

Committee:	Union Employee Consultation Committee	Agenda Item No.:	6.
Date:	6 th November 2009	Category	
Subject:	Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme Update – July to September 2009	Status	Open
Report by:	Head of Human Resources and Payroll		
Other Officers involved:	Senior Management Team		
Director	Chief Executive Officer		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	People and Performance		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities through providing apprenticeships across the public sector in Derbyshire

TARGETS

The subject matter does not contribute directly to a target in the Corporate Plan – but will impact on NI152 and NI153 – which measure the number of working age people claiming out of work benefits.

VALUE FOR MONEY

The proposals deliver value for money for the Council and its residents, by providing 75 apprenticeship places across the public sector, which will provide both work experience and training to NVQ Level 2, and should lead to a reduction in worklessness across the District.

THE REPORT

On 12th August at Full Council, the Chief Executive Officer presented a report to gain approval for the creation of 75 apprenticeships across the public sector within Bolsover District Council boundaries.

The apprenticeships will last for an 18 month period, during which the apprentice will have an opportunity to gain an NVQ Level 2 qualification in their chosen area.

In brief the breakdown of the 75 apprentices in the Bolsover District is as follows:

- Three cohorts of unemployed 16-18 year olds will be recruited to be placed 'in house' at the Council, in January 2010, September 2010 and January 2011, making a total of 15 apprenticeships.

- Two cohorts of unemployed 18-24 year olds will be recruited to work in public sector partner organisations in January and October 2010, making a total of 40 apprenticeships.
- Two cohorts of unemployed 25 plus year olds from designated unemployment 'hotspots' will be recruited to work in public sector partner organisations in April and October 2011, making a total of 20 apprenticeships. Eligible wards are Bolsover North West, Elmton with Creswell, Shirebrook East, Shirebrook Langwith, Shirebrook North West and Shirebrook South East.

It is proposed to offer apprenticeships in Business and Administration, Active Leisure and Learning, Construction, Amenity Horticulture, Health and Social Care, Advice Guidance, Passenger Carrying Vehicle Driving, Youth Work and Customer Service dependent on partner support.

Programme Coordination

A cross organisational Project Steering Group has been established to oversee the project and has now met on two occasions.

There will be a programme management team within Human Resources which will comprise:

- Apprenticeship Programme Coordinator (part funded by Chesterfield WNF to assist with their 30 apprenticeships funded through Future Jobs Fund)
- Apprenticeship Programme Officer (Bolsover only)
- Apprentice (Business/Admin.)

The Apprenticeship Programme Coordinator has been appointed and commenced work on 15th October 2009. Interviews for the Apprenticeship Officer took place on 16th October 2009, and an offer of employment has been made subject to pre-employment checks.

Until this team is fully appointed, an interim project management support is in place.

Latest Position at 5.10.09

The programme team are currently focussing on the January Cohort of 5 in house 16-18 year olds and 20 externally placed 18-24 year olds. Offers are available now to host all of the first 25 apprentices as follows:

16-18 year olds

1 x HR (Business/Admin)

4 x Leisure (Active Leisure and Learning)

18-24 year olds

All are being placed across Chesterfield Royal Hospital or with the Derbyshire PCT. Apprenticeships being offered are:

- Construction (2)
- Business/Admin (14)
- Amenity Horticulture (1)
- Health and Social Care (3)

A training specification has been circulated to training providers and there will be a selection exercise on 13th October 2010 involving relevant partners from the Project Steering Group.

Job Descriptions, Contracts and Partner Agreements have been drafted and circulated for comments.

A vacancy template has been produced by Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and work is underway to commence the targeted advertising of these apprenticeships for the 18-24 and 25 plus age groups. Assessment Centres will take place in November, with successful candidates being referred to the partner organisations for interview by the end of November. Conditional offers will then be made by the beginning of December to allow pre-employment checks to be undertaken, with a view to the first cohort commencing on 18 January 2010.

Clear criteria has been developed for the 16-18 year old age group and sent to Connexions for targeted advertising with a view to meeting the same timescales in terms of the other groups as outlined above.

The next steps will be to develop an induction programme to deliver to this first cohort, and then consider the lessons learnt before commencing recruitment of the first 10 x 25 plus age group.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Members of the Committee are asked to note progress being made on the Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme. A further update will be provided to the next meeting.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial : None – this project is externally funded by Future Jobs Fund and WNF

Legal : None

Human Resources : As outlined in the report

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received.

ATTACHMENT: **N**
FILE REFERENCE: **N/A**
SOURCE DOCUMENT: **N/A**