

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to the Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Meeting Date:	1st November 2016
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Peredur Jenkins
Contact Officer:	Geraint Owen
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Item Title:	Human Resources Annual Report

1 **DECISION SOUGHT**

Approval of the annual report and adoption of the People Plan

2 **REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED**

To reflect and agree on the future corporate strategy in this crucial area.

3 **INTRODUCTION**

This report is presented as the first attempt to produce an annual report in relation to human resources within the Council. An annual report on the Council's financial position is already presented and it is suggested to you that the ability to fulfil the human resources strategy is, at least, as crucial to our overall ability to provide those services required by the people of Gwynedd.

The Local Joint-Consultative Committee (the joint forum between the recognised unions' representatives and Elected Members) is in receipt of an annual report on activity within the area of human resources but that report is focused on the operational relationship between the employer and workforce representatives.

This report's intention is to present details concerning the nature of the workforce and its employment as well as outline objectives for employees' development and set a strategic direction for the future (see appended the proposed People Plan for 2016-18).

We will build on the content of the current annual report by analysing any changes in the workforce's constitution and practices which will, in turn, assist us to prioritise and amend the work programme as required.

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1. Council Workforce

The numbers of those employed on a full-time and part-time basis within the Council over the past three years is noted below. It should be noted that these numbers include school-based staff but not those staff who are employed on a casual basis during periods of holiday/sickness amongst the contracted workforce.

	31/3/14	31/3/15	31/3/16
Full Time	3,178	2,967	2,965
Part Time	3,290	3,318	3,029
Total	6,468	6,285	5,994

These details show a reduction of 474 in the number of individuals employed by the Council at the end of March this year in comparison with the same period in 2014 i.e. a reduction of 213 full-time employment contracts and 261 part-time. This reduction has been realised through a combination of redundancies, retirements and natural turnover.

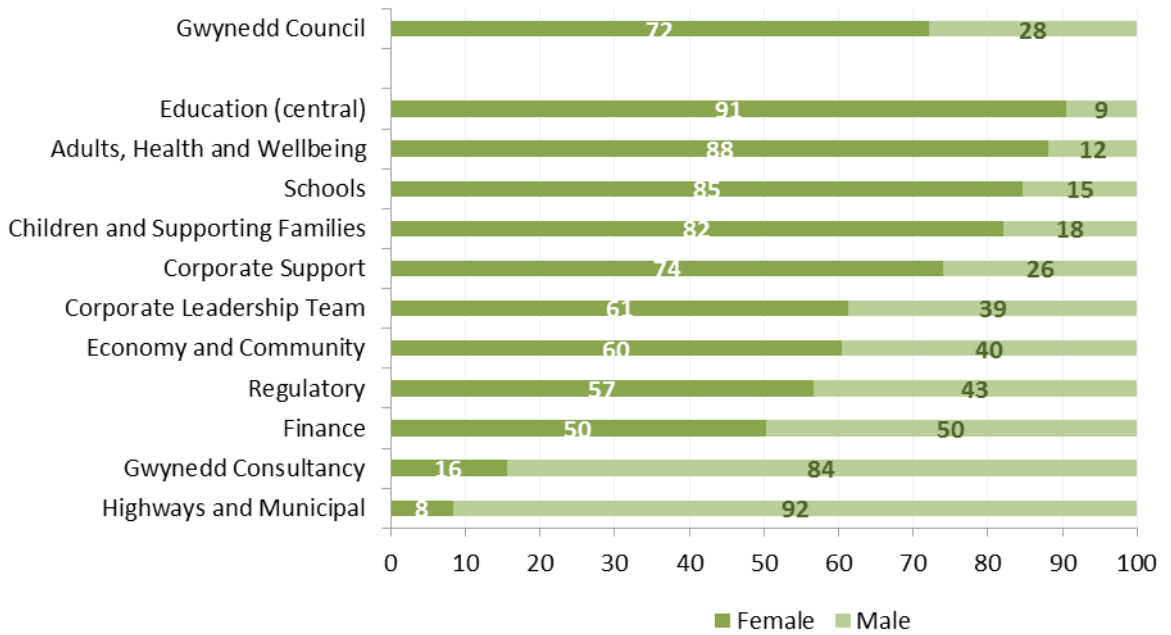
2. Division of Workforce by Gender

Here we see a further analysis of the number of males and females employed on a full-time and part-time basis during the same period. The details show a reduction of 104 males and 109 females employed on a full-time basis whilst the number of females employed on a part-time basis fell by 208 compared with 53 males.

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Full Time	Men	1,474	1,399	1,370
	Women	1,704	1,568	1,595
Part Time	Men	352	350	299
	Women	2,938	2,968	2,730
Total	Men	1,826	1,749	1,669
	Women	4,642	4,536	4,325
Total %	Men	28.2%	27.8%	27.8%
	Women	71.8%	72.2%	72.2%

See further an analysis of the male/female division within the Council's departments as it appeared on the 31st March, 2016.

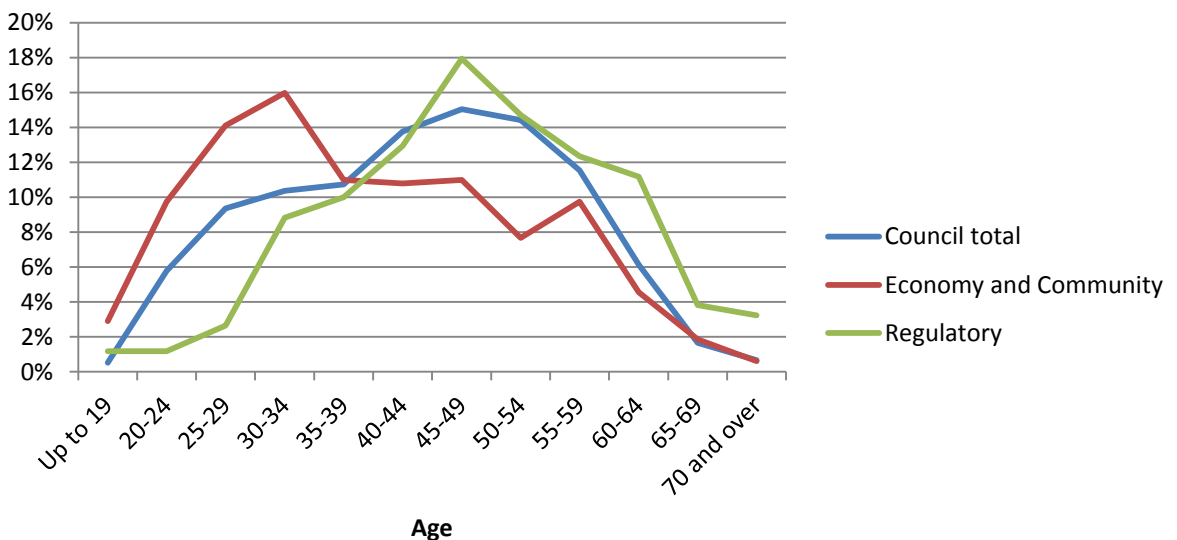
Female / male split of Gwynedd Council staff by Department, 31 March 2016



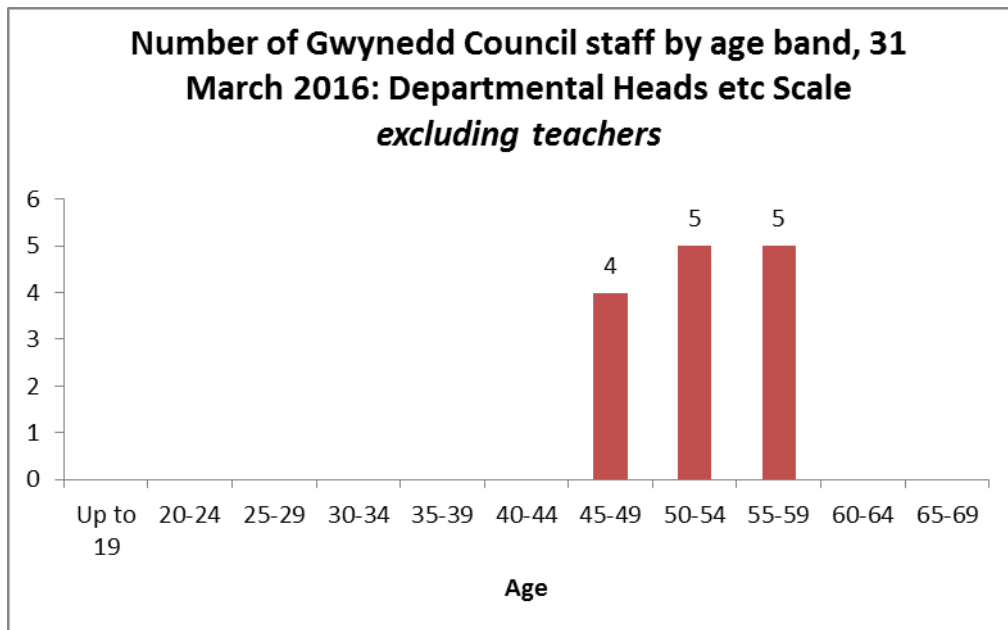
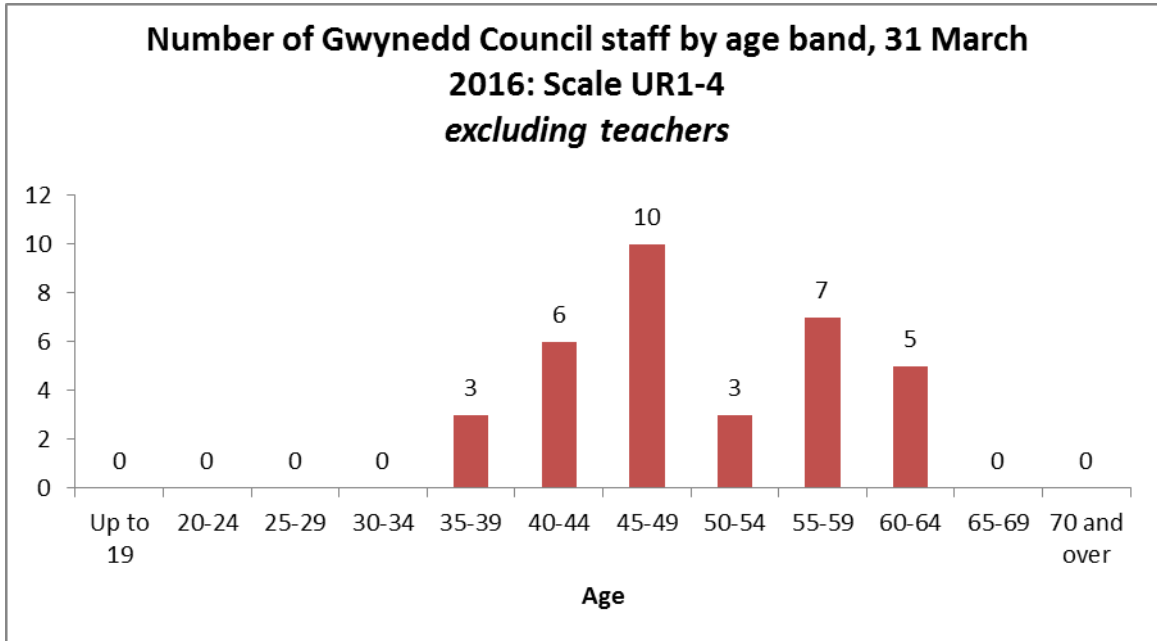
3. Council Staff Age Profile

The Council staff's age profile is shown here as it appeared on the 31st March 2016. It shows that over 63% of the Council's current workforce is older than 40 years of age whilst 34.5% are older than 50 years of age.

Proportion of staff by age band, 31 March 2016



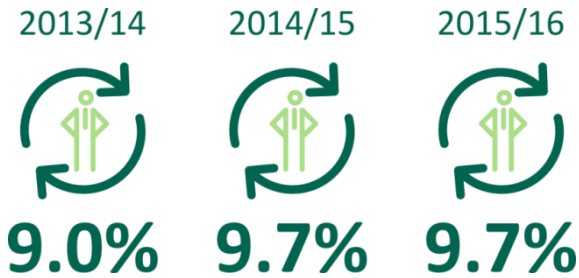
Maintaining a record, analysing and sharing this information is crucial in enabling managers to plan for the future and subsequently to consider those proactive steps required in order to ensure service continuity. See below two examples of tables which provide a clear illustration of the current age profile amongst our senior managers and the Corporate Management Team (heads of department, the directors and the Chief Executive). It should be noted that the tables below do not include staff in schools but do include officers from the Highways Agency and GwE.



4. Staff Turnover

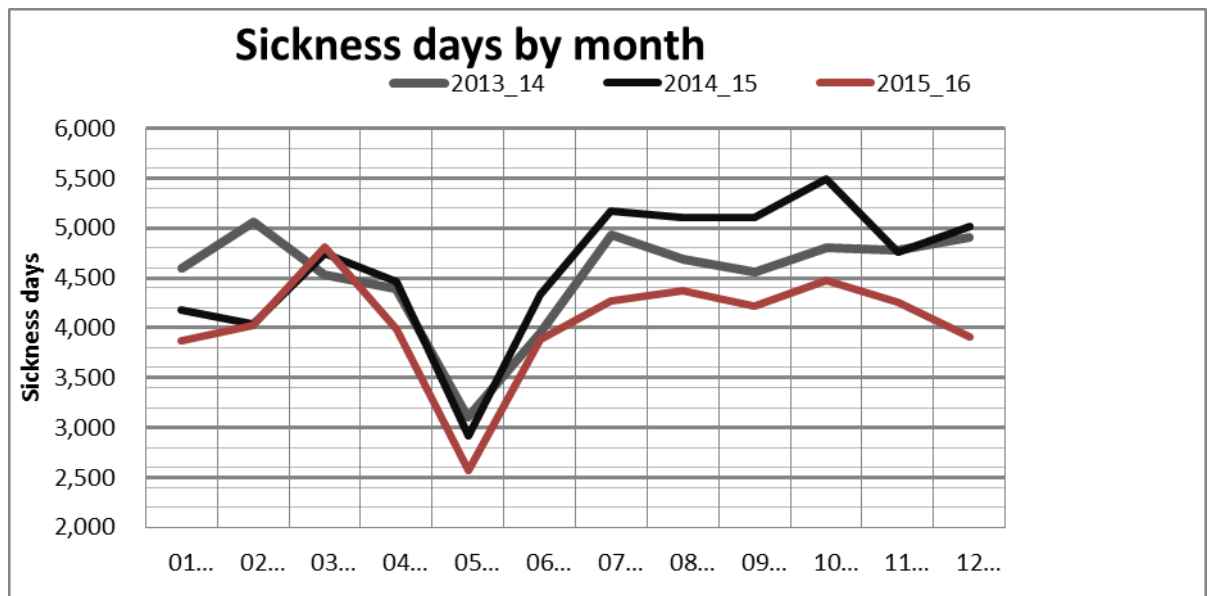
Historically, turnover within the Council has been comparatively stable but a pattern of small increases has been evident over a number of years (although the evidence below shows that turnover has remained at 9.7% over the past two years).

The biggest turnover is to be seen within some of the Economy and Community Department's services (17.4%), Regulatory Department (10.6%) and the Children and Young People's Department (10.2%) whilst turnover is at its lowest within Gwynedd Consultancy (8.9%), the Education Department (9%) and the Adults, Health and Well-Being Department (9.3%).



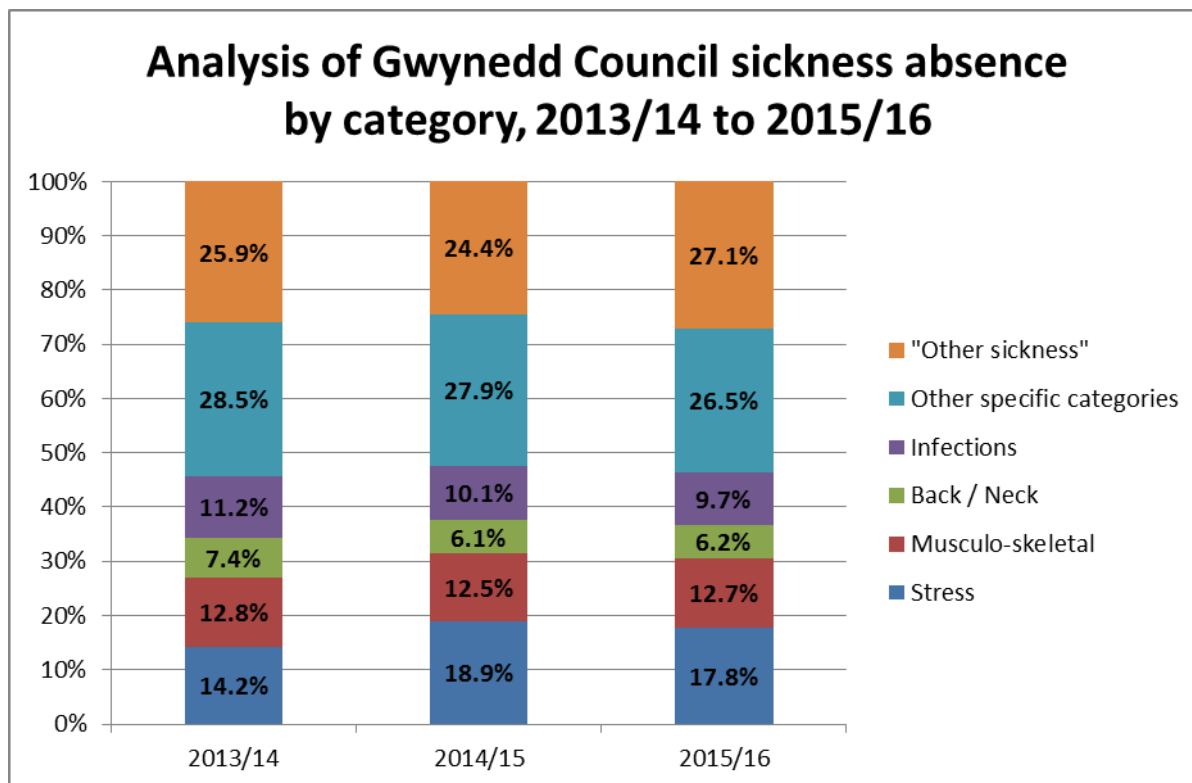
5. Sickness Absences

The number of days lost to sickness across the Council has fallen by approximately 20,000 full-time working days over the last 7 years and the average number of days lost to sickness across the Council has fallen from 10 days per head in 2008/09 to 8.44 days per head in 2015/16. The table below shows the level of sickness absence, month by month, for the last three years.



The emphasis given to effectively managing absenteeism, and on the health and wellbeing programme, has contributed towards this improvement and it is important that the Council does not lose focus on this work and the opportunities to further reduce absenteeism over the next few years.

The table below further analyses the reasons recorded for sickness absence for the past three years. This information is used in order to inform the discussion when considering the annual health and wellbeing programme.



Sickness absence in 2015/16 is at its highest within the Cleaning Service (17 days), Residential and Day Care (15.6 days) and Community Care (13.5 days) whilst sickness absence is at its lowest within Gwynedd Consultancy (5.2 days) and the Finance Department (5.6 days). A working group of officers meets regularly to review individual cases of absence and naturally concentrates its efforts within those services where sickness absence is at its highest.

It is important to note here that 38.4% (2,301) of the Council's staff did not lose a single day to sickness absence during the last twelve months.

6. Learning and Development

The number of traditional training days provided by the corporate Training Service has fallen over the past three years (from 3,043 in 2013-14 to 1,794 in 2015/16). This would appear as a cause for concern since there seem to be fewer opportunities for Council staff to learn and develop. However, in reality, the figures simply reflect the fact that learning and development within the Council these days is provided by a number of alternative means e.g. e-learning, coaching, mentoring.

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Personal development consultations are offered to staff and these consultations, in turn, assist both individuals and whole teams to identify skills to be developed as well as how best to provide the learning. The emphasis on the combination of normative learning (learning through experience), social learning (such as coaching, mentoring and learning through feedback) as well as traditional learning is beginning to take root within the Council. There will be further developments to promote such learning as part of some of the work streams in the People Plan, which will attempt to ensure that the method of delivering training, in itself, is not an obstacle to personal development.

7. Salary Structure and Equal Pay

The 2016/17 Pay Policy was approved by the Council at its meeting on the 3rd March, 2016. Previous steps taken by the Council, hand in hand with the latest national pay agreement for local government workers, has led to a minimum salary of £7.65 per hour as from April 1st, 2016 (which will rise to £7.90 per hour as from April 1st, 2017). It was reported to Cabinet members earlier in the year that discussions were being held with trade union representatives in respect of attempting to ensure means of further raising the Council's minimum wage. Those discussions are ongoing on both a local and national level.

The work involved in attempting to settle the equal pay claims submitted to the Tribunal in 2008 has continued with significant steps taken since October 2015 to bring the matter to a close. It is anticipated that the small number of claims which have not as yet been settled will be cleared by November of this year.

8. Leadership Development

Emphasis has been placed on developing alternative appraisal arrangements which focus on the expected behaviours in order to promote the culture of empowerment, enablement and fulfilling amongst Council staff. The previous appraisal arrangements were terminated in February 2015 and gradually, since the Autumn of last year, the Council has introduced the concept of continuous appraisal for officers and thus avoiding the "annual appraisal event". These arrangements were launched with members of the Council's Management Team and then cascading the new scheme through the Senior Managers to managers and all other officers throughout the Council. The receiving of feedback from others, be they colleagues, managers or stakeholders, is central to the revised arrangements with encouragement to present that feedback in an open and respectful manner to each other.

These new arrangements have not as yet been fully implemented across the whole Council but the emphasis on conducting the dialogue as opposed to completing the paper work has been welcomed and is already paying dividends in those services where the arrangements have been introduced.

A Council Senior Manager Group was established during the year with the intention of providing opportunities to develop potential future leaders. The terms of reference for the Group includes accepting commissions from the Management

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Group to conduct work on corporate issues as well as being a forum to challenge, verify and exchange experiences in those common areas of responsibilities.

9. Recruitment and Appointments

See below statistical information relating to the number of posts advertised by the Council during the past three years together with the number of applications received as well as the number of vacancies where a second advert was required. The analysis of these details again will contribute to our ability to identify those areas of activity where the Council needs to focus in terms of developing specialisms and future workforce planning.

Year	Number of Jobs Advertised	Number of Applicants	Number of Jobs re-advertised	Number of Applications for the second advert
2013	462	2938	20	115
2014	433	2055	29	138
2015	442	2525	30	106
2016	390	1821	40	142

A report was submitted to the Language Committee on the 21st April this year which outlined revised arrangements for implementing the requirements of the Language Policy in respect of recruitment and appointments. Committee members supported the adoption of the revised framework for denoting language levels for posts and staff on the basis of the WJEC Welsh for Learners language levels. Those definitions adopted will offer better guidance to managers when denoting appropriate language levels and also offer recognised standards for measuring progress and an individual's achievement.

Furthermore, it was accepted that there would be no time limitations on learning the language to the necessary level but the need to regularly monitor an individual's progress was emphasised.

The work of denoting language levels for all posts is currently ongoing with an assessment of the training requirements to follow.

10. People Plan

The proposed People Plan (Appendix 1) sets the direction and prioritises work streams to develop the workforce for the period between now and 2018. "Ffordd Gwynedd" is a central driver to the ultimate ambition within the Plan and the work programme is based on that which is required in order to realise that ambition. It will be necessary to regularly review the Plan in order to reflect the consistent and increasing change envisaged in the area of employment and this will take place in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Resources) as well as the Management Group/Senior Managers' Group.

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Although individual work streams are being co-ordinated by officers from the Corporate Support Department, the ambition relates to the Council as a whole and consequently it is crucial that every manager and leader takes ownership of that which we are attempting to achieve.

CONCLUSIONS

All the statistical information contained herein, if carefully analysed, will assist managers, and those officers who advise them, to plan services and timely identify those matters which require further investigation and action e.g. workforce planning.

There is a need to develop and increase the use of all the data held in order to assist us to prioritise the support and encouragement required by employees and prospective employees to give their best. This work stream appears in the People Plan and development within this area of work is critical in enabling the Human Resources Advisory Service to introduce its revised business model which will empower and enable managers to be proactive in their role of managing people in future.

NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

The Cabinet is asked to present observations on the report's content as well as approve the objectives as noted for the future in the People Plan. The next steps and timetable are as stated in the People Plan

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

The Chief Executive:

It is a cliché to say that the Council's staff is our most important resource. But, cliché or not, it is true. The Council cannot achieve its aim of putting Gwynedd's People central to everything we do without the staff having been developed, empowered and supported to achieve on behalf of the people.

This report does two things. Firstly, it gives a picture of the workforce which is very useful and offers some challenges, for example with respect to the age profile of the workforce with a view to providing services in the future. Secondly, the People Plan recognises those fields that need attention in order to enable the Council to have the most suitable workforce.

The Monitoring Officer:

By reporting on an overview of the Council's staffing circumstances there is an opportunity for the Cabinet to receive information and context regarding this essential resource. The recommendation to adopt the People Plan is an opportunity to set a framework and provide appropriate guidance for the Authority's staffing for the future.

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The Head of the Finance Department:

I welcome the intention of presenting an Annual Human Resources Report. It is a further example of the Council's commitment to preparing in advance and planning thoroughly when facing the challenges of the future.

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