

## PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

## Strategic Policy and Resources Committee – 21 November 2012

**MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS, PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIPS &  
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN PERTH & KINROSS****Report by Head of Human Resources****ABSTRACT**

This report outlines how Perth and Kinross Council as an employer will demonstrate its commitment to the Council's Employability Strategy. This paper highlights what the Council has done to meet the commitment made to the Scottish Government to deliver 250 new Modern Apprenticeships and 30 new Professional Traineeships over the next 5 years to help tackle unemployment in Perth and Kinross.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee

(a) Note the progress to date

(b) Agree the proposals listed below are actioned appropriately:-

- In developing future workforce plans services continue to give priority to their commitment to funding Modern Apprenticeship (MA) posts
- Entry level posts factored into all structure reviews
- Ringfence all suitable GE1 and GE2 posts internally.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 In February 2012, the Council committed £250,000 per annum to deliver 250 new Modern Apprenticeships and 30 new Professional Traineeships over the next 5 years to help tackle unemployment in Perth and Kinross. This approach clearly addresses the dilemma young people find themselves in, which is they cannot get a job without work experience and cannot get experience without a job.

2.2 In March 2012, the Council's Corporate Management Group considered a report by the Depute Director (Housing & Community Care) and the Head of Human Resources agreeing that the Council would review the Modern Apprenticeship programme and a proposal to provide a personalised route for those seeking to develop employability skills to gain permanent employment was endorsed.

**3. PROGRESS TO DATE****3.1 Modern Apprenticeships**

3.1.1 Over the past 7 months there has been a significant increase in the number and range of Modern Apprenticeships established within the Council. To date,

the Council has in post 60 Modern Apprentices; 57 within the Council with a further 3 employed by Live Active. The breakdown is as follows:

<b>Service/ Partner</b>	<b>Number of Modern Apprentices</b>	<b>Occupational Areas</b>
Chief Executive's Service	5	Business Administration
Housing & Community Care	19	Customer Service Business Administration
The Environment Service	18	Horticulture Mechanics Business Administration
Education & Children's Services	15	Information Technology Business Administration
Live Active	3	Sport & Recreation
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	

- 3.1.2 A second recruitment drive is planned for November of this year in the areas of Youth Work, Social Care, School Laboratory Technicians, Communications/ Public Relations and Business Administration, with a view to recruiting a further 10 Modern Apprentices.
- 3.1.3 Youth Work, School Laboratory Technicians and Communications/Public Relations Vocational Qualifications are all new occupational areas for Perth and Kinross Council – the Communications/Public Relations Scottish Vocational Qualification being a first for Scotland as it is only available in England at present.
- 3.1.4 Draft service workforce plans have now been produced and all four services have identified that a priority is to create opportunities for young people by developing new modern apprentice routes and Scottish Vocational accredited qualifications to support services on outcomes.
- 3.1.5 The Council also intend to fund from the corporate budget 3 apprenticeships following on from the CoSLA New Horizons Voyages - Ocean Youth Trust Scotland initiative, a programme developed in partnership with CoSLA and Young Scot. 2 placements will be with partner organisations, 1 will be within Housing & Community Care.
- 3.1.6 Corporate funding will also be utilised to support the upskilling of PKAVS staff at the Walled Garden so that they can assess and verify clients in obtaining a Scottish Vocational Qualification in Customer Service, with the objective of supporting long term clients into sustained employment and a modern apprentice will be recruited for placement at PKAVS headquarters in Perth.
- 3.1.7 A partnership arrangement is now in place with Jobcentre Plus offering targeted work experience placements for those who are close to readiness for the labour market.

- 3.1.8 Therefore, following the recruitment drive in November 2012, the Council will have a total of 74 young people undertaking a Skills Development Scotland Modern Apprenticeship which means that in the first 7 months of the 5 year programme, the Council has significantly exceeded its target of placing 50 young people per year on a modern apprenticeship.

### **3.2 Professional Traineeships/Craft Apprenticeships**

- 3.2.1 To date 9 Professional Trainees/Craft Apprentices have been recruited within the Council, The breakdown is as follows -

<b>Service</b>	<b>No of Professional Trainees</b>	<b>Occupational Areas</b>
Chief Executive's	1	Human Resources
Housing & Community Care	2	Plumbing and Bricklaying
The Environment Service	6	3 in Civil Engineering 1 in Architectural Services 1 in Electrical Services 1 in Facilities Mgt Services
	9	

- 3.1.2 In addition to the above the Council is presently in the process of recruiting a further 2 Professional Trainees within Legal Services and Planning & Regeneration. This will bring the total number of Professional Trainees/Craft Apprentices recruited to 11 within the first year, well on target to achieve the overall target of 30 over the 5 year period.

## **4. PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 It is proposed that services currently committed to employing an MA, continue to do so as the additional budget resource approved by the Council in February is conditional on existing MA numbers being maintained.
- 4.2 The offer to young people must be genuine and holistic as a fragmented approach will not achieve the success the Council has mapped out. From whatever perspective, it is complicated but there are 5 steps that can be focussed on in order to achieve success:
1. Raise awareness with Community Planning Partners, the Third Sector and the Private Sector
  2. Dispel the myth around young people and the perception that young people are a burden
  3. Identify wider range of routes into employment for MAs
  4. Greater employer ownership – tenure does not mean talent
  5. Engage in partnerships that work.
- 4.3 To ensure the Modern Apprentices achieve their Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) presents a significant challenge over the 12 month period so that they are skilled and qualified to uptake permanent employment.

Finding sustained employment is challenging and therefore workforce planning and succession planning are a prerequisite. There is a need to think more strategically about how young people can be integrated not only into the Council but how through negotiations employment opportunities can be created by workforce planning with Community Planning Partners, the Third Sector and private businesses.

- 4.4 The Council will be reviewing the composition of its workforce as it makes decisions about the range and level of services on offer and therefore numerous transformation projects and organisational restructures will commence in due course. It is proposed that Services incorporate proposals for entry level posts into any new structure that emerge from transformation projects, linked into career paths to support growing our own and to change the age profile of the workforce.
- 4.5 Human Resources will work in close partnership with Planning & Regeneration to ensure what is happening in the wider economic community is linked back to employability initiatives within the Council. Working together, the two services need to determine how the Council can enhance its role to support the Private Sector more effectively around the Modern Apprentice offer.
- 4.6 Further work will be undertaken to scope out how the Council engage and are more creative with Community Planning Partners, the Third Sector and the Private Sector. Dialogue has already been initiated with Horsecross, PKAVS, YMCA and the business leaders of community campuses in this regard. Localism is the key as we know our young people and we know our employers.
- 4.7 The Council is a major employer and over the past 3 years has advertised 190 clerical entry level GE1 and GE2 posts - 75% of these vacancies were advertised externally.
- 4.8 It is proposed all suitable GE1 and GE2 posts that the MA population could be successfully recruited to are held as internal only as the Council's Recruitment & Selection policy states that for entry level posts, interviews will be guaranteed for job applicants who are on formal training/apprenticeship programmes or work placements with the Council which are nearing completion, or who are on employability related programmes in our schools.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Executive Directors (Housing and Community Care) and (Environment) have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The Council committed £250,000 per annum to deliver 250 new Modern Apprenticeships and 30 new Professional Traineeships over the next 5 years to help tackle unemployment in Perth and Kinross.

## **7. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009-2012**

The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:-

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) Healthy, Caring Communities
- (iii) A Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy
- (iv) Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens
- (v) Confident, Active and Inclusive Communities

This report meets objectives (iii) and (iv).

## **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)**

This report was considered under the Corporate Equality Assessment Framework and assessed in relation to the age, race, gender, disability and other relevant protected characteristics. The determination was made that the items summarised in this report are expected to have a positive impact on the age diversity of the workforce in particular the 16-24 age group.

## **9. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).

The matters presented in this report were considered under the Act and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 Perth and Kinross Council will, by January 2013, have 74 young people on Modern Apprenticeships, thus exceeding its target to place 50 young people in 2012/13 into placements. 11 young people will be on professional traineeships – making an impact on the target of 30 over the next five years.
- 10.2 The Council is a clear champion for the young people in communities and plays a fundamental role in seeking out opportunities to place young people into apprenticeships and permanent work in a depressed labour market.
- 10.3 This requires leadership and a concerted effort from all as the future of local youth lies with the Council and Community Planning Partners. Third Sector and social enterprises will also become key routes for young people to find employment. Consideration also needs to be given as to how the Council can enhance its role to support the Private Sector in providing opportunities for young people.

- 10.4 Whilst recognising the landscape the Council is navigating is difficult given the financial and workforce measurement challenges to be faced over the next 5 years, it needs to ensure the offer to young people is genuine and holistic as a fragmented approach will not achieve success. If the benchmark set in the first year of the programme can be sustained, it will achieve the Council's commitment to youth unemployment and prepare young people for their role as adults in the community.

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