

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Environment Committee

11 January 2017

Grounds Maintenance Modern Apprentice Squad - Update

Report by Director (Environment)

This report updates Environment Committee on the conclusion of the Grounds Maintenance Modern Apprentice (MA) squad, which was funded by the Council budget process in February 2014 and 2016. It also provides an update to the Environment Committee on the progress made by the Grounds Maintenance MAs in terms of their personal and career development.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In February 2014, a budget motion was approved by the Council to allocate £100,000 in 2014 /15 and 2015/16 for the formation of a Grounds Maintenance Modern Apprentice (MAs) squad (Report No. 14/231 refers). This funding was to accommodate a two year placement. The squad comprised of four Horticultural MAs, a trainer / foreperson and a seasonal worker to assist and deputise for the foreman as required, along with a vehicle and appropriate machinery.
- 1.2 The context for the formation of the squad was the Council employability agenda to provide work opportunities for young people, allied with the desire to enhance the capacity of the grounds maintenance service.
- 1.3 The brief for the squad was to provide a resource to perform maintenance tasks on high profile sites. It was also to undertake a range of tasks around the Council area which would give the MAs a varied range of work experience. It was also envisaged that the squad would be deployed to deal with selected public elected member issues.
- 1.4 The MA squad, formed in May 2014, quickly settled in and all of the original group have been successful in securing permanent posts within Direct Services. This is a tribute to the calibre and application of the squad themselves, the leadership and mentoring provided by the trainer/foreperson and the support provided by HR. The squad have matured and become genuine assets to the workforce.
- 1.5 These MAs have all gained their pesticide application certificates (PA1) and (PA6). They have also achieved their SVQs in Amenity Horticulture. Three of the original four have been recruited to become full time staff on the GM workforce, with the fourth employed in the Street sweeping operations. All 4 are training to attain their C1 and E driving licences, which will enable them to drive larger vehicles.

- 1.6 In February 2016, a further budget motion was approved by the Council to allocate £100,000 in 2016 /17 for the continuation of a Grounds Maintenance Modern Apprentice Squad to replace the original squad. This new squad would initially consist of the same structure of four Horticultural MAs, a trainer / foreperson and a seasonal worker to assist and deputise for the foreperson, along with a vehicle and appropriate machinery.
- 1.7 The funding for 16/17 has allowed the recruitment of 4 new Mas and discussions with the Corporate MA team will ensure that they can complete their training and certifications. In year two, the Squad will be disseminated between the Grounds Maintenance Squads to complete their training.
- 1.8 The new replacement squad will be undertaking similar works as in the past such as shrub planting in various locations across Perth and Kinross. This will include support to Bloom Groups and requests by elected members.

2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The recruitment of the MA squad and their successful retention in full time employment within the Council has contributed to the Council employability agenda by providing work opportunities for young people. There has also been a positive benefit to the Direct Services workforce, through an influx of younger people.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Committee:
- i. notes the progress of the original four Grounds Maintenance MAs in achieving permanent employment; and
 - ii. requests the Director (Environment) to bring back a further update report at the end of the current two year placement.

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

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

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 The Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership (CPP) brings together organisations to plan and deliver services for the people of Perth and Kinross. Together the CPP has developed the Perth and Kinross Community Plan which outlines the key things we think are important for Perth and Kinross:

- (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

1.2 It is considered that the actions contained within this report contribute to all of the above objectives.

Corporate Plan

1.3 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.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There is an approved budget of £100,000 for 2016/17 for the Ground Maintenance Modern Apprentice Squad. This programme started in May 2016 and runs for two years until May 2018.

Workforce

- 2.2 The proposals will add temporary staff to the workforce. It will also help the workforce profile in Direct Services by giving opportunities to young people to join the workforce.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no land and property, or information technology implications arising from the contents of this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome. Following an assessment using the Integrated Appraisal Toolkit, it has been determined that the proposal is assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

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

Sustainability

- 3.5 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.
- 3.6 Following an assessment using the Integrated Appraisal Toolkit, it has been determined that the proposal is assessed as **not relevant**.

Legal and Governance

- 3.7 None.

Risk

- 3.8 There are no significant risks associated with the implementation of this project.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Legal and Governance and the Head of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 No external consultation was required.

5. Communication

- 5.1 Not applicable.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS APPENDICES

- 2.1 Report to the Environment Committee on 4 June 2014 entitled Grounds Maintenance – Building Capacity. Report Number (14/231)
- 2.2 Report to Environment Committee 3 June 2015 entitled Grounds Maintenance Modern Apprentice Squad – Update (15/242)

3. APPENDICES

- 3.1 None.