

**Economy and Enterprise
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**



6 October 2014

**Durham Employment and Skills
pre-employment training -
Overview**

**Joint Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive
and Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and
Economic Development**

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with background information on the work undertaken by Durham Employment and Skills in relation to pre-employment training prior to a presentation by Julie West, Employment and Skills Manager, Regeneration and Economic Development.

Background

2. Members will recall that at the meeting of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 23 June when considering the quarter 4 performance report two of the Council Plan actions behind target related to the development of sector specific pre-employment training to prepare clients for employment and meet employer's needs within the work place. It was requested by the committee that a report be provided to a future meeting providing more information on sector specific pre-employment training and work undertaken with employers in relation to sector specific qualifications.
3. Arrangements have been made for Julie West, Employment and Skills Manager, Regeneration and Economic Development to attend the committee meeting on the 6th October to deliver a presentation focusing on:
 - Pre-Employment Training model.
 - Maximising external funding contracts.
 - Supporting employer's needs.
 - Previous success.

Durham Employment and Skills

4. Durham Employment and Skills is part of the Regeneration and Economic Development Service Grouping with offices in Consett, Chester-le-Street, Stanley and Crook.

5. Currently 85% of their work is focused on supporting the Work Programme working as a sub-contractor to Avanta, one of the prime contractors for the Work Programme within County Durham. This involves supporting long term unemployed clients in preparing for, securing and sustaining employment.
6. The type of support currently provided by Durham Employment and Skills include:
 - Maths /English courses to encourage employability.
 - Skills support for the unemployed – ensuring that they have the desired skills required by employers.
 - Working with employers supporting them through the recruitment process, examples include Tesco, Costa Coffee and Tiger Bills.
 - Support for small businesses.
7. Durham Employment & Skills has a number of smaller external contracts that allow the team to provide support from initial engagement through to post employment support. Utilising funding in this way enables the team to maximise all of its contracts to meet agreed targets and outcomes.
8. Durham Employment & Skills works in partnership with employers to meet their requirements through providing Pre-employment training that enables potential candidates to gain essential knowledge and skills of specific sectors and employers.
9. Previous successful Pre-employment training, as mentioned above, has been provided for employers who are developing their business within Co Durham. Developing a relationship with the employer and involving them in the process ensures that Durham Employment & Skills is able to deliver a programme to up-skill potential candidates to meet the employers' needs.
10. Providing potential candidates with the knowledge and skills required for the positions available has proved very successful with a conversion rate of over 40% into employment.

Next Steps

11. Durham Employment & Skills needs to remain flexible to be able to continue to provide support for both employers and potential candidates, against a backdrop of payment by results contracts and a retendering of contracts linked to European monies.
12. Durham Employment & Skills will continue to work with Derwentside Homes, Groundwork NE, Job Centre Plus and other key stakeholders to provide long term unemployed residents with the knowledge and skills required to gain and sustain employment.

Recommendation

13. Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note and comment upon the information provided during the presentation.

Background Paper(s)

Durham Employment and Skills website

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| Contact: | Stephen Gwilym | Tel: 03000 268 140 |
| | | E-mail: stephen.gwilym@durham.gov.uk |
| Author: | Diane Close | Tel: 03000 268 141 |
| | | E-mail: diane.close@durham.gov.uk |

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

Staffing – None

Risk – None

Equality and Diversity– None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder – None

Human Rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – None

Disability Discrimination Act –None

Legal Implications – None