

BUSINESS PLAN 2012-13

Welcome to the Business Plan of South West Councils. This plan details the work priorities, proposed activities and funding for the period 2012-13

Our three key **overarching objectives** in supporting Members and delivering our work are:

1. Supporting Member authorities as Employers, encouraging improved performance and capacity across the region through the provision of high quality HR advice and support, and the sharing of accessible information and knowledge on a range of relevant issues;
2. Assisting member authorities and associate members to enhance capacity and service delivery through developmental activities for improved performance and efficiency;
3. Support authorities in sharing best practice and knowledge and in having a South West voice, built on consensus, of issues on national policy and funding, working with the national Local Government Group, when this is deemed appropriate by Members

South West Councils: supports local authorities, police and fire authorities and other organisations with all aspects of their employer role. In addition SW Councils Employers Panel constitutes the Employers side of regional consultative and negotiating body with the South West Trade Unions, the South West Provincial Council and works at a regional level with the national Local Government Employers. SW Councils also offer a wide range of learning and developmental activities to support all our Members and partners in developing a highly skilled and motivated workforce.

Members of SW Councils played a key role in the work of the South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (SW RIEP) providing a framework for Local Authorities to act together and support each other to improve public services and deliver value for money and SW Councils continues to support the legacy through sharing of information and best practice from these programmes. SW Councils also provides the local democratic leadership in the South West for the SW Migration Partnership, a role supported by Home Office funding which is continuing into 2012-13 although the longer term remains uncertain.

SW Councils provides a lobbying voice for member authorities where there are issues of common concern across the South West e.g. on pay and funding issues. This includes raising issues through the Local Government Group which is assisted by the Chair of SW Councils being a member of the Executive of LGG and other SW Councils Members having key roles in the national LGG Structure..

PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES 2011-12

Key achievements over the past year have been:

- ❖ Local Authority Leaders and Members supported to engage, share information, discuss key policy issues and engage with the national LGA .
- ❖ Local Authorities and Local Education Authorities advised on comprehensive employment and human resource issues including employment conditions and rights
- ❖ Teachers' pay and terms and conditions
- ❖ Successfully supported authorities through a number of employment tribunal cases;
- ❖ Continued provision of hot line for HR advice taken up by authorities and associate members with over 4000 phonecalls/emails;
- ❖ Recruitment support and advice on Chief Executive, Director and other appointments
- ❖ Members advised on sensitive and confidential employment issues;
- ❖ Supported Members of 6 Authorities during the appraisal of Chief Executives;
- ❖ Independent support provided for 3 authorities to review Members Allowances
- ❖ Surveys completed on 53 issues and information shared with member authorities;
- ❖ 2 authorities successfully assessed for Member Charter status;
- ❖ Registered 12 Councillors onto the ILM Endorsed Community Leadership Awards, of which 4 have successfully completed and the remainder are working towards assessment
- ❖ Excellent feedback and increased number of participants on Annual: Pension Managers Conference and , PAs Conference and successful Shared Services Conference,
- ❖ Designed and delivered bespoke in-house training events on a range of subjects for 250 learners
- ❖ Delivered training to 956 learners overall
- ❖ Delivered training to 40 of the 41 authorities in the south west, and 58 authorities from outside of the south west
- ❖ 99% of learners attending courses rated them as Good (11%) or Excellent (88%)
- ❖ Feedback from external inspection highlighted evaluation of development programmes and quality assurance of qualification programmes as being particularly professional
- ❖ Delivered accredited qualification programmes to 120 candidates
- ❖ Completed a wide-ranging review of the South West Migration Partnership and made government aware of local issues –won ongoing funding for 2012-13
- ❖ Put in place constitutional change to ensure a new streamlined structure responsive to Members and Member-led, organisation
- ❖ Stretching Financial income targets met and budget delivered within 1.4%
- ❖ Reduced core corporate costs whilst continuing to support ongoing development of staff following successful IIP re-accreditation

Key Work Priorities

SW COUNCILS CORE BUSINESS	
Work Activity and output	Success Indicator
<p>To be the preferred point of contact on public sector employment issues in the South West.</p> <p>Providing high quality, independent advice on terms and conditions including teachers</p> <p>Provision of direct support to Members on sensitive senior staff issues, Chief Executive appraisals, pay reviews etc</p> <p>Additional consultancy support for challenging issues on a not-for-profit basis including Disciplinary investigations; Job Evaluation and Employment Tribunals etc</p> <p>Qualified psychometric testing provision and discounted rates for authorities to access testing licences</p> <p>Support on Member Allowances Panels</p> <p>Develop and provide on going support to authorities and the Fire and Rescue services and Associate Members as appropriate on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E recruitment Portal ○ E Paycheck ○ SW Coaching Pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of enquiries and continued use of expertise ● Cost-savings to Local Authorities ● Broaden Associate Member base <p>15 authorities accessing the 'Portal Lite' replacement in the first year at least 30 authorities participating in Epaycheck At least 12 organisations participating in SW Coaching Pool</p>
<p>To be recognised as a professional learning and development provider and preferred point of contact focusing on meeting public sector needs.</p> <p>Providing both core training services and responsive topical conferences at a not-for-profit rate for member authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of participants on events from all member organisations and non-member organisations ● A satisfaction rating of at least 85% ● "Excellent" or "Grade A" rating from external

<p>Provision of advice and support on Member Development Charter and independent assessment process</p> <p>Enhance Councillor Induction programmes delivered by authorities through the provision of accredited provision and development of core induction modules at subsidised/free rates for Member authorities</p>	<p>inspections by Awarding Organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of authorities working towards achieving Charter or Charter Plus status (re)accreditation
<p>Regular production of e-bulletin SW News sharing good practice and information and Associate newsletters etc as required</p> <p>Regular surveys on HR issues on items of key concern to authorities and as requested by member authorities</p> <p>To support authorities through sharing of information and provision of advice and policy support in liaison with local authority officers on issues of joint interest.</p> <p>Bringing authorities together to influence policy development such as pay and pensions and undertake lobbying as appropriate on issues of concern across local authority boundaries</p> <p>Liaison with the national Local Government Association to share and link into national policies and developments in relation to human resources issues including pay and workforce development</p> <p>Regular slots for Ministers/senior officials on SW Councils meetings and facilitating national Pay roadshow with LGE</p> <p>Facilitating relationships with national LGG, central Government etc supporting SW Chair on LGG Executive and other Members on national LGG structures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information shared between authorities • Positive feedback from local authority Members/officers • voice of authorities across all the membership or groups of members heard by national government and others • Local Government Group: LGE and LGID continue to engage
<p><i>MIGRATION AND ASYLUM - Home Office Enabling Grant</i></p>	
<p>Work with Local Authorities and stakeholders to inform and assist them in developing and implementing local and national migration policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and agreement of detailed business plan for the partnership.

<p>Sharing of information and best practice through meetings and networks</p> <p>Facilitate constructive debate on migration issues among partners</p> <p>Monitor migration impacts and trends, and raise awareness of issues, risks and opportunities within the South West to inform policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance of half-yearly reports from the Home Office. • Active attendance and contribution at Board and Forum meetings • Positive feedback from partners and stakeholders • Improved integration of migrants into the local community
<p>CORPORATE ACTIVITY</p>	
<p>Provision of support to Members</p> <p>High quality, concise meeting papers delivered at least seven days in advance of meetings striving to achieve ten days in advance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from Members and senior officers and others
<p>Provision of technical, administrative support for Members and Officer Groups</p> <p>Efficient and effective networks which contribute to regional working and assists collaborative working whilst minimising call on officers' time e.g., bringing together groups such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ SW Councils meetings ❖ SW Employers Panel ❖ Resources and Management Committee ❖ Leaders/ Members and Member networks as required e.g. Children's Services portfolio holders; Scrutiny Members etc (working with Local Government Group as appropriate) ❖ Chief Executive Group ❖ HR Directors group ❖ Education Personnel Officers ❖ Reward Group ❖ L&D Officers Network ❖ Member Development Officers ❖ SW Procurement Group ❖ SW Equalities Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from Local Authorities

Provision of confidential web based/electronic discussion group for Members and Officers and links established with KHub run by LGG	
Generate sufficient income to meet costs of delivery, in line with the budget Income generated through delivery of employment support, learning and development and effective use of assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £273k net income generated from provision of services
Financial management delivers accurate financial forecasting and budgeting Provision of high quality and accurate information meeting legal requirements and the highest standards of public accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget is delivered each year +/-5% of forecast • Bad Debt kept below 0.5% of income • External audit approving accounts • Certification Officer approves AR27 return
National Accreditations retained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of national accreditations Awarding Organisations (ILM, Edexcel, Wamitab, CIEH, EDI)
Staff are provided with support and development to meet changing demands and staff resources used efficiently. Staff levels and work loads reviewed and adapted flexibly to changing demands and agendas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraisals completed within deadlines • Sickness levels remain below average • liP Standard continues to be met
Continued compliance with legal responsibilities around health and safety, human rights, equalities, discrimination, freedom of information etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No legal infringements
Organisation operating in an open, fair and transparent manner	
Building management and running costs continue to be kept under review with options for sharing with Taunton Deane etc explored and use of Dennett House maximised for events so cutting course delivery costs etc and service the tenancy agreements entered into.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational running costs minimised