



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE- 11 JULY 2013

INTERNSHIPS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek agreement on the principles of developing Internships within the County Council.

Background

2. The purpose of Internships is to both support the Council's approach to Workforce Planning and support achievement of the Leicestershire Together Outcomes Framework in the growth of the Leicestershire economy, in particular point 19:-

"19. People have the right skills to access current job vacancies

(a) Improved engagement between employers and training and skills providers

(b) Higher number of apprenticeships, internships and work placements."

Internships

3. The Common Best Practice Code for High Quality Internships, which is underpinned by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) guidance and supported by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, notes how an internship is where:

"an individual works so as to gain relevant professional experience before embarking on a career. Well managed, high-quality internships should be beneficial to both employer and intern. The intern should develop professional skills and an understanding of a profession by undertaking work of value for an employer. Employers can use internship programmes to identify and recruit motivated and capable individuals". (Common Best Practice Code for High Quality Internships, July 2011).

Benefits to the intern

4. For the intern the benefits of working in an organisation can assist in their development of a broad range of skills, improving their productivity, CV and future employment prospects.

Benefits to the Council

5. Internships can be an effective mechanism for the Council to introduce new learning and ideas from the intern's previous experience. Internships can also support the Council in preparing the future employment market and workforce planning.

Principles of Internships within the Council

6. The focus of Internships is to gain relevant professional experience. Therefore, based upon Legal Services and Human Resources advice and guidance, an Internship will last for a maximum of 4 to 6 weeks, and must not be used to complete the work required of a paid employee.
7. All Internships will also operate under the following principles:-

(a)Preparation

Managers must prepare in advance and consider the role and purpose of any internship before moving onto the recruitment stage, setting out clearly how both the intern and the Council will benefit from an internship.

(b)Recruitment

With internships providing similar learning opportunities as the Apprenticeship programme, it is proposed that internships are advertised and recruited in the same way as Apprenticeships within the Council. Using this same approach will ensure the appropriate safeguards are in place to protect both the Council and the intern during the recruitment process.

(c)Induction

Interns should receive a proper and supported induction that ensures they complete all necessary activities related to their role, for example, any Health and Safety requirements.

(d)Treatment

Interns should be treated with exactly the same professionalism and duty of care as regular employees.

(e)Supervision

As interns are potentially young and inexperienced, it is essential that supervision is provided. Therefore the manager must ensure that an adequate and supportive supervision process is in place ready for the intern to start.

If an intern is working in an environment dealing with vulnerable adults or children then they **must** be supervised at all times. The manager must also consider confidentiality, data protection and access to information before an internship commences. Where an intern would be carrying out a regulated activity (such as with vulnerable adults or children) then consideration must be given as to whether there is a need for a DBS disclosure to be obtained based on the potential risk.

(f) Learning and development

The Corporate Learning and Development Service will provide support for any internship, including access to relevant learning and development activities and interview skills.

(g) Payment

The internship is voluntary with no wage paid, but funding to cover reasonable travel expenses, to and from work and whilst travelling to undertake any work activity, plus subsistence is provided. This must be clear at the point of recruitment and funding must be agreed between the intern and the manager before the intern commences, allowing the intern to make an informed decision of whether or not this internship is in their best interests.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- (a) the development of an Internship framework and programme using the principles outlined in this report which is underpinned by the Common Best Practice for High Quality Internships be supported;
- (b) That, subject to (a) above, a review of internships in six and twelve months' time be supported.

Background Papers

None.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedures

None.

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Equal Opportunities Implications

There are no equality issues arising from this development.