



## Organising ourselves for the future – smaller but better

**Barry Pirie** calls for a moment of focus as the HR sector gears up for more financially challenging times ahead

Now that the national elections are over, and we have had time to digest the Queen's Speech, it is time for all of us, including HR colleagues across the public sector to focus on the direction we will be going in over the next few years. As HR professionals, our value to our sector is not only the HR skills we bring to the table but an overall understanding of the bigger picture for our organisations and what it means for them – and that is what we have captured in this Supplement.

Over the past five years the concept of 'more for less' has defined what we do in local government. These three words, born from the austerity agenda, have challenged councils to address the services they deliver and how they deliver them in the future.

In the next five years I think a new phrase must dominate our approach to the cuts which lie ahead: we must move on from the idea of 'more for less' to creating organisations which are 'smaller but better'.

There are three important reasons to grasp the need for improvement in what we do right now.

First of these is that the people in communities expect and deserve quality services which are delivered effectively by councils.

The second is that we are clearly not making the most of the tools that can help us right now. The most powerful of these is technology. We are a long way behind how our citizens expect us to provide services and communicate with them based on their consumer experiences. We need to reinvent and rewire

the way we deliver services so they are more effective.

The third is the necessity to grasp that the way that local public service providers have organised themselves will have to change in the face of new government policy. The idea of combined authorities as we have seen in Manchester, co-delivery of services across the charity and private sector is here to stay and we can now add to this, a desire for devolution in formats other



than that of cities, bringing with it an interesting challenge for the previously accepted mayoral models.

These throw up substantial challenges for the way local government goes about its future business.

We need to find new ways of organising people and teams who can work across traditional organisational boundaries whether these are joint ventures or wholly new public bodies.

We also need leaders, effective in business administration but with core skills in anticipating, managing and driving change.

Our public service ethos will still be at the heart of our organisations but our people need to see change as an expectation in their jobs not an exception.

We'll also have to see our

work in a different light. Our understanding of public service delivery will shift from organisations who 'own' services from end-to-end to one where we are responsible for outcomes which are delivered by a range of partners.

Finally, we will have to be resilient, working at a faster pace and not just coping with change but thriving on it.

Whether it is changing service delivery, building new organisations or driving technology enabled change people are central to every part of the change we face in local government.

This means the effectiveness with which councils work with their people will be critical to the future success of local government.

We must be the go-to partners who map the gaps in capability,

put in place the new structures and develop the right skills among leaders, managers and colleagues throughout our organisations.

There is no doubt that the changes ahead will be challenging for the sector but it is vital that we approach them with the right ambition.

We need to understand that if we seize the opportunity to do things differently and redefine our work, our sector will not only be able to attract the talented people to drive for the future but also improve the way we deliver services for the better.

That has to be good outcome for everyone.

**Barry Pirie is Associate Director, People and Business at Wiltshire Council, and President of the PPMA**

## Are we HR – or are we devo?

What will devolution really mean for the HR community?

**A**fter the high octane debate last year about Scottish devolution, and the desire for similar models to be adopted across England being echoed through the media and a variety of political channels, there appears to be a real appetite to make this happen, not just in the northern cities or in London but in the shires too.

Surely this is just a debate about decision making, funding and political ownership? On one level it is. However, HR people studying the impact of such models will already be working through how devolution will create at the least an extension of existing and most likely different demands of public sector leadership teams and workforces.

It is difficult to do justice in a brief article to the complex organisational design issues which will keep people in our profession intellectually stimulated over the next few years. But here is a starter for 10.

There is no sense that devolution will mean wholesale restructuring and reorganisation, 1974 style. But it will mean developing organisational designs and complementary cultures which can manage increased levels of commissioning, delivery and funding across organisational boundaries. This in turn will require a systems leadership approach as standard, together with the skill to work in potentially complex political environments within a mayoral structure and the ability to matrix manage across professional disciplines and organisations. All the while we will want our leaders and our workforces to be able to keep their heads up, using business information drawn from across organisations and understanding the operational impact across the system in the devolved area, to shape the future with the local community. A strength of local government people is their skills to lead programmes across services and sectors and they have demonstrated that they can work effectively with partners. The role of HR is to support the enhancement of those skills, identify along with colleagues and partners, what the gaps might be and help design the system and create the culture that will benefit the locality.

HR is definitely devo (look it up on Wikipedia!).

**Dilys Wynn is Director of People Services at Gloucestershire CC**



## Honey, I shrunk the Council – the sequel or not?

Giving local residents a say is key to effectively running your council at this time of reduced finance, says **Peter Bungard**

**T**he average upper tier council will, after 4 years of austerity, have made savings exceeding £100m, as a combination of grant loss and absorbing increased demand on services for vulnerable children and adults. Put another way, every single working day we have had to find a new £100,000 savings opportunity to balance the books. And we have numerous clues as to the Chancellor's CSR '15 plans, with accelerated savings expected from non-protected budgets. So are we ready and motivated for the sequel, running until 2020? I describe it in my Council as looking down the wrong end of the telescope.

Then along comes the next blockbuster: 'English Devo'. Not quite

released, there are still two trailers that you can watch.

The sceptical (but perfectly accurate) trailer is one of devolution of cuts from Whitehall to the Town Hall. Local government's "reward" for out-performing the rest of the public sector in coping with austerity (through true efficiencies and fundamentally redesigning the public service offer), is to be trusted with more. But surely I can't sell the concept to local political leaders that we should accept ... no chase after ... the honour of managing Whitehall's cuts for them?

Then there is the optimist's trailer: the first chance for a very long time to look through the proper end of the telescope; to actually see the relevance of local government growing into the future, by shaping the full breadth of locally delivered services; to deliver community health and social care integration, tackle worklessness, economic growth and skills, criminal justice, even if it means inheriting and ownership of a much larger savings target. Is it starting to look tempting now? The alternative, of course, is that savings are still made to local services by Whitehall or its quangos, without the subtlety of local political influence, or the local

democratic input that will deliver those savings in a smart, effective way.

So, as a local government CEO, which trailer do I want to show? I have no difficulty in choosing the optimist's trailer of 'English Devo'.

I firmly believe that our savings from 2015 onwards are of a very different type from 2011-2015. Our communities will not buy into cuts as they no longer see the UK in a deep recession. Our future savings will be highly dependent on demand management, usually associated with preventative investment.

But what has this got to do with Devolution? 'Cuts' are largely in

the gift of a Council, as long as you can convince local people they are necessary. Demand management is rarely in our own gift, and requires behavioural change across the whole system: even if we invest in prevention, payback often lands elsewhere. Devolution is the opportunity to bring the whole system leadership and financial accountability in to your locality. If you invest wisely to reduce demand, the payback dividend can be realised to everyone's benefit.

Let's be honest, this comes with lots of risks, perhaps the greatest being the switch from running what sometimes feels like a Whitehall franchise, to true locally shaped services, meeting the needs of local people, and as such being widely open to the "postcode lottery" label. Many of these concerns can be addressed by democratically-run local authorities giving a real say to their local residents.

And perhaps one unanswered question: how do we develop the people who can work fluently across whole system leadership, without the roadmap of a traditional franchised service model?



**Peter Bungard is Chief Executive of Gloucestershire County Council**

### Tell us your views

If you have any views about the contents of this focus or ideas for future articles or would like to contribute please email the Editor Dilys Wynn at

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# What sort of elected mayor would work in your sub-region?

David Marlow ponders the questions that local authorities will need to answer if any revisions to the elected mayor model are made

With the publication of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, a Centre for Cities blog suggested the debate on elected Mayors has moved on from whether or not to have one, to how powerful the post-holder should be. In the same week, The Economist quoted a prediction from Tony Travers (LSE and London Finance Commission) of six metro-mayors being in place by 2020. Whilst these analyses may be premature, local leadership teams should revisit the case(s) for elected mayors. They should move beyond simplistic 'to have or to have not' and bottom-line 'is the hassle worth the enhanced devolution buck' debates.

England already has the London Mayor, operating at 'world city'/ regional scale, and sixteen further directly-elected mayoralties. These

cover a total population of 3.6 million, including two core cities. So, there is significant experience on which to draw in positing a post-Devolution Bill proposition. This piece outlines two key strategic choices local leadership teams have in formulating that proposition.

First, an elected mayorality must strike a balance between a relatively tight focus on local growth, and responsibility for public services reform as a whole. The genesis of metro-mayor debates, and the content of 'city deals', tended to emphasise the former. However, Greater Manchester agreements have extended to health and social care integration. The Bill explicitly allows Mayors to encompass Police and Crime Commissioner roles.

Second, there is a difference between strongly executive mayoral models, and those where the Mayor

is more of an influencer and place advocate.

Many existing Mayors have assumed direct executive leadership of functional services (including Mayors of Liverpool and Bristol), with managerial responsibilities for the performance of their administrations. In principle the metro-Mayor may take over (or be assigned by the Secretary of State) singular leadership of specific functions, and may precept for the discharge of those responsibilities. However, the Greater Manchester agreement suggests more a 'collaboration of equals' with the Leaders of Constituent Authorities. To date, no Combined Authorities (CAs) have envisaged distinctive operational teams akin to London's GLA.

The strategic champion of place, influencing major local institutions,



chairing the Local Enterprise Partnership is a key mayoral rationale, particularly for local growth agendas. This role has been central for the London Mayor. However, how effective would that have been without a directly-reporting administration (the GLA) with powers and resources to execute mayoral decisions?

The Bill provides a fairly blank canvas, both on elected mayors and on enhanced devolution in the round. The challenge is for local leadership teams - councils with partners - to populate that canvas with rich, distinctive and (nationally and locally) attractive portraits of how enhanced devolution can deliver better outcomes for our cities and communities.

For mayoral impact, do councils and local populations want a local growth champion and global ambassador, or an effective 'marshal' of constituent local authorities delivering transformational public service reform? As LAs work up their CA propositions, they should try to answer that question.

David Marlow is Chief Executive of Third Life Economics



# A new broom

**Tom Riordan** looks at Leeds City Council's ambitious approach to regeneration

Leeds has emerged from the recession with a growing population of 780,000 and a buoyant economy. Leeds has over 400,000 jobs, a diverse economic base, the fastest rate of private sector jobs growth of any major city in the UK, and the highest number of fast-growing firms outside London and the South East. We have the largest concentration of financial and business services jobs outside London. Leeds City Centre is in the midst of a £0.5 billion boom in retail investment. We have over 600,000 square feet of Grade A offices under construction supporting growth in our successful financial, business

services and digital sectors. We are planning for growth, with 70,000 new homes planned by 2028. We are at the heart of Leeds City Region has a population of 3 million, 1.5 million jobs, and an annual economic output of £56bn, greater than Wales. The success of Leeds is central to the concept of the Northern Powerhouse. Our vision to be the Best Council and the Best City in the UK. The strategy is for a strong economy and a compassionate city. Leeds City Council has been proactive in supporting development and attracting investment, and also in securing regeneration so all

neighbourhoods and communities benefit from growth. Leeds was hit hard by the recession, but has since bounced back strongly. Leeds City Council has been proactive in helping kickstart stalled commercial developers. For example, when we sold a plot of land just to the south of Leeds railway station to create a new flagship office for KPMG, we reinvested the capital receipt to create Sovereign Square, a new public open space in the surrounding area. This improvement in the area has enabled us to bring additional plots forward delivering 275,000 square feet on the site. In the Leeds Enterprise Zone we have teamed up with developers to give them the confidence to build large modern factories. We agreed with them that if they could not let these buildings the Council would acquire them as long term commercial investments. This gave the developers the confidence to

build and create a new supply of modern industrial space for the manufacturing sector. It is not just about bricks and mortar. We are connecting people to jobs, combining housing growth with improvements to existing neighbourhoods, and integrating public services to respond to the needs of communities. We helped

over 4,600 unemployed people were supported into work last year. We are working closely with communities on Neighbourhood Plans across the city to identify how localities can engage with growth. We are changing the way we provide services locally, becoming more integrated, and responding better to the needs of people. We are also encouraging the private sector to invest in communities by supporting apprenticeships, paying the Living Wage, engaging with schools, and through volunteering. The role of local government is changing. But whilst we may be smaller in size, Leeds City Council is becoming bigger in influence in leading economic growth and regeneration.



**Tom Riordan is chief executive of Leeds City Council**

# Putting people first

**Lorraine Hallam** looks at people management initiatives to make economic development happen in Leeds

At Leeds City Council, our senior management team led by the Chief Executive, Tom Riordan, really do value the contribution that HR can make to the organisation. The city itself has a strong and robust economy that is predicted to grow - which is exciting, while at the same time this presents a number of challenges. Employment growth will bring new demands around infrastructure, services and housing. In addition to this, despite ongoing efforts, inequality remains a theme in the city and addressing this is key to future

economic development. There is a real will to 'close the gap' for people in different parts of the city - in terms of participation in the economy and education, and health equality. As one of the cities largest employers and provider of services, we are in a unique position to influence these issues through our people management initiatives. Just one of our initiatives is to address workforce planning in this whole city context. There is agreement that the city needs to think about its longer term future and aspirations and how this fits with demand and resource patterns.



We are working to develop a common understanding that this needs to take into account the workforce and recognise that there isn't a simple set of planning activities that will solve this. Bringing people together and building new partnerships will be key to making this happen. Through our organisations' values we are proactively encouraging all Leeds City Council employees to 'Look up and Look out'.

This is very much a focus for HR and this year we have adopted this as our key theme for all development activity for our HR team of 150 people. We are expecting everyone to become better at making connections within the council and across the city. This is key to breaking down traditional silos and barriers that often exist in large organisations, both internally and externally, making the

council 'easy to do business with' and get to know. One of our aims is to create a city workforce that reflects the communities we serve. Starting with our own workforce we are developing an approach to inclusion that will combine existing solutions with a fresh approach to exploiting the opportunities presented through social media to attract people who might not otherwise think of working with, or for, a local authority. Although we recognise that things are going to be tough, it's also an exciting time. Our ambition is to be the best council in the best city and our people management initiatives are contributing in a real way to make this happen.

**Lorraine Hallam is Head of HR and OD at Leeds City Council**

# Building a better future

**Helen Fisher** looks at the challenges ahead as London's regeneration continues to put pressure on local authorities to deliver



Over the past several years, regeneration in London has been focused on stimulating growth, creating jobs and new homes and delivering the physical infrastructure needed to enable this growth to take place. Focus is therefore on areas that have the potential to accommodate that growth rather than areas where there are concentrations of poverty.

Nine Elms on the South Bank, an opportunity area of 227 hectares in central London stretching across the north of Wandsworth and covering part of Vauxhall in Lambeth, is the epitome of this approach. The scheme will deliver 20,000 new homes and 25,000 new jobs from 6.5 M sq ft of commercial space over a period of 20 years, making a big contribution to tackling London's population growth. An informal partnership, the Nine Elms Vauxhall Partnership, led by the Leaders of Wandsworth and Lambeth, together with landowners, developers, the GLA and Transport for London, works to foster a shared vision for change and deliver joint endeavour across all sectors.

The Northern line extension to Nine Elms and to Battersea Power Station – an investment of £1 billion in very necessary transport, has enabled the scale of transformation and is made possible by the joint working and leadership of the GLA, TFL, Wandsworth Council, Lambeth and Battersea Power Station, supported by a Treasury backed guarantee.

The Queen's Speech did not signal any significant change in the approach to delivery of regeneration for the public sector. Although some sections of the property industry remain critical of planning, with Greg Clarke, the man who guided the National Planning Policy Framework through Parliament now Secretary of State for Communities, it's unlikely that there will be major changes in the short term. The Government's support for



Helen Fisher is Programme Director of Nine Elms Vauxhall Partnership

development, facilitating infrastructure and the Northern Power House appears to be evident in the City and Local Government Devolution Bill providing increased devolution of powers to the big cities and to the introduction of elected metropolitan mayors with powers over housing, transport and planning and policy and the HS2 Bill. The Housing Bill arguably focuses more on supporting home ownership, extending Right to Buy to 1.3 M Housing Association tenants and increases in the number of starter homes, rather than stimulating major increases in housing supply.

So, what does this mean for Local Authorities and their regeneration team? We are in a period of intense change for Local Authorities. Reductions in size, mergers, changes in services and different delivery mechanisms are all being explored. Discretionary services such as regeneration are being looked at closely. Local Authorities have always worked in partnership to deliver regeneration and they will need to continue to collaborate and develop partnerships with the private sector. They will also need to become ever more creative about use of resources and property assets. Exploration and identification of alternative means for the funding and delivery of infrastructure and regeneration – and for the people we need to deliver, will continue including Planning Performance Agreements, CIL and scheme toplices, TIFs, borrowing powers, raising capital or revenue through the use of assets, pension funds and mechanisms to harness property value uplift from investment in infrastructure. Our staff will need to be able to flow in and out of the public and private sector, crossing boundaries between Councils, Companies, charities and mutuals. Skill sets will be needed to build joint agendas, shared values and objectives with our local communities and private sector partners. Emotional intelligence, negotiation and collaboration are as important as hard technical skills. These will all be needed to make the changes we want to see in our communities and neighbourhoods and to ensure that local people benefit from these changes.

In summary, while the legislative environment remains consistent for the time being, the challenges for individuals operating in the regeneration sector remain ever more demanding with a complex matrix of skills required to deliver success.



## Time to start planning your care

**Sarah Messenger** gives a few pointers for organisations to heed as the provision of adult social care becomes financially and logistically challenging

As the recent ADASS budget survey report highlighted, the continuing need to find efficiency savings is beginning to impact on recruitment and retention in adult social care. The LGA has long taken the view that social care funding needs to be put on a stable footing alongside the NHS as part of the drive to integration. All public service HR professionals know only too well though that funding is just part of the story. It is vital to invest in the right ways by taking a properly strategic approach to the social care workforce. This is where the shared experience of councils as employers really comes into its own.

The vast majority of adult social care provision may be commissioned but the role of the commissioner is becoming ever more active. When it comes to helping networks of smaller providers especially, the LGA sees the role of councils as being at the hub of quite closely associated organisations sharing recruitment, development and even reward practices.

Local partners will have to ensure that more people with increasingly complex needs obtain access to care and support. Ensuring that people receive high quality services with dignity and are kept safe can only be achieved by fostering a sustainable social care workforce with the right set of skills. That is a big challenge in itself but becomes even bigger when we acknowledge that it has to include an understanding of what the best terms and conditions for staff providing care and support are. I won't develop the debate about what is meant by 'best' here!!

All organisations running complex public services have developed workforce strategies; these vary in detail but they all amount to finding ways to ensure that they have the right people doing the right jobs at the right time in the right way. In addition, there is lots of national activity which has identified workforce solutions as a priority for success, with broadly similar key priorities that need to be addressed. In this highly complex environment, the LGA has begun working with national

partners such as ADASS and Skills for Care to identify a series of initiatives and interventions which will help local partners to work together, taking into account the growing momentum towards devolution. We see the key actions as being related to a number of longstanding strategic issues for people managing public service workforces:

### Promotion and targeted recruitment

There are some immediate areas of severe skills shortage in the adult social care and health workforce, for example in social workers, care and support workers and nursing. Investment in the short and long term needs to be put into meeting these needs without an over-reliance on agency provision. We want to enhance recruitment campaigns to celebrate the workforce's vital contribution and encourage people with the right values and skills to work in care and support.

### Skills development, job design and career frameworks

The LGA is encouraging a national conversation on the skills and career options that will ensure a well-trained and flexible workforce. Councils need to be at the hub of networks which ensure that providers can access recruits with the necessary basic skills and then have opportunities to help them develop and pursue their careers. The new health and care certificates provide a foundation for this. Professional development is not only good for individuals personally but we know it will support a cultural shift

at the frontline towards prevention and personalisation, with an emphasis on giving staff the skills to help individuals to manage their own care where appropriate.

These new ways of working will require new styles of job such as generic health and care assistants encouraging commissioners and providers to work together to develop new career structures with redesigned jobs. National partners are well-placed to help develop templates and champion innovation to highlight good practice.

### Pay and contractual issues

The Care Act and growing public awareness about the work of the care workforce, have placed a brighter spotlight on basic pay and other contractual benefits for the workforce. Sustainable solutions will only be found when we have a clear and agreed understanding of what it costs to deliver quality care.

Similarly there are challenges arising from the sometimes significant differences in pay and conditions between health service and local government employees for which solutions will need to be found. In the short term, it's important to deal with problems around continuity of service and pensions which can make people think twice about moving.

Not all areas have fully-developed markets in social care jobs at the moment and the national partners are well-placed to help achieve the conditions to get markets started. They can also play a key role in minimising any perverse incentives that draw skilled staff from one geographical area or specialism.

The workforce priorities arising from the integration of health and social care are numerous, complex and hugely important. The best solutions will be devised between partners at local and/or national level and will certainly need the expertise of workforce specialists which means the LGA and PPMA will be at the heart of those solutions.



Sarah Messenger is Head of Workforce at the LGA

# To be a pioneer

**Joanna Ruffle** outlines the local vision behind Southend and 13 other areas becoming 'pioneer' places

I don't know about you but for me a 'pioneer' is a rugged and fearless explorer (normally in need of a good wash) who overcomes adversity and danger to cut through new paths and build new worlds.

Other than the cleanliness issue which I assume is a given, we do not surely require this skills set when it comes to the integration of health and social care, do we?

Continued financial fragility across the public sector coupled with increased customer demand makes strong and effective partnership an imperative. The burning platform could not be any hotter.

As one of 14 'pioneers', Southend's local vision is to become a healthy town through earlier preventative treatment at home and in the community which reduces the pressure on high cost emergency care in hospitals and care homes. The concept is simple:-



Our ambitions are also straightforward:

- Better integrated services and better access to them;
- Better integrated information and knowledge;
- A renewed focus on prevention and individual responsibility;
- Better use of resources through joint planning and commissioning;
- Better understanding of local people and their experiences.

So far, so obvious; so where do the pioneering skills come in? Our front line staff have been working across the troubled borders of health and social care for years; making things work and improving outcomes for people despite the system and not because of it. Our challenge then is to take this creativity, passion, determination and resilience and – without damaging it – embed this approach across our organisations and into our communities. Leaders have to be encouraged to stop thinking about their organisational remit and consider instead their role in leading the system.

It is the system that has the most significant impact (positive or negative) on an individual not the separate organisations within it – often they are simply barriers to overcome! If a system works the organisations within it should be virtually invisible. But this requires very different behaviours from our leaders.

And there's the rub. Developing collective visions and ambition is important but relatively straightforward. Developing leaders to think and take decisions in the best interests of the system as opposed to individual organisations is a much harder ask.

HR/OD professionals are in a unique position to either drive and support this change or cut it off at the knees before it is even underway.

It would be so easy to spend the next few months/years debating the merits of LG versus health terms and conditions until all the oxygen has been extinguished and, the patient long since expired. Instead, we must be fearless, take a few risks, cut through new paths and refuse to be deterred or disheartened by obstacles along the way including the occasional dead end. Only in this way can we be true pioneers and build a new world for the generations that follow.

Just remember to build in time for a good wash!



Joanna Ruffle is Head of People and Policy at Southend on Sea BC



# Supporting the children's journey

**Sue Evans** reiterates the importance of HR and OD departments in boosting Children's Services

Many authorities are struggling to attract high calibre professionals into high profile roles in Children's Services, structures and demands are changing and budgets under constant pressure. Against this background, it is vital that HR and OD step up and lead appropriate interventions that will help to sustain good service delivery whilst challenging the status quo, developing competency and growing confidence and capability.

Who could disagree? We are all doing our best aren't we? But are we really doing enough? Have we got what it takes and are we really using all of our skills, tools and experience to drive the changes required and to ensure that our Children's services are rock solid, safeguard each and every child and raise aspirations for the future?

If we are serious about our children's journey – both for the services and for the children they serve – then we need to be embedding high quality people practices. It is easy to point the finger at the NHS and shake our heads at the lack of workforce and succession planning that has led to an over-reliance on agency staff and short term measures to shore up a demoralised and over-stretched workforce. It is less comfortable to ask if, with our increasing dependence on agency and interim staff in children's services, time pressures and increasing demand we could be heading the same way?

Local Government is the master of change. No other sector has

delivered so much, so fast, so we are well placed to review and transform our services for children. Indeed there is much innovation and a great deal of success across the sector but we must not slow down or back pedal from the need for further change and development. OD can now take centre stage and lead the kind of development which leads to growth and a more certain future. We need to be developing teams, developing leaders in children's services and embedding the positive behaviours that mean that our staff all take 100% responsibility and really can make the difference that counts for our children.

There needs to be a clear workforce strategy for the organisation and a well-defined plan for the children's services workforce. Hard as it may be embedding workforce planning is key. HR professionals need to work hard to understand the issues locally and nationally that impact

on colleagues in children's services. What are the challenges? Where are the critical posts? What are we doing about progression and development as well as ensuring that our staff are well led, well trained and feel valued and supported. Recruitment, retention, development and effective leadership of the right people with the right attitudes and skills is the key contribution we can make to the children's journey where we are.

We all talk about culture but "the way we do things around here" can make the difference between good and indifferent, and worse, lacklustre, service delivery. There are few phrases in the vocabulary of local government that strike such terror into the heart as "Ofsted Inspection". The arrival of inspectors and the concern that comes with them can cause stress and consternation for all concerned. Are we confident that we do things right around here? Have we got the kind of culture where collaboration, openness and transparency can help to develop the kind of cross agency working that can prevent disaster? Are we focussing on the right things and so that our workforce has the skills needed to make a difference on the front line?

More questions than answers? Of course, but then any good HR and OD professional is a master of the empowering question – are you asking the right ones where you are?



Sue Evans is Head of HR and OD at Warwickshire CC and Vice President of the PPMA

# Are you the Apprentice?



The search for the Public Sector Apprentice of the Year 2015 begins! **Leatham Green** goes through the key aims of the PPMA's popular event.

It was very fitting that at our 40th Year celebrations at the House of Lords on 11 June, in the company of past Presidents of the PPMA and our Rising Stars of the future that we took the opportunity to launch this year's search for our Public Sector Apprentice of 2015. This year's event will be held in Warwick on 3 and 4 September at the Conference Centre on Warwick University's Campus. This event is one of the key themes of the PPMA's offer on talent development and is specifically targeting the youngest sector of our workforce wherever they are working: those talented individuals who are starting out in their careers and are our potential Chief Executives of the future. The

task of seeking out our brightest stars and assisting those young people to kick start their careers is one of the most important role of any leader and that is why PPMA are proud to be leading the way in showcasing how this can be done. The event will be a mixture of coaching, development and competition. The aim is to ensure that every young person who is invited to compete at the event in September gains as much personal learning as possible – enabling them to understand the importance of and is provided with the opportunity to build networks outside their organisation – has their personal profile raised within their organisation and is positively supported to build personal

confidence in their skills and talents that will assist them to obtain a permanent role at the end of their apprenticeship. The event will be delivered by members of PPMA's national policy board and previous participants of PPMA's HR Rising Stars. We will also be drawing from the expertise of our partner, ManpowerGroup. This is the second year PPMA have run this event and last year, Charis Wilson, from East Sussex County Council was awarded the accolade of Apprentice of the Year. Since winning the award Charis gained permanent employment within the HR team in East Sussex and was quickly promoted into an HR role within the Civil Service.

The talent which gathered at last year's event was outstanding and quite simply blew us all away with their enthusiasm and commitment to working in the public sector. It is a myth worth busting that the public sector struggles to attract the most talented young people – and we expecting to be dazzled by an equally impressive gathering of future leaders this year. Entry is free and details of how to apply can be found on the PPMA website. So if you have an outstanding young person on an Apprenticeship programme this is your chance to encourage them to step forward and shine. I look forward to sharing with you the results later in the year.

## Modern HR: Developing Talent – 2015 and beyond

HR has a critical role to play in identifying, nurturing and developing the leaders of tomorrow, as Penna's **Jason Wheatley** explains

In the light of the Queen's speech and George Osborne's call for an emergency budget on July 8, the public sector continues to be under immense pressure for further cuts and tough spending choices, so the need and therefore the opportunity, for highly skilled HR professionals has never been greater. Now more than ever, HR has a pivotal role in enabling public sector organisations to realise and unlock further potential through their most costly but valuable asset, people.

The demand for talented HR practitioners and leaders, both permanent and interim, is high across HR disciplines, not surprising in the light of the significant challenges ahead. The need to become lean, nimble, commercial and cost effective means organisations look to HR professionals to help them move forward with energy, quality and pace but safely and with buy-in and engagement from employees and unions.

At the heart of any successful organisation is a clear understanding of its' workforce, what it needs, how it is deployed effectively, how it is measured, managed, developed, motivated, and ultimately rewarded,

basic in some senses but critical to success. Imperative to effective people management is a clear picture and understanding of the resource and talent on the ground and to this end solid workforce management metrics and HR technology to turn raw people data into intelligence to drive and inform strategic business decisions is paramount. Effective workforce, talent and succession planning to anticipate and manage resources can only succeed with insightful analytics.

We cannot get away from the need for hard accurate data, (which frustratingly still today eludes many) balanced with qualitative data from engagement, performance management and talent mapping. We are already seeing skills shortages in key areas of the public sector forcing more expensive and time consuming reactive recruitment, rather than proactive planned approaches, which in turn relieves pressure

on already stretched service delivery. HR has a critical role to play in identifying, nurturing and developing the leaders of tomorrow and that includes those HR professionals who have the skills and capabilities to become highly effective HR leaders, after all we must develop our own professional HR talent too. For the first time in history, we have five generations working side by side with opportunities realized through mixed age teams that work alongside each other

enabling

the sharing of experience, knowledge and ideas through day to day activity and reversed mentoring. Attracting, retaining, motivating, developing and rewarding these generations requires a more flexible approach taking into account what is important; what matters to them.

To effectively meet the needs of today's workforce, organisations need to create a culture where employees feel valued, have choice, are developed and a less constrained by old ways of working. Ongoing performance conversations rather than the traditional appraisal system, flexible benefits and agile working are just some of the areas that need

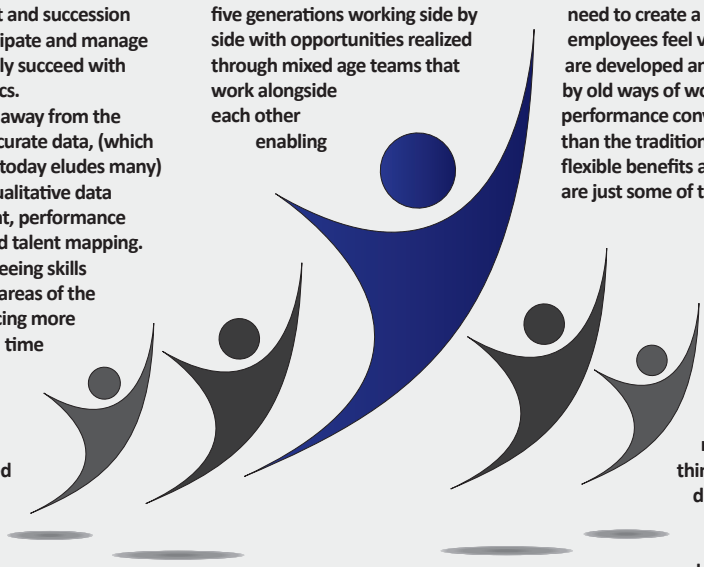
further thought to drive staff engagement and aid attraction and retention of talent.

Today's workforce challenges, future models of how things can be done differently in an ever changing volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous; VUCA

world, means that HR needs to enable organisations to adapt, change and dynamically evolve without the need to, what at times can, seem the constant need to radically transform, the constant cycle we know demotivates employees. It could be argued by some that HR continues to wrestle with the notion of the 'perfect' HR function and how it should be structured. What is clear is that a modern HR function will need to be social and collaborative, mobile and engaging, talent centric, intelligent and insightful and predictive and agile. The good news is HR talent is in demand and being seen as pivotal in making change happen so ensure you're ready to deliver.

The PPMA "Peer into the Future" programme designed in partnership with Penna, Ernst and Young and the Local Government Association offers HR leaders time and space to focus on collective learning and development to understand critical issues, challenges and key workforce and HR issues. For further information go to [www.ppma.org.uk](http://www.ppma.org.uk)

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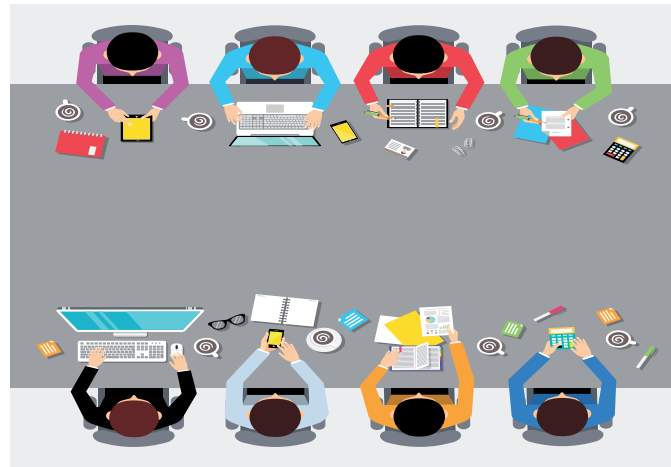
# Joint working that means business...

**Leatham Green** explains how a historic partnership between Surrey and East Sussex is shaping the business landscape of the region



a shared Senior Management Team. Also, in 2013, both Councils entered into an arrangement which brought together transactional services from both organisations, including payroll, expenses and pensions administration, along with the hosting of our core financial and HR systems (SAP). These transactional services had formerly been outsourced by East Sussex County Council to a private company. This project has led to a collaborative relationship between our Councils, with senior managers and operational managers working closely together to ensure successful and valued service to customers. We believe that Orbis will build on our existing relationship to deepen trust and co-operation between the organisations. The creation of Orbis is considered as the best option for our authorities to improve public value for our residents and businesses, and to ensure that our services to them are supported by an efficient and effective business service.

Our vision is to build a strong partnership of local authorities with values and principles aligned to the Orbis partnership. Orbis will provide a range of services covering finance, HR, ICT, procurement, property and transactional services to our own authorities, the wider public sector and beyond – creating public value for



residents. While we expect Orbis to become a compelling alternative to private sector organisations, we also recognise that these service delivery changes must be undertaken and implemented without losing sight of our core mission, purpose and identity as local authorities. Orbis will offer us the most flexible, affordable and adaptable model for change, ensuring that the arrangements support the transformation agenda of each council. It also offers us the best opportunity to sustain employment and enhance professional development for our staff. We expect Orbis to become a highly

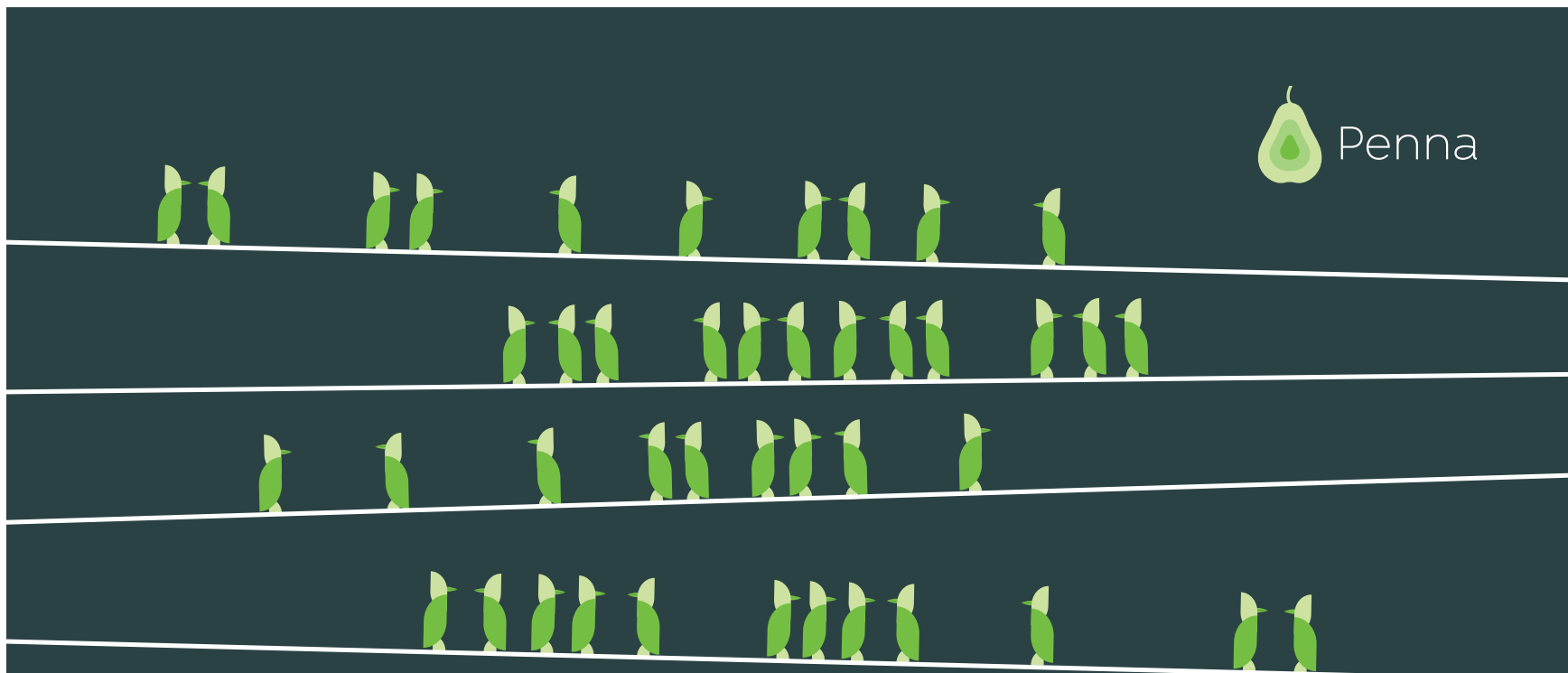
innovative environment that will attract and retain talented professionals who will share our aspirations to deliver high quality public services using a next-generation approach.

The culture for Orbis is being co-designed involving our 1,400 staff who have started to develop the underpinning principles for the Partnership. The 'EPIC' principles are based on being seen as having Expertise, having Passion in what we do, looking for new ways of doing things through Innovation, and putting the Customer at the heart of everything that we do. Orbis is in its early stages of

development and HR are at the centre of supporting this transition. A draft model for an integrated HR service has been developed and is being used by all services as a proforma for future design work. The model for HR is based on supporting and empowering customers to be more self sufficient, underpinned through having the knowledge and compelling enabling technology they need to do this. A culture of 'for the public sector, by the public sector' and the need for it to continue to feel like an integral part of the partner councils, and not something separate or remote, is seen as a key factor in determining the optimum delivery model. HR is playing an integral role in supporting and enabling the change and transition of Orbis as it reaches the desired future state.

This is the start of a three year journey towards full integration however already the benefits of partnership working are being recognised and the energy and support of our staff, trade unions and politicians is very exciting. Our task is to maintain and build on this enthusiasm for what is an historic partnership for both Councils and we will share our 'epic' progress with you in future editions.

**Leatham Green is Programme Director: People & Change - Orbis**



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