

Coalfield Area People Board February 2015

Work Plan - Local Priority: Services and support for young people who are, or are at risk of becoming, NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

Following discussions at the November 2014 People Board it was agreed to focus on two key areas of work. 1) Employer engagement, 2) Preparing young people for working life. Outlined below is information about a programme which addresses both of these issues.

Background to WorkingRite

Working Rite is a successful and sustainable solution to youth unemployment. It is borne from old-fashioned values, whereby young people experience a **working rite of passage** to help take them from adolescence to adulthood. WorkingRite believe that every young person deserves the opportunity to prove themselves in the workplace, regardless of their age, inexperience or qualifications. They give young people that chance.

Across Scotland and England, local Project Co-ordinators individually match a young person to a small business in their local community, where they learn valuable skills on-the-job, where it counts. The 'trainees' work with their placement employer for up to six months . during which they are guided by an older mentor in the workplace and supported by the Project Co-ordinator. They also earn a weekly training allowance. In Scotland travel expenses are also covered.

The programme bridges the gap between school and work. It gives young people essential work experience, provides good role models, builds their confidence and offers them a quality vocational alternative to academic learning.

Opportunity for Delivery in Coalfield Area

Funding has been secured by WorkingRite to deliver the programme in the North East, and a start up grant has been awarded by the Vardy Foundation to get the work off the ground in the outlying areas of Sunderland, and part of County Durham. The Coalfield area will be a 'pilot' or 'launch' area for the project and the recruitment process to appoint a local Project Co-ordinator will commence in March 2015, with a target date of August 2015 for young people to begin the placements.

For Consideration by People Board

Members are asked to add their support to the development and delivery of the WorkingRite programme in the Coalfield area and

- Agree to invite the Project Co-ordinator to a future People Board meeting
- Help to identify local employers who could be approached by the Project Co-ordinator
- Identify local organisations or services who may wish to refer young people to the scheme
- Promote the service to local young people
- Consider whether financial support could be given to the project for travelling costs and out of pocket employment related expenses.

Next steps recommended by People Board

To support the scheme for delivery in the area

To invite the Project Co-ordinator to a future People Board meeting once in post