

FINANCE COMMITTEE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

SUBMISSION FROM CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

1. Thank you for your letter of 17 July 2012 seeking information on the steps being taken by the City of Edinburgh Council and partners to promote employment opportunities.
2. Supporting vulnerable individuals to secure and sustain employment has been a longstanding commitment of the City of Edinburgh Council that has had a lasting impact on the lives of our citizens.
3. Our commitment is demonstrated in the city's new Economic Strategy: A strategy for jobs, and the work of our "Joined up for Jobs" employability partnership.
4. The City of Edinburgh currently invests £7.5 million per annum on employment training initiatives. Over the last three years, this approach has enabled us to support 9,794 people, 8,602 of whom have subsequently moved into jobs, education, or other positive destinations.
5. Central to this success has been the building of strong relationships with individuals, businesses and partners to construct a tailored menu of support for our customers using labour market and performance information to ensure the best use of limited resources.
6. Council investment is targeted at gaps and bottlenecks in national provision to ensure the pipeline of support in the city fits with the specific needs of our economy.
7. In light of economic realities and reforms to UK level Welfare to Work provision Council investment has been refocused into four areas:
 - Helping school leavers and young people make the transition into work
 - Early intervention on unemployment
 - Supporting those in low paid and insecure employment
 - Providing employability support for regeneration areas and vulnerable individuals
8. Improving the number of positive destinations achieved by our school leavers is critical and to reflect this, the Council introduced the Edinburgh Guarantee.
9. This initiative aims to galvanise the expertise and resources of the private, public and third sectors to help our young people the transition into work.
10. A central plank of this has been our engagement with business raising awareness, generating new opportunities and providing support to match young

people with employers. Since the launch of the city initiative in July 2011 we have found positive destinations for over 460 young people.

11. The Guarantee is also intended to drive a cultural change around the recruitment of young people into our economy, with the Council supporting the actions of partners and showing leadership as an employer, service provider and civic guardian.

12. As part of this leadership, the Council recruited an additional fifty apprentices and plan to employ a further fifty in 2012. Our long term target is one apprentice for every 100 of our staff.

13. Currently our programme represents a financial commitment of £2 million in wage and training costs alone. This is in addition to the investment we already make in employment training programmes articulated above.

14. Additionally we have created Inspiring Young People, a programme for 80 individuals furthest removed from the labour market that supports them to make the transition into employment.

15. These programmes are boosting the good work already taking place in the city with the solid partnerships we have built with not for profit organisations such as Barnado's Scotland, The Princes Trust and Young Scot.

16. This year we will focus our engagement on small to medium sized enterprises, as this is where our research indicates new job growth is most likely. Therefore in collaboration with Business gateway and the Chamber of Commerce we are developing a unified offer to small businesses that combines support on business growth with recruitment support that will benefit our young people. I hope to have this offer in place by autumn 2012.