

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14th August 2012

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AT REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Phil Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	√ - Councillor Phil Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources
Wards Affected	None
Ward Councillor Consulted	
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To update Members on the current youth employment statistics and to outline current initiatives in place and potential developments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to RESOLVE that

- 1) **the contents of the report be noted.**

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 A report was presented at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 28th April 2010, outlining the position in relation to youth employment at the Council. Following a request for a further update this report aims to present the current position to Members.
- 3.2 Currently 15.6% of all employees at the Council are under the age of 30. A high proportion of these employees work within Leisure & Cultural Services, with a more even distribution across the remaining services.

Service area	Number of employees
Community Services	13
Customer Services	1
Environmental Services	11
Housing Services	18
Leisure & Cultural Services	47
Planning & Regeneration Services	5
Policy, Performance & Partnerships	2
Finance & Resources	13

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- 3.3 The lower numbers evident in Customer Services and Policy, Performance & Partnerships may be due to the smaller size of the teams, with Planning & Regeneration due to the specialist nature of the service area where experience may take several years to obtain.
- 3.4 The retention rate for employees under the age of 30 is positive with many remaining in employment at the Council for a number of years. The average number of years service within this age group is currently 3½ years.
- 3.5 Only 1 of the 110 permanent employees under 30 is a fourth-tier manager, representing 2.1% of all fourth-tier managers. This may be as a result of the increased demands on fourth-tier managers within the Shared Services environment which necessitates higher levels of experience.
- 3.6 During 2011/12 18.6% of leavers and 29.4% of new starters were under the age of 30. This suggests that the Council is supporting youth employment by proportionately taking on more people in this category than it is losing.
- 3.7 The overall age profile of the Council for the age brackets of 16-24 and 25-34 are comparable to those of all Local Authorities with similar percentages for the workforce.

Excluding Casuals	16-24	25-34
RBC	5.5%	18.6%
All Local Authorities	5.1%	20.1%

Source: Local Government Association

3.8 Existing Initiatives: Apprenticeships

The current situation with regards to apprenticeships at the Council has improved over the last 2 years. Despite the withdrawal of the additional DWP funding that was previously received, there are currently 4 apprentices (in Customer Services, Sure Start (2) and Repairs and Maintenance) with a further 2 being recently established and pending recruitment (including an additional position in Repairs and Maintenance and Environmental Services). Consideration is currently being given to supporting an apprentice working within Organisational Development focusing on training administration.

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3.9 In addition to the support at the Council, apprentices can benefit from working across Councils within the shared services to further enhance knowledge and experience from other organisations. Any time spent within other Authorities is funded appropriately.

3.10 Officers are currently investigating all other options that may be available in the creation of additional apprentices to support young people across the Borough. A potential opportunity that is currently under review is the consideration of an initiative to work with property developers across the Borough to encourage them to provide funding to employ apprentices at the development or within their wider organisation. There is the potential for this to be secured through CIL (previous S106) monies and officers will provide further updates to Members once a more formal policy is established.

3.11 The Council is continuing to maintain its close relationship with New College, particularly in relation to facilitating recruitment and the ongoing support of the college's apprentice training opportunities.

3.12 Work Experience

The Authority aims to accommodate as many work experience placements as is practical, based on the availability of support within service areas. During 2010 and 2011 approximately 49 work experience placements were successfully undertaken. Our objective is to make work experience placements as informative and beneficial as possible. Feedback received from placements has been positive and we are always looking at ways of making the experience more useful. Officers are looking to work with New College to ensure that these opportunities provide a useful and relevant experience for placements.

3.13 Other Initiatives

Subject to confirmation of the event taking place we are hoping to support Redditch Jobcentreplus with their Youth Event in September which is aimed at promoting potential careers and employment opportunities.

3.14 Other recent initiatives that the Council, through Human Resources, have supported include visiting Birchensale Middle School to assist with enabling students to practice their interview skills, exhibiting at a Careers Fair at New College which around 1200 students attended and supporting and advising on the creation of a Climate Change intern opportunity within Environmental Services.

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- 3.15 Looking toward the future, as well as the Council continuing to develop its relationship with local schools and colleges, particularly our ability to offer meaningful work experience, we would also like to consider involvement with national initiatives such as the Government's Work Programme, which gives young unemployed people a chance to get voluntary work experience or a longer term job.

Financial Implications

- 3.15 None as a direct result of this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.16 None as a direct result of this report.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.17 None as a direct result of this report.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.18 None as a direct result of this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

None as a direct result of this report.

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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