



Department of  
**Finance and  
Personnel**

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# Departmental Human Resource Strategy

# 2009- 2011

# Contents

	Page
Permanent Secretary's Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Departmental Context	5
Departmental HR and the future Service Delivery Model	6
Vision, Values and Core Principles	7
Research Methods and Consultation	9
Business Planning and the NICS People Strategy	10
Key Human Resource Priorities and Objectives 2009 - 2010	11
Departmental Human Resource Key Strategic Priorities 2009 - 2011	19
 <b>Annexes:</b>	
1 Departmental Human Resource Retained Model	21
2 DFP's Strategic Training Priorities 2008 - 2011	22
3 Consultation with Business Areas	26

# Foreword



This strategy sets out how we foresee the people challenges facing the Department over the next two years and how we intend to respond to them.

We do this within the context of unprecedented change in the Department's Human Resource function with the advent of HRConnect, the accompanying restructuring of the Personnel & Information Services Division and new ways of working across the Department which are necessary to meet the future challenges.

HRConnect will transform the delivery of Human Resource services within the Department with extensive on-line and transactional services through the Shared Service Centre. This new way of working will demand both cultural and operational changes in the way we manage our people services. For example, line managers will have a much more pro-active role in managing their staff and will be expected to carry out many on-line services such as recording sickness absence and approving leave requests etc. The Personnel & Information Services Division, in turn, will need to restructure to ensure we become much more strategic in our approach and outlook and to ensure there is a clear and dedicated professional Human Resource presence within each Business Area via the Business Partnering model.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the hard work and commitment of staff, not only in the Personnel & Information Services Division but also throughout the Department, during this period of change and look forward to working with colleagues and partners in the future to successfully deliver our objectives over the next two years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leo O'Reilly', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Leo O'Reilly**

# Introduction

This Strategy has been developed to support the Department in achieving its objectives and targets through addressing the Human Resource (People) aspects of the business agenda as set out in the Department's Corporate Plan.

It is intrinsically linked to and supports the DFP Corporate and Operational Plan 2008-2011 and also supports and is consistent with, at a departmental level, the NICS People Strategy.

The Strategy covers the period March 2009 – March 2011 and summarises the actions required to continually improve human resource management within the Department thereby ensuring that the people issues in the Programme for Government are met.

The Strategy has been shaped by and directly links to the following:

- DFP Corporate and Operational Plan 2008-2011
- NICS People Strategy
- The Future Service Delivery Model (For the Delivery of NICS Personnel Services)
- DFP Staff Attitude Survey
- DFP Customer Survey

The Programme for Government from which the Corporate Plan was developed was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and was widely consulted upon by OFMDFM. Special Advisors are still considering the report on the consultation responses. More details can be found at [www.budgetni.gov/drafteqia.pdf](http://www.budgetni.gov/drafteqia.pdf). The effects of the Change Programme have already been Equality Impact Assessed eg eHR, Account NI, Workplace 2010 etc and new personnel policies have been screened for equality impacts. The screening documentation and Equality Impact Assessments are available to view at [www.dfpni.gov.uk](http://www.dfpni.gov.uk). All DFP policies concerned with staffing matters are developed and monitored by Central Personnel Group who are responsible for Equality Screening of such policies. and will have taken the necessary action to mitigate any adverse differential impacts. These policies are continually monitored to check that their original assessments were correct and that any changes in circumstances are taken into consideration (as contained in the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland monitoring guidance issued to all staff last year.

**“the strategy . . . summarises the actions required to continually improve human resource development within the Department . . .”**

# Departmental Context

The Northern Ireland Executive agreed the final Programme for Government, Budget 2008-2011 and Investment Strategy which represent the Executive's strategic plan, thus providing the framework for the Department's work from 2008-2011. From this, Departmental objectives have been incorporated into the Personnel & Information Services Division Business Plan which provides the link between the strategic Departmental priorities and objectives through to the Divisional level and eventually through to the personal performance agreements as agreed by each employee and line manager.

## Key Issues

The key issues facing Human Resources in supporting the Corporate priorities for the department include:-

- HRConnect and the Future Service Delivery Model – which introduces new ways of working using modern IT capability to automate and introduce greater consistency to HR processes. This new model will deliver common, consistent HR policy and business processes through the provision of a Shared Service Centre, the empowerment of line managers to provide front line personnel

management to their employees and extensive self-service facilities. Departmental Human Resources will consist of a smaller number of employees to focus on strategic and policy issues and maintain its approval and decision making role.

- Budgetary and efficiency pressures - The Department's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) settlement includes a challenging requirement to realise total annual efficiencies of £14.8 million by 2010-11. This is made up of cumulative savings across the CSR period (2008-09 to 2010-11) of £5.7m, £10.3m and £14.8m. Individual business areas across the Department have been set efficiency targets and the Department has published an Efficiency Delivery Plan outlining the steps it plans to take to realise these efficiencies. [http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/dfp\\_efficiency\\_delivery\\_plan.pdf](http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/dfp_efficiency_delivery_plan.pdf)

The areas which have been targeted as a means of realising cash releasing efficiencies include, among others, targeted GAE and staffing reviews across the Department with an indicative cumulative headcount reduction of 215 across the CSR period.

# Departmental Human Resources and the Future Service Delivery Model

The introduction of HRConnect and the delivery of the retained human resource services within the Department will result in an ambitious change and restructuring programme within Personnel & Information Services Division which will impact on staff across the Department.

This restructuring is essential if we are to meet the objectives (as contained within the Future Service Delivery Model) to ensure that the Department:

- works to achieve a more open, diverse, professional and high calibre Civil Service in which staff will innovate, create and learn; display good leadership; take personal responsibility; work in partnership with others; reflect the community they serve; and use appropriate technology to deliver timely results of high quality and good value;
- is able, and has the necessary support, to carry out Civil Service functions efficiently and to the standards required by statute;
- acts as employer of choice and in dealing with employees, complies, at all times, with all relevant law and best practice;
- deals with third parties and the general public (including in relation to recruitment) in a manner which is at all times fair, reasonable, transparent, open, considerate and courteous; and

- has in place technical and organisational measures to protect the security of HR information that are sufficient having regard to the sensitive and personal nature of certain of the information held and relevant statutory requirements.

The revised structure is designed to separate the strategic and policy development role from the transactional role and incorporates the concept of Business Partnering. The Business Partner role will provide the necessary human resource support to each business area within the Department and will establish the link between human resource and the delivery of the Division's business in areas such as:

- workforce planning;
- human resource issues associated with business planning;
- leadership and talent issues;
- analysis of management information; and
- agreeing training needs and assessing the impact on the business.

The revised Departmental Human Resource Retained Model is attached at Annex 1.

# Vision, Values and Core Principles

The Visions, Values and Core Principles which underpin this strategy are firmly embedded in the Department's Corporate Plan and within the Northern Ireland Civil Service People Strategy and are described below.

## The Northern Ireland Civil Service People Strategy

The People Vision for NICS which this Department endorses is, "To be an employer of choice, with full capacity and capability to deliver the NI Executive's Programme for Government and associated Budget and Investment Strategy with:

- a clear and distinctive positioning in the labour market;
- flexibility to meet Departmental needs and a realistic range of employee expectations;
- outcome focused HR policies which enable people to fulfil their potential and are reflective of good practice; and
- is underpinned by NICS' commitment to diversity, equality and fairness."

## Departmental Corporate Plan

At an employee level the NICS Code of Ethics supports the vision by setting out the standards of behaviour expected of all Civil Servants. This has shaped the Department's core values which each employee should adhere to as follows:-

- Clear direction and leadership
- Customer focus
- Respect for people
- Open communication
- Working to deliver best value
- Maintenance and development of positive working relationships with others
- Commitment to the highest ethical standards of public service
- Valuing and harnessing the innovation of our staff
- Professionalism

## Principles

The Department's Corporate Plan sets out the main principles by which it will conduct its work and provide its services to its customers over the next three years.

The main principles, which are set out below, detail the manner in which the Department will carry out its Human Resource functions for the duration of this strategy.



**Customer focus** - the purpose and focus of our work is to deliver good services to our customers in accordance with the DFP Customer Service Standards (published November 2008). We will listen to the views of our customers via the staff survey and on-going consultation and will use this information to inform our annual business planning for the duration of this strategy.

**Continuous Improvement** – The Department is committed to a culture of continuous improvement and recognises that our people are critical to the successful delivery of our business plan. As such we will measure our development against the Investor in People indicators and results of the staff survey each year.

**Leading Reform** – Leading reform continues to be a top priority for the Department in 2008 - 2011. Departmental HR will support the business areas not only in the management and implementation of HRConnect but also across the full spectrum of reform projects. The first wave of services under HRConnect went live in November 2007 and complete roll-out is on target to be achieved by the end of this year. The focus over the next two years will be on managers and staff getting used to the new way of working within the HR function.

**Delivering Value** – As a result of the HRConnect Shared Service Centre carrying out transactional activities, the Personnel & Information Services Division has had an opportunity to restructure and concentrate on more strategic and policy related human resources matters. It has also embarked upon the Business Partnering model, providing Departmental Divisions/Agencies with Business Partners who will provide a strategic human resource service specific to their individual needs.

**Promoting Human Resource Sustainability** –

The Personnel & Information Services Division, in conjunction with our colleagues in NISRA and Business Improvement, will continue to co-ordinate the work to develop enhanced workforce forecasting. This will enable us to identify both our requirements and our gaps and will be used to inform and influence the Learning and Growth Strategy to ensure the Department has adequate skilled people in place to deliver the corporate objectives in 2008-2011. A further strand to ensuring we have the people in place to deliver corporate objectives is effective attendance management. The Department will continue to tackle sickness absence in an effort to continually reduce absenteeism thus working towards Ministerial targets.

**Learning and Growth** – In support of the Department's Corporate Strategy, the development of strategic training priorities will assist managers to prioritise leading, supporting and developing their staff throughout the change process and beyond. As part of our corporate improvement activity we will continue work on the leadership and management strand to address issues fully from the staff attitude and customer surveys and the IIP review.



# Research Methods and Consultation

In developing the NICS People Strategy, stakeholder interviews and focus groups with Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Function, Establishment Officers, Grade 7s and graduate groups were facilitated by PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

Internally, and specifically for this strategy, interviews were carried out with staff from Departmental business areas and Personnel & Information Services Division heads of section which included discussions on their human resource strategic priorities and results of the staff surveys and customer surveys. Trade Union side was also consulted and confirmed its broad contentment with the Strategy.

The results of the internal consultation exercise are attached at Annex 3. They provide details of the main human resource priorities identified by divisions and how they relate to the objectives contained in the Balanced Scorecard section of this Human Resource Strategy and the NICS People Strategy.



# Business Planning and NICS People Strategy



The Personnel & Information Services Division Balanced Scorecard, overleaf, outlines the key Human Resource priorities and objectives for the year 09/10. Also included are those Human Resource priorities and objectives that will be co-ordinated by the Corporate Improvement Centre, eg Investors in People.

The scorecard will be updated each year in line with the Department's Business Planning Schedule and the Strategy will be reviewed in April 2010 to include the 10/11 Human Resource objectives and targets.

In support of the Department's Corporate Strategy, the Departmental Board has agreed a number of strategic training priorities which will assist managers to prioritise leading, supporting and developing their staff throughout the change process. These priorities and how they are to be implemented are outlined at Annex 2.

In addition, we fully support the individual elements of the NICS People Strategy as detailed below.

- Capability to meet requirements of devolved government
- More focused career management and development
- Outcome orientated people policy
- Refreshed reward and recognition strategy
- Improved employee health, wellbeing and engagement
- Improved performance
- Flexible and effective resourcing

We will engage with the core strategy team on the scope and detailed project definition for each element.

# Departmental Personnel and Information Services Division Business Plan/Balanced Scorecard

Business Results		Customers
<p><b>R1</b> Implement and embed Reform Projects within DFP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HRConnect; • RecordsNI; • Workplace 2010; • IT Assist</li> </ul> <p><b>R2</b> To ensure compliance with Data Protection legislation and implement compliant security practices in relation to data, physical and personal security as set out in the SPF.</p> <p><b>R3</b> To ensure policies and strategies are in place to promote best practice and ensure compliance to support the Department.</p>	<p><b>C1</b> To provide high quality Departmental HR and information services.</p> <p><b>C2</b> Delivery of Business Partnering in place to support DFP in achieving their business objectives.</p>	
Internal Processes		Organisation and People
<p><b>IP1</b> Rationalise processes to enable Departmental HR and ISB to live within budget.</p> <p><b>IP2</b> Contribute to sustainable development.</p> <p><b>IP3</b> To communicate in an effective, timely and appropriate manner both internally and externally.</p>	<p><b>OP1</b> To lead modernisation and change through positive, visible leadership and management at all levels in DHR and ISB Division.</p> <p><b>OP2</b> To embed a culture of engagement, innovation and continuous improvement.</p> <p><b>OP3</b> To ensure staff are equipped with the necessary skills and competencies to deliver business objectives.</p>	

# Key Human Resource Priorities and Objectives 2009 - 2010

## Business Results

Divisional Objective	R1	Actions	Targets	Performance Measures/Indicators
Implement and embed Reform Projects within DFP:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HRConnect</li> <li>• RecordsNI</li> <li>• Workplace 2010</li> <li>• IT Assist</li> </ul>	1.1 Implement in DFP the key milestones of HRConnect	1.1 By 31 March 2010	Key reform milestones for HR and ISB are achieved
		1.2 To review and evaluate the introduction and operation of retained HR services	1.2. By 31 December 2009	Review completed
		1.3 To increase utilisation of the records management system	1.3 90% utilisation of available users in DFP creating at least one document in Trim by 31 March 2010	Delivery of Reform Projects/embedding, in line with project plans
		1.4 Implementation of Version 6.2 Trim	1.4. By 31 August 2009	
		1.5 To migrate remaining ICT functions, DFP email and NIGov domain	1.5 By 31 August 2009	
		1.6 Meet DFP accommodation needs in accordance with the workplace NI principles and programme	1.6 In line with DFP plan	
		1.7 Deliver agreed HRConnect and RecordsNI Benefits Realisation	1.7 By 31 March 2010	HRConnect and RecordsNI benefits realised

## Key Human Resources Priorities and Objectives 2009 -2010

### Business Results (cont'd)

Divisional Objective	Actions	Targets	Performance Measures/Indicators
<b>R2</b> To ensure compliance with Data Protection legislation and implement compliant security practices in relation to data, physical and personal security as set out in the Security Policy Framework (SPF)	2.1 Implement actions from the DFP Information Assurance Action Plan re data, physical and personal security	2.1.1 Target dates in line with the Action Plan 2.1.2 Review Data Protection action plan by 30 June 2009	Report and implement recommendations
	2.2 Review effectiveness of current arrangements for information, physical and personal security	2.2.1 By 31 December 2009 2.2.2 Report to January DB	Review completed and action plan produced

# Key Human Resources Priorities and Objectives 2009 -2010

## Business Results (cont'd)

Divisional Objective	R3	Actions	Targets	Performance Measures/Indicators
To ensure policies and strategies are in place to promote best practice and ensure compliance to support the Department		3.1 Implement and review Year 1 DFP HR Strategy	3.1 By 31 March 2009	DFP policies and strategies are in place in consultation with Stakeholders, Business Partners and in line with statutory requirement
		3.2 Implement recommendations from the Equality Commission of Northern Ireland (ECNI) review of the effectiveness of Section 75	3.2 By 31 March 2010	
		3.3 Revise Departmental Health and Safety Policy	3.3 By 30 June 2009	
		3.4 Implement revised inefficiency procedures in support of absence management	3.4 In line with Corporate Implementation Plan	
		3.5 Introduce new SPF guidance	3.5 By 31 March 2010	
		3.6 Implement agreed workforce and succession planning objectives	3.6 Achieve Departmental Board agreed targets by 31 March 2010	
		3.7 Implement actions from NICS Corporate Action Plan on Managing Attendance	3.7 In line with targets set in NICS Corporate Action Plan	



# Key Human Resource Priorities and Objectives 2009 - 2010

## Customers

Divisional Objective		Actions	Targets	Performance Measures/Indicators
<b>C1</b>	To provide high quality Departmental HR and Information Services	1.1 To meet customer satisfaction targets set by DFP	1.1 Achieve 75% customer satisfaction for DFP in 2009 Customer Survey	At least 75% satisfaction level achieved
		1.2 To provide business specific ICT solutions	1.2 In line with agreed programme for 09/10	Requirements met within agreed timescales
		1.3 Supporting Line Managers to achieve business area and DFP targets for absence management	1.3 8.5 days for DFP by 31 March 2010	Directorates meet their individual targets for 2009 - 2010 (Dependent on availability from HRConnect)
		1.4 IIP re-accreditation for the Core Department	1.4 By 31 December 2009	IIP re-accreditation
<b>C2</b>	Delivery of Business Partnering in place to support DFP in achieving their business objectives	2.1 Agree framework to measure effectiveness of Business Partners	2.1 By 30 September 2009	Framework agreed and implemented
		2.2 Evaluate the agreed framework	2.2 By 31 December 2009	Framework evaluated
		2.3 Business Partners to attend Directorate/Agency business planning events for the 2010 - 11 planning year	2.3 Visits to be arranged during 2009 - 10	Increase in Business Partners/Assistant Business Partners effectiveness
		2.4 Benchmarking exercise across business Areas	2.4.1 Formulate benchmarking questions for inclusion in 2009 Customer Survey 2.4.2 achieve x% customer satisfaction for DHR and IM	Higher customer satisfaction rates in the survey  x% achieved

# Key Human Resource Priorities and Objectives 2009 - 2010

## Internal Processes

Divisional Objective		Actions	Targets	Performance Measures/Indicators
<b>IP1</b>	Rationalise processes to enable Departmental HR and ISB to live within budget	1.1 Develop a plan to rationalise up to 3 key common or surplus administrative and support arrangements	1.1 By 30 June 2009	Plan approved and achieved
		1.2 Implement actions for process improvement	1.2 By 31 March 2010	Improvements are made in line with plan
		1.3 Monitor DHR and IS performance against budget allocation 2009 - 2010	1.3.1 No overspend during 2009 - 2010 1.3.2 No greater than 1.5% underspend	Spending meets the target tolerance level
		1.4 Pay 90% of valid CSG invoices	1.4 Within 10 working days	Prompt payments
		2.1 To monitor the DFP Waste Management Action Plan	2.1 Quarterly	Quarterly stats to DB
<b>IP2</b>	Contribute to sustainable development	2.2 Paper consumption within DHR/IS to be reduced to contribute to overall DFP reduction by 20% (from a 2006 - 2007) baseline	2.2 By 31 March 2010	DFP 20% reduction achieved
		2.3 DHR/IS contribute to CSG's air and road travel expenditure reduction by 5%	2.3 By 31 March 2010	CSG's 5% reduction achieved

## Key Human Resource Priorities and Objectives 2009 - 2010

### Internal Processes (cont'd)

Divisional Objective	Actions	Targets	Performance Measures/Indicators
<b>IP3</b> To communicate in an effective, timely and appropriate manner both internally and externally	3.1 Monitor Divisional and Section levels of achievement against all targets in the Business Plans and produce management information for HOD and DB meetings	3.1 Quarterly within deadlines set by Finance Division	Appropriate management information and support is provided to facilitate strategic and proactive decision making
	3.2 Ensure Team Brief and management meetings take place	3.2.1 Quarterly management meetings	Team Briefs held monthly and well attended
	3.3 All requests for information under FOI, Environmental Information Regulations and Data Protection to be answered within statutory deadlines	3.3 100% of written responses to be returned within required deadlines	100% achieved
	3.4 All written responses to non co-ordinated Assembly Questions to be returned to Assembly Section within required deadline	3.4 100% of written responses to be returned within required deadlines	100% achieved

# Key Human Resources Priorities and Objectives 2009 - 2010

## Organisation and People

Divisional Objective		Actions	Targets	Performance Measures/Indicators
OP1	To lead modernisation and change through positive, visible leadership and management at all levels in DHR and ISB Division	1.1 To promote and participate in appropriate CSR activities	1.1 By 31 March 2010	Have at least participated in 1 activity
		2.1 Develop an improvement plan to take forward actions from DFP Improvement Plan	2.1.1 By 31 May 2009 2.1.2 Monitor quarterly	Produce an agreed improvement plan
OP2	To embed a culture of engagement, innovation and continuous improvement	2.2 All managers to include at least one improvement activity in their personal performance	2.2 Include in Personal Performance Agreement for 2009 -2010	Progress against Corporate Improvement Plan
		3.1 Formulate costed DHR and IS training plans	3.1 Revise Training Plans and send to Training Commissioner on a quarterly basis	Agreed DHR and IS training budget met
OP3	To ensure staff are equipped with the necessary skills and competencies to deliver business objectives	3.2 Performance Reviews for 2008 - 2009 completed	3.1 By mid May 2009	All Performance Reviews within the Division completed
		3.3 All Job Descriptions/PPAs and PDPs for 2009 - 2010 to be completed in line with DFP Core Competence Framework	3.3.1 PPAs to be completed by 30 April 2009 3.3.2 PDPs to be completed by 30 April 2009 3.3.3 All staff to have at least one in-year review completed by 30 October 2009	All PPAs/PDPs within the Division are completed in line with the Performance Management Guidelines

# Departmental Human Resource Key Strategic Priorities 2009-2011

In addition to the objectives as defined in the Divisional Balanced Scorecard, the Department's key strategic priorities over the next two years and how they link to the Corporate Plan and NICS People Strategy have been identified as follows:

## Key Strategic Priorities

1. **Improved Employee Health, Wellbeing and Engagement - To build a departmental specific programme to improve the health and wellbeing of our employees and reduce health costs through reduced absenteeism.**

**Measurement** - Successful implementation of the programme in line with the NICS Corporate HR Strategy resulting in a continual reduction in sickness absenteeism thus working towards Ministerial targets.

**Links** - Corporate Plan (Human Resource Sustainability). Results quadrant of the Balanced Scorecard. NICS People Strategy to build a programme to improve the health and wellbeing of the workforce.

2. **To ensure that staff are equipped with the necessary skills and competences to deliver DFP business objectives and support the implementation of reform within the Department.**

**Measurement** - To have a Training Plan in place and ensure that all training and development within the plan is delivered.

**Links** - Corporate Plan Objectives to ensure staff are equipped with the necessary skills and competences to deliver DFP business objectives and support the implementation of reform within the Department. Learning and Growth quadrant of the Balanced Scorecard. NICS People Strategy to have more focused career management and development.

3. **To ensure staff are equipped with the necessary skills and competences to provide high quality Human Resource services which meet the needs of our customers.**

**Measurement** - Customer requirements are incorporated into the Division's objectives and priorities and monitored in line with the business planning process and improved staff satisfaction levels as monitored by the Staff Satisfaction and Customer Surveys.

**Links** - Corporate Plan Objectives to ensure the provision of high quality services which meet the needs and expectations of our customers. Customers quadrant of the Balanced Scorecard.

**4. Workforce Forecasting and Succession Planning - To develop enhanced processes for human resource planning.**

**Measurement** - To have enhanced workforce forecasting and succession planning processes in place.

**Links** - Corporate Plan Objectives to develop enhanced processes. Internal Process quadrant of the Balanced Scorecard. NICS People Strategy to have more focused career management and development.

**5. The implementation of HRConnect. To ensure that the transitional arrangements are in place so that all releases of HRConnect are successfully implemented within the department.**

**Measurement** - Successful implementation in line with the deployment strategy. Full implementation of the new retained structure.

**Links** - Corporate Plan Objectives to deliver the reform projects. Results quadrant of the Balanced Scorecard. NICS People Strategy to develop and implement specific development programmes to improve capacity and capability.

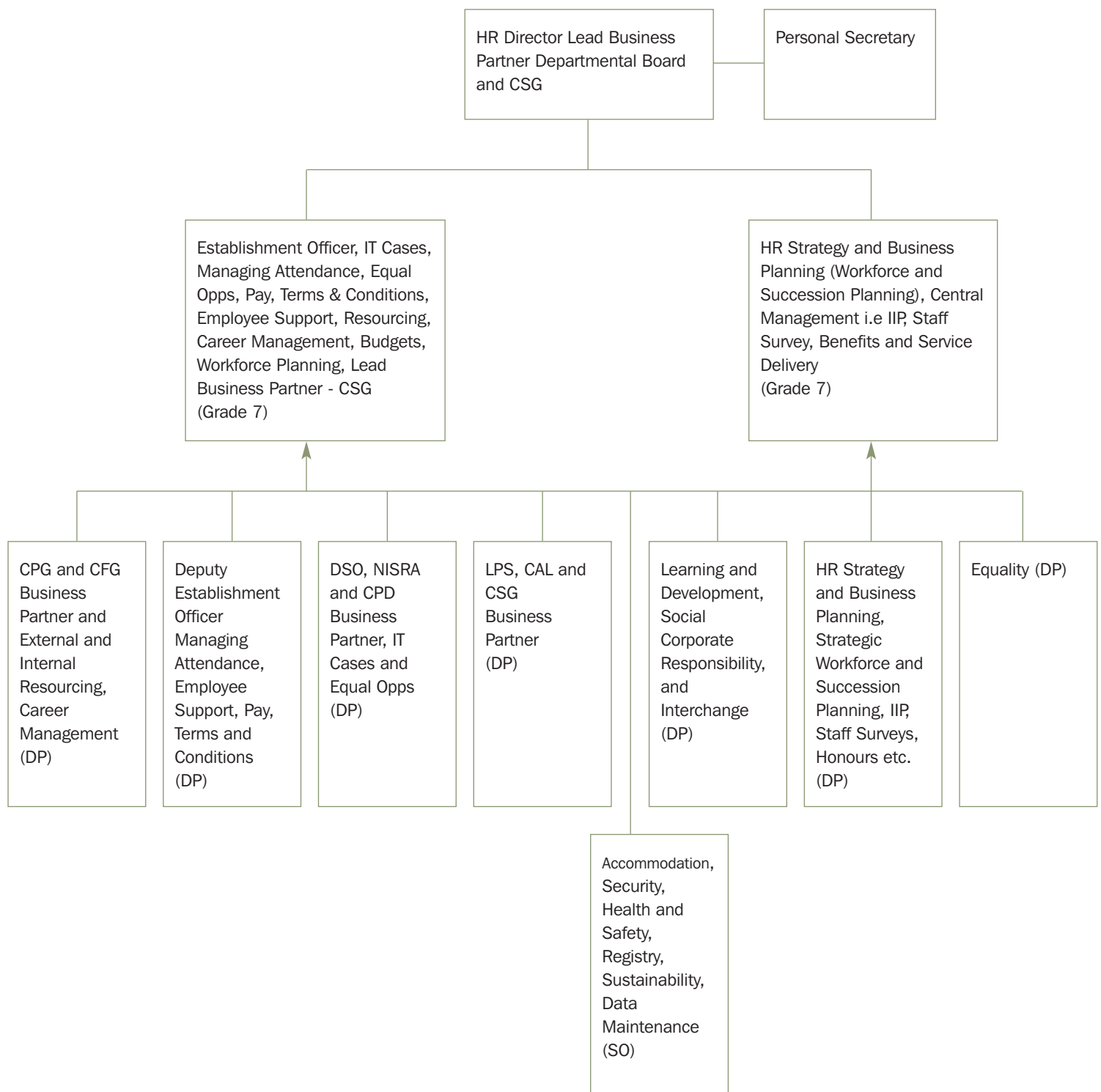
**6. Corporate Social Responsibility - To support involvement in inclusive community projects that reach across all social and community backgrounds in line with the Department's Corporate Social Responsibility Policy.**

**Measurement** - Business areas commit to a programme of structured, planned employee volunteering activities during 2009-10.

**Links** - Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority to ensure effective leadership, the promotion of a culture of engagement, innovation and continuous improvement and that all staff are equipped with the skills and competences to deliver DFP business objectives.



## Departmental Human Resource Retained Model



## DFP'S Strategic Training Priorities 2008-2011

Corporate learning and development priorities for 2008/09, reflecting both the Corporate Strategy and the 2008/09 Operational Plan, were published earlier this year to assist line managers in identifying training needs. The Strategic Training Priorities for 2008-11 will be supplemented, if necessary, with additional priorities for 2009/10 and 2010/11, should the Operational Plans for these periods demand this.

During the period of this strategy, Business Areas will not only hold and manage their own budgets for line of business training but will also have notionally delegated budgets (with effect from 1 April 2009) for generic training delivered by the Centre for Applied Learning (CAL). As CAL operates hard-charging, this budget is notional only to the extent that the Personnel & Information Services Division will continue to hold the actual budget centrally and will make payment to CAL on behalf of Business Areas.

Line managers will continue to be responsible for assisting staff to identify their learning and

development needs. However, each Business Area will be required to produce costing training plans and to ensure that their spend remains within their allocated budget. Budgetary approval to attend training events will be made by Development Co-ordinators. Learning and Development needs will therefore need to be clearly linked to corporate and business area objectives and prioritised in terms of importance. The strategic training priorities will enable Development Co-ordinators to make funding decisions in the context of ensuring that training and development spend remains within budget and maximising the impact training and development interventions have on the achievement of business objectives.

The Personnel & Information Services Division will continue to commission courses from CAL to meet the needs identified and agreed in individual Business Area Training Plans. It will also work with Business Areas to ensure that essential training is received.

# The Priorities

## 1. Reform Programme Training

### 1.1 Programme and Project Management

A wide range of staff can benefit from guidance on managing small projects – straightforward techniques to help ensure that we deliver on time, to budget and to appropriate quality standards. (Full PRINCE accreditation is only needed by a few people and is not within the generic provision of CAL.) The inclusion of Programme/Project Management as an additional competence within the core competence framework from April 2008 is also a factor for the priority of this training;

### 1.2 Process Mapping and Re-engineering/ Process Improvement

All DFP Business Areas are to undertake process mapping and process rationalisation which may stretch our internal business consultancy resources and therefore require appropriate staff within Business Areas to become skilled in this area.

### 1.3 Benefits Realisation/Benefits Management

Benefits management is a key skill needed in the Department both to enable implementation and monitoring of the DFP benefits framework across all Business Areas and in DFP's role as the lead Department for the reform programme.

Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Areas – 1, 2, 3, 5

## 2. Diversity and Equality

Diversity Now (new NICS diversity & equality foundation course) is mandatory for all staff and has already started to be rolled out across the Department. The course will be delivered as either classroom based (new entrants) or via e-learning (all other staff).

Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Area – 2

## 3. Financial Management

Against the background of the CSR and more scrutiny from local Ministers and Assembly Committees, the key priority is to address general finance management skills for SO and above. These will be addressed through the Finance Management Overview (aimed at SCS & G6/7), Practical Skills course (G7-SO), and where appropriate through use of the National School of Government's Love Learning financial e-learning package which provides an alternative to formal classroom training. This package can be accessed by following the registration instructions on the NSG website at <http://lovelearning.nationalschool.gov.uk/>

Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Areas – 4, 5

#### **4. Administration Development Programme**

This three-day development programme for staff at AA/AO has been developed in line with the NICS core competence framework and includes customer service, communication and telephone skills and team working.

Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Areas – 2, 6

#### **5. Information Assurance**

Through its monitoring role, the Information Management Unit has identified a training need around staff adhering fully to relevant legislation in relation to Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Information Management. We must ensure that the strong procedures we have in place are adhered to and also that compliance with the Acts is seen as something for which every member of staff must take responsibility.

Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Areas – 2, 6

#### **6. Sustainable Development**

A new sustainable development strategy was introduced in 2007 and the Executive has also placed sustainability as a key cross cutting theme in the Programme for Government. General awareness training and decision-maker/practitioner courses will be available this year and targeted at specific groups of staff in the Department.

Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Area – 9

#### **7. Absence Management**

The Department is committed to reducing the levels of absenteeism in line with ministerial targets. This programme is mandatory for all newly promoted EO2s who are line managers and is available to any other managers.

Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Area – 10

#### **8. Leadership and Management**

The findings of the Government Skills analysis identified needs around leadership, strategic thinking and delivery. In line with this, corporate leadership and management programmes will continue to be mandatory for staff newly promoted to the EO2 and SO grades and available to other staff in the EO2 – SO grades with training needs in this area. A new G6/G7 Programme Leading for Change is also now available.

Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Area – 11

## **9. Working with the Minister and the Institutions of Government**

The devolved administration relies on particular systems and working relationships to be in place for it to function. Understanding these systems and working relationships will help civil servants deliver policy in a more efficient manner. Priority training in this area includes Assembly Questions, Working with Ministers and Speech-writing.

[Corporate Plan Key Strategic Priority Area – 11.](#)

In addition to the above strategic priorities, achievement of the Key Strategic Priority Areas outlined in the Corporate Plan should be supported by operational (line of business) priorities.

## Consultation with Business Areas

The following section details the main HR issues that Business Areas have highlighted following consultation sessions held by staff within the Corporate Improvement Centre.

### Departmental Solicitors Office

Building capacity and succession planning. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 2.

### Finance Division

Succession Planning. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 2.

Recruitment/retention of Finance Personnel and professional/HR consultancy. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 1

### Central Support Team

Succession Planning. This is reflected in the Key Strategic Priority 2.

Identify training needs well in advance. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 4.

### Central Procurement Directorate

Succession Planning. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 2.

HRConnect processes. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 1.

### Land and Property Services

Resourcing. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 1.

Succession Planning. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 2.

HR Business Partner. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 1.

### NI Statistics & Research Agency

Resourcing. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 1.

Headcount levels. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 2.

### Properties Division

Succession Planning. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 2.

Managing Attendance. This relates to the objective as described in the NICS People Strategy, "Improved employee health, wellbeing and engagement".

### Central Finance Group

Resourcing. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 1.

Succession Planning. This is reflected in Key Strategic Priority 2.

Managing Attendance. This relates to the objective as described in the NICS People Strategy, "Improved employee health, wellbeing and engagement".