

20th July 2012

Provision of training and employment opportunities on new affordable housing schemes.

Introduction

This paper provides Scrutiny Board with details of the previous level of training and employment opportunities delivered as a result of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) in 2011/12; the expected level of forthcoming opportunities arising from delivery of the Affordable Homes Programme 2011/15 and outlines the work which is ongoing to ensure that collaborative efforts to maximise opportunities are pursued.

Background

As a condition of HCA funding under the NAHP, there was a requirement to provide a specified number of employment and training opportunities, including apprenticeships on new affordable housing schemes according to the value of the scheme. As a condition of funding, providers were required to submit quarterly information to the HCA on employment and training outputs on each of their schemes.

Outputs from 2008/11 National Affordable Housing Programme

Between 2009 and March 2012 **59 apprenticeships** and **19 work placements** were created or safeguarded on schemes which delivered 565 affordable homes via the National Affordable Housing Programme in Leeds.

Potential Outputs from the 2011/15 Affordable Homes Programme

The current programme is estimated to deliver in excess of 700 new affordable homes over the period 2011/15. It is estimated that this could result in the provision of an additional 100 new employment opportunities including apprenticeships and work placements over the next 3 years.

However, it should be noted that the HCA no longer imposes national apprenticeship targets as a condition of funding. The Affordable Homes Programme 2011/15 saw the end of significant levels of grant funding for development by Registered Providers (RPs) and introduced a model which encouraged providers to use their existing assets to raise finance and help reduce the amount of public funding needed to deliver new supply, which is the main driver currently.

In addition it is important to understand that whilst RPs appreciate and support the need to create employment opportunities as a priority for the Council this is a matter outwith the Council's direct control and will be the subject of negotiations between RPs and their contractors, especially in view of the necessity for them to provide greater value for money to the HCA.

However, officers in the Regeneration Service with the support of the Employment and Skills service continue to work collaboratively with RPs to ensure that opportunities are maximised. The Housing Investment Team continues to monitor RPs employment and training outputs including apprenticeships, work placements and other employment opportunities. The importance of this issue as a priority for the Council is reinforced to RPs at the regular RP Delivery Group meetings where RPs are encouraged to share examples of good practice and details of their performance.