

ANGUS COUNCIL

PERSONNEL & PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 JUNE 2002

PERSONNEL SERVICES: TRAINING SERVICES – PROGRESS REPORT

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

This report describes the activities of Personnel Services' Training Services section during 2001/02.

1. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee note the terms of this report.

2. INTRODUCTION

This report advises of the operations of the Training Services section of Personnel Services during the period 1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002.

As Members will be aware, the Training Services section manages and delivers a range of training and employment programmes for young and unemployed people under contracts with the Employment Service and Scottish Enterprise Tayside. Additionally it delivers IT training to Council employees. Its twin and related objectives are to increase the skills base available to existing and potential employers in Angus and to help people into jobs.

To ensure Members are regularly updated on the work carried out by Training Services, it is proposed to submit progress reports, outlining recent activities, achievements and significant events, to this Committee at six monthly intervals. This first report, however, reviews the full year ending 31 March 2002.

3. PROGRESS REPORT**Skillseekers**

The Skillseekers Initiative, funded by Scottish Enterprise Tayside, is intended to enable school leavers, principally aged 16-18, to obtain Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ's) while in employment or work experience placements.

- During the period 232 young people were on the programme, with 76 joining the programme (35 in Council departments)
- At the year end 142 young people were in training with local employers (including 34 in Council departments) over 72% of whom were employed by the host organisation
- The 14 occupational sectors covered by the Skillseekers programme include agricultural engineering, administration and dental surgery assistance.
- Eighty five people left the programme of whom 53 (62%) achieved a vocational qualification at level II or above and 51 (60%) progressed into employment (11 in Council departments).

New Deal 18-24 – Environment Task Force (ETF)

The ETF programme is one of four New Deal options for unemployed individuals aged 18-24 years. The New Deal ETF contract with the Employment Service (ES) was extended to 31 March 2003.

The range of projects undertaken by participants included:

- Recycling – Angus Community Recycling Opportunities Partnership (ACROP) in partnership with the Environment & Consumer Protection department
- Step-up - a self-build project in Strathairlie, Arbroath managed in partnership with Gowrie Housing, George Martin Builders and the Housing Department
- Warm Deal – providing loft insulation in Council owned housing stock in Arbroath and Montrose in partnership with the Housing Department
- A total of 151 people participated in these and other projects during the period with 35 individuals gaining employment with local employers. The Employment Service target of 50% of leavers (ES definition) entering employment is currently being exceeded with 52% gaining employment

New Deal 25+

This programme aims to assist individuals aged over 25 years who have been unemployed for more than 18 months into sustainable employment.

- Ninety-eight individuals have participated in the programme, during the course of the year.
- Of those who have left 10 (40%) have progressed into employment as defined by Employment Service.

Training For Work

Training for Work (TFW), is a Scottish Enterprise Tayside funded programme, for individuals aged 25 years and over who have been unemployed for 6 months or longer. Participants gain either construction or IT skills.

- Twenty-four participants have started on TFW since 1 April 2001 with an average occupancy of 15 people.
- Eleven people have achieved the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and 3 have found permanent employment.

IT Training

Training Services delivers IT training to both trainees who are participating in the various programmes described above and to Council employees.

Training Services successfully applied for British Computer Society (BCS) centre status for the delivery of the ECDL in March 2000. The ECDL is an internationally recognised award certifying that the holder is competent in the operation of a range of software packages such as word processing, spreadsheets and databases.

- Delivery of the ECDL began in December 2000 and since then a total of 174 Council staff, including all library staff, have started training. Of these, 88 gained the full qualification during 2001/02.

Training Services also delivers standard IT training in a range of Microsoft Office packages eg Word, Excel, Access at beginner and advanced levels.

- During the period a total of 363 training days in these packages were delivered to Council staff.

IT & Customer Service

In December 2000, Training Services successfully bid for £34,000 from the European Social Fund, Objective 3 Programme to support the delivery of the IT & Customer Service course for a three year period. The funding provides training and development opportunities for 60 individuals, 20 each year, to assist them gain skills in information technology and customer service as well as confidence building and motivation.

- The first two courses ran from March to December 2001 during which time all participants received training leading to the Welcome Host and Scotland's Best qualifications and information technology training. Nineteen people started on the programme 10 (53%) of whom progressed into jobs. The third course started in February 2002, with 9 participants and is scheduled to end in June 2002.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the terms of this report.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications associated with this report.

6. CONSULTATION

The Director of Finance and Director of Law & Administration have been consulted on the terms of this report.

A B Watson
Chief Executive

HR/PersMan

NOTE No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.