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To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee - 14 January 2010

Subject: Workforce Strategy Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary

Provides an update on KCC strategy to influence employment demographics and recommends that the Corporate Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitors progress towards meeting targets and objectives on a regular basis.

1. Context

It is well documented that the public sector has an ageing workforce and that historically fewer younger people are attracted to work in the sector. This leads to a potential demographic time bomb.

Personnel and Development commissioned research within Kent that identified 33% of public sector employees in the County are 50 and over, whilst only 5% are under 25.

In KCC 40% of employees are 50 and over. As a result of workforce strategy interventions the number of young people employed by KCC is increasing. The attached Appendix gives further detail. We are also engaging with and influencing the wider public sector in Kent.

2. Strategic Objectives

KCC's workforce strategy supports a number of organisational objectives:

- Towards 2010 – supporting Kent people by providing apprenticeships and opportunities for graduates, including partnership working with both public and private sectors.
- Workforce demographics – influencing and changing the age profile of employees and more fully reflecting our communities.
- Talent Management – attracting, recruiting and developing talent, succession planning and providing a talent pipeline that will contribute to replacing older employees who will exit the organisation.
- Backing Kent People – Youth unemployment is rising during the recession. KCC recognises its role in alleviating youth unemployment both as a major employer and through influencing partners.

3. Employing Young People

The key interventions that form part of KCC's workforce strategy are as follows:

Work Experience – opportunities provided for 14-19s helping and encouraging young people to work in the public sector on leaving full time education.

Kent Success Apprenticeships – provides paid training and employment for young people. KCC has delivered the Towards 2010 target. We are currently working with public sector on how KCC can support partners deliver apprenticeships.

Social Care – working with residential, domiciliary and disability sectors to establish a social care apprenticeship scheme.

Thanetworks – Providing apprentices for SME's in Thanet. Undertaken recruitment, issued contacts and deliver payroll service on behalf of SMEs.

Future Jobs Fund – KCC won government funding to create 1000 new roles with KCC and partners aimed at young unemployed people (18-24s). Jobs are for 6 months, are paid at national minimum wage and benefit the community. Roles include support community wardens, play assistants and working with people with learning disabilities.

Gap Year Programme – Provides paid employment opportunities for A Level students seeking a gap year before university, 'Year in Industry' undergraduates, and recent graduates. An internship scheme has also been launched that provides short term work experience for graduates that support young people gaining paid employment.

Kent Graduate Programme – KCC also has a well established graduate programme that attracts high calibre graduates seeking a career in local government. In addition to a long standing management trainee cohort KCC also operates streams in Finance, Transportation & Development and IT.

4. Retaining, Developing and Managing Talent

KCC continues to develop its Talent Management Strategy. A talent management programme that targeted employees under 30 was delivered during summer & autumn 2009. 31 young people successfully completed the programme and individuals are now receiving coaching from qualified coaches. An Established Leaders Talent Management programme will shortly be launched.

5. Outcomes – Achievements to Date

- Kent Success Apprenticeships – Towards 2010 target of 250 achieved with 280 starts to date. Target has been revised to 300 by autumn 2010 – the forecast is that KCC will also exceed this target.
- Gap Year Programme – 87 young people placed during 2008/09 both within KCC, the public sector and Kent businesses. There have been 72 placements during 2009/10 to date.
- Kent Graduate Programme – 5 to 10 young people are recruited each year (subject to funding). 59 have been retained within KCC.
- Future Jobs Fund – Providing up to 1000 externally funded posts (subject to continuation of funding) predominantly for young people aged 18-24.
- Number of employees under 30 has increased 13.57% to 14.6% in 18months (April08 – Sept09)
- In recognition of our achievements KCC reached the final six in a national talent management award alongside private sector employers. KCC's workforce strategy to recruit and develop young people was particularly highlighted for praise.

6. Employing Young People – Future Developments

- KCC will continue to build on and develop existing schemes. Work is going on at the moment to establish aggressive targets for each of the streams both for KCC and for Kent as a whole. We will also continue to embed the employment of young people into other people strategies.
- We are currently working with Tribal Resourcing, our advertising agency on how we can develop the image of KCC as an employer.
- In order to retain young people we will continue to develop the culture by demonstrating that KCC is an employer that recognises potential develops and manages talent and where young people are valued. Greenhouse, KCC's staff group for young people under 30 worked closely with Personnel & Development on the development of the young people talent management programme.
- Personnel & Development plans to make proposals on ways in which the organisation could deploy staff in modern agile ways and provide greater flexibility for managers to determine how they deploy staff.

7. Recommendations

Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

7.1 Note the achievements to date and future developments

7.2 Advise on any further areas that committee would like developed.

7.3 Agree that the Corporate Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee will regularly monitor progress against the targets set, and agree how often this monitoring should take place.

Nigel Fairburn
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