

**HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGIC FORUM****STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER ON COACHING****How the council is developing coaching as an alternative to more traditional methods of training.**

Coaching is well established within NHDC and has been used for several years often as an alternative to more traditional methods of training. Coaching can cover a wide variety of development areas including soft skills such as time management.

In the current economic climate when financial support for Learning & Development has reduced, coaching is also viewed as a cost effective development tool. Using internal coaching, or developing the coaching skills of managers can provide a cost effective method to enhance skills, knowledge and work performance.

There are now around 18 Institute of Leadership and Management accredited coaches across the Council. Coaching supports NHDC's principles of continuous improvement and has helped to maintain its status as a recognised Investor in People.

Employees are able to request coaching through their line manager or directly by contacting HR.

The four most popular reasons for using coaching are:

- To aid leadership development
- To improve on the job performance
- To build on good performance
- To focus upon skills and capability improvement
- To explore career development needs

In addition, individuals can benefit from coaching through developing their potential, increasing confidence and greater self-awareness. The focus on the individual's personal needs will improve motivation and self-belief, making employees feel valued and empowered.

The culture and acceptance of coaching is evolving within the Council and a Coaching Steering Group was formed to raise the profile of coaching and to promote its benefits. Various barriers can inhibit the success of coaching, including individual resistance, time pressure and lack of senior level support these barriers are

addressed regularly at the group. The group is chaired by Norma Atlay and meet bi-annually.

Next steps:

- Increase awareness of Coaching and access to it including through the appraisal process
- Gather testimonials from coachee's
- Offer all apprentices and new starters access to a coach
- Consider coaching and mentoring when looking at Learning & Development Needs
- Offer supervision for all accredited coaches
- Provide managers with coaching skills