

**MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

Report to: Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny
Committee – Human Resources Subgroup

Report of: Strategic Director of Transformation and Head of Corporate
Personnel

Date: 6 October 2009

Subject: Skills Pledge

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This paper has been prepared as an update on the information provided in an earlier note to the Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2008. It provides an outline of strategies and actions being delivered in support of the City Council's Skills Pledge commitment and specifically the aim to significantly increase the number of Apprenticeship posts within Manchester City Council. This will in turn support the achievement of a skilled and motivated workforce, and support the broader worklessness agenda.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The City Council has committed to an approach to skills that will both enhance the competence base of existing employees and support the employment opportunities of workless residents.
- 2.2 This approach provides for a range of strategies as part of the Skills Pledge commitment that will enable existing employees to learn and progress within the organisation, whilst opening up opportunities for Manchester residents to access employment with the City Council through a range of bespoke learning interventions – including Apprenticeships and NVQs. Manchester College and Skills Solutions have been identified to work with us to identify and deliver funded learning solutions.
- 2.3 Apprenticeships and NVQs will be available in both Level 2 and Level 3 formal qualifications. Level 2 qualifications equate to 5 GCSEs or equivalent A-C, and Level 3 equates to 2 'good' A-levels or equivalent. An Apprenticeship is typically 18 months in length to complete and includes 4 elements (including key, technical and competency skills). NVQs are generally shorter in length as they are a workplace evidence based qualification. See Appendix 1 for more details.

3 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE WORKFORCE

- 3.1 Manchester City Council signed the Skills Pledge with the Learning and Skills Council in December 2007. The Pledge is a commitment to support our employees to develop their basic skills, including literacy and numeracy and work towards relevant qualifications to at least Level 2 (including apprenticeships and NVQs). The purpose is to ensure that all staff are skilled, competent and able to make a full contribution to the success of the organisation and its goals.
- 3.2 Initial data gathering indicates that approximately 68% of our employees are currently qualified to Level 2 or equivalent. This is in line with the average for Local Government, which is 67%. The People Strategy sets a target of 100% of employees qualified to Level 2 by 2015.
- 3.3 Through developing employees to enable them to progress within the organisation, and by specifically targeting employees in Grade 1-3 posts, further opportunities will be opened up for future employment of Manchester residents.

4 SKILLS AND THE WORKLESSNESS AGENDA

- 4.1 In addition to creating development opportunities for the City Council's workforce, the skills agenda also supports broader employment agendas for the city through strategies aimed at the recruitment of workless Manchester residents, both with the Council and with other partner organisations.
- 4.2 It is intended that all new recruits to the Council who are not already qualified to Level 2 will commence employment within a suitable Apprenticeship framework. If an appropriate Apprenticeship framework is not available for the particular role to which they have been recruited, then an alternative Level 2 learning intervention will be provided.
- 4.3 In addition to directly recruiting individuals into vacant positions with an associated apprenticeship framework, a pre-employment programme is being developed to support long term workless individuals into employment. This programme will target those individuals most likely to become or remain long term unemployed including specific targeting looked after children, those young people (16-19) not in education employment and training (NEET) and those workless residents who live in areas within the Residents' Wages project.
- 4.4 The specification for the pre and post employment programme is currently being agreed with training providers. Comments have been sought from a steering group who represent all the groups who are outlined in the eligibility referral criteria detailed above and also from external agencies such as the National Apprenticeship Scheme. Consideration is also being given to how opportunities to experience the world of work through the Future Jobs Fund

can be linked to this pre-employment programme. It is intended that the pre-employment be operational by the end of October 2009.

5 PROGRESS TO DATE

- 5.1 A Skills Sub-Group, chaired by the Strategic Director Transformation, has been established to support the development and delivery of our skills commitments. The Sub Group includes directorate and specialist leads, trade union representatives, representatives of the Manchester College and Skills Solutions, and a representative from the National Apprenticeship Service.
- 5.2 Individual services have commenced a more detailed audit of existing employees to enable specific targeting for our Skills Pledge commitments, and to ensure skills data is accurately captured for the future.
- 5.3 Directorate leads are also identifying Apprenticeship framework matches for roles within their service areas. Consideration is being made to placing existing employees onto these frameworks where appropriate. Information on available frameworks will also be presented to recruiting managers and recruited individuals will be placed within an appropriate framework at the commencement of their employment with the Council.
- 5.4 A number of new schemes are now under development in addition to our current offers (these are set out in Appendix 2). These include a scheme to support our commitment to offer all looked after children within Manchester employment within an appropriate apprenticeship framework. This commitment together with other apprenticeships in place or under development for young people is part of a broader commitment to the national Well-being Project (being led by the Young Foundation) which aims to increase numbers of apprenticeships for 14-19 year olds in local authorities.
- 5.5 Manchester City Council has been working with the National Apprenticeship Service to develop a publicity programme and information package to increase the number of Apprenticeship posts within the City Council to a target of 600 by April 2010. An overview of target figures and actual enrolments for both Apprenticeships and NVQs is outlined in Appendix 3.
- 5.6 As part of the 2010/11 Business Planning process, Heads of Service will be integrating proposals for apprenticeships and NVQs into workforce plans and working with specialists to identify how these learning routes can add value, improve service delivery and develop a culture of learning in the organisation.

6 SUMMARY

- 6.1 A significant amount of work is underway as part of a coordinated approach to the development of skills within the existing workforce and those newly recruited. This paper outlines the key elements of the strategy and identifies how links are being made to workless Manchester residents.

ATTACHED AS APPENDICES

1. Levels of Formal Qualifications available in NVQs and Apprenticeships;
2. Existing Apprenticeships and Pre- Apprenticeships;
3. Skills pledge progress.

Levels of Formal Qualifications available in NVQs and Apprenticeships

- Level 2 (5 GCSEs or equivalent grades A-C)
- Level 3 (2 'good' A-levels or equivalent)

An Apprenticeship framework includes 4 elements:

- A competency element leading to National Vocational Qualification level 2 (Apprenticeship) or National Vocational Qualification level 3 (Advanced Apprenticeship)
- Knowledge leading to a Technical Certificate
- Key skills in Application of Number and Communication
- Wider skills in IT, problem solving improving own learning and working with others.

The National Vocational Qualification includes:

- NVQs are available in level 2 and level 3.
- NVQs have flexible structures, which allow candidates to gain recognition for the skills required in their job role.
- NVQs assess knowledge and understanding but also measure a candidate's performance in the real work environment.

Existing Apprenticeships / Pre-Apprenticeships

	Department	Target Group	No's on scheme	Details
1.0	Various Depts	16 to 25	6	Level 2/3 Apprenticeships for existing MCC staff, set up under the Skills Pledge.
2.0	Corp. Services	14-16 yr. olds with predicted A to C grades.	7	2 year pre-work experience in Corp. Serv, NVQs plus key skills, as preparation for an Advanced Apprenticeship with MCC.
3.0	Chief Executives	14-16 yr. olds LAC or at risk of becoming NEET with C to G Grades predicted.	3	2 year pre-work experience placement, in Chief Executives, NVQs plus key skills.
4.0	Trading Services	14-16 yr. olds	2	2 year pre-apprenticeship work placement in catering departments of schools including NVQs plus key skills, leading to an employed status level 2 apprenticeship.
5.0	Bereavement Services	Post 16 yr. olds NEET	4	6 month pre-employment work placement providing work skills that might lead to work in Bereavement Services.
6.0	In the Community (organised by Capital Works)	16 to 18 yr olds NEET & ethnic minority groups	20	"Aspire" Apprenticeship programme for young people from areas of high unemployment, with work placements in Manchester construction companies.
7.0	New East Manchester	New East Manchester residents	17	2 year contract of employment first year focussed on short placements throughout New East Manchester and linked projects. Second year identification of specialisation placement. NVQ on 'Working In The Community' leading to a possible foundation degree in Neighbourhood Renewal. Further work to explore whether an appropriate apprenticeship framework exists or can be developed.
8.0	Trading Services (Horticulture)	16 to 25 yr. old recruits	4, expanding to 9 subject to funding	Level 2/3 employed Apprenticeships as part of MCC Skills Pledge.
9.0	Corporate Personnel	16 to 25 year olds	2	Shared Service apprenticeship
10	Chief Executives	16 to 25 year olds	1	Business administration apprenticeship

Apprenticeship Posts Being Developed

	Department	Target Group	No's on scheme	Details
1.0	Children's Services	16 to 25 yr. olds currently in care	8/10	Apprenticeships/employment to be offered to 8/10 young people leaving care, to support the MCC Skills Pledge.
2.0	In the Community (organised by Capital Works)	16 to 18 yr. olds NEET & ethnic minority groups	8	"Aspire" Apprenticeship programme for young people from areas of high unemployment, with work placements in Manchester construction companies.
3.0	Adult Social Care	16 to 25 yr. old recruits	TBA	Apprenticeship scheme for new recruits, and existing staff, to support the MCC Skills Pledge.
4.0	Schools	School support staff of all ages	Being considered	Pilot being considered by the LSC/Training & Development Agency.
5.0	Trading Services (Horticulture)	16 to 25 yr. old recruits	9 subject to Green Skills Funding	Level 2/3 employed Apprenticeships as part of MCC Skills Pledge.
6.0	Leisure	16 to 25 yr. old recruits	6 but aim of 1 per ward	Level 2/3 Apprenticeships, possibly leading to employment.
7.0	Chief Execs / Corporate Services pre-apprenticeship	14-16 year olds	5-10 (tbc)	2 year pre-work experience placement, in Chief Executives and Corporate Services, NVQs plus key skills.
8.0	Trading Service pre-apprenticeship	14 - 16 yr. olds	4	2 year pre-apprenticeship work placement in catering departments of schools including NVQs plus key skills, leading to an employed status level 2 apprenticeship.
9.0	Bereavement Services apprenticeship vacancies	16 - 19 yr. Olds	4	Entry level apprentice cemetery worker vacancies offered to the participants of the Bereavement Services trainee scheme
10	Adult Social Care Services	All ages	18	Currently being developed
11	Housing	All ages	TBA	Being considered
12	ICT	All ages	TBA	Being considered

Skills Pledge Figures as of 31st August 2009

	NVQ 2 Enrolments	NVQ 3 Enrolments	NVQs Completed	Apprenticeship Enrolments
Childrens Services	218	190	62	22
Neighbourhood Services	278	80	8	6
Chief Executives	16	37	5	7 *
Corporate Services	21	79	7	22
Total	533	386	82	55
Target to date	416	134	100	100

* Not including figures from New East Manchester as this scheme is NVQ traineeship (Appendix 2).

* Not including figures from In the Community as these are roles external to the Council through Construction companies.