

## **TALENT MANAGEMENT**

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of the paper is to enable the board to have a discussion on talent management and to come to a collective view and agreement on the way forward in England.

### **Background**

2. The Forestry Commission (FC) is currently facing an unprecedented level of change to shape its future and cope with the many demands placed upon it. It's therefore more important than ever to focus on talent management and ensure that employees are prepared, equipped and engaged to manage the changing work environment.
3. A recent report "how to improve talent management in the civil service" highlights that it is vital to identify and develop talented people in order to deliver better services and to respond to new political priorities and managing changing delivery models.
4. This paper sets out the proposed approach to talent management to identify high performing staff with sufficient growth potential to perform at a higher level. To help these individuals prepare for increased responsibility and role complexity in the future, a talent management programme would provide opportunities to support their development.

### **Approaches to Talent Management**

5. A key ongoing debate surrounding talent management is in regard to its purpose. Some organisations adopt an inclusive approach to talent management creating a "whole workforce" approach to engagement and talent development. Others develop a more exclusive focus segmenting talent according to need, that is, the talent management process specifically relates to key or high potential individuals.
6. Often a blended approach is used in practice, with attention paid to employees as a talent group as a whole but with special focus given to a particular core group or groups of employees. The 2010 CIPD "Talent Perspective" survey showed that this is indeed the case for the majority of organisations that, whilst they adopt an inclusive approach to talent, they have in addition, selected subgroups to be talent-managed in a more structured way, such as graduate populations, top talent programmes and various schemes aimed at specific

functions with more technical skills. Over the last seven years we have started to address sub-groups by our participation in the cross-border (and now England led to develop our own) graduate programme, the Forester development programme that's just started and our apprenticeship recruitment for Forest Craftspeople.

7. FC Scotland is currently running a talent management programme closely linked to succession planning, with the key aim of identifying high performing individuals who have the potential to compete for senior management positions in coming years. Through staffing analysis, they identified that there was a requirement to fill a number of high priority posts within a 3-5 year period. The programme was therefore aimed at staff (regardless of pay band) that had a genuine desire to fill one of the following roles: Forest District Manager, Area Land Agent and Senior Operations Posts.
8. The selection process consisted of an application form and assessment centre with the stipulation that the application should be endorsed by the Unit Manager. The cost of the external assessment centre's which included accommodation for candidates was approx. £11K.
9. We also need to consider how we can make an impact to try and improve our diversity, especially at more senior levels, in line with the aspirations of the Civil Service. Other talent management schemes have often resulted in faster progression of people 'in the same vein' as those already in those positions and we should look to see what different strengths a more diverse future talent pool might provide. We may be able to learn something about this approach from FC Scotland's talent management programme.

### **Options**

10. It is suggested that England's approach could be inclusive, focusing on having a fair and consistent process for managing talent and ensuring we support and develop our workforce to meet our future organisational challenges.
11. The current Performance Management process including the Civil Service Competency Framework already provides a mechanism to identify talent within England. Whilst only introduced from April 2014, the nine box performance grid can, if used correctly (appendix 1) could be used as a matrix tool to evaluate and measure employee performance and potential as identified through the Performance Review. It could provide a framework for succession planning by allowing managers to assess employee's potential and identify their development needs, exploring their transition towards future development and progression with the FC.
12. The performance grid could be used to identify a talent category for the employee based upon their potential/behaviours plotted against their

performance on the grid. For example there could be 3 talent categories (Appendix 3) with each talent category having specific talent activities aimed at the employee's immediate needs and to help over the course of their career which will be delivered through a blended learning solution and within the Learning and Development framework. This will become easier from 1 April 2015 when we have access to Civil Service Learning.

13. Special focus could be given to Top Performers to ensure we have a succession of talented people to take on business critical roles and transformational activities. Top performers will be considered as consistently exceeding outcomes and targets, ready to move and progress beyond their role now or within 12 months, constantly demonstrating positive behaviours and with a strong interest in career development and moving to other opportunities. They may be from any pay band and it is proposed that the talent activities for this group could include:
  - Clear succession plans and career paths identified
  - Attendance on specific talent programmes as part of leadership and management development offers
  - Mentoring and coaching opportunities
  - Considered for role swaps or rotated into business critical roles for lateral development.
14. As part of a longer term strengthening of our succession planning approach, consideration could be given to implementing a further selection process for a "Top Talent Programme" for those achieving Top Performer ratings and identified as having the highest potential. This programme can be used to either fill business critical posts or be used to develop staff.
15. Research shows that having a selection process for "Top Talent" programmes increases the value that individuals perceive of the programme and also enhances self-awareness, confidence and motivation to perform well for those who are successful applications. Those selected for the programme are likely to have high engagement levels and more likely to see a future within the organisation.
16. Given the size of FCE, we could perhaps consider developing any talent management scheme as part of a wider network of similar employers, perhaps including others in the Defra network, to provide a wider pool of talent and equally opportunities for them.

## Principles

17. The following principles could apply to guide the direction of this approach:

- **Attraction:** A “Top Talent” programme would be advertised to all staff achieving “Top Performer” and open to all pay bands to apply.

- **Identification:** Talent would be demonstrated by high potential and high performing individuals. An objective assessment process could be undertaken to identify these individuals using the Civil Service Competency Framework and nine box performance grid.

- **Development:** The selection process would also identify gaps in the skills, experience and knowledge of applicants. A Talent Management Programme could then provide development opportunities to fill these gaps.

- **Retain:** Challenging opportunities would be provided, which would be stimulating and rewarding for participants. Thus, the programme should enrich the careers of participants and provide them with a good platform for future promotion possibilities.

- **Deployment:** Participants would be in a stronger position to apply for more senior roles arising within England in the future.

## Conclusion

18. An approach to Talent management within a performance management culture would better support effective talent and performance identification, development and improvement at individual, team, district and corporate level. The process and activities identified within the Talent Management approach are consistent with achieving the outcome of the “fit for future” people strategy to have the right people, in the right place, at the right time and at the right cost to meet our business demands.

## Resource Implications

19. There is a small budget held centrally for learning and development activities. The £10k available within this budget could be used to fund certain key activities identified, with further development being paid from out of existing cost centre manager budget where required.

20. We would need to identify HR resources and resource from L&D to progress this piece of work. With the current resignation of the Senior HR Manager and the need to take on devolved HR services work, there isn't sufficient resource to take this on within existing staffing at present.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

21. Not applicable

## **Risk Assessment**

22. The following risks have been identified:

- Expectations are raised with staff and there is insufficient money to pay for the development interventions identified;
- England continue to be perceived as the 'poor relation' to Scotland in terms of offering any form of talent management;
- The pool of talent initially identified is too big to address;
- Poor assessment by managers over performance markings may include or exclude some staff in being considered.

## **Communications**

23. None required at the current time. The HR Business Partnering team would start to develop ideas as a result of this discussion paper which would be brought back to the board at a later date.

## **Recommendation**

24. The board is asked to discuss the situation and conclude next steps.

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**10 February 2015**

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# Appendix 1: Civil Service PMS Markings

## The Performance Grid

The Performance Grid demonstrates how the extent to which you achieve the 'what' (outcomes and targets) and the 'how' (effective behaviours) of your role impacts on your performance rating:

Exceeding	<p><b>Good Performer: exceeded outcomes and targets; behavioural standards just met</b> Exceeding a challenging set of outcomes and targets, need further development as has only just met the full range of behaviours expected</p>	<p><b>Good Performer: exceeded outcomes and targets; behavioural standards met</b> Exceeded a challenging set of outcomes and targets; demonstrated the behavioural standards required with no significant weaknesses</p>	<p><b>Top Performer: exceeded outcomes and targets; exceeded behavioural standards</b> Exceeded a challenging set of outcomes and targets; strongly demonstrated and role modelled the behaviours expected from someone in own and higher pay band</p>
What	<p><b>Not Fully Effective: satisfactory delivery of outcomes and targets; behavioural standards must improve</b> Met outcomes and targets; must improve as has not yet demonstrated the full range of behaviours expected. Please refer to Section 6.1</p>	<p><b>Good Performer: satisfactory delivery of outcomes and targets; behavioural standards met</b> Met outcomes and targets and demonstrated the behavioural standards required with no significant weaknesses</p>	<p><b>Good Performer: satisfactory delivery of outcomes and targets; exceeded behavioural standards</b> Met outcomes, strongly demonstrated and role modelled the behaviours expected from someone in own and higher pay band</p>
Less Than Effective	<p><b>Not Fully Effective: delivery of outcomes and targets / behavioural standards must improve</b> May not have met, or needed a lot of support to meet, one or more outcome or target. Must also improve as has not yet demonstrated the full range of behaviours expected. Please refer to Section 6.1</p>	<p><b>Not Fully Effective: delivery of outcomes and targets must improve; behavioural standards met</b> May not have met, or needed a lot of support to meet, one or more outcome or target. Demonstrated the behavioural standards required with no significant weaknesses. Please refer to Section 6.1</p>	<p><b>Good Performer: outcomes and targets just met; exceeded behavioural standards</b> May not have met, or needed a lot of support to meet, one or more outcome or target – requires further development in this area. Has strongly demonstrated and role modelled the behaviours expected from someone in own and higher pay band</p>
	How	Exceeding	

## Appendix 2: Talent Categories

TALENT CATEGORY	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE	SUGGESTED LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT
TOP PERFORMER	Consistently exceeding all their objectives and demonstrating the highest levels of performance capacity to develop in the short/ medium term.	Look at tailored development & succession plan
GOOD PERFORMER	Meeting or exceeding their objectives, frequently demonstrating positive behaviours and capacity to develop in the medium term. Performing to the required standard and want to remain in current role or have scope for a lateral move. At the core of any success by ensuring the work is done well	Focused coaching, project work, core leaning and development
NOT FULLY EFFECTIVE	Recently appointed, promoted or new to the role and are learning the ropes/working towards their objectives or has failed to meet their performance objectives and behavioural standards	Role specific training & support. Performance closely managed.

# Appendix 3: Why is a Talent Strategy important

From an Employer Perspective	From an Individual Perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the leadership of your organisation is rich and diverse;</li> <li>• Help to achieve strategic business objectives;</li> <li>• Build a high performance workplace;</li> <li>• Encourage a culture of leaning and development</li> <li>• Ensures value for money through targeting talent spend and ensuring talent is coherently managed;</li> <li>• Engage people;</li> <li>• Retain talented people; and</li> <li>• Enhance the image and position in the employment market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with their work and be more effective;</li> <li>• Be satisfied with their jobs and proud of their organisation;</li> <li>• Recommend their employer to others;</li> <li>• Have a good opinion of their managers;</li> <li>• Feel that their performance is valued;</li> <li>• Have stronger feelings of personal and professional growth and accomplishment; and</li> <li>• Feel valued and important to the success of the organisation</li> </ul>

## What are the risks?

- It can be divisive
- It can raise people expectations which you may not be able to meet
- It can be expensive and take a lot of time
- This is a long term investment so it may be impossible to show return in the short term
- Your talented people may be increasingly attractive to other organisations, so they may not stay