

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Report by Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services (Housing & Regeneration Services)**

**Community Safety & Environmental Services Committee: 6 December 2006**

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**Subject: Construction Apprenticeship Project (CAP)**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the implementation and progress of a pilot Construction Apprenticeship Project which has assisted 20 young people in West Dunbartonshire to access the opportunity to commence a construction apprenticeship.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** West Dunbartonshire is one of seven areas that is recognised by the Scottish Executive as a Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) hotspot. There are a significant number of young people in the area who are currently NEET. This is set against the construction sector locally which is expanding to meet development opportunities and will continue to do so, whilst currently experiencing a skills shortage.
- 2.2** Consultation with the local Construction Alliance Network highlighted some barriers to industry in taking on apprentices.
- 2.3** A major concern of employers is the costs of employing an apprentice particularly in the first year when the young person can be required to attend college for up to 20 weeks.
- 2.4** A pilot project was therefore developed to provide support to employers to encourage them to offer apprenticeship training and the project is supported by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers Federation (SNIPEF).

#### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** Marketing of the project commenced in April 2006. Around 30 local businesses expressed an interest in the project. The staff of the Skillseekers Section assisted employers in the recruitment and selection of apprentices.

- 3.2** Twenty apprentices have been recruited, 8 directly through the Skillseekers Section's existing and successful, "Get Ready for Work" programme. The Project has included a range of trades within the construction industry, including Carpentry and Joinery (8), Painting and Decorating (5), Plastering (2) Plumbing (2), Electrical (1), Bricklaying (1) and Ceiling Fixing (1).
- 3.3** All recruits have been registered as apprentices with the appropriate skills sector councils: Scottish Building Apprenticeship Council, Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT) or Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers Federation (SNIPEF).
- 3.4** Two young people have since withdrawn from the project, however, in both cases the employers have indicated that they will continue to employ them leaving a total of 18 in apprenticeship training.

#### **4. Personnel Issues**

- 4.1** An intensive period of marketing the project to local employers, assisting with recruitment of apprentices, liaising with CITB, SNIPEF, the local Construction Alliance and Clydebank College took place from April through to mid October. This role was largely undertaken by staff from Skillseekers with support from the Economic Development Section, whilst maintaining existing service levels.
- 4.2** The two Skillseekers staff involved will continue to be responsible for liaising with employers and colleges as well as providing a mentoring service to apprentices over the next year.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** The project is funded in part from existing Economic Development and Skillseekers Sections revenue budgets. The remainder of the project is funded by European monies after a successful application to the Objective 3 Partnership. It is expected that over £60,000 will be drawn down from European funding over the duration of the project.
- 5.2** CITB, SNIPEF and SECTT will pay all college fees and in addition will make some grant support available to participating employers.
- 5.3** The Council provides support to employers with a payment towards employer's liability insurance, journeyman downtime and apprentice wage subsidies to cover periods spent at college. Apprentices are supported with grants of £200 towards the cost of tools, £30 for personal protective equipment and assistance with travel expenses for periods at college.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1** The Construction Modern Apprenticeship project provides assistance and financial support for one year to encourage small to medium sized businesses within West Dunbartonshire to take on an apprentice in the construction, plumbing and electrical trades. This has resulted this year in 18 young people in West Dunbartonshire commencing apprenticeships in Construction trades and a further two gaining employment, who otherwise may not have done so.

## **7. Recommendation**

- 7.1** The Committee is invited to note the commencement of the Construction Apprenticeship Project and its success in establishing employment and training for 20 young people in West Dunbartonshire.

**Irving Hodgson**

**Report by Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services  
(Housing & Regeneration Services)**

**Date: 8 November 2006**

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**Wards Affected:** All

**Appendix:** None

**Background Papers:** None

**Person to Contact:** Michael Gill, Section Head, Skillseekers,  
Development and Environmental Services  
Tel. No. (01389) 608018