforce change programmes

39. Bodies should have sound governance arrangements in place to ensure that workforce planning will deliver the organisation's business objectives. Boards and elected members should approve both:

- the organisation's workforce plan

- significant individual workforce change programmes identified within the workforce plan.

They should subsequently monitor, at regular intervals, progress in achieving the aims and objectives of the workforce plan and related workforce programmes.

Scrutiny of the workforce plan

40. Board and elected members have a key role to play in developing the workforce plan by setting out the expected objectives of workforce planning activity. They also have a key role in monitoring overall progress annually in meeting their workforce objectives. More frequent monitoring to ensure that implementation remains on track may be delegated to an appropriate committee or to the senior management team, although boards and councils should consider each significant, individual workforce programme as each is developed and implemented.

41. To effectively monitor progress against the workforce plan, board and elected members will need information on changes in the overall shape and size of the workforce and an understanding of the causes of any change. It is important that board and elected members assess the data in terms of the contribution made to achieving the organisation's corporate and workforce objectives, as set out in the workforce plan and incorporated in a range of performance indicators.

42. Boards and councils or committees should also consider any impact on other aspects of the organisation's business such as:

- the equality and diversity of changes in the workforce at an overall level

- any intelligence on how the changes are perceived by stakeholders, including partners and staff

- significant risks arising from the organisation's workforce change programme. Major risks should be included in the corporate risk register and considered by board and elected members as part of the usual risk assessment and review process.

Workforce change programmes

43. Significant workforce change programmes should be subject to scrutiny by boards and elected members, both at the proposal stage, and throughout their implementation at milestone points to ensure that the expected benefits are being realised. We found in our audit that fieldwork bodies did not routinely collect information on the costs and savings of their workforce change programmes to ensure that the expected savings were being realised, although they did report on the effect of changes in terms of staff numbers, for example. Glasgow City Council reported the following information to councillors to provide assurance on the council's early departure scheme:

- total number of applicants and the proportion of staff that this represented in each service area, grade group and in each job family

- total costs arising from the applications received

- total annual salary savings

- net savings after reconfiguration and investment costs were taken into account

- the expected pay back period, given the costs and savings estimated.

44. It is important when planning significant change programmes that bodies identify which measures they will report to boards and elected members to monitor impacts on service delivery, staff and user satisfaction.

Part 2. Scrutinising workforce plans and workforce change programmes

Audit Scotland developed the list of questions in this part of the guidance to support the scrutiny and challenge of workforce plans and workforce change programmes. The questions are based around good practice and are organised under the four key themes developed in Part 1 of the guidance.

- Developing workforce plans

- Selecting workforce approaches

- Implementing workforce change

- Effective scrutiny of planning and implementation

We have set out the questions in four blocks, so that board and elected members can select only the set of questions appropriate to the task under scrutiny at the time. The questions on assessing the quality of the workforce plan will mainly apply when a new plan is developed.

The guidance is intended to promote review and reflection and, where necessary, provide a basis for improvement. We recommend that those responsible for scrutinising workforce plans and workforce change programmes consider assessing themselves against each question, and recording the results to show:

- whether the good practice is in place

- comments that support or explain your assessment

- required actions.

Questions for board and elected members

Assessing the quality of the workforce plan
1. Does the workforce plan support business change programmes? Does the workforce plan link to the organisation's corporate objectives?
2. Is it clear how service delivery is to change over the next three to five years? Does planning take account of any likely changes in demand, policy and the legislative environment?
3. Where uncertainty exists, has the organisation used scenario planning to develop a range of potential options? Are the assumptions on which the plan is based documented?
4. Did stakeholders, including staff, and service users feed their views into the service review

Assessing the quality of the workforce plan

and workforce planning process? Do staff groups support the workforce plan?

5. Is there a single organisation-wide workforce plan which conforms to good practice (see Part 1 of the guidance, paragraph 14, pages 6 and 7)?

6. Does the workforce plan provide a clear summary of workforce requirements across each part of the organisation, built up from individual service plans?

7. Are service plans consistent in content and format? Do they have a similar content and format to the organisation-wide plan?

8. Is information available in the workforce plan on:

    a) the number of staff required to deliver services over the next three to five years and changes in this?

    b) the skills and capabilities of the staff required, and changes needed?

    c) how staff will be employed to deliver the service efficiently and what changes are needed?

    d) estimated workforce costs over the next three to five years?

    Is the expected workforce outcome in terms of staff numbers and skills mix set out for the whole organisation and for individual service departments, up to the end of the planning period?

9. Does the workforce plan set out a clear plan of action to make the changes required? Is it clear what approaches will be used? Were different options considered prior to selecting the most appropriate mix of approaches to use?

10. In the action plan, is each action clearly assigned to an individual or team, and are milestones identified against which progress will be monitored?

11. Does the workforce plan consider if partnership working is needed and where? If so, does it consider how the organisation can work with partners to deliver services jointly and as efficiently as possible?

Selecting workforce approaches

1. Are there clear objectives and minimum criteria which define what the workforce approach(es) must deliver, to help the organisation select which to use?

2. Has the organisation considered in detail all acceptable and feasible options to reduce workforce numbers and costs and documented the expected benefits and risks of each?

3. Do board and elected members receive sufficient information on the expected costs and savings of significant workforce change programmes? Are the assumptions upon which these costs and savings are calculated clear? Are the assumptions based on good information and a sound assessment of potential risks and scenarios?

4. Has the affordability of each approach been tested? Is it clear how the approach will help the organisation to make the changes it needs to make?

5. Are there barriers to using some approaches? If so, does the organisation have a plan in place to tackle them, so that these options can be considered at a future date, if needed?

Selecting workforce approaches

6. Do the governance arrangements in place for any early departure schemes meet good practice, (as set out in Exhibit 4 of this guidance, page 10)?

   For example:

   - are early retirement policies approved by councillors/board members and reviewed regularly?

   - are recommendations for early departures agreed after the organisation has appraised individual cases rigorously to ensure that expected savings outweigh costs?

   - do councillors/board members receive annual reports on the number, costs and savings of early departures?

   - do councillors/board members approve early retirement decisions for senior staff?

7. When evaluating their approaches, did the organisation ask external bodies to share any relevant experience of using different approaches? If yes, did the organisation make use of the information when developing and tailoring its own approaches, for example, has it compared its approaches with others?

Implementing workforce change

1. Are the intended financial and other benefits of the actions set out in the workforce plan, and of each programme, set out clearly? Have the benefits been translated into measurable outcomes? Do these measure both financial and other (staff and service delivery) expected impacts over the next three to five years? Has baseline data been gathered for each measure?

2. Is there a clear communication plan for managers to help them inform staff, unions, stakeholders, partners and service users about planned changes, the expected service benefits and potential impacts on each group?

3. Is it clear who has overall responsibility for ensuring that each workforce change programme is delivered on time and according to plan?

4. Are those responsible for the day-to-day delivery of specific workforce change programmes clearly identified? Are they fully aware of their role and responsibilities?

5. Have the support needs (including additional resources and change management skills) of all staff involved in the delivery of the organisation's change programme been identified?

6. Is there a resourcing plan (detailing what personnel, equipment, finance, and time is needed to complete the workforce change process)? Is the resourcing plan linked, where appropriate, to plans to reshape or restructure the organisation?

7. Does the resourcing plan ensure that the organisation will use an appropriate mix of recruitment, internal and external training, redeployment, retirement, voluntary severance and redundancy to improve productivity and support the required workforce changes?

8. Are the consequences of partnership working, for the organisation and its partners, understood? Are the resources and commitments in place to deliver services jointly?

9. Is there a plan in place to monitor the financial and other impacts (positive and negative)

Implementing workforce change

expected from each workforce change programme over the next three to five years?

10. Does the organisation plan to monitor service delivery during the transition period, to allow negative impacts to be quickly identified and addressed?

11. Has the organisation developed systems to monitor staff wellbeing during the transition period to allow negative impacts to be quickly identified and addressed? Is appropriate baseline data available to allow impacts to be monitored?

Effective scrutiny of programme planning and implementation

1. Is the governance structure for workforce planning and individual programmes clearly defined and understood?

2. Was the board/council asked to approve the workforce plan? Will the board/council review progress on implementing the workforce plan at least annually? Has a date been set when the workforce plan will be refreshed?

3. Are elected members and board members provided with information that allows them to determine if the expected financial impacts and changes in service, performance and staff and customer satisfaction are being achieved?

4. Have performance indicators been identified? Is there a plan in place to monitor these and the financial impacts of the workforce plan over the next three to five years against expected savings and costs? How will board and elected members know the plan has been successful and that it has realised the expected financial and service improvement benefits?

5. Are there suitable systems in place to provide board and elected members with assurance on equality and diversity; service, performance and productivity impacts; and staff wellbeing?

6. Do board and elected members receive benchmarking information that allows them to assess performance on programme planning and implementation against other similar public bodies?

7. How are risks associated with the workforce plan and programme identified and reported? Are individual programme risks aggregated and assessed in terms of likelihood and expected impact and mitigating actions put in place?

Endnotes

1   Our fieldwork sites were Aberdeenshire, Glasgow City and South Lanarkshire Councils, NHS Forth Valley, NHS Lanarkshire and the Scottish Ambulance Service, the Scottish Court Service, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and the Scottish Government.

2   Other sources of advice include Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), *Workforce planning: right people, right time, right skills*, 2010, the Improvement Service and Employers Organisation Guide *to workforce planning in local authorities*, July 2003.

3   Scotland's public finances: Addressing the challenges, Audit Scotland, 2011.

4   AHP staff include audiologists, dieticians, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and radiographers.

5   The Scottish Court Service (SCS) was one of the first bodies to make use of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme. Ninety-six staff left SCS through this scheme in 2011.

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