



6th November 2013

Agenda Item: 5

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR HR AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

WORKFORCE PLANNING - WORK EXPERIENCE AND WORKBASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Personnel Committee with an update on the range of work related learning and experiential opportunities, to date predominantly targeted towards young people aged 16-24, which are hosted or directly provided within the County Council and an analysis of participation and outcomes to date.

Information and Advice

2. Approximately 958,000 young people in the U.K aged 16-24 are currently without work.
3. As at June 2013, almost three quarters (74.9%) of unemployed claimants in the whole of Nottinghamshire were under 45 years of age, the largest number being in the 25-44 age group; which accounts for 46.6% of the total.
4. Good work experience placements and quality apprenticeships can offer an alternative, high quality route into work and help improve youth employability.
5. Previous and current government policy is geared towards improving employability skills through apprenticeship schemes and providing improved career guidance through the newly formed, National Careers Council.
6. Most recently, in a bid to develop the employability skills of young learners, the Skills Funding Agency have set up a £1 billion Youth Contract which aims to use apprenticeships and voluntary work experience placements to provide nearly half a million new opportunities for 18-24 year olds.
7. New research by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (August 2013), claims that 54% of young people in the UK would opt to undertake an apprenticeship if one were available to them, this figure rose to 56% among university students, and to 66% of young people who were already employed but received no training, according to statistics published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).
8. As part of its aspiration to be an exemplar of good employment practice to other organisations across Nottinghamshire, regionally and nationally, to tackle youth unemployment in the County, and to get people back to work thereby helping local communities to thrive, the County Council already provides work experience

opportunities across its full range of services and geographical locations and is looking to develop this further.

Background:

9. In March 2012 Personnel Committee received an update report about the range of work related learning opportunities offered directly by the County Council through a range of short term work experience, apprenticeships and graduate traineeships.
10. This will interface with the Council's Economic Development Strategy 2013-17, (discussed at Economic Development Committee on 17th October with a view to sign off at the December meeting of Policy Committee), which will have as one of its key themes "Jobs Skills and Training" including an overview of apprenticeships, traineeships and youth employment policy across the county of Nottinghamshire.
11. The current programme of work experience and learning opportunities which are co-ordinated and managed through the Council's Workforce and Organisational Development team within the HR function, is summarised below:

Provision and participation:

National Graduate Development Programme - NGDP

12. Now managed through the Workforce and Organisational Development team, the Council has been involved in the Local Government Association NGDP scheme since 2009. The scheme provides National Management Trainees (NMT's) who have leadership potential with the capacity to modernise, challenge and improve services and service delivery. Being part of the NGDP allows the County Council to start thinking earlier about longer-term succession planning and future leadership potential.
13. The County Council currently employs 4 NMT's on a two year contract. In October 2013 four new NMT's will join Nottinghamshire County Council building internal capacity to deliver high level initiatives and projects working alongside experienced members of staff. These individuals have been employed across the Council to help deliver a range of projects across strategic, support and front line services (**see appendix B**).
14. Whilst there is no commitment to find the graduates work within the Council at the end of their contract, in the last 2 years all County Council trainees have achieved employment in the local government sector, 3 of the 4 NMT's are now substantively employed by the County Council in project management and in executive support to the Children, Families and Cultural Services senior leadership team.
15. The overall response from participants in the NGDP scheme has been very positive as the quotes set out in **appendix A** indicate.

Financial Management CIPFA Trainees (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy)

16. The current financial challenges facing the public sector generally, and local government specifically, 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.
17. The Nottinghamshire Finance Officers Group (whose membership includes the Chief Financial Officers of all Nottinghamshire local authorities, as well as the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service) recognise this as a priority and, led by the County Council, have worked towards the development of a collaborative scheme.
18. The scheme was launched in July 2013 with the first cohort of 9 trainees being employed on a fixed-term, 39 month contract. The trainees will study, by day release at Nottingham Trent University, for their Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) qualification. CIPFA is the professional body for people in public finance and the County Council has traditionally supported CIPFA training.
19. The scheme is currently being delivered through the Workforce and Organisational Development team in partnership with 6 district councils, the Office of the Police and Crime Commission and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. To date the scheme has been very well received and other public sector employers, locally and nationally, are showing interest in the approach.
20. Trainees rotate placements around the participating organisations across the training period. This provides them with a breadth of knowledge and practical experience of working within different organisations, also allowing recruitment and training costs to be shared amongst participating employers, thereby also allowing for a greater number of trainees.
21. There is no guarantee of a job at the end of the placement period and there are strict conditions governing payback of earnings if participants leave prior to satisfactory completion of all examinations and assessments.
22. The overall response from participants in the CIPFA schemes had been very positive as the quotes in **appendix A** highlight.

Nottinghamshire County Council Apprenticeship Scheme

23. The Council's own scheme was established in 2011 in partnership with Futures Apprentice Agency, originally with the aim of providing 25 placements for young people aged 16-18.
24. The scheme was extended in 2012 with a target of providing a minimum of 50 opportunities at any one time for young people aged 16-24 to access a variety of work related learning opportunities at Nottinghamshire County Council, such as libraries, youth work, catering, highways, business administration and customer service.

25. There are three levels of Apprenticeship: intermediate, advanced and higher. County Council placements are aimed at those young people wishing to achieve intermediate level. On occasion, due to candidate qualification level, the Council has offered placements at advanced level. Also a small number of apprentices from the 2012 –13 cohort have been given an opportunity to continue to the advanced level qualification.
26. Placements usually last for 52 weeks depending upon the type of apprenticeship. As at 30th September 2013, 56 apprentices are in existing placements across the Council (42 of these apprentices are studying at intermediate level and a further 14 are completing advanced apprenticeships).
27. 53 new placements have been generated for September 2013-14, 22 of which were yet to be recruited to as at 30th September.
28. Apprentices have been placed throughout the county with the largest numbers being in the Ashfield district; where 17% of the apprentices are based. Placements have therefore drawn young people from many different districts. The table below shows the resident districts for current apprentices, the highlighted districts are those with the highest level of social deprivation in the County.

Resident District	Number of apprentices
Bassetlaw	5
Newark & Sherwood	7
Mansfield	7
Ashfield	11
Gedling	4
Broxtowe	4
Rushcliffe	7
Nottingham City	8
Derbyshire	3

**Based on most recent English Indices of Deprivation, 2010, the Governments preferred measure of deprivation which ranks areas of the country according to the relative levels of deprivation.*

29. The table below shows the numbers of current placements by department:

Department	Total number of apprentices placed
CFCS	34
E & R	17
ASCH & PP	5
PPCS	0
Total	56

**As at 30th September 2013*

30. Nottinghamshire County Council's apprenticeship scheme has primarily focused on engaging 16 – 18 year olds. However as there is evidence that participation in apprenticeships for 16 – 18 year olds is declining and youth unemployment amongst 18 – 24 year olds has the greatest growth, the scheme has now been extended to include those up to the age of 24 years. The table below shows the number of apprentices currently in placements by age:

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Number	10	16	20	9	0	0	1	0	0

31. The aim of the apprenticeship scheme is to help young people gain employment and increase their employability skills. The County Council is under no obligation to offer employment to the apprentice at the end of the placement; however this would be the desired outcome if a suitable vacancy was available at the time. Apprentices are also able to apply for internal positions.

32. The table below shows the destinations for those apprentices completing the scheme during 2012-13. The majority have remained with the County Council, either gaining employment or undertaking further training, or secure employment elsewhere in the public sector.

Outcomes at end of apprenticeship	Number of apprentices
Employment with NCC	9
Advanced level apprenticeship with NCC	7
Employment with other public sector organisation	3
Employment with other organisations	0
Advanced level apprenticeship with other organisations	1
Further education	1
Higher education	2
Unemployed	1

**Of the 54 young people who were taken on placement for 2012 -13, 6 did not complete their apprenticeships & 24 will be completing their placement in the next couple of months.*

Work Experience Placement Scheme

33. Work experience opportunities provided by the County Council across the full range of its services and geographical locations support its aspiration, as an exemplar of good employment practice, to help local communities to thrive by tackling youth unemployment and getting people back into work.

34. The Workforce and Organisational Development team have responsibility for co-ordinating short, unpaid, work experience placements centrally. This provides an overview of the activity and helps to ensure the process is consistent, streamlined and evaluated so that improvements can be made on a continuous basis.

35. Placements, which typically last for one week, are offered across the authority, predominantly for young people, and can be arranged for:

- school pupils aged 14-18

- school leavers
- undergraduates
- graduates
- people wanting a change of career
- others looking for work experience

36. Applications for the school work experience scheme come through school work experience co-ordinators, parents/relatives or direct from the pupils themselves and are open to any school pupil from Year 10 upwards. Many County schools and pupils value the benefits of work experience in shaping young people's perceptions of the world of work. These placements:

- provide valuable insight into the world of work
- help pupils to learn about a particular occupation
- offer valuable personal skills such as independence and team work
- provide increased levels of self confidence
- offer an understanding of the expectations of employers

37. Other work experience gives an individual the chance to experience a particular area of work, providing them with:

- An opportunity to help bridge the gap between studying and working
- Hands on experience that can help them get a foot on the ladder of their chosen career
- Valuable experience in a field that matches their skills and interests
- A chance to experience working in a new field if they need to change their career pathway
- A boost to their confidence, helping them in the search for work

38. The table below demonstrates that, from a total of 196 applications received in the last 18 months, 80 placements have been arranged, of which 75 were completed by the end of August 2013 and the rest of the placements are either on-going or still to start.

March 2012 – September 2013

Department:	Number of placements:
Environment and Resources	38
Children, Families and Cultural services	22
Policy, Planning and Corporate Services	10
Adults Social Care, Health and Public Protection	12
Total	80

39. Of these applications, 46 work experience placements were offered to school pupils, 17 placements were taken up by undergraduates or college students, 6 placements were offered to graduates and 6 placements were offered to older adults. A number of applicants either decided to accept an alternative placement or did not respond to follow-up communications.

40. Nottinghamshire County Council does not support the current Government's "Work Programme" and the Council has now discontinued its previous relationship with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through Job Centre Plus in this respect.

Traineeships

41. The Young People's Service, within its broader study programme for 16-19 year olds, is also developing a range of traineeships to secure young people's progression into apprenticeships or sustainable employment. 20 placements are envisaged initially within the Council which would sit alongside and compliment the Council's existing programmes of apprenticeships and work experience.
42. The traineeships would be aimed at 16-19 years olds qualified below level 3 or 19-24 year olds who have not yet achieved a full level 2 qualification who are not currently in work and have had little or no work experience but are focussed on work.
43. A substantial placement of six months average duration will be provided to give the young person meaningful work experience to develop work based skills; provide work training skills such as CV writing, interview preparation and interpersonal skills; provide support to improve Maths and English and a range of flexible support and training to ensure that at the end of the placement the young person is able to progress onto an apprenticeship or secure employment.
44. The Workforce and Organisational Development team are currently working with the Young People's Service to ensure the programmes of work are joined effectively and compliment each other to further improve outcomes for young people .

Next steps

45. Continuing to directly provide work based experience and the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to access sustainable employment opportunities either with the Council or with other local employers and more widely would enable the Council to take a lead role, as one of the largest employers in the County, in supporting the delivery of its strategic priorities relating to Economic Growth and Attainment.
46. There is potential, as part of a refreshed Workforce Strategy, to underpin the Council's new Strategic Plan for 2014-18, to expand current in house activity aimed at young people and to build on this provision to include more opportunities for unemployed adults in the wider community.

Other Options Considered

47. No options other than continuation and broadening of the approach are currently under consideration although the details of how this will be achieved are still under discussion.

Reasons for Recommendations

48. The apprenticeship scheme forms part of the County Council's overall Youth Employment and Employability strategy which focuses on increasing employment opportunities for the 16-24 age group and developing the skills and employability of this age range across the County. Increasing the take up of apprenticeships is a key strategy both locally and nationally and benefits both young people and employers.
49. The apprenticeship scheme also feeds into the Council's Workforce Performance Indicator to increase the number of young people aged 16-25 employed by the County Council from 5.20% (March 2013 figure), of its total direct workforce to 7.00% by 1st April 2014 thereby contributing to improving the diversity of the age profile of the Council's workforce and encourage new ideas and innovation.

Statutory and Policy Implications

50. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Human Resources Implications

51. 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.

Financial Implications

52. The cost of the Apprenticeship Scheme is £6,210 per apprentice (16–18 year olds) per annum which equates to an hourly rate of £2.65p, rising to £2.68p hour from 1st October 2013. If an apprenticeship is extended beyond a year and the young person is 19 years old they go on to the national minimum wage rate (currently £4.98 per hour for 19 – 20 year olds, and £6.19 per hour for 21 – 24 year olds, due to increase to £5.03 and £6.31 respectively from 1st October 2013). Central funding of £300,000 was originally made available to fund the apprentice's salary, agency costs etc and encourage a greater number of opportunities. A number of additional placements have also been paid for direct by departments.
53. The County Council currently employs 4 NMT's on a two year contract at a salary of £22,958. The Local Government Association charge a one off subsidised fee of £2,000 (per NMT) for a comprehensive national recruitment and assessment centre approach and the delivery of an ILM Level 7 (two year post graduate study)

qualification in Strategic Leadership.

54. The CIPFA course requires a three year commitment to study from the employee with significant study in their own personal time. The course itself requires the completion of assessed modules, each of which culminates in an examination. In line with other best practice CIPFA schemes the trainees gain salary increases upon passing examinations and gaining a satisfactory performance appraisal, as follows:

- Starting salary - £19,621
- After passing the certificate stage (12 months) - £22,221
- After passing the diploma stage (18 months) - £25,472.

The other partner employers pay a contribution towards salaries and training costs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

1. Note the progress that has been made to date in developing a breadth of work related learning opportunities at the County Council and the positive comments made by those involved with the scheme.
2. Support the future development of work experience opportunities for young people and other unemployed people within the County as part of the Council's wider Workforce Strategy.

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Constitutional Comments (KK 04/10/13)

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

Financial Comments (SEM 03/10/13)

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

Background Papers

Report to Economic Development Committee 9th July 2013 – Apprenticeships Update

Report to Personnel Committee 20th March 2013 – (NCC) Apprenticeships Scheme

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

Appendix A:

Evaluation of Placement Outcomes and Feedback from Schemes:

The overall response to completed placements had been very positive as the following quotes illustrate:

1. NCC Apprenticeships:

Apprentices:

- *"The apprenticeship has helped me to experience youth work in a whole new way and made me realise exactly how much I want to be a youth worker"*
- *"As for the work placement where I was placed, Nottinghamshire County Council – I couldn't have wished for a bigger or better organisation to get my administrative training".*
- *"Working as an apprentice has opened up a lot of doors for me.... I have ambitions to learn more, go on to university and progress my career".*
- *"I feel like I have found what I want to do with the rest of my life. This is definitely something I want to continue to do in the future so I'm really happy".*
- *"To any young person who is considering what to do with their future I would definitely urge them to consider apprenticeships. You can gain qualifications but also experience of working at first hand".*
- *"I really enjoyed my apprenticeship here and I'm so glad I've got a permanent job now as a Highways trainee. Even if I hadn't got the job here, I'd still have walked out of the apprenticeship with lots of transferable skills that would make me much more employable than before".*
- *"I learned so much on my apprenticeship here. Customer Service skills are essential to most jobs now – especially in local authorities. But my apprenticeship also equipped me for the world of work in a way that a more traditional route doesn't. I had previously been studying for my A Levels but I decided that an apprenticeship would be a better way to get a good job as I didn't want to go to university."*

Managers:

- *"We will really miss our apprentice, she has been excellent"*
- *"It's hard work to begin with and you do have to put the hours in but it's worth it to see the apprentice progress"*
- *"She is like a breath of fresh air".*

2. NGDP participants :

- *"The scheme has reaffirmed my decision to work in Local Government, and I am committed and determined to progress my career through to management level. I have relished the opportunity to work on real projects and produce work and strategies that have had a real and beneficial impact on Nottinghamshire's communities".*
- *"The support that I have received both during my placements and in regards to career development has been fantastic, and has helped me to develop skills and experience for my future career".*
- *"The experience has enabled me to develop my skills, gain further responsibility and consider areas, having worked in different departments, in which I would like to pursue my career beyond the scheme".*

- *"I've had a variety of opportunities for development, for example through project management, analysis, and stakeholder engagement. This is strongly supported by a strong placement co-ordinator and a robust framework for personal development that makes sure you're getting the most out of the scheme".*
- *"The structure of the scheme with placements in different authorities allows me to gain a very broad base of experience, giving the strongest possible foundation for a career in finance in the public sector".*

3. CIPFA trainees:

- *"The structure of the scheme with placements in different authorities allows me to gain a very broad base of experience, giving the strongest possible foundation for a career in finance in the public sector"*
- *"In just a few months, I've learned a great deal about finance in a district council. I've taken on a number of roles in the office, been part of meetings involving senior officers of the council and become a part of the team here in Ashfield. After half a year, I get to move on to another authority and experience all this again from a different perspective. I can't think of a better education in workings of finance and local government"*
- *"The scheme offers excellent support to me as a trainee, both from those at NCC who manage the scheme, and from colleagues at my first placement at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. I feel I have been given the chance to contribute early on, and I have learned so much about the challenges facing local government and my placement organisation".*
- *"I am learning a great deal about a variety of local authority finance functions on my placement and am looking forward to experiencing all aspects of accountancy as I progress through the scheme. The CIPFA qualification is a very important aspect of the scheme".*
- *"I have already gained a great deal of insight through, transferring concepts of accounting fundamentals taught in university, into real life daily practices. It is definitely an exciting prospect and I am so pleased to have Police as my first placement".*
- *"What I find really unique and attractive about this scheme is that we [trainees] are able to undertake placements across the numerous public sector organisations partaking in the scheme. This enables us to quickly gain varied work-experience and skill-sets which we are able to apply in different contexts, as well as gaining a though understanding of the financial and strategic issues public sector organisations face".*
- *"Everyone I work with at placement and at County Hall is so supportive and this has helped me settle quickly in to my new role. I am looking forward to starting the CIPFA qualification in September as I believe this will open up a lot of doors and will enable me to create a successful and exciting career for myself".*

4. Work Experience:

- *"..... thank you again so much for your help. Within the space of 24 hours my request for this opportunity has not only been responded to but arranged by X (the manager), could not have been more accommodating and I am now very much looking forward to spending time in the Registration Service"*
- *"X worked with 9 members of the Team, and covered various elements of Procurement. He also attended a CLDT Invoice Consolidation meeting. He was a very polite and courteous young man, and seemed very bright."*

- *"We were able to provide the student with a broad range of experience, and allow her to do some work which will be used by us in the future - she therefore felt she was doing something worthwhile for us."*
- *"I spent some time with X talking him through the revenue budget, how it is funded and the challenges currently faced by the County Council. I also talked him through the capital programme so that he could understand both the scale and scope of it. X asked some good questions throughout and generally showed a high level of interest."*

Appendix B:

NGDP – Range of Project work undertaken			
Year 2010/2011	Year 2011/2012	Year 2012/2013	2013/Future
Improvement Programme - Service Reviews including HR	Communications Review	Living at Home Project - Admissions to Care	Wellbeing Strategy
Corporate standards for policy writing	Services to schools - strategic review	Re-design of Home Based Services	Strategy for Workplace Health (Public Health)
Pilot project set up - 24 hour care at home	Review of operating procedures at National Water Sports Centre	Lean Plus Projects	Nottinghamshire Growth Plan – developing a sector approach
Redesign & centralise business support in CYPS	Library Service - exploring new models for service offer and developing a volunteering programme	Troubled Families including Business Process Mapping (now a national model)	Finance ASCH
ASCH - Night Response	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub - MASH	Base Budget Review	Sexual Violence Strategy
Big Society	Review of Management Choices Brochure - Services for Schools	Day Care Transport review	Review of provided services for looked after children
Putting People First project	Child & Family Poverty Strategy	Improvement Programme	Lean business process re-engineering - accounts payable
Chief Executive's Office - Policy Officer		Executive Officer CFCS	Medium Term Finance Strategy
		Young people coming into care - early prevention / review of systems and processes.	Living at Home - Joint Working and Integrating with Health
		Living at Home - Joint Working and Integrating with Health	Implementing Operation Encompass, an automatic reporting mechanism for domestic violence incidents where children are involved.
			Early Help Strategy and Action Plan

