

**PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**

**Executive Sub-Committee of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee -  
30 July 2015**

**WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT – RECRUITMENT MEASURES AND  
LEARN TO TEACH PROGRAMME**

**Report by Corporate Human Resources Manager**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report seeks approval for additional recruitment measures which can be deployed for hard to fill posts as part of our workforce management strategy.

It outlines the benefits associated with retraining existing employees for hard to fill posts and seeks approval for the Learn to Teach Programme to support teacher recruitment.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Perth & Kinross Council employs a diverse range of occupations over a large geographical area. We remain one of the largest employers within Perth and Kinross and are recognised for having a skilled and adaptable workforce who are central to this Council's ability to ensure continuity of service delivery through challenging times, as well as encouraging new ways of thinking and working to inform service redesign and transformation.
- 1.2 Like the rest of Scotland's public services, over the last five years our workforce has been reducing as we have redesigned services and made savings. This trend has been reported to the Council annually through the Securing the Future Through Our People reports. Although our overall workforce numbers have been reducing, we continue to recruit staff to vacancies which are deemed to be essential for service delivery. And, like many other employers, from time to time we face recruitment difficulties for some posts.
- 1.3 The upturn in the Scottish economy has recently seen higher employment rates, lower unemployment rates and inactivity rates within the United Kingdom. This trend is forecast to continue and it will impact on the availability of labour in Scotland as competition for particular skills and abilities grows, particularly for permanent staff and in areas of growth, such as construction and engineering. There is also a shortage of qualified teachers seeking work in Scotland.
- 1.4 This report recognises that we need to be proactive and creative in our workforce planning approach to ensure that we have the right people with the right skills and abilities, at the right time, to carry out the duties and responsibilities we need. There is already a wide range of activity and management tools which promote Perth & Kinross Council as an employer of

choice, develop the skills and knowledge we require for future roles and help tackle recruitment difficulties. However, the purpose of this work is two-fold – to increase the range of recruitment measures available for **hard to fill** posts so they are available to be deployed timeously; and to enhance our “Grow Our Own” approach to developing staff by retraining staff for our hard to fill posts. This report therefore details a retraining proposal for teachers, although the principle may have wider applicability across other occupational areas.

## **2. CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS**

- 2.1 Perth & Kinross Council has well-established and effective recruitment arrangements to attract and select applicants to join our workforce. However, these are kept under review and our practices evolve to reflect the changing job market and organisational requirements.
- 2.2 The Employer Branding project which is already underway is helping to redefine our employment offer in terms of how we promote our values, our culture and our expectations of current and prospective employees. This work is already informing reviews of our processes and practices for recruitment and selection, induction and employee review and development. There are now also important messages from the new Perth City Plan which we can use within our recruitment literature to attract people to relocate to a city with ambition and plans to become one of Europe’s Great Small Cities.
- 2.3 Workforce planning within Services helps define the types of skills and roles we will require in future and supports a “Grow our Own” approach. We have a well-established Modern Apprenticeship and Professional Trainee programme which brings young people into our workforce with a view to preparing them for future roles.
- 2.4 The Council also encourages and supports a wide range of learning and development activity for all staff to ensure we have the knowledge, skills and experience for future roles. This may be supporting employees in achieving formal qualifications, attendance at courses and seminars, and less formal learning opportunities, including Learning Lunches, networking and sharing expertise. Our commitment to Leadership and Learning was set out within our Organisational Development Framework which was approved by the Council on 1 July 2015 (Report No 15/292). Our developing talent approach allows us to frequently advertise vacancies internally only when there are staff within our workforce who are equipped and ready to take on new roles.
- 2.5 Over recent years, through service redesign projects and transformational reviews, the Council has supported many staff in moving to new roles by acquiring new skills and knowledge and embracing new ways of working. This is further evidence of our commitment to develop talent and support staff through organisational change.

- 2.6 We are also aware of the need to be creative and proactive in our recruitment practices so that we are able to bring the best available people into our workforce. Future developments and proposed changes are set out later in the report in Section 3.

### **3. PROPOSALS**

#### **Hard to Fill Posts**

- 3.1 As part of our workforce planning activity, we have set out what we mean by hard to fill posts in order to identify potential recruitment difficulties and take early action, and to ensure consistency across the organisation.

- 3.2 In normal circumstances, our definition of a hard to fill post is:

*A post that remains vacant for 6 months or more and where reasonable effort has been made to fill the vacancy*

- 3.3 However, our knowledge and experience of the job market for specific occupational areas will allow a post to be defined as hard to fill so that specific recruitment measures can be applied from the outset of the recruitment process. There must be some evidence to confirm potential recruitment difficulties so that appropriate measures can be put in place – an example could be a shortage of suitable candidates during recent recruitment activity for the same job type. Currently, engineers, primary teachers, secondary teachers for maths, physics and teaching/promoted teaching posts in rural schools fall into the hard to fill category. Our hard to fill posts will, of course, change over time.

- 3.4 There are different reasons for a job being designated hard to fill – a limited supply of suitably qualified applicants, competition with other employers, salary level, employment package, work location, transport, and access to or cost of housing. Therefore, the action to be taken will vary for job types according to the circumstances. This report focusses on measures that Perth & Kinross Council can put in place within its own recruitment practices. However, it is recognised that there is also action that takes place at a national level through professional bodies, sectors skills bodies, Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Government to address particular skill shortages.

#### **Additional Measures**

- 3.5 The Council offers a removal and relocation package to help attract people to join Perth & Kinross Council where there are recruitment difficulties. These incentives will be marketed and promoted within our job adverts for hard to fill posts. The financial ceiling for relocation claims is currently £5,000 which has been the case since 2007. In 2014/15, there were three claims for removal and relocation expenses at a total cost of £8,800. This in part reflects the fact that the package has been offered in limited circumstances. A recent benchmarking exercise with other local authorities showed that several

Councils have higher ceilings. We also reviewed typical costs associated with buying and selling a house which may form part of a relocation claim. It is therefore **proposed** that the financial ceiling for removal and relocation claims is updated to £7,000. It is also **proposed** that a commuting allowance based on 25p per mile be payable to supply staff where there are proven recruitment difficulties. Payment of travelling expenses can incentivise supply staff to travel to locations they may not otherwise consider.

- 3.6 With regard to salary levels, we regularly benchmark our salaries with those offered by other public services, and where appropriate, private sector employers. We know our salary levels remain competitive. Equal pay and single status give us limited room to manoeuvre on salaries other than with market supplements. The Market Supplement Policy allows salary supplements to enhance the benefits package for jobs where there are proven recruitment and retention difficulties. By designating a post as hard to fill, a market supplement can be applied as a proactive recruitment measure rather than as a reactive retention measure. There are only two posts which have qualified for Market Supplements in recent years – Senior Electrical Technicians and Planning Advisor. We need to ensure that the availability of this tool is promoted so that it can be utilised to best effect.
- 3.7 We utilise the Scottish local government recruitment portal – myjobscotland – to advertise our vacancies. Recently, we have used social media (i.e. Twitter and Facebook) to promote specific vacancies which has been effective in generating interest in coming to work for the Council. However, the use of social media in recruitment is growing and it is proposed that we make better use of these channels to reach out to prospective job applicants. This will include use of promotional short videos on Twitter and Facebook, etc and use of professional networks, such as LinkedIn.
- 3.8 The availability of quality and affordable housing is often cited as a barrier to job applicants wishing to relocate to Perth and Kinross. There is a national short-life project group looking at specific affordable housing needs of key workers with a view to developing policy options. A key worker is defined as an employee who provides an essential service. If there are difficulties in the recruitment and retention of key workers, this will be to the detriment of local economic growth, and to service provision that is important to the wellbeing of the population and to other objectives shared between community planning partners. Key worker posts can cover a wide range of functions and salary bands, both of which may change over time. While this work continues nationally, at a local level it is proposed we explore ways in which the housing needs for key workers working in public service within Perth and Kinross can be addressed through the private sector (either renting or home ownership) while the needs of those on lower incomes continue to be met through the social housing system, supported by public funding. We will engage with other local public service employers in this regard.

## **Teachers**

3.9 The shortage of teachers seeking work in Scotland has been well reported. Perth & Kinross Council, like many other Councils, (especially those with smaller schools in rural areas), is experiencing difficulties in recruiting teachers and promoted teachers to permanent positions. There are also difficulties in recruiting supply teachers. While recruitment activity continues throughout the year, there is an Annual Staffing Exercise which commences in January each year and aims to ensure schools are fully staffed for the start of the school session in August. We are faced with a constantly moving picture as teachers resign to take up posts elsewhere, gain promotion, retire, and pupil rolls change.

3.10 Specific measures to support teacher recruitment have been:

- Removal and relocation expenses
- Early release of vacancies as part of the Annual Staffing Exercise
- Over-recruitment of an additional 10FTE teachers to support schools and in anticipation of turnover throughout the school session
- Offering permanent contracts to those who have successive fixed term contracts, thereby providing security of employment
- Supply – use of text messages to contact individuals about supply work
- Streamlining the recruitment process for teachers who are retiring and wish to join the supply register
- A rolling programme of supply teacher job advertisements

3.11 Additional measures which are being investigated include:

- Supporting locally qualified teachers who are not working to return to the profession via a “return to teaching” course
- Further streamlining of recruitment arrangements for supply teachers, such as avoiding duplicate PVG checking when teachers work on a supply basis across a number of local authorities

3.12 A more detailed report on teacher numbers is being prepared for the Lifelong Learning committee in August 2015.

## **Grow Our Own**

3.13 We have commenced a programme of work to review our modern apprenticeship programme in order to take advantage of new Advanced Apprenticeships. This will enable us to bring young people into the Council's workforce who have higher level school qualifications but may prefer to work and learn rather than go to university and college. Workforce planning can ensure we target foundation and Advanced Apprenticeships in occupational areas which have or are expected to have skill shortages. This approach also supports the Council's response to Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.

- 3.14 Another approach which develops the current practice of employing summer students is to offer paid internships for undergraduates outwith term-time with a view to preparing them for professional traineeships on graduation. This type of approach has been effective with social worker and environmental health officers which were once hard to fill posts.

### **Retraining**

- 3.15 A more creative approach to our recruitment and retention challenge which also supports reshaping our workforce is a programme of retraining for existing staff for hard to fill roles. This type of approach has been developed to increase the supply of qualified teachers who, when qualified, will be directed to vacancies within Perth & Kinross Council schools. There are similar programmes emerging in other Scottish local authorities as each employer develops bespoke solutions in partnership with local universities who offer teaching qualifications.

### **Learn to Teach Programme**

- 3.16 We have developed the brand **Learn To Teach** for the Perth & Kinross Council programme which is a partnership with the University of Dundee and the Scottish Government. The proposal is to provide twenty places on an 18-month post graduate teacher training programme for Perth & Kinross Council staff. The same entry requirements would apply to this programme as apply to the University of Dundee's one year post-graduate teacher training course. Employees would be required to go through a two stage application process – first of all gaining support from their Head of Service for their application; and then the University of Dundee's formal application process.
- 3.17 The proposed 18-month post graduate programme would be delivered by the University of Dundee and would commence in January 2016, subject to approval by Committee. The proposed programme would comprise two main components (academic and professional) for primary education and certain subjects for secondary education which are expected to be hard to fill (namely maths, physics and home economics). It is anticipated that the academic component would be undertaken mainly in the evenings in Perth, one Saturday morning per month and a one week summer school. The professional component would be undertaken in Perth & Kinross Council schools and would require three 6-week student placements which are supported and assessed.
- 3.18 Following successful completion of the programme, individuals would be assigned a probationary teaching position within the Perth and Kinross area. At this time, they would leave their substantive post and move on to teacher terms and conditions of employment. Thereafter, on successful completion of the probationary placement, probationers would teach in any school within the Perth and Kinross area. This will be a condition of the programme which individuals will be required to commit to.

- 3.19 We are finalising the principles and criteria for the programme in order to ensure there is sufficient organisational benefit for the Council. This will take into account that we may be able to retrain staff from areas which are subject to review, transformation or efficiencies, or we may be able to redesign job roles which create employment or development opportunities for others. While staff will require Head of Service permission to be released to be part of the programme, this may not always be possible although the expectation is that requests are considered favourably.
- 3.20 Initial interest from employees across the Council has been encouraging with around 70 individuals attending a briefing session on 25 June.
- 3.21 This innovative programme of developing our talent also supports the reshaping of our workforce to meet changing skill requirements. The organisational and individual benefits are far reaching, including:
- Providing opportunities for retraining (in particular for those in scope for reviews)
  - Staff retention
  - Redirecting resources in support of future workforce planning requirements
  - Supporting organisational transformation
  - Bringing individuals with experience of the world of work into the teaching profession
  - Promoting career choices
  - Work life balance – which may include moving to term time working for family reasons
- 3.22 The Council expects that individuals who are accepted onto the programme are fully committed to completing the study elements and to a career in teaching. Employees accepted onto the programme will be expected to undertake the academic study component in their own time and will be expected to utilise some of their annual leave allocation to attend the one week summer school. This may require temporary adjustments to working patterns to allow attendance at evening classes and Saturday morning classes.
- 3.23 University course fees for each individual will be paid directly to the University of Dundee by the Scottish Government.
- 3.24 The backfill salary costs of the three 6-week student placements in Perth & Kinross Council schools will be underwritten by Education & Children's Services in the first instance. The estimated cost for 20 employees on the programme would be £200k. This figure however will be dependent on the salaries of those employees who were successful in securing a place on the programme.
- 3.25 The Council's Support for Learning Guidance which details support for exam leave, study leave and financial support for text books will apply.

- 3.26 The Learn to Teach Programme is a bespoke programme to increase the supply of teachers to work in Perth & Kinross Council schools by retraining staff who work elsewhere within the Council. It also utilises funding from the Scottish Government who are keen to support such initiatives. While these are unique circumstances to teaching, there may well be other opportunities to retrain staff for hard to fill jobs or jobs where there is an expected increase in demand. In order to maintain a corporate overview the Executive Officer Team will give approval for any similar retraining programmes.

#### 4. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 In conclusion, although we have controls on workforce size and cost, we will need to continue to recruit people for posts which require to be filled. As the Scottish economy continues to improve, the demand for labour will increase, particularly for certain skill areas and locations. It is therefore important to have effective workforce planning and a range of recruitment measures which help us fill hard to fill posts.
- 4.2 The proposals within this report are designed to increase the range of recruitment measures available for **hard to fill** posts so they are available to be deployed timeously; and to enhance our “Grow Our Own” approach to developing staff by retraining staff for our hard to fill posts. This approach is consistent with the Workforce Management Measures which have been in place since 2009 and the Organisational Development Framework which promotes “Learn Innovate Grow”.
- 4.3 It is recommended that the Executive Sub-Committee of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee:
- I. Notes the ongoing development of additional measures to support recruitment to hard to fill posts as described within Section 3;
  - II. Approves the increase in the financial ceiling within the Removal and Relocation Scheme to £7,000;
  - III. Approves the provision for a commuting allowance where supply staff are used to cover hard to fill posts;
  - IV. Approves the Learn to Teach Programme and instructs the Executive Director (Education & Children’s Services) to conclude discussions with Scottish Government and the University of Dundee;
  - V. Instructs the Executive Director (Education & Children’s Services) to submit a report to the Lifelong Learning Committee on Teacher Numbers in August 2015; and
  - VI. Instructs the Executive Director (Education & Children’s Services) to report the progress in the Learn to Teach Programme during the academic session 2017/18.



**Author**

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**Approved**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Date</b>
Karen Donaldson	Corporate Human Resources Manager	23 July 2015
John Fyffe	Executive Director (Education & Children's Services)	23 July 2015

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## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Yes / None</b>
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Plan	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	
Financial	<b>Yes</b>
Workforce	<b>Yes</b>
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	<b>None</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	<b>Yes</b>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<b>None</b>
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	<b>None</b>
Legal and Governance	<b>None</b>
Risk	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>Yes</b>
External	<b>None</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	<b>None</b>

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### 1.1 Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

*This section should set out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:*

- (i) *Giving every child the best start in life*
- (ii) *Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens*
- (iii) *Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy*
- (iv) *Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives*
- (v) *Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations*

This report relates to priorities (ii) and (iii)

Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens  
Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy

#### 1.2 Corporate Plan

*This section should set out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities:*

- (i) *Giving every child the best start in life;*
- (ii) *Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;*
- (iii) *Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;*
- (iv) *Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and*
- (v) *Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.*

This report relates to priorities (ii) and (iii)

Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens  
Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy

## **2. Resource Implications**

### **2.1 Financial**

Removal and relocation costs and commuting allowances will be funded by Services from existing budgets.

University course fees for each individual will be paid directly to the University of Dundee by the Scottish Government.

The backfill salary costs of the three 6-week student placements in Perth & Kinross Council schools will be underwritten by Education & Children's Services in the first instance. The estimated cost for 20 employees on the programme would be £200k. This figure however will be dependent on the salaries of those employees who were successful in securing a place on the programme.

The Council's Support for Learning Guidance which details support for exam leave, study leave and financial support for text books will apply.

### **2.2 Workforce**

This report focuses on additional recruitment measures available for hard to fill posts and enhancing the Council's "Grow Our Own" approach to retraining existing employees.

### **2.3 Asset Management (land, property, IT)**

N/A

## **3. Assessments**

### **3.1 Equalities Impact Assessment**

Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups.

Assessed as **relevant** and actions taken to reduce or remove the following negative impacts:

- Age – provisions of the Learn to Teach Programme apply to all ages however qualification requirement applies to all applicants and is set nationally by the General Teaching Council.
- Pregnancy & Maternity – issues around programme completion as a result of pregnancy absence will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- Sex – the profile of applicants is predominantly female however it does give scope to take positive action to secure men into teaching posts.

### 3.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

### 3.3 Sustainability

N/A

### 3.4 Legal and Governance

N/A

### 3.5 Risk

Impact on the Council's ability to deliver it's strategic objectives.

## 4. **Consultation**

### 4.1 Internal

Head of Finance  
Head of Education – Early Years and Primary

### 4.2 External

N/A

## 5. **Communication**

### 5.1 Learn to Teach Programme:

Staff briefing on 25 June 2015.  
Programme information published on the Council's Intranet Site.

Ongoing communication as the Programme develops.

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are no background papers.

**7. APPENDICES**

There are no appendices to this report.

