



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Investment Programme – Update on job opportunities and employability aspects of the Investment Programme
Date:	25 April 2014
Reporting Officer:	Jill Minne, Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Human Resources (Ext 6038)
Contact Officer:	Catherine Christy, Human Resource Manager (Ext 3226)

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 three year duration. This report is to update Members on achievements regarding the job opportunities and placement targets and to seek agreement to the targets and plans for year three, including the “ring-fencing” of two full-time permanent Recycling Operative job opportunities to the long term unemployed.
1.2	Members will be aware that within years one and two we successfully delivered targeted employability interventions through first piloting the ring-fencing of five Business Support Clerk posts to the long term unemployed, supported by a pre-recruitment and training programme. Building on the success of this in year two we delivered a pre-employment programme in partnership with Grafton Recruitment, whereby five seasonal Cleansing Operative posts were ring-fenced to 30 long-term unemployed participants along with the delivery of a pre-employment programme.

2.0	Key Issues
2.1	Update on job and employability opportunities Year one and two targets for both job opportunities and placements were exceeded. The collective job opportunities target for years one and two of the Investment Programme was 170 and the Council has delivered 509 job opportunities (295 permanent and 214 temporary jobs). The collective work placements target for years one and two was 340 and 486 placements were provided. Please see Appendix One for a detailed breakdown of employability interventions and work placements provided. The year three targets for job opportunities and work placements (as previously agreed) are 30 and 170 respectively.

2.2	<p>Our pilot initiative to ring fence five Business Support Clerk (BSC) posts to the long term unemployed and provide a pre recruitment and training programme was the first of its kind in the public sector in Northern Ireland. This was very well received by our partner organisations and the five successful candidates were appointed to permanent positions in May 2013. Based on the success of this pilot and applying the learning from the evaluation process we successfully implemented a joint pre-recruitment programme with Grafton Recruitment to recruit five long term unemployed people into seasonal cleansing operative posts last year.</p>
2.3	<p>Ten apprenticeship opportunities (for electricians, fleet technicians, painters and gardeners) were offered in March 2013 and successful applicants started employment with Belfast City Council in September 2013. Sixteen paid one-year industrial placements were also recruited in year two through our ongoing university partnership arrangements.</p>
2.4	<p>Partnership Working</p> <p>The Council has worked closely with a number of partner organisations on our employability initiatives in order to achieve the successes of years one and two. In particular in year two we have continued to work with the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and its lead contractors providing placements for its Steps to Work programme as well as with the LEMIS (Local Employment Intermediary Services) 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. In year two we have also built on existing partnerships with NIACRO and have been able to offer more placements to ex- offenders.</p> <p>The Council will also host six managers across a range of disciplines from the Berlin Administration for a four week placement this summer.</p>
2.5	<p>Year three proposals and next steps</p> <p>While we have already exceeded the targets set for the full three year programme, Human Resources wants to continue to stretch employability targets for year three. Having worked closely with NIACRO in year two we are also in discussions with the Prison Service to review placement and education initiatives. In addition we will continue to build relationships with all our existing partners.</p>
2.6	<p>Following the success of previous ring-fencing exercises, we are seeking Member approval to ring fence two out of seven Recycling Operative job opportunities in the Cleansing section. The same best practice model, agreed with the Equality Commission, the Local Government Staff Commission and with DEL, would be applied, including the delivery of a pre recruitment and training programme. The programme will consist of on the job work experience and classroom based training for twenty participants which will be selected by our existing employability partners; Steps to Work providers, LEMIS providers and disability organisations. It is also proposed that the Prince's Trust is brought on board as an additional partner as part of our focus on the employability requirements of the NEETS (Not in Employment Education or Training) group. It is anticipated that appointments will be made before the end of July 2014.</p>

3.0	Resource Implications
3.1	Human Resources Engagement in these employability initiatives requires ongoing 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 permanent Recycling Operative posts is based on the previously implemented programmes and will be developed in accordance with the DEL, the Equality Commission and the Local Government Staff Commission.

5.0	Recommendations
	Members are asked to:
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> note the progress in relation to job opportunities and employability targets set out in the Investment Programme
5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support the continued approach to delivering year three targets
5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree the proposal to ring fence two Recycling Operative posts to the long-term unemployed and deliver a pre recruitment training programme

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

7.0 Key to Abbreviations
DEL – Department of Employment and Learning LGSC – Local Government Staff Commission ECNI – Equality Commission for Northern Ireland LEMIS – Local Employment Intermediary Services

8.0 Documents Attached
Appendix One – Placements and outreach activity

Appendix One

Employability interventions and work placements from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2014

20 (year 1) and 32 (year 2) targeted 'Job Assist / Employability' Interventions e.g. pre-recruitment training programmes, targeted job assist interventions including:

Job Assist / Employability Interventions	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Pre-recruitment training programmes	1 (39 participants)	1 (30 participants)	-	2
Job assist outreach for LEMIS providers	19 (initiatives)	31	-	50

Placement Type	Year 1 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	Year 2 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014	Investment Programme 1 April 2012 - YTD
University	30	26	56
College	24	12	36
School	79	83	162
Disability	32	28	60
Young Person's Employment Initiative	12	12	24
Youth Employment Scheme	1	1	2
Steps to Work	22	20	42
Graduate Acceleration Programme	6	11	17
Training Orgs and Community Projects (including Belfast Met)	3	7	10
Youth Justice Agency	2	0	2
NIACRO	0	1	1
Programme Led Apprenticeships	2	3	5
Pre Recruitment Training Programme	39	30	69
Total	252	234	486