



To: Environment Scrutiny Committee
Report by: Head of Streets and Open Spaces
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment 15th March 2011
Wards affected: All

Apprenticeships in Environmental Cleansing

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 An opportunity exists to work in partnership with Nordic Pioneer, a leading and cutting edge training company in the field of environmental cleansing, on an innovative apprenticeship scheme.
- 1.2 The scheme will deliver opportunities to twelve young people (16-18 year olds) to be employed by Nordic Pioneer and undertake a six-month apprenticeship gaining a NVQ level 2 in Cleaning and Support Services.
- 1.3 The apprentices will be working on projects to clean up areas such as nature reserves, commons and cemeteries as well as undertaking the removal of fly tipping, graffiti and fly posting.
- 1.4 The Council will be committed to producing a programme of work that meets the criteria of the NVQ.
- 1.5 Funding will come from the receipts from Fixed Penalty Notices issued for environmental crime and existing agency budgets.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To approve the proposed apprenticeship scheme with Nordic Pioneer.
- 2.2 To approve the use of income from Fixed Penalty Notices issued for environmental crime to offset £10,000 of costs.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Streets and Open Spaces service delivery team, formerly known as Streetscene, carry out a range of activities in the public realm that are designed to improve the Local Environmental Quality. These activities include Street Cleansing and the removal of litter; fly tipping, graffiti and fly posting from public open space and the public realm. In

addition grounds maintenance activities are carried out by skilled and semi skilled gardeners.

3.2 An opportunity has been presented to us to work with Nordic Pioneer, a well established company in the training and environmental cleansing field, to offer opportunities for twelve unemployed young people (ideally 16 – 18 year olds) for a six month apprenticeship in order for them to attain a NVQ level 2 qualification in Cleaning and Support Services.

3.3 The concept of this partnership would be that the apprentices undertook high value and high visibility environmental work and after the six month period would have a nationally recognised qualification and six months work experience.

3.4 The aim of this partnership arrangement would be:-

To ensure that young people in Cambridge achieve an apprenticeship in six months whilst supporting the Council's objectives and aspiration to be a clean, green and safe city.

The objectives of the partnership would be to:-

- To recruit 12 young people locally to become neighbourhood assistants in Cleansing Services within Cambridge City Council boundaries
- To assist the council to achieve its objective to keep the city clear of litter and graffiti.
- To assist the council to achieve its objective to maintain public realm, footpaths and cycleways to a high standard.
- To support young people into employment and enhance their employment chances
- To attract a more diverse age range into the cleansing workforce

3.5 The requirements of the partnership for each partner are as follows:-
Nordic Pioneer

- Advertise, recruit and employ the apprentices
- Provide initial 10 days on-site training for apprentices
- Complete assessor visits (at least two per candidate)
- Complete paperwork and apply for the qualification and certificates for apprentices
- Participate in media / awards ceremony for young people

The City Council

- Provide suitable training venue and refreshments

- Provide uniform and protective equipment
 - Provide work programme and supervision
- Fund the 12 apprentices £95 per week salary throughout the 6 month pilot (total £29,640k)

- 3.6 This proposal offers benefits in that the apprentices' employment is with Nordic Pioneer . It is envisaged that the apprentices will work on project work such as clean ups on nature reserves, commons and cemeteries under the supervision of a leading hand and in order to comply with the requirements of the NVQ some more standard work would also be undertaken. This scheme with Nordic Pioneer is supported by the TUC and an early discussion has taken place with GMB.
- 3.7 Whilst there is no guarantee of future employment after the six month apprenticeship the apprentices will have gained six months work experience, a nationally recognised qualification and knowledge of the work undertaken in the improvement of local environmental quality and the public realm.

4. Implications

- 4.1 The financial commitment for this project would be £29,640 which reflects the payment of £95 per apprentice per week for the six month period.
- 4.2 Additional expenditure would be required for the provision of PPE.
- 4.3 All training costs would be covered by Nordic Pioneer.
- 4.4 It is requested that the scheme use £10,000 of the fund accrued from the receipt of Fixed Penalty Notice fines to help finance the initiative. This proposed use of Fixed Penalty fines falls within Defra guidelines. The rest of the funding will be found from current budgets set aside for agency support to the services.
- 4.5 As Nordic Pioneer are unique in the market place it is proposed to seek an exemption from contract procedure rules – part 4G of the Constitution.
- 4.6 Risk Assessments and Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as will further discussions with the Unions and HR.

5. Background papers

Nodic Pioneer proposal to T. Ainley dated January 2011.

6. Appendices

Nil

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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