

Human Resources Strategy 2022 to 2025

Commitment to Excellence

1. Introduction

SYPA's workforce is central to our success as an organisation. This strategy focuses on how we will:

- Develop,
- Recruit, and
- Retain

a workforce that meets the needs of the organisation as it embarks on the next stage of its development.

To do this we need to pay attention, not just to how we attract the best candidates for roles with SYPA from outside, although this is important, but also focus on how we can develop the skills of the current workforce. More importantly than any of this, though, we need to focus on the culture of the organisation, how it feels to work here, and the way things are done. These are key factors that will determine whether people want to work for us and whether they want to stay with us and make a career with SYPA.

SYPA is a relatively small organisation, a fact which in itself has many benefits, for example in terms of the ability of management to be visible to staff, however it also has the disadvantages of small scale such as a more limited range of opportunities for promotion and relatively limited resources to actually deliver some of the changes that we need to make. A great positive of the organisation's culture is that this latter point is simply seen as a challenge to be overcome rather than a barrier to achieving our objectives.

2. The current reality - Understanding our workforce

To achieve any objective, it is necessary to understand the starting point. To facilitate this, an analysis of the composition of the current workforce has been undertaken (at 31st March 2021). This is summarised in the table below.

Characteristic	SYPA %	Barnsley %	South Yorkshire %
Gender			
Female	60%	51%	51%
Male	40%	49%	49%
Ethnicity			
Non-white	2.1%	2%	9%
White	97.9%	98%	91%
Disability			
Disability	6.4%	24%	21%
No Disability	93.6%	76%	79%
Age			
0-19	2.13%	23.5%	24.3%
20-29	11.70%	12.1%	14.4%
30-39	30.85%	11.9%	12.3%
40-49	30.85%	15.6%	14.6%
50-59	22.34%	13.2%	12.1%
60-69	2.13%	11.7%	10.7%
70+	0.0%	11.9%	11.7%

Broadly, the current workforce at SYPA is older, whiter and more female than the community which the organisation serves. This is an issue which the Equality and Diversity Scheme highlights as requiring attention and achieving greater diversity in the workforce needs to be an objective of the recruitment element of this strategy.

The level of staff turnover has increased from a very low level in recent years and for the latest full year was 7.5%. Some turnover is always necessary to keep an organisation “fresh” and the age profile of the workforce meant that some increase was inevitable. However, it would be wrong not to recognise that the pace and scale of change being undertaken within the organisation must have had some impact in this area.

In the absence of a comprehensive HR system, it remains difficult to understand how well qualified our workforce is; both in terms of specific pensions issues and more generally, because this data is not held in a structured form. Historically, however, there has been considerable emphasis on internal and external qualification processes in order to support the career grade scheme for Pensions Officers. Far less emphasis was previously placed on other groups of staff and little or no emphasis on the development of management skills and competencies (whether through qualifications or other routes). Changes have been made in this area, including moving the career grade to a competency-based model and instituting a management development programme.

This work has sat alongside a comprehensive review and modernisation of the organisation’s HR policy framework which will have been completed by the end of 2021-22

3. What we need our workforce to deliver - The future possibility

The Corporate Strategy sets out an ambitious agenda for SYPA over the coming years. This strategy is about providing the organisation with a workforce that can deliver this agenda. Consequently, the key characteristics that we are looking for in our workforce are to be:

- Customer Focussed
- Highly skilled and technically knowledgeable
- Adaptable
- Engaged

These qualities have equal weight for staff in all areas of the organisation be that Pension Administration, Investment Strategy, ICT, or Finance and Corporate Services.

Over the coming years we will need to ensure that our current workforce possess these qualities and will also need to design recruitment processes to ensure that the staff we have to bring in to replace those who will be lost, either through retirement or for other reasons, have them at the beginning of their career with us.

A well-motivated workforce exhibiting these qualities will ultimately drive change and improvement across the organisation in a self-sustaining way, making SYPA a more sustainable and resilient organisation.

The overall objective of this strategy is therefore to provide SYPA with a workforce capable of ensuring the delivery of the objectives set out in the corporate strategy.

Specifically, this strategy supports the following corporate strategy objectives, although clearly there is a potential impact on all the objectives:

Customer Focus

to design our services around the needs of our customers (whether scheme members or employers).

Listening to our stakeholders

to ensure that stakeholders' views are heard within our decision making processes.

Valuing and engaging our Employees

to ensure that all our employees are able to develop a career with SYPA and are actively engaged in improving our services.

4. Developing the current workforce to meet the needs of the organisation

Our current workforce are a significant asset to the organisation, and it is a fundamental responsibility of management to maintain and enhance the value of that asset. We can do this in several ways.

Providing the appropriate tools for management of learning and development and for understanding our workforce by:

- Procuring and implementing a new HR management system. *(by March 2023)*
- Exploiting LinkedIn Learning to provide structured development paths for both technical and non-technical learning and development. *(by December 2023)*
- Recognising staff for the improvements which they have delivered as part of a more structured approach to reward and recognition. *(by December 2023)*

Actively managing the pool of talent within the organisation by:

- Provide coaching and mentoring support for staff where this is identified as an appropriate support within their appraisal *(arrangements to be in place from June 2022)*
- Create a framework which provides all staff with access to personal development activities *(April 2023)*

Addressing identified skills deficits by:

- Providing training and resources to support the development of first line supervisors and managers across the organisation, including a 'Management and Leadership' programme for current supervisors and team managers *(by April 2022)*
- To introduce a development programme for the Senior Practitioner level roles within the organisation to prepare them for team leader and management roles in the future where opportunities present *(by March 2024)*

Measuring success

The success of these steps will be measured through the overall level of morale and motivation within the organisation which will be assessed through the results of the staff survey undertaken every 2 years, together with information on absence rates, staff turnover, grievance and complaint data and information from exit interviews.

5. Recruiting a workforce for the future

Any organisation will always need to devote time and effort to bringing the right people into the organisation to replace those who leave, either as a result of retirement or for other reasons. The costs of getting this wrong in terms of repeated recruitment exercises can be substantial and we can enhance our chances of success by:

Widening our recruitment net and turning more interest into applications by:

- Identifying and utilising different methods of advertising, such as social media, to reach a wider audience, including groups underrepresented in the current workforce (*Ongoing throughout the strategy period*).
- Reviewing the recruitment process to ensure that it provides as smooth and as short a “journey” as possible for the applicant (*by March 2023*).

Planting the seeds to grow the workforce of the future by:

- Putting in place a clear apprenticeship framework across the organisation which provides clear routes into specific career paths such as Pension Officers (*by April 2023*)

Making sure that where we need to recruit at a senior or managerial level, we get the right people by:

- Focussing not just on candidates’ technical abilities but on their managerial skills and ensuring that these fit with SYPA’s approach, through the use of values-based recruitment (*to be developed throughout the strategy period*).
- Developing a specification for the “SYPA Manager” skill set which reflects the organisation’s values and culture (*December 2022*)

Measuring success

We will know if these actions have made the desired impact if we see an increase in the diversity of the workforce, and an improvement in the assessment of the quality of management within the staff survey.

6. Retaining a high-quality workforce

While the composition of our current workforce means that some level of recruitment activity is inevitable over the coming years, we do want to retain staff and enable them to build a career with SYPA. There is a delicate balance here as we need to maintain sufficient staff turnover to avoid the organisation becoming stale and the level of turnover becoming destabilising. We can ensure that we retain a high-quality workforce by:

Adopting modern HR policies and practices which strike a balance between flexibility for the employee and the business needs of the organisation, through:

- Maintaining an ongoing review of the HR Policy Framework in the light of new legislation, best practice, and the local labour market (*ongoing*).
- Adopting agile and hybrid working to ensure employees can have a healthy and stable work-life balance (*ongoing and continually developing*).

Ensuring that our staff are healthy and safe in the workplace by:

- Formalising the arrangements for managing workplace health and safety and reviewing and refreshing the Health and Safety policy (*by December 2022*).
- Implementing a Health and Wellbeing Strategy building on the work of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (*April 2024*).

Maintaining a fair pay and reward structure by:

- Ensuring the transparent evaluation of all new or revised job roles (including senior managers) resulting from the process of change within the organisation (*ongoing*).
- Reviewing the broader pay and benefits package in the light of recruitment and retention pressures and changes in the broader labour market (*December 2022*).

Engaging and communicating with staff openly to allow them to influence the future direction of the organisation by:

- A review of internal communications to address identified weaknesses (*April 2023*).
- Documenting and communicating the actions taken in response to the 2020 Staff Survey (*June 2022*).
- Maintaining a regular dialogue with the trade unions, and ensuring all staff are aware of the issues discussed (*ongoing*).
- Undertaking a staff survey once every two years and ensuring that the results are acted upon (*next survey due November 2022*).

Measuring success

We will know if these measures have been successful if we maintain a relatively low level of staff turnover and if the measures of staff satisfaction and engagement derived from the staff survey reflect positive progress. We would also expect to measure the degree of compliance with corporate policies such as conducting appraisals, one-to-ones, and team meetings.

7. Resourcing the strategy

The resources available to deliver this strategy are as follows:

	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £
HR Team including SLA with Barnsley MBC	59,450	60,650	61,870
Training Budget	90,000	90,000	90,000
Wellbeing Initiatives	7,000	7,210	7,420
Health and Safety	5,000	5,150	5,300
Occupational Health	3,000	3,090	3,180
Total	164,450	166,100	167,770

There are a number of areas where additional investment may well be needed over the coming years in order to deliver the wider objectives of this strategy, in particular the need to be able to generate and report management information which will necessitate investment in information systems over the period. This form of investment will be considered through a business case process when required.