

BRECKLAND PARTNERSHIP

03 February 2011

Report of Mark Fretwell, Partnership (LSP) Officer, Breckland Council

Future Jobs Fund (FJF)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1.1 To update LSP Board members on the progress in delivering the 'Future Jobs Fund' scheme through the submission by the Breckland Partnership.
- 1.1.2 To inform the LSP Board members of the potential to develop further employment opportunities within the Breckland district.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the LSP Board:

- 2.1.1 Promote the placements delivered and the successes achieved by the individuals and employers through a range of media such as Breckland Council's Voice, website, press releases and through the Bold directory etc.
- 2.1.2 To continue to support the employers and the individuals who took up the six month placements and to follow their progress in the labour market beyond the scheme.
- 2.1.3 To seek further employment opportunities under the Future Jobs Fund within Breckland with Norfolk County Council continuing to act as the lead body.

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 The 'Future Jobs Fund' is a fund of around £1 Billion to support the creation of 150,000 jobs. It is for long term unemployed young people and others who face significant disadvantage in the labour market.
- 3.1.2 The fund is being run by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in partnership with the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG).
- 3.1.3 The jobs should have a recognised training element (NOCN, NVQ etc) or it should offer an employability outcome and meet the needs of the local community & the current jobs/skills shortages and should not be funded under statutory delivery.
- 3.1.4 The Breckland Partnership submitted a portfolio of and these positions were put forward as part of the wider Norfolk County Council bid (lead body) which was successful in obtaining funding from DWP (up to £6,300 per position).

3.2 Issues

Current & Previous Employers:

Jazzy D's Salon, Thetford

- 3.2.1 A successful bid was submitted for '6' positions as hairdresser trainees within the Thetford salon with the employee being provided an opportunity to learn new skills in an essential service area.
- 3.2.2 Three of the interviewees were successful in gaining the position and they began their employment on 16th April. One of the employees left the position on 16th June.
- 3.2.3 While the two remaining employees have continued with their employment and they have gained social, practical and communication skills.

- 3.2.4 Each Wednesday they received practical training on an individual or with a block head. Training to date has included shampooing, blow-drying, colour application, xtenso chemical smoothing service and product training.
- 3.2.5 Every other Friday they receive personal development training which is a theory based session which teaches attitude, customer service, mindset and positive thinking. At the end of a session the employee is given a development action to research as part of the fantastic hair training programme.
- 3.2.6 The employer states that “FJF is a fantastic way of giving a young person a great start in a career and they can see what the job entails and see whether it suits them”.
- 3.2.7 Three further employees have now been taken on for positions at the Salon under FJF and are developing their skills further, whilst learning essential working environment transferable skills.

Salena Dawson & Co, Watton

- 3.2.8 A successful bid was submitted for ‘1’ position as a Solicitor’s Admin/receptionist at the Watton practise. With the employee receiving training in administrative skills, typing skills, public interaction, communication skills, time management, confidence building and computer literacy.
- 3.2.9 The solicitor’s received an application and interviewed the individual and offered them the position, with a start date of 13th April 2010.
- 3.2.11 The employee had previously studied hairdressing and is currently gaining office skills, digital dictation and customer service skills whilst undertaking a NVQ 2 in administration and office through the employment. The NVQ course is delivered at the workplace and commenced in June 2010 and is due to finish in May 2011.
- 3.2.12 Due to the FJF employment it has enabled the practise to be more proactive with the Wayland Chamber which is a voluntary organisation, thus demonstrating the wider community benefit.
- 3.2.13 Together we have been able to run the Wayland jigsaw competition, assist with meetings and with the employees help organise the Business breakfast Forum. This in turn has created an increase in Chamber membership, been the voice for local business, been able to participate more in community events and raised the profile of the Wayland Area.
- 3.2.14 The employer states that “she is a hugely valuable member of our staff and the business and local community is benefitting from her skills and employment both during the placement and now as an employee”.
- 3.2.15 Since the employee completed the six month appointment she has been taken on permanently by the practise working part time (17 hours/week) as a receptionist and secretary. This position commenced in October 2010 and is working extremely well for both the employee and the employer.
- 3.2.16 Plans for the future include more in house secretarial training and exploring Para-legal qualifications in the next 12 months in order to develop the employee further and to work towards becoming a legal executive in the future.

Pride in Breckland

- 3.2.17 The ‘6’ positions were created to create an environmental task force to deliver environmental outcomes for the local community. The task force will assess, target and clean up ‘hot spot areas’ whilst educating the community on ‘Green Living’ throughout the district.
- 3.2.18 The 6 employees began on Monday 19th July 2010 and have completed a wide range of projects across the Breckland district see the table below:

Project	Location
Litter picking	Thetford
Recycling road-show	Swaffham
Ancient wall restoration	Great Hockham
BMX track creation	Swanton Morley
Litter Picking	Dereham
Unit clear out for Asset Management	Watton
Community centre decorating	Shipdham
Community clean up	Thetford
Administration for Electoral Services	NA
Dyke clearance	Sporle
Shrub clearance	Dereham
Litter picking	Dereham
Premises decorating	Thetford
Conservation work	Hardingham
Community clean up	Weeting
Community centre decorating	Ashill
Church restoration	Thetford
Helping at Golden Age Fair	Harling
Conservation work	Bawdeswell
Conservation work	Dereham
Litter picking	Thetford
Allotment creation	Swaffham
Building work	Swaffham
Gardening	Tuddenham
Community centre decorating	Ashill

3.2.19 The team have learned a wide range of skills during the project including conservation, painting and decorating, gardening, restoration, basic building, confidence, planning, conversing, CV writing, interview skills, customer service, work ethic, clerical, respect, team work, pride in their community.

3.2.20 Success has been achieved for the candidates in that two of the candidates took up full time employment while on the placement. Two other candidates have secured positions to commence in February and March. The other two team members currently remain unemployed and are actively seeking job opportunities.

Future opportunities:

3.2.21 I attended a partnership event on 5th January hosted by Norfolk County Council where I was informed that over 1,000 jobs have been created across the County since the delivery of FJF began.

3.2.22 The first round of jobs created under the scheme resulted in 356 jobs which in turn managed to create outcomes of 47% of participants into positive outcomes e.g. employment, self-employment or future training.

3.2.23 FJF will not be continued by the coalition Government however NCC are able to fulfil the contracts previously submitted and agreed by DWP

3.2.24 Therefore there is an opportunity to put forward to the lead body Norfolk County Council further positions that can be created under the Future Jobs Fund scheme.

3.2.25 The positions will be required to deliver the same outcomes and will be administered by the same terms and conditions as previously i.e. paid at least minimum wage, minimum of 25 hours week and for a 26 week placement for example.

3.2.26 The candidate would need to be referred by Job Centre plus by 18th March and the role would need to commence by 31st March to be eligible to receive the funding.

3.2.27 It is important that the focus of FJF is maintained through offering training, prospective employment, job search support. CV development and identifying the barriers to finding employment and working towards overcoming them.

3.3 Options

3.3.1 To note [for information and planning purposes] the contents of this report.

3.3.2 To continue to support the employers and employees where necessary throughout the Future Jobs Fund scheme.

3.3.3 To develop (or) not develop further opportunities under the Future Jobs Fund scheme within the Breckland district under the previous conditions.

3.4 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

3.4.1 The Future Jobs Fund offers an opportunity to:

- Improve the employability of long-term unemployed people.
- Deliver socially useful work that otherwise would not be done.
- Enhance workforce development and skills linked to the Sustainable Community Strategy priority of 'Thriving Economy.'

3.4.2 A further successful bid will allow an opportunity for young people to gain valuable work experience and skills in the district and to leave the individuals better placed to find permanent employment.

3.4.3 The Future Jobs Fund gives the Breckland Partnership an opportunity to support young people in the district who are in a disadvantageous position in obtaining work or work experience in the current economic climate.

3.4.4 With 1 in 5 under 25 year's young people currently unemployed they statistically are the worst hit group.