



REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR HR AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

WORKFORCE PLANNING: UPDATE ON WORK BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Personnel Committee on the range of schemes and initiatives which are focused on encouraging young people into the Council's workforce by providing experiential, work based, learning opportunities with Nottinghamshire County Council.

Information and Advice

2. There are a significant number of young people across Nottinghamshire who are not in Employment, Education or Training. In order to help address this the Council has put in place a number of schemes to encourage youth employment by offering work based learning opportunities for young people with the County Council. This also models good employment practice to other organisations across Nottinghamshire and helps encourage them to take similar action.
3. The most recent update report on the schemes in place to offer work based learning opportunities for young people came to Personnel Committee in November 2013. The schemes are now all managed and co-ordinated corporately through the Workforce and Organisational Development team on behalf of the wider Council. In the period since the last report there have been significant developments across the schemes which ensure they are more closely aligned with the Council's workforce planning priorities and better reflect priorities in the Strategic Plan.
4. The schemes in place contribute to the delivery of the Council's wider workforce strategy by helping to address imbalances in the age profile of its workforce by encouraging a greater number of young people to work for the Council. The schemes have the potential to provide progression routes to enable young people to develop a career within the County Council, particularly in areas where there are identified skill shortages.
5. These initiatives also support the Council's wider aspiration to support youth employment across Nottinghamshire as reported to the Economic Development Committee on 6th January 2015. This includes the use of the apprenticeship grant measure to increase the numbers of apprenticeships available to young people through grants to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) recruiting an apprentice for the first time.

Apprenticeship Scheme

6. The County Council continues to further develop its partnership with Futures Apprenticeships Agency to ensure that our internal apprenticeship scheme is an attractive proposition for local young people.
7. Since its inception in June 2011, 135 apprentices have accessed 152 placements with the County Council (there have been more placements than actual apprentices as some individuals have been supported to move on from intermediate to advanced level apprenticeships linked to higher level NVQ qualifications). The move from intermediate to advanced apprenticeships has occurred where it can be shown that the apprentice is capable of working at a higher level and this would significantly improve their employment prospects in certain fields (e.g. youth work).
8. The target number of placements over a rolling 12 month period was previously set at 50. As of 31st March 2015 there were 39 current apprentices in active placements with the Council with a further 23 placements advertised during April and May 2015 to ensure that the Council maintains its target. Following an increase in corporate funding, the target for 2015/16 has been increased to 60 placements in each rolling 12 month period.
9. Apprenticeships have been offered across all districts within the County with a particular emphasis on offering placements in those areas with higher levels of youth unemployment with the intention of attracting apprentices from those areas. The highest numbers of apprentices in the last 12 months are resident in the Ashfield area; followed by those from the Mansfield area.
10. More recently the Council has given the commitment that all Care Leavers who meet the criteria for an apprenticeship and wish to be considered for one will be offered an apprenticeship with the Council.
11. As well as the geographical spread, the success of the scheme also depends on placements being provided across a variety of services and departments. **For the 12 month from 1st April 2014**, this broke down as follows:

Department	Placements
Children, Families and Cultural Services	19
Environment and Resources	18
Adult Social Care and Health	3
Policy, Planning and Corporate Services	1
Public Health	0
Total	41

12. A significant development of the scheme has been the introduction of the age related National Minimum Wage. From April 2014, the Council moved away from paying its apprentices the government trainee rate of £90 per week to paying the national minimum wage. This supports the Council's commitment to fair pay and has improved the number and quality of applications for the Council's scheme.
13. The introduction of the minimum wage has also had a positive impact on the number of apprentices remaining on placement to complete their NVQ. Prior to this, around 40% of

apprentices did not complete the full apprenticeship. Since the minimum wage was introduced this has reduced to around 30%.

14. As well as encouraging apprentices to find employment within the County Council, the scheme is also designed to develop their knowledge, skills and experience and improve their career prospects. Managers are encouraged to support their apprentices in their job seeking efforts towards the end of their placement. Apprentices also receive support and careers advice from Futures as part of the programme. Around 80% of the apprentices with the County Council, who complete the scheme, go on to further or higher education or employment.
15. There has recently been an improved focus on enabling apprentices to access employment opportunities within the authority. Whilst there is no guarantee of a job within the County Council, under current vacancy control arrangements, managers are encouraged to consider applications from apprentices (after those relating to re-deployment have been considered as a priority), for appropriate vacant positions in their service areas.
16. So far both the Customer Service Centre and the Business Support Centre have been proactive in identifying entry level posts suitable for apprentices to apply for and successful in appointing apprentices to these posts. During the period 1st October 2014 to 31st March 2015, 14 apprentices have found employment opportunities with the authority straight from their apprentice placement.

National Graduate Development Programme

17. The Council has been involved in the Local Government Association's National Graduate Development Programme since 2009. The programme aims to build leadership capacity in local government; with a new cohort recruited annually.
18. Graduates recruited through the scheme become National Management Trainees employed by the County Council on a fixed-term two year contract during which they are provided with at least three placement opportunities with a strategic, operational and front line focus. This enables them to develop the leadership and management skills needed to help modernise and bring about improved services in local government.
19. During the period of their fixed term contract the trainees work on a series of projects to deliver operational and strategic priorities across the Council. To date these have included work on the children's social care transformation; child and family poverty strategy; troubled families; MASH; Care Act demand modelling; Deprivation of Liberties process review; Living at Home project; Adult Social Care scheduling of fieldwork assessments; Wellbeing Award –accreditation to gold level award; social work recruitment and retention; business support review and Nottinghamshire Growth Plan.
20. To date, 16 graduate trainees have been taken on by the County Council as part of the programme. There are currently four trainees on the scheme. While there is no guarantee of a job at the end of the scheme all 12 who have left the scheme so far, have secured employment, 5 of those with Nottinghamshire County Council.

21. The County Council is planning to recruit a further three graduates to the scheme as part of this year's recruitment with a start date within the authority of September/October 2015. The intention is that, at any one point, there will be 6 trainees on the scheme with NCC. Those finishing the scheme will hopefully go on to access appropriate positions within the County Council. This supports the Council to build a talent 'pipeline' to develop and retain leadership talent within the organisation.

Nottinghamshire Financial Management Training Scheme (CIPFA traineeships)

22. The current financial challenges facing the public sector have highlighted the need for high quality financial management support. A key consideration for local authorities and other public sector organisations is to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of suitably qualified finance managers in the future. The Nottinghamshire Finance Officers Group has recognised this as a priority which has seen the County Council lead on the development of a collaborative scheme where graduates are recruited to a 39 month programme to provide a range of experience whilst studying for their professional qualifications.

23. 9 trainees were recruited on to the scheme in July 2013 and a further 6 in July 2014. It has been agreed with all partners that there would be no new recruitment to the scheme this year. This is to enable the Council to review the current scheme and to consider a number of options as to how the scheme might be developed and expanded to include other financial trainees such as the new CIPFA apprentice programme.

24. Placements are rotated around participating organisations across the 39 month training period. Placements typically last for six months and are designed to provide trainees with the opportunity to experience a number of disciplines such as audit, management accounts etc. As well as the County Council, the participating organisations are:

- Ashfield District Council
- Bassetlaw District Council
- Mansfield District Council
- Newark & Sherwood District Council
- Nottinghamshire Police
- Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Nottingham City CCG
- Nottingham Healthcare Trust
- County Health Partnership
- Grant Thornton

25. As of the 31st March 2015 there were 13 trainees on the scheme. Of the 2 trainees who have left the scheme one did so to take up a substantive role with the County Council's Transformation Team and the other secured a permanent position with Broxtowe Borough Council.

26. Trainees recruited during July 2013 will soon be entering the final year of their traineeship and it is anticipated that a number of them will find positions within the finance teams of participating organisations.

Other professional traineeship opportunities

27. Other areas of service provide on the job training opportunities and access to specialist professional training for small numbers of employees. For example the health and safety and HR teams.
28. The Council is also an accredited training location for public health registrars and foundation year doctors. Colleagues in the Public Health Team offer supervision and training to health colleagues as part of their rotation. In return the Council benefits from the additional capacity and fresh ideas from the trainees.
29. A separate item on the agenda outlines the development of a Centre for Knowledge and Practice development for Social Care. Working in partnership with local universities, Nottingham City, Derbyshire County Council and Health colleagues; this will build on our previous good practice and ensure high quality training for social work students and qualified social work practitioners across the partnership, including offering work based placements.

Work Experience Placement Scheme

30. Short term, unpaid, work experience opportunities are offered by the Council in support of its aspiration to be an exemplar of good employment practice through encouraging people back into the workplace and engaging young people to consider the career options available to them in the local government and wider public sector.
31. The central co-ordination of placements for all services and locations across the County Council ensures the process for applications and allocation is consistent and streamlined. Placements are unpaid, typically last for up to two weeks and are offered across the authority for:
 - School pupils aged 14-18
 - School leavers
 - Undergraduates and graduates
 - People wanting a change of career
 - Returners to work.
32. Work experience applications are made through the County Council's website and whilst there is no guarantee of a placement, every effort is made to try and accommodate requests. For the period **1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015** 114 placements were arranged or are awaiting arrangement.
33. These placements have been spread across the Council's departments. A successful placement requires a considerable investment in managerial / supervisory time and the scheme relies on managerial commitment and participation.
34. A high number of placement requests fall outside of the current scope of the scheme. The Council is currently reviewing the focus of the work experience scheme with a view to broadening the range and duration of placements available and engaging more managers across the whole Council to improve the placement success rate.

35. Consideration is also being given to whether work placements of longer than 10 working days in duration and sandwich course/industrial placements could be offered more routinely. This includes working with the local Universities to identify potential placements for a wider range of students. Placements are already provided for social work students in social care settings.

Proposals for further development:

36. The Workforce and Organisational Development team are working closely with colleagues from across the Council to identify further opportunities to develop the various schemes across the Council including:

- Creating greater synergies with Economic Development Team in relation to the employment of apprentices in SME businesses across the county
- Integrating elements of the Apprentice and Work Experience schemes with other initiatives aimed at providing opportunities for Nottinghamshire Care Leavers to support the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities
- The adoption of the new national CIPFA Apprentice scheme to create career pathways for young people to gain employment in the public sector
- Engaging direct with Public Health colleagues to proactively explore the potential for further Work Based Learning opportunities
- Development of the regional Centre for Social Care Knowledge and Practice Development for Social Work training, for which NCC would be the lead partner, to be hosted in the corporate Workforce Planning and Organisational Development team
- Work more closely with District Councils to identify a wider range of employment opportunities.
- Ensure that the provision of apprenticeships is taken into account when developing arms length delivery models.

Other Options Considered

37. A range of options to continue and broaden the overall approach are currently under consideration.

Reason for Recommendations

38. To keep members informed of the range of initiatives to support work based learning opportunities available across the Council which support the strategic objective of increasing youth employment and enhance the Council's workforce capacity.

Statutory and Policy Implications

39. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such

implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

40. Centrally allocated budget is available to enable managers to take on an Apprentices and some services also fund their own placements. Traineeships are centrally funded. There is no cost arising from the work experience scheme.

Human Resources Implications

41. The human resource issues are identified in the report. Any recruitment processes will be in line with agreed County Council policy and processes. The trade unions have previously been consulted on the apprenticeship scheme and have commented on the Council's approach.

Equality implications

42. The Council works actively with partner organisations to endeavour to attract a diverse cohort, representative of all protected characteristics, to participate in all of its experiential work based learning schemes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Personnel Committee:

1. Note the achievements and focus to date of the Council's experiential work based learning initiatives.
2. Note the proposals for further developments of the schemes involved to ensure improved alignment with the Council's workforce planning priorities.
3. Agree to receive regular annual update reports, the next in July 2016.

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Constitutional Comments (KK 09/06/15)

45. The proposals in this report are within the remit of Personnel Committee.

Financial Comments (SES 09/06/15)

46. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Trades union side comments.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All