

**IMPLEMENTATION OF MODERN APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME AND
WORK PLACEMENTS**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A paper outlining the proposal of a Modern Apprenticeship Scheme was presented to the SMT on 7th March 2014 and additional information was requested in relation to widening the scope of this project.
- 1.2 The SMT constituted a short-term working group of officers to consider the additional requirements.
- 1.3 This paper reports how the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme will be introduced and expanded within the Council, and how this could be further developed with partners both within and outwith the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Note the implementation of a Modern Apprenticeship Scheme to be delivered within the Council (in addition to agreements already in place with external partners through the Argyll and Bute Employability Partnership).
- 2.2 Note the programme of the in-house Modern Apprenticeship Scheme as follows:
 - Phase 1 – 16-19 year olds – SVQ level 2 or 3 – Implementation Date August 2014 (plus 2 pilots undertaken April 2014).
 - Phase 2 – 19-24 year olds – SVQ level 2 - 4 (in addition to Phase 1 group) – Implementation date August 2015.
- 2.3 Note the formation of a working group to include representatives from HR, Education, Economic Development, Community Services, Communications Team, the Trade Unions and Community Planning Partners to work together to develop opportunities for 16-24 year olds across Argyll and Bute.
- 2.4 Noted that further research will be undertaken by HR in partnership with Heads of Service/Third Tier Managers which will identify areas where recruitment has been problematic and/or where there are skills gaps in the workforce. This information will assist in

determining which services Modern Apprentices are assigned to and will input to the Skills Audits to be prepared during 2014/15 for each of the four administrative areas of Argyll and Bute, as articulated in the four area-based Economic Development Action Plans, 2013-18.

- 2.5 Note that up to 25 modern apprentices within Council departments during 2014-2015 (subject to the outcome of the research referred to in 2.4). Once the framework is in place this number could be increased subject to the needs of the service and subject to appropriate funding being available.
- 2.6 Notes the appointment of an additional temporary HR Officer post at LGE12 to research, develop and implement a Modern Apprenticeship Scheme within the Council, and to liaise with partners both within and outwith the Council, including the Employability Partnership and other local authorities across Scotland.
- 2.7 Endorse the development of additional projects and initiatives to enhance opportunities for young people in Argyll and Bute of all ages and abilities (including those with supported learning needs), by providing a range of work placements, apprentices and traineeships across a range of departments and at various Council locations; and
- 2.8 Endorse the development of a publicity campaign to positively promote opportunities for young people within the Council and with partners across Argyll and Bute, in liaison with the Communications Team.

3 DETAIL

- 3.1 Departments will need to identify funding for the salary costs for Modern Apprentices, although the training costs will be met by Skills Development Scotland. At this stage, it is intended these costs to the Council will be met from existing budgets.
- 3.2 With regard to the European Structural and Investment Funds, 2014-20, through the Enhanced Employability Pipeline Strategic Intervention being developed for the Scottish Operational Programme, an initial request for funding a Modern Apprenticeship programme has been submitted. However, there is no guarantee that funding will be secured through this strategic intervention and no formal response has been received from the Scottish Government.
- 3.3 A pilot for the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme is currently underway in Customer Services, with two MA posts currently advertised for the Kilmory post-room. Experience gained from this process will be used to inform the process moving forward.
- 3.4 The creation of Modern Apprenticeships posts to the Councils'

establishment will be in line with existing budgetary and hierarchy procedures.

4 CONCLUSION:

- 4.1 This is an exciting opportunity for the Council to develop a number of initiatives which enhance life skills and career choices for young people in Argyll and Bute. However, additional resource will be required from HR and liaison will be required with departments to support this programme, as well as to provide the financial commitment to fund the apprentices' salary costs.

5 IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 Policy: The Single Outcome Agreement 2013-23:
Overarching Outcome: Argyll and Bute's economic success is built upon a growing population.
Outcome 3: Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all.
The introduction of a MA Scheme will also complement policies relating to the Health of the Organisation and Workforce Planning.
- 5.2 Financial: Funding is available from Skills Development Scotland for the training element of Modern Apprentices (subject to age restrictions).
Basic salary costs would need to be met by the employing departments, although 26 weeks of funding will be available from the Youth Employment Fund if a department takes on a young person who has been on an Activity Agreement or is a Looked After Child.
An additional temporary post will be required within HR at LGE12 for 6 months at a cost of £18,645 - £20,410 depending on the placement within the grade will be funded from existing budget.
- 5.3 Legal: None
- 5.4 HR: Significant support will be required from HR to ensure the procedures for employing Modern Apprentices are compliant with relevant legislation and to work with departments with regard to workforce planning and recruitment issues to identify and prioritise the need for apprentices across the Council.
- 5.5 Equalities: The proposals are consistent with the Council's Equalities policies and will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.
- 5.6 Risk Failure to progress a Modern Apprenticeship

programme within Argyll and Bute Council will impact on the life chances of young people across the local authority area and may result in a further out-migration of young people from the area to take up similar opportunities elsewhere, contrary to the overarching aim of the Single Outcome Agreement, 2013-23.

- 5.7 Customer Service A publicity campaign will promote a clear and positive articulation of the opportunities for young people within the Council and with partners across Argyll and Bute.

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