

JOINT PERFORMANCE AND REGENERATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

Friday 10 February 2012

The meeting commenced at 4.30 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Hillary Thompson (Performance Portfolio Holder)
 Peter Jackson (Regeneration, Economic Development and Skills
 Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Wally Stagg, Organisational Development Manager
 Vicky Bosley, Democratic Services Officer

1. Council Apprentice Arrangements (Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer)

Type of decision

Non Key Decision

Purpose of report

To update the Joint Portfolio Holders on the progress to date regarding the Apprenticeship Partnership between the Council and Hartlepool College of Further Education (HCFE) and to seek approval to continue with the Apprenticeship Partnership arrangement for the recruitment and placement of apprentices in 2012/13.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Organisational Development Manager presented the report which proposed continuation of the Apprenticeship Partnership arrangements between the Council and Hartlepool College of Further Education. Questions had previously been raised as to why HCFE were delivering the Council's Apprenticeship Programme and not Adult Education (AE), the Council in house provider. The primary reason for this was whilst it is

acknowledged that AE had a contract in place to deliver an Apprenticeship Programme for the Council, this would not have resulted in any salary savings being achieved as, in essence, the apprentice would have been employed by the Council and therefore the existing Council Apprentice salary rate as detailed in Table 1 of the report would have applied, in line with the Council's strategy to minimise/eliminate equal pay risks. It was also confirmed that AE would need to investigate whether it could deliver the required frameworks.

Two further proposals had recently been offered by the college, the first was in relation to adult Apprenticeships which would require the Council to identify 100 employees to undertake an adult Apprenticeship. The Council would carry out the assessment role and the college would deliver the remaining elements. In return the college would pay the Council a fee of £250 per apprentice. The Organisational Development Manager reported that the figure of 100 was ambitious, as they only had six to date. The second proposal offered the Council the opportunity to undertake the role of assessor for the NVQ element of the Apprenticeship framework and the college would pay for the Council's services which could be in the region of £250 per apprentice. The Performance Portfolio Holder commented that undertaking assessments was very time consuming. The Organisational Development Manager confirmed that investigations were currently taking place which would ascertain if the proposed payments from HCFE would cover the delivery cost.

Concerns had been raised by Scrutiny Coordinating Committee regarding the apprenticeship arrangements and written responses from the Regeneration and Economic Development and Skills / Children's services / Adult's and Public Health Services Portfolio Holders were required, details of which were to be presented to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.

The Performance Portfolio Holder referred to appendix 1 attached to the report and commended the work carried out within the Economic Development department to date. The Performance Portfolio Holder questioned why there had not been any Business Administration Apprenticeships in 2010. The Organisational Development Manager was unsure, however said he would confirm next week.

The Regeneration, Economic Development and Skills Portfolio Holder requested that the Organisational Development Manager provide quarterly reports direct to both, the Performance and Regeneration, Economic Development and Skills Portfolio Holders, in order to monitor the apprenticeship arrangements effectively and offer support where necessary.

Decision

- (i) That the progress made to date regarding the Apprenticeship Partnership arrangement between the Council and Hartlepool College of Further Education be noted.
- (ii) That the continuation of the Apprenticeship Partnership arrangement for the recruitment and placement of apprentices in 2012/13 be agreed.

The meeting concluded at: 4.45pm

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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