

EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY
20 JANUARY 2005

**READY FOR WORK PROGRAMME -
BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Members of progress with the delivery of the Ready for Work programme in Exeter.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Business Action on Homelessness, an initiative organised by Business in the Community, deliver a number of national employability programmes, of which Ready for Work is being delivered in Exeter. Ready for Work is delivered in seventeen cities nationally.
- 2.2 Under the Homeless Act 2002 every local authority must publish a homeless strategy. The Ready for Work scheme plays an important role in contributing to that strategy by preventing homelessness, resettling people back into communities and promoting independence and self-reliance
- 2.3 Ready for Work is a work placement programme, which in preparing those for employment, aims to build candidate's confidence, develop new and existing skills and receive a reference on completion of their placement. Many companies use this programme as a recruitment tool, thereby providing some participants with job opportunities upon successful completion of the programme.
- 2.4 In Exeter, the Ready for Work programme is delivered in partnership with Job Centre Plus. In practice, programme workers undertake the following:-
- recruit and brief companies on their responsibilities in the programme
 - work with key workers and agencies to identify suitable homeless candidates to attend the placement
 - brief candidates on programme details and access areas of interest for employment opportunities
 - work with advisors to ensure candidates have a smooth transition into the programme and provide ongoing support to participants through the training
 - candidate interview training
 - conduct a debrief at the end of the placement for participants and signpost them to further employment and training opportunities with the support to Job Centre Plus.

3. PROGRESS

- 3.1 The programme as described above has been set up in Exeter with a target of twenty participants by April 2005. It is intended that at least half of these will be supported into employment.
- 3.2 Three small groups have started with a further two planned in order to achieve the target. There is an ongoing effort to recruit businesses to the various stages of the programmes. Close working relationships have been established with the key agencies, particularly Job Centre Plus to try and ensure participants receive ongoing support and information to aid their move into employment.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A summary breakdown of costs is given below:-

Staff	£11500
Equipment	£2500
Training Operation costs	£2000
Other	<u>£500</u>
	£16500

- 4.2 The City Council's contribution, of £5,000 approved in conjunction with the Portfolio Holders - Economy and Tourism and Housing and Social Inclusion, and is met from Economy and Tourism budgets. The balance of costs is met by Job Centre Plus, Business in Community's own funds, Homeless Directorate funding and support in kind from the businesses involved in delivering the project

5. RECOMMENDED that:-

- 5.1 The report be noted and that following monitoring of the programme, an evaluation report be brought back to this committee.

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ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:

None