

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSAL FROM COUNCILOR PENNY EWENS – INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN LEEDS CITY COUNCIL AND ITS WHOLLY OWNED COMPANIES.

1.0 Background

1.1 Leeds City Council as a major employer in the City is widely seen as being able to offer employment opportunities to people under-represented in the labour market or who may be disadvantaged.

1.2 When focusing on young people some key facts include;

- People between 16-25 account for 9% of the work force
- When applying for jobs, candidates under 21 have only been recruited to around 10% of potential entry level jobs. This suggests in-experienced people at this level struggle to compete against more mature (and graduate) job seekers.
- The reduction of NEETs as a key target for the City Council

1.3 With an aging work-force profile and low numbers of 16 – 18 year olds employed by the Council there is a clear business case for taking a more co-ordinated and directed approach to recruitment of young people. This business case includes;

- Complements the national agenda for skills development focusing on young people
- Is a key tool to help ‘narrow the gap’ and reduce the number of NEETS
- Has potential to generate savings by the reduced use of Agency staff (estimated to be in the region of £1million per annum)
- Will demonstrate to other City employers and partners the benefit of this approach

2.0 Scope

2.1 The purpose of the Inquiry is to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:

- The current policies for the employment and training 16 – 18 year olds, either to substantive or supernumerary posts
- The legal obstacles for following a pro-active approach in positively discriminating in favour of 16 -18 year olds.
- What performance targets are in place to recruit from this age range
- Strategies are in place to encourage job seekers from this age range
- What strategies are in place to provide ‘after-care’ services to ensure reduced through-put of young people and increased career opportunities and long term employees
- What job guarantee schemes are in existence
- What apprenticeship programmes are in place

- The potential cost savings that can be made (e.g. Agency staff) by recruiting from this age range, who could be moved between departments as part of their training
- The contribution to the reduction in the number of NEETs

3.0 Timetable

3.1 **It is proposed that a Working Group of the Board is established to undertake the initial research identified in paragraph 2.1 of the proposal.**

4.0 Possible Witnesses

- Chief Officer Human Resources
- Member from the Children's Services Scrutiny Board
- Learning Skills Council
- Jobs and Skills