

14 November 2013		ITEM: 5
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
16 – 24 Year Olds Working for Thurrock Council		
Report of: Strategy and Performance Officer.		
Wards and communities affected: ALL	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Accountable Head of Service: Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy		
Accountable Director: Steve Cox – Assistant Chief Executive		
This report is Public		
Purpose of Report: To provide Corporate Overview and Scrutiny members with an overview of the current situation for 16-24 year olds within the council's workforce, targeted initiatives and to put forward a recommendation for moving the agenda forward.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee requested a report highlighting the position of 16-24 year old employees within the Council's workforce. The purpose of the report is to provide Corporate Overview and Scrutiny members with an overview of the current situation and initiatives and put forward a recommendation for moving the agenda forward.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- 1.1 Note information regarding profile, programmes and support for 16-24 year olds working within the council**
- 1.2 Consider this particular age group as part of the wider scope of the Task and Finish Group (subject to agreement to set up a Task and Finish Group as recommended in the *Fairness in Thurrock* report also presented to the Committee)**

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

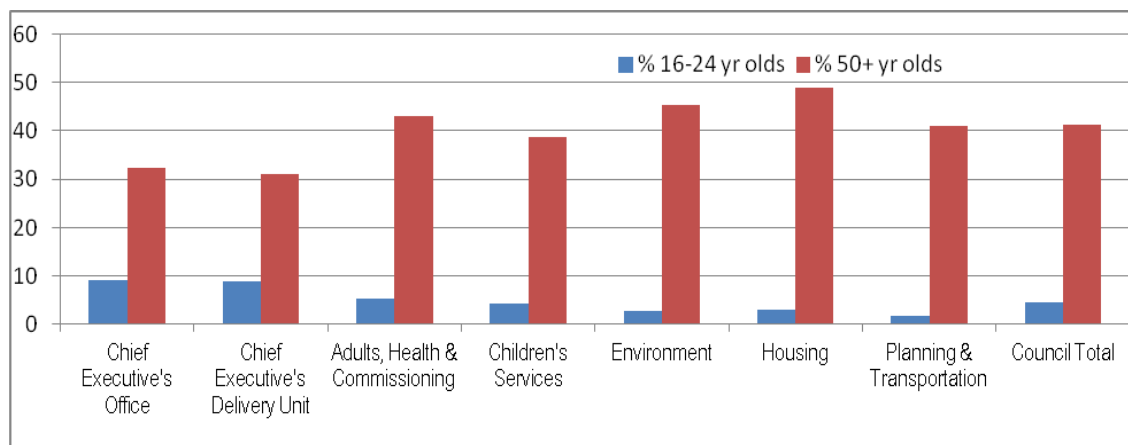
One of the corporate scorecard indicators which has been monitored for the last two years is the percentage of 16-24 year olds who make up the council's workforce. The rationale for including this within the corporate scorecard is to

monitor the effectiveness of initiatives to encourage Thurrock’s young people into the council.

Encouraging younger recruits helps towards a number of key issues faced by the Council, including:

- supporting the council’s work to improve training opportunities for young people and reduce youth unemployment. The rate of unemployment amongst Thurrock young people has improved significantly at a time when the reverse has been true nationally.
- supporting succession planning against a back drop of over 40% of Thurrock Council employees being over 50 years old

	Total No of staff	% of 16-24 yr olds	No of 16-24 yr olds	% of 50+ yr olds	No of 50+ yr olds
Chief Executive's Office	121	9.09%	11	32.23	39
Chief Executive's Delivery Unit	45	8.89%	4	31.11	14
Adults, Health & Commissioning	366	5.46%	19	43.17	158
Children's Services	772	4.27%	33	38.61	298
Environment	295	2.71%	8	45.42	134
Housing	198	3.03%	6	48.99	97
Planning & Transportation	61	1.64%	1	40.98	25
Council Total	1858	4.47%	82	41.17	765
Serco	381	8.66%	33	-	-
Council inc Serco total	2239	5.14%	115	-	-



According to the Census 2011, the population of Thurrock which is between 16 and 24 years old is 11.1%. This compares with a regional figure of 10.9% and an all England figure of 11.8%.

Percentage of population by bespoke broad age band
mid-2011

	0–15 %	16–19 %	20–24 %	25–29 %	30–44 %	45–64 %	65+ %
Thurrock	21.7	5.0	6.1	7.1	23.1	24.2	12.8
East	18.9	4.9	6.0	6.2	20.2	26.1	17.6
England	18.9	5.0	6.8	6.9	20.6	25.4	16.4

Source: Office for National Statistics (Census 2011)

3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

3.1 Monitoring and target setting

The makeup of the council's workforce is reported each month to Directors and Heads of Service as part of the wider HR Management Information pack. This includes a breakdown of employee ages and other diversity streams. In addition, there is the specific key performance indicator (KPI) within the corporate scorecard which reports on the overall percentage of 16-24 year olds within the workforce.

The latest data (July) shows that 4.47% of the council's workforce (5.14% including Serco employees) is within the 16-24 year old age group. The target is 5%. 5% may seem low compared to the 11.1% 16-24 year old population of Thurrock, however there are a number of issues to take into account when looking at the appropriate targeting of this:

- Current limited recruitment activity taking place due to organisational restructures and budget reductions
- The council does not want to target the same percentage of 16-24 year olds in the workforce as the population as our Raising Participation Age strategy also wants to encourage young adults into further/higher education. Therefore careful targeting has been required to account for the encouragement of young people into further education, not just employment
- The nature of some of the services within the council requires professional qualified/skilled staff (eg social workers/planners) thus precluding school leavers from undertaking these positions

3.2 Profile of 16-24 year olds in the council's workforce

There were 82 council employees (report run 29 July 2013) who were between 16 and 24 years old. The summary of this cohort is as follows (NB. the below data does not include those staff employed by Serco):

- Average age = 21.6 years old (mean), [24 years old (modal average)]
- Average salary (not including casual staff) - £14,994 (just over spine point 8)
- Average length of service is 17 months – the longest service is 93 months (7.7 years)
- 62% of the cohort are employed on permanent contracts
- 71% of the cohort are employed on full time contracts

- 63% of the cohort are female
- 77% of the cohort live in Thurrock (ie are Thurrock residents)

Grade	No of 16-24 yr old employees
Apprentice Pay Point 1	8
Apprentice Pay Point 2	4
Apprentice Pay Point 3	2
JE Band 1 (PP1-6)	1
JE Band 2 (PP3-10)	4
JE Band 3 (PP8-16)	20
JE Band 4 (PP12-20)	12
JE Band 5 (PP18-26)	11
JE Band 6 (PP23-32)	9
JE Band 7 (PP30-39)	1
Casuals (Peripatetic Music)	3
Youth Service	5
Other	2

3.3 Apprenticeships

One of the aims of the council’s Organisation Development Strategy is to *ensure we attract the right people through excellent recruitment and ‘pathways into employment’ including internships, volunteering and apprenticeships.*

A recent national government study reported 8 out of 10 apprentices said their apprenticeship has boosted their career prospects. Another national survey showed that 54% of young people in England would choose to do an apprenticeship if one were available.

- 3.3.1 At the time of report (July), the council directly employed 14 apprentices (2 in Adults, Health and Commissioning, 2 in Chief Executive’s Delivery Unit, 5 in Chief Executive’s Office and 5 in Children’s Services) – however the council supports over 50 apprentices. For instance, there are apprentices working within the Environment Directorate and within Serco who are working for the council, but technically employed by a partner. These “partner” apprentices are not included in the analysis of the 82 individuals in paragraph 3.2 above.
- 3.3.2 The council is developing a one stop approach for apprenticeships within Thurrock, whose aim is to get the right young person into the right job. Thurrock’s young people (16-19 year olds) can approach the service and they will act as “job brokers” and put them into contact with appropriate apprenticeship opportunities. This could be within the council or in the wider Thurrock business community. (NB. For young people aged 19-24 years old the support is through Job Centre Plus).
- 3.3.3 To support the council’s corporate parenting responsibility, Children’s Services have also developed a bespoke apprenticeship scheme, *Diversity in Apprenticeships*, for the borough’s care leavers. This is a targeted scheme which includes an initial basic skills assessment and then support to find an apprenticeship opportunity, both within the council or in the wider area.

- 3.3.4 For all apprentices, once they have completed 12 months on their apprenticeship, they are then entitled to move onto the minimum wage appropriate to their age group. Wherever possible, the council tries to encourage employers to enhance this further to the Local Living Wage minimum rate.
- 3.3.5 Apprenticeships are a key part of the council's Health & Well-being Strategy aim of ensuring progression routes to higher level qualifications and employment. One of the key elements for the apprenticeships scheme is that it both directly and indirectly helps towards other priorities within the corporate plan and 14-19 strategy and to three other indicators within the corporate scorecard. The link with reducing the rates of Thurrock young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is self explanatory.

The link with increasing the numbers of 19 years olds who have a Level 2 or 3 qualification is that most of the apprentices will only have a Level 2 qualification when they start the scheme. One of the aims of Thurrock's scheme is that by the time they finish their apprenticeship they will have gained a Level 3 qualification. This will give those young people additional options, following completion of their apprenticeship whether they decide to continue to work or progress onto higher education.

3.4 Internships

An internship is essentially work experience, paid or unpaid, for young people who have a degree. Two services within the council have developed an internship model, bespoke to their areas of work.

Children's Services have three (soon to be four) graduate interns on short fixed term contracts, paid at the local living wage, engaged in projects, co-ordinating events and high level administration work.

Legal Services also has graduate interns who are gaining experience in a number of different areas of the local government legal field, which is essential for their ongoing continuous professional development.

This offers mutual benefits to both the council and to the individual; the council has well qualified, motivated young people, bringing new energy and ideas into the workplace; the intern gets work experience, in a varied role, which enables them to develop their working skills for the future, whilst having support mechanisms in place.

3.5 Graduate scheme

Budgetary and capacity issues have, thus far, precluded the council from implementing a council-wide graduate training scheme. Options are being considered to develop a cost-effective programme by utilising the national scheme or joining with other authorities.

3.6 New Workforce Strategy & Plan

A draft Workforce Strategy & Plan is currently being finalised, having been presented to the Corporate HR, Equalities and Cultural Change Board (CHRECC) on 4 September 2013. These documents outline some of the issues and actions being put in place to ensure the Council has the right people in the right place at the right time to deliver strategic goals. This draft strategy includes some existing actions at directorate level which relate to the topic of 16-24 year olds including:

- Working with schools, colleges and universities to ensure skills are developed locally in order to fill vacancies (Adults, Health & Commissioning Directorate)
- Develop a graduate recruitment scheme (Housing)

Several services also explicitly mention the necessity of succession planning brought about by an older workforce eg Educational Psychology, Environment, Housing.

The draft action plan includes the following initiatives:

- For hard to recruit areas work with colleges/universities on routes into the council or for arranging placements/work experience
- Develop “grow our own” strategies
- Implement training for staff so that they have the necessary skills required for the future
- Develop use of social media as a communications tool
- Identify professional routes and funding/sponsorship available for key roles

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- 4.1 The Corporate O&S Committee is being asked to consider setting up a Task and Finish group to look at issues of fairness across Thurrock. This group will be well placed to consider this age group as part of the scope of that piece of work.

5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 There has been no consultation on the issues explored in this report.

6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 6.1 This will have an important positive impact on a number of corporate priorities in particular the objectives around health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 **Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
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mxjones@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no financial costs associated with these proposals. However, any initiatives commissioned as a result of this may well entail future financial implications, which will need to be considered as appropriate.

7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
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davidlawson@bdtlegal.org.uk

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
Telephone and email: **01375 652472**
sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

The Council is under a statutory duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations. This report highlights the work done by the council in supporting young people within the workforce.

7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

There are no other relevant implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- none

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- none

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