



Case study | **London Borough of Newham**
Physical Regeneration and Development Service

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Project Overview

SPM was commissioned by the Physical Regeneration and Development Service at Newham to put together a Recruitment, Retention and Reward Strategy aimed at addressing the severe difficulties of resourcing qualified planners and building control professionals to work on large scale regeneration developments in preparation for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Working closely with the Business Improvement Manager and HR Manager, SPM examined the range of HR interventions needed to identify, attract, engage, develop, retain and effectively deploy planners and building control officers.

Newham had experienced considerable difficulties in attracting new staff to planning and building control positions and despite already paying recruitment and retention allowances, vacancy levels had continued at an unsustainable level. Newham's planning, building control and regeneration workload at the time of the project was very high and was set to increase with Stratford City, the Olympics and Canning Town developments coming on stream. Future workload was likely to remain high with an anticipated increase in major planning applications.

SPM put together a comprehensive business case for a number of recruitment and retention initiatives, with the emphasis on achieving a holistic approach to achieve the impact required. Recommendations were therefore made in three key areas: Attracting new talent (recruitment); Managing existing talent (retention) and Managing temporary talent (covering vacancies and temporary fluctuations of workload).

As well as extensive research of the market, focus groups were held with existing staff in the positions affected to gain a complete picture of the current challenges and how they may best be overcome. Detailed recommendations for strategic and operational changes were made including:

Reward and Recognition issues:

Including job gradings, market supplements, retention and performance payments, other benefits or terms and conditions.

Recruitment issues:

Including reputation and brand management, recruitment advertising, online advertising and the web, talent pools, referral schemes, golden hellos, use of recruitment agencies, removal and resettlement, international recruitment and grow your own schemes.

Retention issues:

Including performance management, promotion prospects, golden handcuffs, flexible retirement options, family friendly policies and learning and development opportunities.

Karen Dennis, Business Improvement Manager says, "I have worked with Sarah on this major service review. Sarah's expertise, understanding and enduring patience helped me to deliver a really effective business evaluation and policy change which was ultimately successful."

"Sarah is great to work with and really becomes part of the team. Her honest approach really helps you to get to the heart of what you aim to achieve and delivers precisely what you need".

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