

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

DATE: 20th NOVEMBER 2012

REPORT BY: HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: MODERN TRAINEE SCHEME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an overview of how the current Flintshire Modern Trainee Scheme has developed over recent years.
- 1.2 To seek support from Members to further develop the scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each May Flintshire County Council recruit a number of Modern Trainees for placement within various Directorates.
- 2.2 During the placement, trainees undertake NVQ qualifications: NVQ 2 during the first year and NVQ 3 during the second year. Trade apprenticeships are longer and can last up to four years.
- 2.3 Prior to 2006, the Council was recruiting to approximately 20 placements per year - a large number did not complete the scheme, citing reasons of poor pay and course content. Of those who did complete, the retention rate was estimated at 50%.
- 2.4 A review of the scheme in 2006 made the following changes:
 - Members agreed to increase the pay rate to coincide with the National Minimum Wage (as a minimum). This measure improved levels of retention and the quality of the applicants applying. It also prompted neighbouring Councils to adopt similar good practices.
 - The course programme that is now followed at Deeside College is varied and interesting and includes team building events, welsh language visits and other elements to ensure Flintshire Trainees gain an excellent learning experience and achieve maximum qualifications.
 - Trainees approaching the end of their placements, who have not secured employment, are placed on the Council redeployment list thereby providing them with the opportunity of gaining employment within the Council.
- 2.5 The improvements made to the scheme have had an impact on the recruitment and retention rates of Trainees.

The number of Trainees recruited to placements over the last 4 years are as follows:

2009 - Intake 22
2010 - Intake 19
2011 - Intake 15
2012 - Intake 31

- 2.6 The record intake in 2012 has resulted in the number of Trainees currently employed across the organisation reaching 56.
- 2.7 Over the last four years, 62 Trainees have completed the programme. 73% have been retained within the organisation, 20% have secured employment externally, 5% have moved on to University or professional training and 2% have left.
- 2.8 For 2012, one Traineeship has been designated a “shared placement” between Flintshire County Council and Deeside College, enabling the Council to explore more creative partnership arrangements with other organisations for apprenticeships.

3 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Prior to 2012, the number of Trainees being recruited annually across the organisation was in decline. This was due to Directorates not being able to fund the placements on a sustainable basis.
- 3.2 In 2012, a central budget was established to fund a minimum of 17 places per year on a ‘match funding’ basis with placements being partly subsidised by the central budget.
- 3.3 The central budget, supported by Directorate budgets, enabled the highest ever intake of Trainees in 2012.
- 3.4 The Modern Trainee Scheme is being reviewed further with the aim of enriching and improving the work experience element of placements and offering a more varied range of placements across the organisation.
- 3.5 The Council and Local Service Board are also committed to improving the variety of Apprenticeships and Traineeships on offer both internally and across Flintshire. Work is already underway to increase partnership working with other sectors to develop Schemes that address youth unemployment by improving employment and career prospects for the long term unemployed. This work is now included on the Council’s Improvement Plan.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the content of this report is noted.
- 4.2 That Members continue to support the central funding of Flintshire Trainees.

4.3 That Members support the expansion of the variety of Apprenticeships on offer for 2012/2013 for the Council.

4.4 That Members support the exploration of the “shared apprenticeship” model.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 £245,000 central budget. Additional Trainees are also funded by Directorates and salary costs are borne out of Directorate’s budgets.

6 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT

6.1 There is an increase in the number of Modern Trainees recruited. The higher retention rates of Flintshire Trainees will impact positively on the local economy.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.1 None identified at this time.

8 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 None identified at this time.

9 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The increase in recruitment for 2012 has resulted in 56 Trainees currently being employed.

10 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- Members
- Learning Providers
- Various Council Officers

11 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- Corporate Management Team
- Members

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

Background Documents: None

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