



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Investment Programme – Evaluation of year 1 jobs and employability aspects and plans for year 2.
Date:	24 May 2013
Reporting Officer:	Jill Minne, Head of Human Resources
Contact Officer:	Jill Minne, Head of Human Resources

1.0	Relevant Background Information
1.1	In our Investment Programme we committed to the provision of 400 placement, apprenticeship and internship opportunities and the delivery of 200 job opportunities over its 3 year duration. This report is to update Members on achievements regarding the job opportunities and placement targets agreed for year 1 of the Investment Programme and to seek agreement to the targets and plans for year 2, including the “ring-fencing” of 5 seasonal (6 month) Cleansing Operative job opportunities to the long term unemployed.
1.2	Members will be aware that within year 1 we successfully delivered a targeted employability intervention through piloting the ring-fencing of five Business Support Clerk posts to the long term unemployed, supported by a pre-recruitment training programme. We hope to build on the successes of year 1 to ensure the continued achievement of agreed targets and on-going commitment to stimulating the economy through providing job opportunities and employability outreach measures.

2.0	Key Issues															
2.1	<p>Update on job and employability opportunities</p> <p>Year 1 targets for both job opportunities and placements were exceeded:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Year 1</th> <th>Year 2</th> <th>Year 3</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Job opportunities</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target</td> <td style="text-align: center;">110</td> <td style="text-align: center;">60</td> <td style="text-align: center;">30</td> <td style="text-align: center;">200</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Job opportunities					Target	110	60	30	200
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Job opportunities																
Target	110	60	30	200												

Actual	249 (159 permanent and 90 temporary jobs)	32 to date (15 permanent and 17 temporary jobs)	-	281 (174 permanent and 107 temporary jobs)
Placements				
Target	170	170	170	510
Actual	252	17 to date	-	269

2.2 Please see Appendix 1 for a detailed breakdown of job assist / employability interventions and work placements provided.

Ring fencing of Business Support Clerk (BSC) posts and pre recruitment training programme

Our pilot initiative to ring fence 5 BSC posts to the long term unemployed and provide a pre recruitment training programme was the first of its kind in the public sector in Northern Ireland and was well received by our partner organisations - DEL and its lead employability contractors across the city; disability organisations; and the Equality Commission for NI. The 5 successful candidates will be appointed to permanent positions before the end of May 2013.

Evaluation of this pilot has provided very positive feedback and partners have expressed their support for future initiatives of this type. The employability organisations and their clients valued the high standard and nature of the placements and classroom based training. Learning from the evaluation will be used to improve future initiatives (this largely relates to eligibility and referral process).

2.3 **Apprenticeships and student placements**

Ten apprenticeship opportunities (for electricians, fleet technicians, painters and gardeners) were launched at an event in City Hall in March. We have received 758 applications and the recruitment process is progressing. Successful applicants are due to start in September 2013. Fifteen paid one-year industrial placements were also recruited in year 1 through our ongoing university partnership arrangements.

2.4 **Partnership Working**

The Council has worked very closely with a number of partner organisations in order to achieve the successes of year one. In particular we have worked with DEL and its lead contractors providing placements for its Steps to Work programme as well as with the LEMIS providers across the city, providing outreach activities to help the long term unemployed and those furthest removed from the labour market apply for our job opportunities and prepare for our selection processes.

It is also important to recognise Council departments' contribution to the success

	<p>achieved in year 1. The commitment and flexibility of staff across all departments over the past year, in facilitating the placements and additional outreach activity, has been crucial.</p>
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Year 2 proposals and next steps</p> <p>We are committed to delivering our targets as outlined in paragraph 3.1. There will be an increased focus on the reduction of overtime and an emphasis on ensuring agency usage compliance to ensure that staffing budgets are deployed in the most cost effective way and that permanent front line jobs are created where possible. We will continue to work with DEL and with employability partners citywide to explore existing and potential opportunities to support the Council's employability targets and to raise awareness and promote the opportunities being offered. We will also continue to work with key departmental representatives to ensure that our targets are reflective of the opportunities on offer and ensure all feedback is considered in order to maintain a focus on continuous improvement. In particular we wish to build on the number of placements for DEL's Youth Employment Scheme as well as for clients from PBNI and the Youth Justice Agency. There is also potential to link in with programmes run by The Prince's Trust. A number of work experience placements will also be provided in our leisure centres for the Coach Education and Development Programme (Lower Falls and Divis.)</p>
<p>2.6</p>	<p>Proposed ring fencing of seasonal cleansing positions and supporting pre recruitment and training programme.</p> <p>In recent years Cleansing Services has used agency workers (currently contracted from Grafton Recruitment Ltd) to cover its seasonal requirements. This approach has proved the most effective resourcing method providing the flexibility and responsiveness required in a high profile service over busy periods.</p> <p>Following the success of the pilot to ring fence 5 BSC posts and provide a pre recruitment and training programme it is proposed that the council works in partnership with Grafton to implement a similar approach when assigning seasonal agency cover for Cleansing Services this year. The Council, in partnership with Grafton Recruitment, will deliver a pre-recruitment training programme for 30 long-term unemployed individuals, selected by DEL's employability partners across the city. On successful completion of the pre-recruitment training programme, these individuals will be eligible to compete at interview for five seasonal Cleansing Operative job opportunities, working for the council from July 2013 to January 2014, one job in each area of the city. Discussions regarding the proposed approach have taken place with the Equality Commission and DEL. Both organisations have welcomed this new initiative and, having both contributed to the evaluation of the BSC pilot, are content that the learning from the pilot will be incorporated into the proposed approach.</p>
<p>2.7</p>	<p>It should also be noted that the Cleansing Section, intends to fill up to 10 vacancies for permanent Cleansing Operatives in October 2013 once the ongoing structural review has been completed and it is hoped that a targeted ring-fencing initiative for the long term unemployed will also be used in this recruitment exercise.</p>

3.0	Resource Implications
3.1	Human Resources Engagement in these employability initiatives requires increased support and supervision within departments.
3.2	Financial There are no additional financial implications in this report.

4.0	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	The planned approach to the recruitment of seasonal Cleansing Operative posts in partnership with Grafton Recruitment Ltd is based on the previously implemented pilot and has been agreed with the ECNI and LGSC.

5.0	Recommendations
5	Members are asked to:
5.1	note the progress in relation to job opportunities and employability targets set out in the Investment Programme;
5.2	support the continued approach to delivering year 2 targets; and
5.3	agree the proposed approach to delivering a pre recruitment training programme and ring-fencing 5 seasonal Cleansing Operative posts to the long term unemployed.

6.0	Decision Tracking
6.1	The Investment Programme activity in relation to job and employability opportunities/initiatives will continue to be reported to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate.

7.0	Key to Abbreviations
BSC – Business Support Clerk DEL – Department of Employment and Learning LGSC – Local Government Staff Commission ECNI – Equality Commission for Northern Ireland PBNI – Probation Board Northern Ireland LEMIS - Local Employment Intermediary Services	

8.0	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - Placements and outreach activity	

Appendix 1

Employability interventions and work placements from 1 April 2012 to 13 May 2013

22 targeted 'Job Assist / Employability' Interventions e.g. pre-recruitment training programmes, targeted job assist interventions including advice on effective completion of application forms; conducting mock interviews etc

'Job Assist / Employability' Interventions	Year 1	Year 2 (YDT)	Year 3	Total
Pre-recruitment training programmes	1 (39 participants)	0	-	1
Job Assist programmes	19 (programmes)	2	-	21
Total	20	2		22

Placement type	Year 1 1 April 2012- 31 March 2013	Year 2 1 April 2013- 13 May 2013)	Investment Programme 1 April 2012 - YTD
University	30	1	31
College	24	0	24
School	79	0	79
Disability	32	0	32
Young Person's Employment Initiative	12	0	12
Youth Employment Scheme	1	1	2
Steps to Work	22	5	27
Graduate Acceleration Programme	6	7	13
Training orgs and community projects	3	1	4
Youth Justice Agency Programme Led	2	0	2
Apprenticeships	2	2	4
Pre Recruitment Training Programme	39	0	39
Total	252	17	269