

Report

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Report to:	Corporate Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	10 December 2008
Report by:	Executive Director (Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Vocational Development Programme Update
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise the Committee of the current position with regards to the Vocational Development Programme (VDP)

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Vocational Development Programme, "What's with Work?", is designed to encourage young people to participate in vocational training as part of the school curriculum. It started 4 years ago with 30 S4 pupils from 5 secondary schools doing one vocational option.
- 3.2. Pupils participating in the mainstream Programme spend half a day per week at college or on work placement learning the practicalities of their chosen occupation. All pupils work towards an accredited qualification.
- 3.3. The aim of the Programme is to give South Lanarkshire pupils the opportunity to gain new skills such as confidence, self-esteem, team-working and problem solving, as well as a vocationally based qualification and, most importantly, the opportunity to make an informed decision on their future career.
- 3.4. The programme is a 2 year course that is made up of 8 vocational options that have been selected on the basis of Future Skills Scotland figures, and recognise the social and economic needs of the Lanarkshire area. Pupils completing the courses will receive Intermediate level 1 or 2 Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) certificates which, combined with their standard grade and higher qualifications, will allow them to go on to further or higher education or to apply for apprenticeship opportunities.

4. Vocational Development Programme Update

- 4.1. In academic year 2008/2009, the programme has 861 S3/4 pupils. This is an 8.3% increase from the previous year's participation level, with pupils from across all 17 South Lanarkshire secondary schools participating in 8 different vocational options. These are delivered by a range of specialist training providers.

- 4.2. Pupils can currently choose from the occupational areas of construction, early years care, hairdressing, hospitality, manufacturing, administration, finance, and rural skills.
- 4.3. In academic year 2008/2009 there is a pilot course in engineering with S3 pupils attending Motherwell College, and fashion branding courses being run for limited numbers of S6 pupils at Caledonian University.
- 4.4. Currently there are 9 training providers delivering the courses and this includes 3 local colleges, 2 universities, 3 private training providers, and one internal Council provider.
- 4.5. In the academic year 2009/2010 we intend to withdraw programmes within Administration and Finance due to pupils' lack of interest in both course areas. These subjects are covered within school as part of the national curriculum. In future years we intend to provide new course options in uniformed services, motor vehicle mechanics, and sports and leisure programmes.
- 4.6. As part of the Council's commitment to "closing the gap", the VDP takes a disproportionate intake from pupils who live in the most deprived datazones. Currently, 47% of the pupils on the Programme fall into that category.
- 4.7. It is useful to know the progress of pupils who experienced the VDP, and this allows us to adjust our approach if appropriate. In the last 2 years, pupils who completed the Programme progressed to the following destinations:-
- ◆ 19% college and training
 - ◆ 60% returned to school
 - ◆ 10% secured employment
 - ◆ 8% registered unemployed
 - ◆ 3% unknown
- 4.8. There are 3 further Programmes under the "What's with Work?" banner which cater for looked after and accommodated young people, young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), and those who are winter leavers.
- 4.9. The looked after and accommodated course runs for 6 months and engages with 8 young people per year to give them skills in joinery and manufacturing. They work towards an SVQ in performing manufacturing and operations at level 1. The course provides a one-to-one environment to help develop the communication and confidence skills of these young people.
- 4.10. The SEBD course works with 6 young people on a one-to-one basis and uses vocational profiling and appropriate work placements to help them make informed decisions about their future careers.
- 4.11. The winter leavers programme runs between August and December and has 70 young people from 7 schools that are eligible to leave school in December of their 5th year. The programme is a 4 day-a-week course which has pupils attending college and outward-bound activities to gain a range of vocational skills. Currently we have 64% of the participants living in South Lanarkshire's most deprived datazones.

5. Evaluation Summary

- 5.1. The programmes have been successful on a number of different levels, not only for the pupils involved, but also the schools. A rise in levels of confidence and self-

esteem for all who participate is a standard benefit, as is a rise in attendance and class participation at school.

5.2. We also survey the participants on our courses to find out what they think about programmes. Year on year, the feedback is really positive. For 2007/2008, 93% of the participants thought the Programme was excellent or good. 87% rated their chances of getting a job after the Programme as good to excellent. All found the Programme to be relevant and in accordance with their expectations. We will continue to refine our feedback arrangements to ensure we get the best information possible.

5.3. Further benefits for the South Lanarkshire area are that young people are applying for Council and private employment equipped with transferable employment skills such as team working, communication and problem solving. They are also applying for jobs on the basis that they are aware of the industry and are sure that they wish to work in it.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. None.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. All financial implications can be met from within existing budgets.

8. Other Implications

8.1. None.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.

9.2. There was no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in the report.

Robert McIlwain
Executive Director (Corporate Resources)

19 November 2008

Link(s) to Council Objectives

- ◆ Excellent employer
- ◆ People focused

Previous References

- ◆ 7 May 2008

List of Background Papers

◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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