
Report to: Housing, Health & Care Committee

Date of Meeting: 23 August 2012

Subject: Clackmannanshire Family Firm Programme

Report by: Director of Services to Communities

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. This report updates members on the Local Employability Partnership strategic project relating to Looked After Children as considered by Council on 30th June 2011. It seeks agreement to use the experience of a pilot project together with best practice from elsewhere to develop a formal programme for Clackmannanshire.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Council agrees to build on the established pilot exercise by implementing the phased Clackmannanshire Family Firm Programme model outlined in section 3 of the report.

3.0 Considerations

Background

- 3.1. The Council considered a report on the Clackmannanshire Employability Strategy and Framework for Action in June 2011. One of the strategic projects approved by Council focused on Looked After Children.
- 3.2. Evidence shows that young people in the care of a Local Authority tend to perform less well in the labour market than their peers.
- 3.3. A pilot model to develop the employability of young people in the client group was developed and implemented by Clackmannanshire Works in partnership with Childcare Services Staff and host services within the Council.
- 3.4. Lessons learned from the pilot, cited by Scottish Government as an example of good practice, have been used, together with research into best practice in other authorities to further develop the model and to devise a "Clackmannanshire Family Firm Programme".

Clackmannanshire Family Firm Programme

- 3.5. The intention of the programme is to provide dedicated assistance to young people who are looked after by the Council (both accommodated and otherwise) at the point of leaving school and who have not made a successful transition to the labour market. The programme aims to target young people aged 17+. The rationale here is that this programme should not act as a distraction to the existing programmes available to young people as they leave school, such as Activity Agreements and National Training Programmes, but should act as both a safety net and progression route for slightly older young people. Where exceptional circumstances exist, however, younger clients could be considered.
- 3.6. The programme aims to improve the employability of the young people through a phased programme of confidence building, training, work based activity and ongoing support. For young people who progress through the early phases successfully this would culminate in a full-time work placement within the Council of at least 3 months. It is a development from the original Clackmannanshire model in that it extends the pre-placement phase. This will include an element of selection to match needs and skills with opportunities.
- 3.7. The proposed Clackmannanshire model has been developed around 4 stages:

Phase 1 - Marketing and Selection

- Targeted marketing of the programme to all eligible young people via the Opportunities for All network.
- Information events for young people and agency staff
- Selection of young people through a supported application process. The aim is to select 7/8 young people with the hope that at least 5 will continue through to the full-time placement

Phase 2 - Programme Induction (3 to 4 weeks part-time)

- Induction of young people to ensure young people understand both the offer, expectations of their input and support available.
- Confidence building.
- Tasters/tours of participating services to support appropriate allocation.
- Matching of young people to opportunities and firm allocation of placements.

Phase 3 - Placement Induction (4 weeks part-time)

- An opportunity for young people to get settled into their placement and ensure they are happy to continue on to a full-time placement.

Phase 4 - Full-time Placement

- Approximately 5 young people progress on to a full-time placement of 3 months.

- 3.8. At the end of Phase 4 the young people would be supported with job-seeking and other assistance as required through relevant services, including Clackmannanshire Works.
- 3.9 Progression support would be available to all young people at whatever point they leave the programme.
- 3.10 The first 3 stages of the model are part-time on the basis that young people will remain on benefits throughout this phase and will need to meet job-seeking conditions. At phase 4 the young people will become employees of the Council to enable them to overcome the financial barriers to participation.
- 3.11 This resource intensive programme would be managed and implemented through a dedicated resource working with other key staff already supporting the client group. It is likely to take up to 6 months to progress young people from selection to completion of their placement.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

- 4.1. The Clackmannanshire Family Firm Programme would have a positive impact on issues identified through the Best Value and Sustainability Checklist:
- Targeting skills and training to reduce unemployment, and
 - Reducing social exclusion

5.0 Resource Implications

- 5.1. An annual budget of £60000 has been established within Social Services to provide dedicated employability support to children in the care of the Council
- 5.2. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes
- 5.3. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes
- 5.4. *Staffing*
- 5.5 Through Care and After Care staff based within Child Care Services will continue their statutory involvement offering advice, guidance and support as appropriate to the relevant young people
- 5.6 Experience here and elsewhere, and more recently highlighted in the Scottish Government's Finance Committee's inquiry into improving the employability of individuals experiencing high levels of multiple deprivation, has emphasised the resource intensive nature of this type of activity. Part of the budget available would, therefore be allocated to the provision of a dedicated resource, based in the Council's Human Resources team, who would work with existing staff within the Council to support the young people as well as mentors.

6.0 Exempt Reports

6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are safer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vulnerable people and families are supported	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substance misuse and its effects are reduced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environment is protected and enhanced for all	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence	<input type="checkbox"/>

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

Clackmannanshire Employability Strategy and Framework for Action

Corporate Parenting Policy

8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes No

The implementation of this policy will deliver benefits and opportunities to one of the most disadvantaged groups of people in Clackmannanshire.

9.0 Legality

9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

10.1 None

11.0 Background Papers

11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes (please list the documents below) No

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Ian Fraser	Team Leader, Economic Development	X2293

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
John Gillespie	Head of Community & Regulatory Services	
Garry Dallas	Director of Services to Communities	

