

	
Meeting of the Effective Organisation Scrutiny Committee	23 March 2010
Report of the Head of HR	

Review of the existing arrangements for apprenticeships and other work based learning for young people in the City of York

Summary

1. This paper details what we currently offer in the areas of 16-19 apprenticeships etc, and plans to improve opportunities for training. It meets the Committee's request for a report/presentation on the Council's current arrangements. The information will be used to decide whether to have a scrutiny review of existing arrangements for apprenticeships in the City of York.

Background

2. The proposed focus of the scrutiny is what the Council as an employer is offering i.e. work experience, apprenticeships for school leavers and post-graduates, and apprenticeships for young people who are NEET. The topic was registered by Cllr Julie Gunnell.

Consultation

3. This paper has been written in conjunction with the responsible officers in Adults, Children and Education, and City Strategy.

Options

4. Members will need to agree whether a scrutiny is appropriate at this time, and if so, agree the terms of reference.

Analysis

5. The drive for apprenticeships from national and regional government over the past year has come at a difficult economic time and, in York

council, a recruitment freeze. Our performance is regularly monitored through regional bodies to national government . We have been active in local networks and in frequent touch with regional support .

6. Although funding streams have been changed and lead-in times for funding some types of apprenticeships have been extremely tight and prescriptive, we have set in place arrangements to respond to this, in partnership with City Strategy. As the CAA self assessment acknowledges, the corporate learning and development team remains significantly under resourced. It has no capacity at present to oversee the recruiting and workskilling of young people.
7. The Corporate Workforce plan recognises that the demographic of the workforce is not representative of the City, with only about 337 employees under the age of 25. Details of how we intend to address this can be found in para 20 below.
8. In schools, the Raising of the Participation Age to 17 from the current Year 8 cohort onwards means that ever more emphasis is having to be put on planning for providing opportunities for NEET young people. And the start of Foundation Learning from September 2010 puts increased priority of partnerships between schools and other learning providers to provide appropriate training for all young people at this level.

Corporate Approach

9. Members will be aware that recruitment and work based training is the responsibility of directorates. Our approach to apprenticeships, therefore, has been to provide a light touch corporate framework, offering maximum strategic and practical advice and support to directorates, managers and individuals, and monitoring the results. Directorates have been expected to identify suitable posts and, with support, set in place actions to recruit and train the apprentices, including the priority groups.
10. Involvement in other education-into-work issues mentioned in the proposed scrutiny topic registration form, such as work experience, is left to the discretion of Directorates, within the general guidelines laid down in Human Resources manual. The exception is the graduate development programme mentioned below.

Practical Support

11. Practical expertise in the council resides in York Training Centre, (YTC) in City Strategy. York Training Centre has a contract with the Learning and Skills Council (a joint contract with Adult and Community Learning). This enables them to claim funding for Entry

to Employment, apprenticeships and Train to Gain on behalf of CYC. HR co-funded their training manager Anne Sykes to provide advice and support to the Council. Anne had experience of training apprentices through YTC and the 6 apprentices on the City Strategy scheme (see below). With the transfer of responsibilities from the LSC to successor organisations on 1st April, YTC will be funded for 16-19 Apprenticeship delivery by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS).

12. HR and City Strategy actioned a structured communications campaign to engage all staff. All DMTs have received advice from City Strategy over the last 6 months. City Strategy provides a practical one stop shop for managers thinking of recruiting apprentices, or to help staff accessing funding for NVQs to find out what is available. The campaign is called 'Skills for you'. On our behalf City Strategy manages the operational relationship with the LSC. This approach helps give us a flexible and fast response to new funding streams, opportunities and priorities.

13. In November 2008 CYC signed the Skills pledge. It committed the council to encourage staff to gain work based qualifications, and to raise skill levels particularly those below level 2 (about GCSE level). This initiative began by promoting new funding aimed at getting our employees to gain NVQs and improve literacy levels – ('Train to Gain' and 'Skills for Life'). Directors opted to set their own targets for numbers, which they would set once they had more detailed knowledge of the requirements. Within a short space of time, the focus of funding and government priorities reverted to apprenticeships, and so did our advice to directorates.

City Strategy Apprenticeship Scheme

14. The six place City Strategy Scheme started in September 2008. Six young people, all 17 – 18 years old, were recruited as Administration Apprentices on a fixed term two year contract as paid employees on Grade 2. The six apprentices move around six departments within City Strategy on a rotational basis, spending four months in each. Within each department they then experience a range of jobs and sections. At the end of the first year, all apprentices successfully completed the Apprenticeship programme at Level 2, now in their second year, they are half way through the Advanced Apprenticeship at Level 3.

NEET Placements

15. Directorates have also been asked to consider offering placements for young people who are NEET and currently registered under the Entry to Employment programme with York Training Centre. E2E is a six month programme in preparation for working life and is a pre-apprenticeship programme.

Results to date

16. There has been a lot of interest in the NVQ training available for existing staff and there has been a regular take-up of individual apprentices by some directorates over a few years , averaging about 5 – 8. To date no other directorates have chosen to replicate the City Strategy Apprenticeship Scheme.

National Graduate Development Programme

17. The council is currently offering a 2 year traineeship to three graduates from the National Graduate Development Programme. These graduates each have three placements within different directorates. The graduates compete for the programme and for a place at York. They are not necessarily local graduates.

14-19 Agenda

18. Under the new arrangements for funding and delivering education for 16-19 year olds, which come into force on 1st April 2010, the LA has a duty to ensure that all young people who are suitably pre-qualified can access an apprenticeship under the curriculum entitlements being introduced from 2013. The government has also set a target that by 2020 20% of 16-19 year olds will be on apprenticeship programmes. The LA has to encourage the uptake of apprenticeships and provide an annual statement of need detailing the number and range of apprenticeships that it is estimated are required to meet demand from young people and raise participation in apprenticeships. The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) is the funding and commissioning agency for apprenticeships and is charged with delivering the places specified in the statement of need. This means that it is the organisation responsible for engaging with employers and matching young people with vacancies. There is currently a lack of detail around working arrangements between NAS and LAs which should be resolved by the publication of the National Commissioning Framework next month.

19. To ensure that we are well placed to move forward on the apprenticeship agenda and take forward the decision of the Executive (15/12/09) initial meetings are taking place with NAS this month. A core apprenticeship development group will be formed next term to work specifically on the development of 16-19 apprenticeships in York and this group will clearly want to engage with the council to ensure that it plays a leading role as an employer of apprentices. The group will include the Principal Adviser 14-19, 16-19 Manager (joining the LA from the Learning and Skills Council in April) and both employer services and learner services arms of NAS. A council HR presence will ensure that a corporate 16-19 apprenticeship strategy is central to the development of 16-19 apprenticeships across the city, that the council fulfils government expectations of it as a major public sector employer and that it models good practice in the apprenticeship field. Representatives of the organisations supporting the of apprenticeship frameworks York College and York Training Centre, for example, will also be involved. It is hoped to identify 3 or 4 key employment sectors to focus initial developments on with the intention being that these sectors should be central to economic activity in the area and therefore most likely to yield ongoing jobs for young people who successfully complete apprenticeships. As noted in para 11, York Training Centre has expertise in this area. However, because of its role as a commissioner of 16-19 education the 14-19 Team within Adults, Children and Education will not be able to promote the use of YTC as a provider of training to employers.

Workforce Plan

20. The council's first Workforce Plan is currently being drafted for the period 2010-12 to ensure the right staff with the right skills are employed in the right places to deliver the right services to customers. The Workforce Plan has 5 strategic objectives including a diversity objective 'to help build an inclusive culture in which all are treated with dignity and respect ' and supporting actions to increase the number of young people under 25 years old working for the council. This includes actions to develop a programme of short internships for local young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) and to increase the number of apprenticeships offered to young people.

Management Information System

21. Councillors will be aware that we are enhancing our information system. We are using the opportunity to capture demographic details of our staff, including age, qualification levels, and employment status. We do not have a sufficiently detailed comprehensive picture at present.

Supply Chain

22. CYC has a Building Schools for the Future programme and one of the quality criterion is based on local employment and apprenticeships. The contractors for the new school due to open in March 2010 have an excellent record of generating and encouraging apprenticeships
23. CYC works with local employers to generate apprenticeship opportunities (see comments re BSF). In addition, it works with local employers to promote the Young Apprenticeship scheme aimed at Year 10 and 11. This can allow progression in the Apprenticeship programme and raise awareness of alternative pathways to both learners and parent / carers. CYC also works through the local community by offering apprenticeship opportunities including Entry to Employment (E2E) and developing the delivery of community projects within E2E.

Corporate Priorities

24. The proposed scrutiny falls into a number of aspects of the Corporate strategy, notably, 'learning city', 'inclusive city' and 'effective organisation'. Lead responsibility is shared between these areas.

Implications

- (a) **Financial** Any changes to the current recruitment and training arrangements as the result of the Scrutiny would need to be funded, as would any changes to the management arrangements.
- (b) **Human Resources (HR)** The HR implications are dealt with in the body of this report.
- (c) **Equalities** The diversity objective in the Workforce Plan helps us to meet our Inclusive City objectives
- (d) **Legal** There are no legal implications
- (e) **Crime and Disorder** There are no crime and disorder implications
- (f) **Information Technology (IT)** There are no IT implications
- (g) **Property** There are no property implications
- (h) **Other** There are no other known implications

Risk Management

25. If the Council does not get this right it will not play its part in leading the City in the work education of young people. We risk not attracting young people to work and develop in the Council. This paper demonstrates some of the ways these risks are and will be mitigated.

Recommendations

26. Members are asked to consider whether a scrutiny is appropriate at this time, and if so, agree the terms of reference.

Reason: To provide Members with further information in relation to this proposed topic.

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Specialist Implications Officer(s) <i>List information for all</i> <i>Implication ie Financial</i> <i>Implication ie Legal</i> Name Name Title Title Tel No. Tel No.				
Wards Affected: <i>List wards or tick box to indicate all</i>				All <i>tick</i>
For further information please contact the author of the report				

Background Papers: None attached

