

Report of the Director of Corporate and Adult Services

Towards a More Representative Workforce

RECOMMENDATION

1. This report recommends that:
 - the Council enters into a partnership with JET - Jobs Education and Training - a BME-led training agency based in Normanton
 - appropriate Council entry-level vacancies are converted into temporary traineeships for people from the Normanton, Arboretum and Sinfin wards of the city and offered to nominees from JET, before being filled as normal through open recruitment
 - a proportion of the existing City Placements traineeships are reserved for candidates from Normanton, Arboretum and Sinfin and filled by nomination from JET
 - appropriate management vacancies are converted into temporary traineeships and offered as secondment opportunities to candidates from the Positive Steps programme, before recruitment as normal through open advert
 - each participant of the Positive Steps programme has a senior manager identified as a mentor to assist their development.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

2. This recommendation is aimed at helping to achieve a more representative workforce for the City Council. It specifically addresses the acute under-representation of people from the Pakistani community and recommends the formation of a partnership with JET, a BME-led training agency based in Normanton, to help us resolve this problem. It also addresses the under-representation of BME people among the upper tiers of the Council's management.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 During discussion of the annual report on the Council's employment statistics at the MCDF meeting in September 2007, delegates pointed out the continuation of under-representation of people from the Pakistani community in the Council's workforce.

- 3.2 Our current workforce statistics state that only 1.58% of employees are from the Pakistani community and yet the 2001 Census tells us that Pakistani people account for 3.96% of the Derby community. For the Council workforce to be reflective of its community it needs to bridge this 2.38% deficit - and 2.38% of the workforce equates to approximately 400 employees. The recruitment statistics for 2006/7 tell us that we had 493 Pakistani applicants, yet we only appointed 16. So the chronic problem of under-representation of Pakistani employees is not correcting itself and looks unlikely to do so without intervention.
- 3.3 This is not a new issue for the Council; the Workforce Statistics in October 2005 showed that 1.66% of the employees were from the Pakistani community. And while other minority ethnic groups are under-represented in the Council, most have seen an increase in numbers since 2005 but the Pakistani representation has suffered a slight decrease. Also, none of the BME communities are more than 0.6% below the 2001 Census figures apart from the Pakistani community. So the under-representation of Pakistani people in our workforce is worse than for other ethnic minority communities and it is getting worse still, not better.
- 3.4 The workforce statistics also show that BME people generally are under-represented among the upper tiers of management in the Council.
- 3.5 During the discussion at the MCDF meeting Rod Wood, lead officer for the Council on MCDF, asked Mohammed Sharief, the Executive Director of JET, for support in generating some ideas to address the problem. The proposals in this report have come from that discussion.
- 3.6 JET - Jobs Education and Training - was created in 2002 to help Muslims to achieve in education and to access further training and employment. It has since expanded to respond to the need for improvement in the economic prosperity of residents in the Normanton community, which has among the highest levels of unemployment in the city. Because of its roots and because of the make-up of the population in this area, many of its candidates are from the Pakistani community but it caters for people from various ethnic groups in this part of the city, including the Arboretum and the Sinfin wards.
- 3.7 JET has established considerable credibility within both the Pakistani community in Derby and within the wider community in the Normanton and Arboretum wards. It has existing partnerships with Connexions, Jobcentreplus, the LSC and many other training and employment organisations and projects. Its various programmes have enabled it to identify cohorts of young people leaving education who want jobs and of other adults who want to either resume work or enter the workforce for the first time. It works with these people to equip to them to achieve job-readiness.
- 3.8 JET's unique credibility within this community makes it an ideal partner for the Council in our attempts to rectify the acute under-representation of Pakistani people in its workforce.

- 3.9 Discussions have also been held with the LSC and the LSC has confirmed that it can fund specific training and development activity through Derby College to address any basic skills or level 2 training needs that JET nominees for Council traineeships may have.
- 3.10 The specific activities that JET will assist the Council with are:
- nomination of suitable candidates for entry-level traineeships from the Normanton, Arboretum and Sinfin wards of the city
 - nomination of suitable candidates for City Placement traineeships from the Normanton, Arboretum and Sinfin wards of the city
 - encouragement of suitable candidates for Council vacancies and for our existing Job Seeker Registers from the Normanton, Arboretum and Sinfin wards of the city
 - provision of a suitable venue for activities linked to the encouragement of Pakistani people to apply for Council vacancies.
- 3.11 The specific activities that the Council will undertake with JET are:
- identification of suitable entry-level vacancies that can be converted into temporary traineeships for the JET nominees from the Normanton, Arboretum and Sinfin wards of the city
 - identification of suitable City Placement traineeships for JET-nominated candidates from the Normanton, Arboretum and Sinfin wards of the city
 - enrolment of JET candidates onto the existing Council Jobseeker Registers
 - running special Jobseeker courses at JET
 - supporting JET candidates in making applications for Council vacancies on a fortnightly basis to coincide with publication of the Council's Vacancy List
 - setting a target of 12 traineeships to be filled through JET nomination in the first 12 months of the partnership.
- 3.12 Other ideas generated by the discussion included:
- converting suitable management vacancies into temporary traineeships that could be filled, on a secondment basis, by existing council employees who are on our the Positive Steps programme
 - offering senior manager mentors to participants on the Positive Steps programme.

Converting suitable entry-level vacancies into traineeships

- 3.13 The proposal is that HR will identify some of the broad range of entry level posts that become vacant and are notified for advert as potential opportunities for conversion to traineeships. Following discussion with the recruiting manager for the vacancy, JET will be asked to put forward a suitable nominee or nominees. If more than one nominee is put forward, the line manager will be involved in a selection process.

- 3.14 The traineeship will be for a period of six months, during which a training allowance equal to the salary for the post will be payable to the trainee. During the traineeship, the trainee will be given whatever training is appropriate to allow them to perform the duties of the post.
- 3.15 Nearing the end of the traineeship, the vacancy will be advertised and the trainee will be invited to compete for the post. The recruitment will follow the normal Council selection process, leading to the appointment of the best candidate based on the “on merit” principle.

Converting suitable management vacancies into traineeships

- 3.16 The proposal is that HR will identify managerial vacancies that match the aspirations of employees that have recently completed the Positive Steps programme. Following discussion with the recruiting manager for the vacancy and with the manager of the employee from the Positive Steps programme, for whom a match has been identified, the employee will be offered a secondment into the post for a period of six months as a trainee and they will be given whatever training is appropriate to allow them to perform the duties of the post.
- 3.17 Nearing the end of the traineeship, the vacancy will be advertised and the seconded trainee will be invited to compete for the post. The recruitment will follow the normal Council selection process, leading to the appointment of the best candidate based on the “on merit” principle.

Offering mentors to Positive Steps participants

- 3.18 The suggestion has been made that mentoring by a senior colleague would be useful for aspirant managers on the Positive Steps programme. The proposal is that ADs and Corporate Directors are invited to volunteer to mentor participants in the programme who think that this would assist them. HR will match participants to volunteer mentors.

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. The proposals in respect of traineeships will not involve any additional expenditure on direct employment costs. The training needs of the trainees will have to be funded either from LSC-based programmes delivered through Derby college or from the existing training budgets of the host departments.

Legal

- 2.1 The provisions of the Race Relations Act allow training to be given to members of particular racial groups where these groups are shown to be under-represented in the workforce. The proposals in this report implement these provisions of the Act.
- 2.2 Section 37 and 38 of the Race Relations Act 1976 allow for positive action measures to be used to train or encourage people from a particular racial group that is under-represented in the work-place. Training opportunities can be reserved for a particular racial group that is under-represented; however, jobs cannot be provided for people of a particular racial or ethnic background. The schemes suggested in this report are offers of training and encouragement, and not guarantees of employment as such. The entry-level traineeship proposals would be available to any of the clients of JET and not only those of Pakistani origin.

Human Resources

3. As shown in the main body of the report.

Equalities impact

4. The Council's workforce is becoming broadly representative of the Derby community as measured in the last census – but it has persistently shown disproportionately low levels of representation from the Pakistani community. The proposals in this report are designed to help rectify this deficit.