

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Constitutional and Nomination Committee – 9 October 2013

Subject: Juvenile Employment

Report of: Director for Children & Commissioning Services

Summary

The Juvenile Employment Service fulfils a statutory function dealing with applications for juvenile employment licences, chaperone licences and providing a safeguarding service for employed (both paid and unpaid) children of compulsory school age. In line with the Council's Corporate Transformation priorities set out in the Corporate Plan 2011-2014, the licensing function is to be transferred to the Council's Licensing Unit. Therefore, the delegated responsibility for the issuing of these licences must be transferred to the Head of Planning, Building Control & Licensing. Responsibility for the safeguarding element of this service will remain with the Strategic Director of Children & Commissioning Services.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee recommends to Council to approve an amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers in Part 3, Section F of the Council's Constitution to transfer the responsibility for licensing the employment of children (Part II of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 byelaws made under that Part, and Part II of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963) from the Director for Children & Commissioning Services to the Head of Planning, Building Control & Licensing. The transfer of responsibility will be formally made from 1st January 2014 to allow for the new process to be finalised and formally set up.

Wards Affected: All

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of contribution to the strategy
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	Youth employment can break intergenerational cycles of worklessness and give valuable work experience to aid with employment opportunities in later life.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	Young people in employment gain valuable work experience which can lead to future job opportunities. For some young people, employment can also encourage them to engage more fully with formal education and increase school attendance.
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	Youth employment promotes social integration and development and offers opportunities and experiences outside the formal education setting, promoting confidence and boosting self-esteem.

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of contribution to the strategy
Neighbourhoods of Choice	Youth employment promotes confidence, self-esteem and increases a sense of personal responsibility, encouraging young people to engage in positive opportunities and activities.

Implications for:

Equal Opportunities

Yes

Risk Management

Yes

Legal Considerations

Yes

Financial Consequences for the capital and revenue budgets

The service is staffed by 1 FTE Juvenile Officer (currently held by two officers, working job-share hours) and overseen by a Team Leader within Education and Skills. Under the proposed arrangements, the costings for 0.5 Juvenile Officer would transfer to the Licensing Team to fund the additional work. The remaining finance for 0.5 fte Juvenile Officer would be transferred to Quality Assurance Team within Education and Skills as part of the reorganisation of this service.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

Constitution of the Council – May 2013
Children and Young Persons Act 1933 byelaws
Children and Young Persons Act 1963
Children (Performance) Regulations 1968

1. Background

- 1.1 This report sets out details of the transformation of the Juvenile Employment Service including the transfer of responsibilities and processes and the legal and constitutional implications of these proposals.
- 1.2 These proposals are as a result of collaboration and consultation between Children & Commissioning Services, Planning, Building Control & Licensing, and Neighbourhood Services. The proposals aim to provide a more flexible and modern service with greater capacity to process licences, particularly at peak periods, whilst ensuring the safety of children who are employed.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The Juvenile Employment Service fulfils a statutory function dealing with applications for juvenile employment and chaperone licences. Applications are usually completed by hand and posted or emailed to the Juvenile Employment Officer along with paper copies of relevant supporting documentation. Processed licences are returned to the applicant in a similar way. The new system will offer the applicant a web-based application process and licences will be processed by a larger team of generic licensing officers.
- 2.2 The Juvenile Employment Officer also carries out a safeguarding function by making announced and unannounced visits to places where children are working or performing to ensure compliance with the appropriate rules and regulations surrounding employed (paid and unpaid) children of compulsory school age. In the future, these visits will be the responsibility of the larger team of officers carrying out quality assurance and safeguarding duties within Education and Skills. Similarly, pro-active work with potential employers about the benefits and responsibilities of offering children work opportunities would be carried out by the same team of officers.
- 2.3 Chaperones will be responsible for making their own application for a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check. This is also a new online service. Whilst applicants will now bear the cost for their check, it will be a much quicker and effective process with greater data security. Their DBS will be "portable" and they will have the option to register for a small fee (£13 pa) meaning savings on future licence updates.
- 2.4 The advantages for the new arrangements are as follows: -
 - A streamlined online application process designed to ensure fewer delays due to incorrect forms or missing supporting documentation, resulting in improved expediency of processing of applications for customers.
 - Greater convenience for customers who will be able to submit applications instantly and at any time of the day.
 - A reduction in paper-based systems/applications with business being conducted through web-based processes and email, providing a reduction

in the Council's carbon footprint thereby supporting the Council's Carbon Reduction initiative.

- Increased service resilience for both the issuing of licences and the safeguarding/quality assurance checks as these will be carried out by a wider range of staff than current.

2.5 The new arrangements offer a service that is complementary to the Transformation Priorities set out in the Corporate Plan 2011-2014:

- improving value for money by providing a modernised service within existing resources
- using a 'One Council' approach by providing juvenile employment licences from the same team that processes all other types of licences for Manchester including taxis, street trading, alcohol licences etc.
- delivering an improved customer experience by making changes to the way customers can contact the Council and access services ie. through an online application process.
- ensuring that the Council is effective and customer focussed with a, flexible and can-do approach to front-line service delivery. The changes to the service have been done with consultation and feedback from our customers to ensure that it meets their needs.
- supporting the delivery of a modern, flexible workforce, equipped to deliver the Council's goals by absorbing the separate functions of processing the licences and carrying out safeguarding responsibilities into separate teams. This will widen the scope for providing staff cover at times of sickness and holidays thus providing a more flexible and continuous service.

2.6 Importantly the new arrangements will ensure relevant officers can provide the necessary checks and balances required to cover child safety.

3. Staffing implications

3.1 The service is staffed by 1 FTE Juvenile Employment Officer Grade 6 (currently held by two officers, working job-share hours) and overseen by a Team Leader within Education and Skills. As a result of the proposals, this post would be disestablished.

4. Financial implications

4.1 Under the proposed arrangements, the funding of £15,765 for 0.5 Juvenile Officer at grade 6 (FTE costs are £26,276 + oncosts of 20% = £31,531) would transfer to the Licensing Unit to fund the additional work they would be taking on. The new streamlined process for administering the licences would be absorbed within the team as a whole. The remaining finance for 0.5 Juvenile Officer would be transferred to the Quality Assurance Team where it will be integrated with a range of other quality assurance functions within Education and Skills as part of a wider restructure of this service. There would be no additional staffing costs for the new arrangements.

- 4.2 There will be some minor savings as a result of the new arrangements. Chaperones have, until now, had their costs for CRB checks met by the Council. In the future, applicants will be required to make a request for a DBS check online and fund their own costs associated with that. This will result in approximate savings of £1,200 per annum.

5. Implications for other Council teams and services

- 5.1 The Licensing Unit will incorporate responsibility for the administrative processing of applications and issuing of licences within their existing structure.
- 5.2 The Quality Assurance Team is being reorganised as part of the overall review of Education and Skills. An integrated team will bring together all quality assurance functions which take place across the service in addition to the quality assurance of schools and settings. This includes provision and placements which children and young people access when they are not in school such as supplementary schools, youth provision, children educated at home as well as employers of children and young people. The officers within this team will have a quality assurance role across a whole range of provision. However, in relation to juvenile employment they will carry out the following activities :
- scheduled and ad hoc visits to known places of employment, including those that we carry out on behalf of other local authorities
 - checks and approval for all chaperone licensing applications
 - advising on all other types of licences in instances where there are exceptional or unusual circumstances
 - promoting awareness of juvenile employment regulations; and
 - undertaking investigations and prosecutions where necessary.
- 5.3 These new arrangements will ensure that the duties and responsibilities are carried out by larger teams of staff thereby ensuring a wider generic knowledge base and a more flexible, integrated service with extended cover for times of holidays and sickness. Juvenile employment duties and visits will be carried out as part of this wider safeguarding and quality assurance remit.

6. Legal and constitutional implications

- 6.1 Manchester City Council's Constitution (May 2013), Part 3, Section F, Scheme of Delegation to Officers states that a non-executive function of the Strategic Director of Children's Services and Commissioning is the power to license the employment of children (Part II of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 byelaws made under that Part, and Part II of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963). This power will be transferred to be a non-executive function for the Head of Planning, Building Control & Licensing.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The new arrangements for the licensing of juvenile employment will result in a quicker, more effective customer service. Greater responsibility has been placed on applicants to provide correct supporting documentation at the time of application but this is aided by the online process. It should also strengthen the lines of communication between parents/guardians and the organisations employing their children and result in less delays for the production of licences.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 That the Committee recommends to Council to approve an amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers in Part 3, Section F of the Council's Constitution to transfer the responsibility for licensing the employment of children (Part II of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 byelaws made under that Part, and Part II of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963) from the Director for Children & Commissioning Services to the Head of Planning, Building Control & Licensing. That the transfer of responsibility be formally made from 1st January 2014 to allow for the new process to be finalised and formally set up.