

FINANCE COMMITTEE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

SUBMISSION FROM DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

1. Dundee City Council has experience, through the Local Employability Partnership and directly, of participating in a wide range of programmes which assist people who have been previously unemployed to improve their employability and where possible secure employment opportunities.

2. Current programmes

- **Public Sector Recruitment Approach Manager** - The council is supported by a specific post (seconded from Skills Development Scotland) whose role is to support public sector organisations, principally the Council, to support the development of employability skills in their role as major employers and procurers of capital activity. This includes providing work placements, modern apprenticeships, support services for people with disabilities, etc.

- **Community Benefits - Securing Opportunities from Procurement**

The Council has developed some expertise in the area of securing community benefit in the form of employment and training outcomes from public sector procurement, particularly within construction contracts. To further support this the Council is in the process of developing a mandatory approach to securing community benefit agreements in all appropriate council contracts - this includes the provision of targeted recruitment and training requirements - which will focus on providing 'new entrant' employment opportunities for young people and previously unemployed adults.

- **Modern Apprentice Business Administration Opportunities** - in partnership with a nominated training provider these opportunities are particularly targeted at MCMC young people, by advertising them to GRFW providers and other partners. Minimum qualification requirements have been removed and replaced with skills tests to support young people who lack formal qualifications and guaranteed interviews are provided to young people who have been looked after. Modern apprentices receive a training wage of 50% of AP1 grade and a 1 year fixed term contract. They are also entitled to a guaranteed interview for suitable positions during and for 6 months after their apprenticeship and this has resulted in a good success rate in securing permanent positions. In the last year the council has supported 8 Business Administration Modern Apprentices to date, 2 of which have secured permanent positions within the council.

- **Modern Apprentice Trade Programmes** - The council currently also supports a trade's Modern Apprentice programme of 37 apprentices (8 annually). Recruitment is competitive and not specifically targeted at disadvantaged groups.

- **The Family Firm** - This programme provides a fully customised 'package' of employability support for young people who are or have been looked after, based on the individual aspirations and interests of the young person. For each opportunity a negotiated, a package of support is put in place to support the young person and the employer. As of July 2012 we have 99 young people who are aged between 15-19 years that are being supported by the family firm approach.

- 6 young people are in Employment
- 11 young people are in Further Education
- 50 young people are on Activity Agreements
- 15 young people are Unemployed
- 1 young person has moved out of the area
- 8 young people are at school
- 8 young people are on Get Ready for Work

- **Work Experience Programmes** - the council provides work experience placements for clients who are far from the labour market to support them to improve their employability. Work placement programmes supported include Activity Agreement placements, Get Ready for Work and Life Skills.

- **Employment Support Service** - based within the Social Work department this service provides employability support for people who are often far removed from the labour market. Their principal target group are people with health problems and disabilities. 60% of the people accessing this service have been unemployed for more than 12 months. The service provides job club services work experience placements and a dedicated support team for those with more complex needs. In the last year, 40 work placements have been provided 22 of those within the Council with one going on to secure employment.

- **Health & Social Care Academy** - the Social Work Department in partnership with NHS Tayside, Gowrie Care and Dundee College have developed a programme to educate and prepare students for a career in care or progress onto further education. The H&SCA is a 36 week course involving core skills training, and practice opportunities and is accredited to Scottish Vocational Qualification at Level 2 in Health and Social Care. The course gives students experience through a mixture of academic study in college and work placement experience with one of the partners. The course also includes underpinning knowledge and development workshops in care related subjects. A recent evaluation recommended amendments to the programme in part to support more disadvantaged students. This included an amended recruitment approach, more pre-placement information, increased placement support, pre-placement visits and increased employability support and guidance including a mock interview. Recent improvements have improved retention rates significantly from 79% in November 2010 to 94% in November 2011, from 74% in January 2011 to 92% in January 2012 and 70% in June 2011 to 84% in June 2012.

3. Previous programmes

- **Future Jobs Fund** - the Council responded to the Department of Work and Pensions Future Jobs Fund programme and directly employed 98 candidates, the majority of them 18 - 24 year olds, in various programmes including Grounds Maintenance, Environmental Improvements, Decorating, Sports Coaching and Catering over the 3 years of the FJF programme. Candidates were supported to complete formal training programmes to increase their skills and employability. All candidates were full staff of the council on temporary contracts. Where they met the person specification, FJF clients were also eligible for guaranteed interviews for selected council positions for 6 months after completion of their programmes.
- **Pre-recruitment Training** - The council has also supported a series of pre-recruitment training programmes in areas where the council has bulk or repeat recruitment requirements. This provides unemployed people access to training designed by the department which includes the entry level requirements for the post and a period of work experience. Graduates receive guaranteed interviews at the end of the programme. An example of this is the Health and Wellbeing Assistant programme with the Education Department which supported 12 candidates to complete the programme with 8 securing positions within the department. Pre-recruitment programmes will continue to be considered to support bulk recruitment requirements when opportunities become available.

4. Potential Future Activity

- **Modern Apprenticeship Options Project** - An appraisal paper is currently being prepared which presents options for increasing the Councils provision of Modern Apprenticeship opportunities. This approach has been developed as part of a wider review aimed at tackling youth unemployment and securing more opportunities for MCMC young people. A task group has been developed to
 - Investigate current levels of commitment to the apprenticeship programme, initially within DCC and NHS Tayside.
 - Investigate models of MA delivery practiced by other public sector employer's particularly local authorities.
 - Begin to consider resource requirements needed to coordinate and fund an increased apprenticeship programme

5. Employment Support Service

- **Job Club** – For people who have previous work experience and have a reasonable idea of their job preference the Job Club activities are well suited to their needs. The Job Club enables people to compete in the open labour market, identify suitable vacancies, potential employers and perform job finding activities to a high standard.
- **Work Experience Placements** – For people who have been out of work for long periods or who, because of their health problem, disability, or other barrier are

unsure what they can/cannot do. Work Experience Placements help people develop new skills or build on existing skills and have become an essential activity to assist people furthest removed from the labour market.

- **Support Team** – For participants that have more complex needs and have not accessed the labour market for usually more than 3 years. The Support Team will adopt a more holistic approach than the Job Club activity (see above) and will use the Work Experience Placement model (see above) to address the unmet employment needs of people accessing our services. The Support Team works on a one-to-one basis to address the multiple barriers people often encounter.

6. The development of Job Club services, Work Experience Placements and a Support Team have been wholly consistent with addressing the needs of people who are unemployed and removing barriers that people face in accessing employment.

7. The Employment Support Service has consistently delivered results over previous years and our methods of delivery have proven successful and effective. Over the past 3 years, referrals to the project have seen a growing number of beneficiaries with more complex needs especially people with learning disabilities and mental health problems.

8. The project has a wealth of experience and excellent partnership arrangements. The staff have developed considerable knowledge of working with people who often have multiple barriers to employment and are comfortable in working with partner bodies and employers.

9. More than half of our participants are either in receipt of no benefits or disability type benefits, such as Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Disability Living Allowance etc. Our main target group of working with people with health problems and disabilities are often the furthest removed from the labour market. It is widely accepted of working age population 46.8% of disabled people are in employment (LFS Data 2010) compared to 76.7% of non-disabled (LFS Data 2010). In Scotland there is a disabled person or a person with a long-term illness living in just over one in three households (DRC Research).

10. On average around 60% of the people accessing our services will have been unemployed for more than 12 months.

Health & Social Care Academy

11. Within Dundee, Dundee City Council Social Work Department, NHS Tayside, Gowrie Care and Dundee College have formed a partnership which ultimately aims to educate and prepare students for a career in care or progress onto further education. The partnership is known as the Health and Social Care Academy (H&SCA) and was established in 2008.

12. The aim of the Health & Social Care Academy (H&SCA) partnership is to "promote health and social care as a rewarding career option and enhance the workforce by offering a high standard of education, training and opportunities for

employment to a cross-section of the community, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to work effectively across the care sector".

13. H&SCA Partnership Agreement.

The H&SCA is a 36 week course encompassing mandatory training, core skills, practice and Scottish Vocational Qualification at Level 2 in Health and Social Care. The course gives students experience through a mixture of academic study in college and work placement experience with one of the partners. The course also includes underpinning knowledge and development workshops in care related subjects.

14. Students completing a full academic year of the Academy will leave with:

- SVQ Health and Social Care Level 2.
- Skills For Work Higher comprising the following units:
 - Care Principles and Practice
 - Working in a Health and Social Care Setting
 - Health, Safety and Protection Issues in Care Settings
 - Understanding and Supporting People in Health and Social Care Settings
- Core Training, consisting of:
 - REHIS Health and Safety.
 - REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene.
 - HSE First Aid.
 - Moving and Handling.
 - REHIS Infection Control.
- Communication Skills at Higher Level
- Experience of working in a care setting.

15. The partners are continuously reviewing processes and procedures to further enhance the benefits of this course to both students and potential employers. In May 2011 we re-established the partnership agreement and evaluated the course. Ultimately our aim was for more students to graduate with the skills, values, attitudes and qualification required to practice in the social care sector. The results of the evaluation showed 5 areas for improvement and as a result the following have been put in place;

16. Recruitment process –

Recruitment is carried out jointly and consistently between partners and the college following the SSSC codes of practice to ensure candidates would be suitable to enter the social services workforce. Carrying this out jointly ensures a mix of expertise and collective knowledge helping to ensure that the right people are recruited onto the course.

17. Agreement was reached to incorporate a values based exercise using the Continuous Learning Framework (CLF) as part of the recruitment process. This gives the interview panel a better understanding of values held by the candidate and to identify room for improvement. The use of capabilities within "Managing Relationships" formed the written exercise. This allows candidates to demonstrate

how they may behave when faced with a particular situation. The combination of this exercise and the formal interview ensures that less confident candidates are not disadvantaged. It also identifies candidates whose values may not meet the course criteria or be suitable to work within a social care or health setting.

18. Availability of information regarding placements –

Partners take the opportunity to "showcase" what their organisation has to offer in terms of placements, employment and career progression. Examples of the diverse range of placements include working with a service user to support them in their own home or in a day centre to working with patients going into theatre or being cared for on the renal ward.

19. Students have time to discuss directly with partners their potential placement experiences and expectations. Information provided includes outline of the work involved, location and hours of work. At one to one tutorial time students express their area of interest and discuss the logistics around where they would benefit from going. This all enables a better student match to each placement.

20. Placement support –

Partners agreed to clearly identify a supervisor/mentor for the student, partner and tutor to liaise with. This is now firmly embedded within the H&SCA giving students additional support.

21. Pre-placement induction and visit –

Previously these did not routinely take place. Efforts are made to ensure that all students undertake pre-placement induction and visit the location of their placement prior to commencing. This breaks down any real or perceived barriers and assists in establishing a relationship between student and the practice placement as early as possible.

22. Guidance & Support into employment –

Partners introduced a mock recruitment activity during the term Jan - April 2012. This involved briefing students on the varied recruitment processes required for all 3 partners, including the completion of application forms, mock interviews and verbal feedback relating to their performance at interview. The aim of this experience is to equip students with the skills and knowledge to meet the recruitment expectations of the partners in their settings.

23. How are the Changes Working Comparative retention figures are;

- November 2010 - 79%
- November 2011 - 94%
- January 2011 - 74%
- January 2012 - 92%
- June 2011 - 70%
- June 2012 - 84%

24. 55% of students graduated in June 2011 and current figures show this has increased this year although final figures are not yet available. The overall figures suggest that students received a better service through the closer

partnership working and the cohesive approach to recruitment and support to the students has improved their experience this year.

25. All successful students are guaranteed interview at Support Worker Level with partners and figures currently show a large increase in students gaining employment with each of the partners.

26. Dundee City Council have also introduced the ring fencing of selected post which will only be advertised to those who are attending the Social Care Academy. The benefit of this will not be identified until 2013.