Inspiring leaders to
improve children's lives

National College
for Leadership of Schools
and Children's Services

Building and implementing an effective local workforce strategy

Module 11: monitoring and measuring the workforce strategy activity

August 2010

Resource

Working with
cwdc
Children's Workforce
Development Council

Preface

Building and implementing an effective local workforce strategy is a valuable activity a local area can embark on to enable the delivery of its ambitions for children's services. Put simply, it is not "organisations", but the people within them, that make change happen – and workforce strategy is about people.

A workforce strategy summarises how each of the organisations working with children and young people intend to work together to make certain that everyone is excellent in their practice, committed to partnership and collaborative working, respected and valued as a professional and ambitious for every child and young person.

This local workforce strategy guide has been developed jointly by the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (National College), the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), working collaboratively to improve the support and service we can offer the children's workforce.

This is a practical, "how to" guide designed to provide support and a framework of guiding principles from the start to the end of the process of creating and implementing a local workforce strategy, no matter where the local area is on that journey. The guide has been written for the use of any individual or group whose professional role involves working towards helping children achieve more and securing the best possible results for children and families.[1]

[1] As these materials have been published separately on the CWDC and National College websites there may be minor discrepancies in language between the two versions, although content remains largely consistent.

Introduction and overview

A local children and young people's[2] workforce strategy (workforce strategy) is a key document that draws together all that local organisations aim to do to attract, retain, support and develop everyone working with children and young people in their local area.

Building and implementing an effective local workforce strategy is a valuable activity a local area can embark on to enable the delivery of its ambitions for children and young people.

This practical, how to guide is designed to provide support at each stage of creating and implementing a workforce strategy, whether that is:

- **at the start**: trying to understand what a workforce strategy is and its local, regional and national context
- **already underway**: either reviewing or refining a workforce strategy
- **complete**: and ready to be promoted and implemented; or
- **being implemented**: requiring sustained focus and momentum, as well as regular review to ensure it is having the desired impact

There is a slide deck 'building and implementing an effective local workforce strategy' to accompany this how to guide, all slide references refer to this document.

Workforce strategy and other human resources (HR) activities

A workforce strategy, also sometimes known as "HR strategy" or "people strategy", provides the direction and principles which managers and practitioners need to guide decision making and in order to create their own, more detailed, people related plans.

In every agency and service area, and often at department level within them, one would hope to see a number of detailed plans and strategies being regularly developed and reviewed, such as:

- workforce plans[3]
- recruitment, reward and retention plans
- training and development plans (guided by skills and qualifications audits)
- continuous professional development plans
- leadership development plans
- succession plans
- their own workforce or HR strategies

The local workforce strategy does not seek to replace any of these, rather it seeks to be informed by them, respond to them and provide direction to them in an ongoing cycle (slide 4).

[2] Throughout this document children & young people should be read to include their families & carers where appropriate
[3] Workforce planning is sometimes confused with workforce strategy. Workforce planning is focused on estimating an organisation's future staffing requirements and calculating the numbers, nature and sources of potential full time and temporary staff who might meet that demand.

Background to the guide

'Building and implementing an effective local workforce strategy' has been developed jointly by the **National College**, the **CWDC** and the **TDA**. The immediate focus of activity is support to local areas with workforce strategy and planning to ensure everyone working with children and young people is:

- ambitious for every child and young person
- excellent in their practice
- committed to partnership and integrated working
- respected and valued as a professional

Priorities

- Understanding the real time workforce issues facing local areas.
- Collaborating to achieve local solutions that encourage sustainable change.
- Working together to ensure best use of resources, shared efficiency and increased effectiveness.

Roles of development partners

The **National College** works to develop and inspire great leadership across children's centres, schools and children's services so that leaders and their teams can make a real and positive difference to the lives of children and young people. Our four key goals are:

- inspiring new leaders
- great leadership development
- inspiring successful leadership
- shaping future leadership

CWDC specialises in the development of the children and young people's workforce. Our immediate focus is on early years, social work, young people's workforce, social care and the integration of leadership and management of children's services in local authorities.

TDA focuses on developing the skills of the children's workforce in schools and ensures that schools can recruit good quality, well trained people who will continue to develop and improve their skills to support children's learning and development. We work to secure the supply and quality of the teaching workforce and promote teaching as a career. We also support the modernisation of the children's workforce in schools by helping schools to access the resources they need to remodel their workforce, deploy their staff effectively and introduce extended services.

Links

National College:	www.nationalcollege.org.uk
CWDC:	www.cwdcouncil.org.uk
TDA:	www.tda.gov.uk

Overriding principles

By following this guide, the organisations involved can be certain that their efforts will result in a local workforce strategy that is not only well thought-out and achievable, but will also follow and promote a set of fundamental overriding principles:

- Involving children and young people, their families and carers in the decisions that affect them.
- Engaging staff from all levels in shaping the children's workforce of the future.
- Including all workforce groups (or sectors) working with children and young people in the process.
- Promoting integrated working and reducing barriers and obstacles to this approach wherever and whenever possible.
- Being focused, both in terms of how resources are deployed and on making a real, tangible difference in the lives of children and young people.
- Driving more efficient operations of children's services to achieve the best possible value for money from the continued investment.
- Ensuring a diverse children's workforce that is representative of the community it serves, and in which everybody is treated fairly and offered equal opportunities.
- Striving to create a fully engaged, motivated and enthusiastic children's workforce, made up of high performing teams.
- Investing in the ongoing development of those working with children and young people to ensure that they have the right levels of qualification and experience, skills and knowledge.
- Inspiring the children's workforce through visionary, expert leadership and creating a succession pipeline of capable managers and leaders for the future.
- Collecting, analysing and acting on data intelligently in order to drive performance and focus resources.

Who is the guide designed for?

This guide could be useful to a number of audience groups, such as:

- the person or group of people directly responsible for drafting and implementing the workforce strategy – the developers of the local workforce strategy and actions
- the main sponsor of the local workforce strategy activity
- other active senior stakeholders, senior managers and leaders in the organisations involved who act as internal advocates and sponsors within their relevant organisations
- actively involved human resources and training practitioners, policy and commissioning leads, or people involved in evidence gathering or implementation projects

Developers

The guide has been written primarily for local workforce strategy developers. If you are the developer of your local workforce strategy, you will find in each module an explanation of what it is about and why it is important, followed by a range of practical support materials such as individual or group exercises, case studies and useful links.

Sponsors

If you are a sponsor of the local workforce strategy activity you will find a checklist at the end of each section giving suggestions of how you, in your role, can best support and promote the activity in that module. You will find that the role of sponsor is not a passive one , there are many doors that require opening, obstacles to remove and, importantly, tough questions to be asked along the way.

Active stakeholders

The guide has been written in modules which allows you to dip in to the modules relating to the activity areas you have been asked to contribute to or participate in.

Module 11: monitoring and measuring the workforce strategy activity

By the end of this module, you will have:

- established timescales, milestones and deliverables of the workforce strategy activity and designed simple key performance indicators to track these
- decided how and when the workforce strategy activities will be reviewed
- created a reporting schedule and template for project managers and other implementers
- identified and mitigated the potential risks to the workforce strategy

The best way to ensure that the workforce strategy activity will be well managed and maintained is to introduce a system to measure progress and performance at each stage of the workforce strategy cycle.

This requires an agreed workforce strategy cycle to be set in place. For example, many areas work on a three year cycle, with annual impact reviews and updates to the workforce strategy action plan, and quarterly implementation progress reviews. Therefore, the cycle needs to set out:

- how often the workforce strategy will be developed
- how often the impact of the workforce strategy on objectives will be reviewed
- how often the action plan will be reviewed and updated
- how often the implementation of strategy actions will be reviewed

A set of **key performance indicators** (KPIs) can be introduced to help to measure and provide visibility that the workforce strategy activity is on track. After all – what gets measured gets done. They need not be complicated, and can be as simple as measuring that the planned activities have been completed on time and in full at each stage of the strategy cycle (slide 51).

The team with overall responsibility for the workforce strategy action, such as the workforce development group, should introduce a regular meeting agenda item at agreed intervals in order to monitor and discuss the key performance indicators.

In addition to monitoring the workforce strategy cycle, the team will need to monitor and review the progress being made in implementing the workforce strategy actions, according to the system established as part of action, covered in Module 9. The change programme manager and sponsor would most likely benefit from a regular slot on the meeting agenda, and should be given clear instructions about when and how to report to the team on strategy action progress. Exercise 10.2 suggests a simple traffic light system for project progress reporting.

Identifying and reviewing risks to the plan

Risk Management is an important management discipline which helps to achieve the right balance between innovation and change on the one hand, and the avoidance of shocks and crises on the other. The four elements of risk management are:

- risk identification
- assessment of risks (considering impact as well as likelihood)
- action on risks (how to mitigate them)
- monitoring risks

A **risk register** can be created in order to manage this process. Although this can be informed by the key internal factors identified by the enablers and blockers exercise suggested in Module 9 – the risks identified in this process are of a higher level and greater impact. They identify and assess the chance of something happening that will have a marked impact on the workforce strategy activity.

The actions on risks should be concentrate on those which are highest impact and/or more likely to occur. Actions on risk fall broadly under four categories:

- terminate
- treat
- transfer
- tolerate

Recommended activities

Exercise 11.1: establish project and action progress reporting mechanisms

The detailed workforce strategy action plan, introduced in Module 6, is a useful monitoring tool. If kept up to date, it provides a mechanism by which the progress of each action can be recorded and tracked. Working together with the sponsor, workforce development group (or responsible group) and project managers, a schedule and template for progress reporting should be established.

If each action is supported by a project plan or project charter, the key objectives (deliverables) and milestones will be easily identified. If not, these should be developed for every action so that you can track them.

A simple mechanism is to introduce a traffic light system which allows you at quick glance to spot problems and focus people on resolving any issues. A template has been provided to help get you started (Template 13) but invariably your report will take on a shape of its own.

	Stages of implementation			
	Action or Project	**Stage 1**	**Stage 2**	**Stage 3**
Strategic theme 1	**Project 1**			
	Project 2			
	Project 3			

Exercise 11.2: identifying and mitigating potential risks to the workforce strategy cycle

The exercise is best conducted by a group of people. Using the template provided in Appendix 2 (Template 12), identify the top risks to the workforce strategy cycle, and rate them according to their impact and likelihood of occurring using the risk matrix. Then complete the risk register, identifying ways to mitigate the risks and deciding how often and when to monitor for each one.

Checklist for sponsors

Sponsors can support and enable the activities in this module by:

- ☑ putting simple key performance indicators in place to help track and monitor the progress and performance of the workforce strategy activities
- ☑ establishing a schedule for the review of the workforce strategy activity as well as the implementation of the strategy actions
- ☑ making sure that the review and progress of the workforce strategy is included in the meeting agenda of the overseeing bodies
- ☑ helping to identify and mitigate potential risks to the workforce strategy activity

Appendix 1: the local workforce strategy diagnostic

The following questions are designed to help give you a perspective on your workforce strategy and the process you have gone through to establish it.

Question	Useful modules	Useful exercises
Have we developed clear links between the workforce strategy and the children's plan?	1	
Have we identified the workforce implications of the children's plan?	1	1.1
Are the workforce strategy and children's plan cycles mapped and aligned?	1	1.2
Have we aligned the workforce strategy locally?	2	
Do we have a good understanding of who makes up our children's workforce, possibly presented in a stakeholder map?	2	2.1
Do we have a clear picture of the local partnership arrangements?	2	2.2
Have we identified the local priorities for the children's workforce by interviewing key stakeholders within each sector?	2	2.3
Have we identified the workforce implications of the local community strategy and local area agreements?	2	2.3
Do we understand the local workforce development priorities highlighted in the workforce strategies, people plans and other documents for each of the sectors in our children's trust?	2	2.3
Have we asked children, young people and their families how they would like the future children's workforce to be shaped?	2, 10	
Have we asked staff at all levels and managers from across the children's workforce to participate in shaping the future of the children's workforce?	2, 10	
Have we aligned our workforce strategy nationally and regionally?	3	

Question	Useful modules	Useful exercises
Do we understand the national context in which our workforce strategy sits?	3	
Have we identified the national priorities for the children's workforce?	3	3.1
Are we effectively project managing the workforce strategy activity and cycle?	4	
Have we decided on an overall model and approach to our strategy activity?	4	4.1
Have we considered the lessons we can learn from the past?	4	4.2
Has the children's partnership scoped the overall ambitions of the workforce strategy activity?	4	4.3
Have we scoped the HR elements to be included in the workforce strategy?	4	4.3
Do we know who to engage in the workforce strategy activities, and when?	4	4.4
Have we created a formal project plan or project charter for the workforce strategy activity?	4	4.1
Have we defined a shared vision of where we want to be?	5	
Have we created a clear and motivating vision statement?	5	5.1
Have we identified the key focus areas of strategic themes of the workforce strategy?	5	5.2
Are a core set of agreed principles in place?	5	5.3
Do we know what we have to do in order to achieve our vision?	6	
Have we conducted a gap analysis to determine where we are now?	6	6.1
Have we made use of evidence such as audit reports, Ofsted and other inspection reports ?	6	

Question	Useful modules	Useful exercises
Have we thought about how to use the children's workforce tool to establish a baseline and support our gap analysis?	6	
Have we developed a range of creative solutions to bridge the gaps?	6	6.2
Could we come up with more effective solutions by embracing creative techniques and engaging in group problem solving?	6	6.2
Are we confident that we have selected and prioritised the strategy actions which will have the greatest impact?	6	
Have we mapped the likely impact of workforce strategy actions?	6	6.3
Are our actions prioritised to ensure there are sufficient resources to deliver the action plan?	6	6.4
Have we assessed the likely impact of the proposed changes?	6	6.5
Do we have a detailed strategy action plan in place – and is it up to date?	6	
Are we confident about the implementation of our workforce strategy?	7	
Are we clear on what structure we need for the strategy document?	7	7.1
Do we know what look and feel we want for our strategy?	7	7.1
Have we taken the needs of our target audience groups into consideration?	7	7.2
Have we thought how best to launch and then promote and communication about the workforce strategy on an ongoing basis?	8	
Have we identified key formal and informal leaders to endorse the workforce strategy and the importance of workforce development?	8	

Question	Useful modules	Useful exercises
Have we established links, and possibly created a working group, of marketing and communications managers from across the children's partnership?	8	8.1
Do we know what the communication and marketing review and sign off procedures are in each of the partner organisations?	8	8.1
Have we planned an exciting launch of the workforce strategy?	8	8.2
Is there a communications plan in place which sets out the key messages and activities to move from awareness building to keep understanding?	8	8.3
Are we effectively implementing the workforce strategy actions?	9	
Have we identified the key internal factors enabling or blocking implementation at a local level?	9	9.1
Is there a programme of change in place?	9	
Are we fostering an innovative, creative and challenging approach to the implementation projects?	9	
Is there support for working in multi-agency or cross-functional teams wherever possible?	9	
Do we know who is responsible and who is accountable for the implementation of every action?	9	9.2
Does everybody implementing strategy actions understand what to report on, when and how?	9, 10	9.2
Are we helping individuals and teams to understand what the workforce strategy means for them personally?	9	9.3
Do we have an effective, agreed, workforce strategy cycle?	10	
Is the workforce strategy cycle linked into existing planning cycles and governance structures?	10	10.1

Question	Useful modules	Useful exercises
Are the workforce strategy cycle and children's plan cycle well aligned? Are commissioning and performance management cycles also taken into consideration?	10	10.1
Are we monitoring and measuring how effectively we're managing the workforce strategy cycle and activities?	11	11.1
Have we identified and mitigated any risks to the workforce strategy activity, and are we reviewing these appropriately?	11	11.2
Are we confident that we are doing the right things, and doing things right?	12	
Do we regularly review the impact the workforce strategy is having on meeting our children's plan and local area objectives?	12	12.1
Do we regularly review the impact the workforce strategy is having on the lives of children and young people, and do we consult them first hand as part of this process?	12	12.1
Do we regularly review the impact the workforce strategy is having on the working environment and job satisfaction of our staff and managers, and do we consult with them first had as part of the process?	12	12.1

Appendix 2: templates and guidelines for exercises

Template 1
Local workforce priorities

Exercise 1.1: workforce development priorities from the children's plan

Reference	Priority area / issue / initiative	Importance (high, medium, low)	Workforce implications / comments

Template 1
Local workforce priorities

Exercise 2.3a: workforce development priorities from the local community strategy and local area agreement

Reference	Priority area / issue / initiative	Importance (high, medium, low)	Workforce implications / comments

Template 1
Local workforce priorities

Exercise 2.3b: workforce development priorities – interviews with sector leads

Reference	Priority area / issue / initiative	Importance (high, medium, low)	Workforce implications / comments

Sectors to consider are, for example: education, early years, health, justice and crime prevention, social, family and community support, sport and culture and the third sector.

Template 1
Local workforce priorities

Exercise 2.3b: workforce development priorities – sector level plans, strategies and data

Reference	Priority area / issue / initiative	Importance (high, medium, low)	Workforce implications / comments

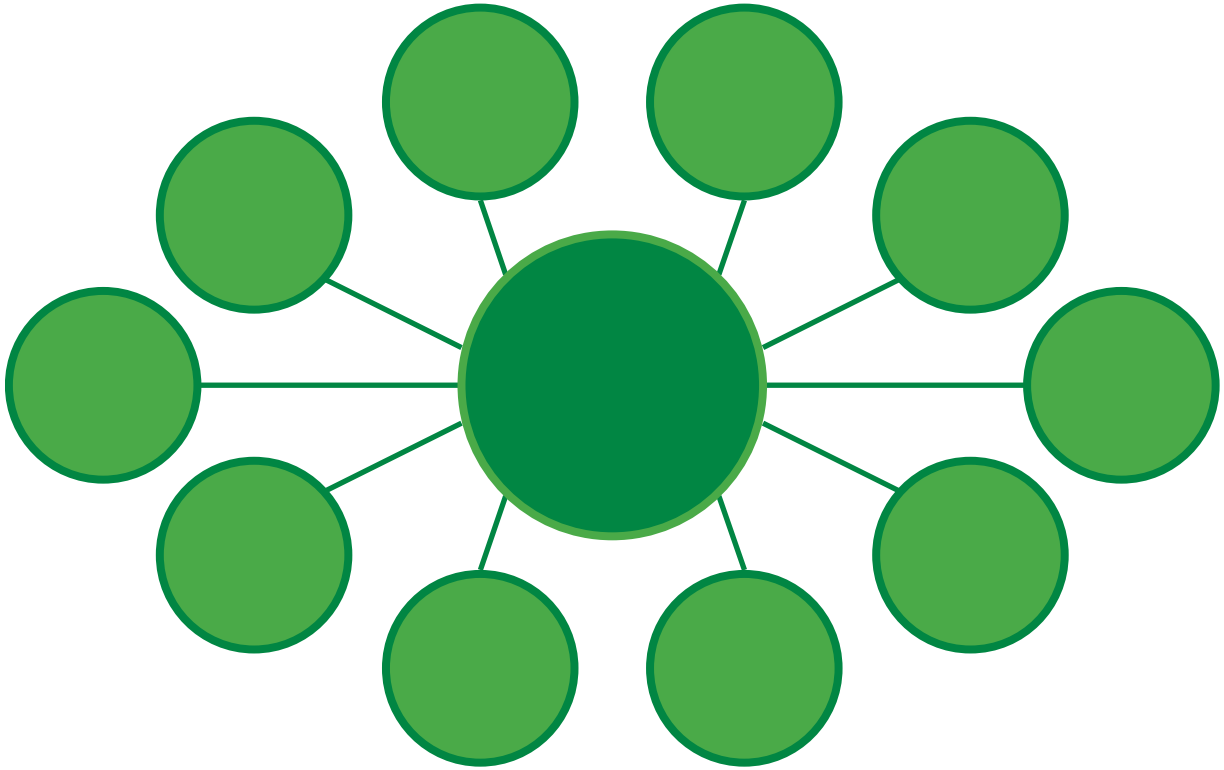
Sectors to consider are, for example: education, early years, health, justice and crime prevention, social, family and community support, sport and culture and the third sector.

Template 1
Local workforce priorities

Exercise 3.1: national and regional workforce development priorities

Reference	Priority area / issue / initiative	Importance (high, medium, low)	Workforce implications / comments

Template 2
Stakeholder map



Template 3
Workforce strategy project charter

Project summary

Aim	to... by...
Overall approach	– – – –
Key milestones	– – – –
Resource	– – – –

People directly involved

Developer		**Sponsor**	

Overseeing	(eg workforce development group)	**Governance**	(eg local partnership)

Other project team members	–	–
	–	–
	–	–
	–	–
	–	–

The scope of the workforce strategy

Ambitions for the workforce strategy	– (ie what is hoped will be achieved through the workforce strategy activity – – – – –	**Elements of the workforce strategy**	– (ie what will be included or excluded from the workforce strategy – – – – –

Key project objectives

Workforce strategy objectives	– (ie the main achievements and activities planned) – – – – –

Template 4
Stakeholder engagement plan

Exercise 4.4: identify which stakeholder groups to engage with and when

Stakeholder group	Aligning the strategy	Designing the strategy	Implementing and promoting the strategy	Sustaining the strategy
The workforce strategy developer/s				
The local children's partnership - members and subgroups – most importantly the:				
– **workforce development group**				
Director of children's services				
Other senior level sponsors within each sector or organisation				
Other actively involved senior level stakeholders such as:				
– **strategic partnership board**				

Stakeholder group	Aligning the strategy	Designing the strategy	Implementing and promoting the strategy	Sustaining the strategy
– the local safeguarding children board				
– joint Commissioning Board				
– lead member for children's services				
– other children's workforce related councillors and politicians				
Actively involved HR or training managers, policy leads				
Commissioning leads				
Communications and marketing teams				
Staff – frontline and support				
Other leaders and managers				

Stakeholder group	Aligning the strategy	Designing the strategy	Implementing and promoting the strategy	Sustaining the strategy
Trade unions				
Associations and forums for voluntary and community organisations				
Children, young people, their families and carers				
– **consultation and participation groups**				

Template 5
Gap analysis

Exercise 6.1: conducting a gap analysis, where are we now?

The rating scale and criteria should be developed by the group conducting this exercise to ensure common understanding of what they are and mean. A suggested approach is to use High, Medium and Low for Importance and for current status a scale such as: Not yet begun, struggling, average or midpoint, making progress and excelling.

Key workforce objective – where we aim to be	Importance (impact on ECM outcomes)	Current status	Comments regarding current position

Template 6
Action impact mapping

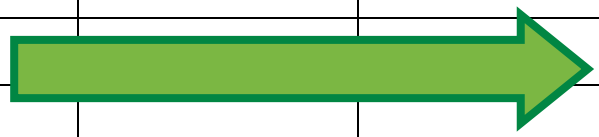
Exercise 6.3: mapping the likely impact of workforce strategy actions

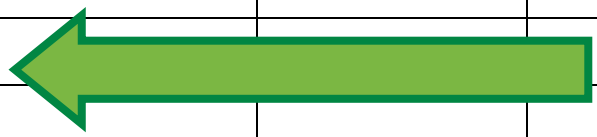
Part a: The criteria for rating the actions should be discussed and agreed by the exercise participants. A simple rating could be high, medium and low.

Proposed workforce strategy action	Children's plan objective 1	Children's plan objective 2	Children's plan objective 3	Children's plan objective 4, etc

Part b:

Potential workforce strategy action	Desired response to activity	Desired outcome		How trust is measuring progress (KPI)	Potential root cause of issue	Local children's partnership objective





Template 7
Assessing the impact of change

Exercise 6.5: assessing the impact of change

Part a: The criteria for rating the level of impact (such as high, medium or low) should be discussed and agreed by the exercise participants.

Description of change	Who will it impact?	Level of impact	Nature of impact	Pressure points	Actions

Template 8
Target audience groups

Exercise 7.2: assessing the needs of the target audience groups

Stakeholder group	How they use the workforce strategy document	Main areas of interest	Level of detail required	Preferred format and media	How we will meet their needs
The local children's partnership - members and subgroups – most importantly the:					
– workforce development group					
Director of children's services					
Other senior level sponsors within each sector or organisation					
Other actively involved senior level stakeholders such as:					

Continued

Stakeholder group	How they use the workforce strategy document	Main areas of interest	Level of detail required	Preferred format and media	How we will meet their needs
– strategic partnership board					
– the local safeguarding children board					
– joint Commissioning Board					
– lead member for children's services					
– other children's workforce related councillors and politicians					

Stakeholder group	How they use the workforce strategy document	Main areas of interest	Level of detail required	Preferred format and media	How we will meet their needs
Actively involved HR or training managers, policy leads					
Commissioning leads					
Communications and marketing teams					
Staff – frontline and support					
Other leaders and managers					
Trade unions					
Associations and forums for voluntary and community organisations					
Children, young people, their families and carers					
– consultation and participation groups					
The community as a whole					
The press					

Template 9
Key internal factors

Exercise 9.1: identifying the key internal factors which could enable or block the implementation of strategy actions.

Key internal factor	Enabler or blocker	Degree of impact	How it could be leveraged / overcome
			–
			–
			–
			–
			–
			–
			–
			–
			–
			–

Template 10
Team level impact assessment

Exercise 9.3: identifying the required tasks and likely impact of workforce strategy actions at team level.

Workforce strategy action	Tasks we are required to do	What changes we are likely to see for our team	Additional tasks and actions we will need to take
	–	–	–
	–	–	–
	–	–	–
	–	–	–
	–	–	–
	–	–	–
	–	–	–
	–	–	–
	–	–	–
	–	–	–

Template 11
Project progress report

Exercise 11.1: project and action progress reporting.

		Stages of implementation						
	Action or project	**Stage 1** (eg resourcing)	**Stage 2** (eg designing)	**Stage 3** (eg piloting)	**Stage 4** (eg roll out)	**Stage 5** (eg embedding)	**Stage 6** (eg reviewing)	**Comments**
Strategic Theme 1	**Project 1**							
	Project 2							
	Project 3							
	Project 4							
Strategic Theme	**Project 1**							
	Project 2							
	Project 3							
	Project 4							
Strategic Theme	**Project 1**							
	Project 2							
	Project 3							
	Project 4							
Strategic Theme	**Project 1**							
	Project 2							
	Project 3							
	Project 4							

Copy and paste, then move into the box concerned:

Red: a significant problem requiring the help of a sponsor

Amber: a delay or hiccup which the project team can resolve themselves

Green: everything running smoothly

NYS: Not yet started, as planned

Note: Stages of implementation could be replaced by Months or Weeks.

Template 12
Risk register

Exercise 11.2: identifying and mitigating potential risks to the workforce strategy cycle

Part a: risk matrix

	IMPACT (most likely impact, if in doubt grade up, not down)				
Probability (likelihood of occurrence)	**Insignificant**	**Minor**	**Moderate**	**Major**	**Catastrophic**
	1	2	3	4	5
almost certain	5				
probable (highly likely)	4				
likely	3				
possible	2				
rare	1				

HIGH – plan immediate action, MEDIUM – review closely, LOW – limited action, long term plans

Part b: risk register

Risk identification	Risk assessment (H,M,L)	Actions on risks	When to monitor next
		–	
		–	
		–	
		–	
		–	
		–	
		–	
		–	
		–	
		–	

Template 13

Exercise 10.4: gauging the impact of workforce development.

Action	Desired / planned impacts	Impact achieved so far	Evidenced by	Comments / further actions

The National College is the first professional body uniquely dedicated to developing and supporting aspiring and serving leaders in schools, early years settings and children's services.

The College gives its members the professional development and recognition they need to build their careers and support those they work with. Members are part of a community of thousands of other leaders – exchanging ideas, sharing good practice and working together to make a bigger difference for children and young people.

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