



# **Agenda Item 15**

## **Graduate & Internship Scheme**

Falkirk Council

**Title:** Graduate & Internship Scheme  
**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 15 January 2019  
**Submitted By:** Director of Corporate & Housing Services

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present an option to Members for a Graduate & Intern Scheme, which would operate from summer 2019.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Executive agree that a Graduate & Intern Scheme be introduced across the Council commencing in summer 2019.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Members will be aware from the recently agreed workforce plan, that there is a need for positive actions to be taken to assist with succession planning. Whilst there are a range of approaches to this, including development of our existing workforce, there is a need to look at the future workforce requirements including the skill profile of our workforce for future years.
- 3.2 Another area highlighted within the workforce plan is the age profile of our workforce. This shows that c37% of employees are currently over 50 and this increases to c52% in 5 years. There is no longer a statutory retirement age, so the age profile in itself does not automatically mean that there will be a skills shortage at a particular point in time. Actions do however, need to be taken to mitigate against this possibility, and to ensure that we improve the diversity of our workforce.
- 3.3 The Council previously ran a graduate recruitment scheme. There is an option to re-launch this with a wider scope, focused on future skill needs, and targeted appropriately. The Council has never operated a formal intern scheme, although has had students on placement over summer months.

**4. Considerations**

**Graduate Scheme**

- 4.1 For the graduate scheme it is proposed that Services consider their future workforce planning needs in line with their workforce plans. On this basis, a range of graduate opportunities will be collated across the Council. These

opportunities will provide real work experience and options for project/research work. The aim is to support the Council in this work, develop future skills which will be of benefit to the Council, and help the individual graduate to improve their experience/skills.

- 4.2 Generic job descriptions will be developed for the graduate role outlining overall expectations of the placement rather than full job descriptions for each specific area. The job description will be graded with an expectation that the role will be graded around Grade E (£19,562 - £21,337). The graduate posts will be for a minimum of one year and can be extended up to c2 years, depending on service needs. The Graduates will be eligible to receive increments over this period if their length of service entitles them to this. They will also be entitled to the appropriate level of annual leave and public holidays, as well as having access to the pension scheme and any other conditions to which an employee would be eligible for the length of contract/service.

### **Intern Scheme**

- 4.3 In order to help promote the council as a positive place to work and in which individuals can gain good work experience, it is also proposed that an Intern Scheme is introduced. The Intern Scheme will be a paid summer placement for undergraduates for up to 12 weeks. Interns will be paid the Scottish Local Government Living Wage, i.e., the minimum the Council would pay to any other substantive employee. Interns will also receive the appropriate leave and other entitlements to which an employee would be eligible, based on their length of contract/service.
- 4.4 These placements should be valuable work experiences, which will bring benefits to the Council and from which individuals can learn and gain skills. Ideally, Interns should be given responsibility and diverse work to maximise the opportunity for professional development. A structured work plan is important for this.

### **Criteria**

- 4.5 The table below outlines the essential and desirable criteria which will be used to select graduates and interns. The essential criteria must be met and the desirable criteria could be used to give priority to applicants who live in the Falkirk Council area and who have not had the opportunity to have work experience in their chosen field. In addition, Members will note the desirable criteria relating to care experienced young people. This is to help prioritise opportunities which improve outcomes for those who have been in our care as part of the Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
HND or above (for graduate programme)	Yes	No
Studying at college/university (for internship)	Yes	No
Care Experienced	No	Yes
Graduated in last 2 years (for graduate programme)	No	Yes
Live in Falkirk Council area	No	Yes
Currently unemployed/less than 16 hours per week	No	Yes

Not working in professional area applying for	No	Yes
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### **Support for Graduates & Interns**

- 4.6 For the schemes to be a success, graduates and interns need to be well managed. A corporate induction programme will be arranged for both groups. This will enable them to understand the Council and to get to know each other. It will also help them build relationships across the group of graduates/interns and help with networking/learning opportunities.
- 4.7 Dedicated mentors/coaches will also require to be identified for each graduate/intern. This will help to ensure individuals have a positive experience whilst working with the Council. Mentors/Coaches can be someone within or out with the service area the graduate/intern is working. It doesn't require to be a manager and indeed, the opportunity to provide this support could be a good development opportunity for current employees who are aspiring managers. Employees undertaking the coaching qualification could also provide the support role and gain valuable experience from this.

### **Growing Our Own**

- 4.8 To ensure we do not lose the skills of the graduates we've invested in, consideration should be given to the opportunities for their future employment at the end of their graduate placement. This will not always be possible, but should be considered at the point of appointing a graduate and efforts made through workforce planning to find employment wherever this is possible.
- 4.9 Whilst interns are only working with the Council for a short period of time, it is essential that their time here is positive. This may encourage them to apply for a future career in local government once they qualify in their professional subject.

### **Marketing the Programme**

- 4.10 The results from the recent youth engagement survey suggest that young people want to hear about developments in the council area through school and college, email, Facebook and Twitter. To improve the pool of candidates for the Graduate & Intern Scheme, we need to take this into account when we market the programme. This will include a different approach to our normal recruitment methods, using social media to promote opportunities, as well as building relationships with universities and colleges in the local area to advertise to their students through job boards.
- 4.11 An early campaign is required to ensure this is successful. This will require the dates of placements to be agreed in advance to ensure sufficient preparation time is in place. A draft timetable is attached as Appendix 1.
- 4.12 A promotional pack will be developed for this purpose, to explain both the scheme, as well as to promote the Council as an employer of choice.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with CMT and Trade Unions who were both positive about the proposed Graduate and Intern Scheme.

## **6. Implications**

### **Financial**

- 6.1 There will be no additional funding given to services for hosting graduates or interns. Services will be expected to consider the use of graduates/ interns as part of their workforce planning review process, utilising budget within their current establishment or through other funding that they have available.

### **Resources**

- 6.2 Mentors/coaches will be required from across the council to support the graduates and interns.
- 6.3 Resources will be required from HR to develop job descriptions/pack and develop and present induction courses. Managers will need to be involved in the recruitment process.

### **Legal**

- 6.4 Graduates and interns must be paid at least the national minimum wage and will be entitled to statutory minimum annual leave, pro rata to hours worked. This minimum requirement is addressed in the proposed rates of pay outlined above.

### **Risk**

- 6.5 There is a risk of reputational damage if the scheme is not implemented properly. Research shows that graduates need to have career progression and meaningful work otherwise it could be detrimental to recruitment, retention and succession planning.

### **Equalities**

- 6.6 An initial equality and poverty impact assessment was completed. No negative impact was identified. There is a positive impact as the programme is being opened up to a wider age group.

### **Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 6.7 A sustainability assessment has not been completed.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 A Graduate & Intern Scheme could be beneficial for workforce and succession planning. It may also help attract potential employees to the Council who may not have otherwise have considered a career in the public sector. It should also help to improve the skills and experience both available to the Council and to the individuals who take part in the Scheme.

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### **Appendices**

1 - Proposed timetable

### **List of Background Papers:**

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:

None

## Appendix 1 - Implementation Timetable – Graduate Programme

Stage	Timeframe	Month	Responsible
Identify areas of work, mentors and coaches	8 weeks	November – December 2018	CMT/Service Managers
Discuss with Trade Unions		December 2018	HR
Submit proposals to Executive		January 2019	HR
Create job descriptions & summary of associated T&C's	12 weeks	Jan – March 2019	HR
Prepare promotional pack	8 weeks	Feb - March 2019	HR/Communications
Recruitment advert	4 weeks	Mar - May 2019*	HR
Coaching session for mentors and coaches	4 weeks	April 2019	Coaches/mentors
Prepare induction day	8 weeks	May/June 2019	HR/Service Managers
Shortlist	2 weeks	May/June 2019	HR/Service Managers
Arrange Interviews	3 weeks	May/June 2019	HR/Service Managers
Interview Outcomes	3 weeks	June/July 2019	HR/Service Managers
Induction	1 day	September 2019	HR/Mentors/Coaches/Service Managers
Start in new team	N/A	September 2019 – May 2020	Placement Managers & Graduates

\*dependent on advice from universities/colleges

## Implementation Timetable – Internship Programme

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
Identify areas of work, mentors and coaches	8 weeks	November – December 2018	CMT/Service Managers
Discuss with Trade Unions		December 2018	HR
Submit proposal to Executive		January 2019	HR
Create job descriptions & associated T&C's/job pack	8 weeks	Jan – Feb 2019	HR
Prepare promotional pack	8 weeks	Feb – Mar 2019	HR/Communications
Recruitment advert	4 weeks	Mar/Apr 2019*	HR
Coaching session for mentors and coaches	4 weeks	April 2019	Coaches/mentors
Prepare induction day	4 weeks	Apr 2019	HR/OD/Service Managers
Shortlist	2 weeks	Apr - May 2019	Service Manager
Arrange Interviews	3 weeks	May 2019	HR/Service Managers
Interview Outcomes	3 weeks	May 2019	HR/Service Managers
Induction	1 day	June 2019	HR/Mentors/Coaches/Service Managers
Start in new team	N/A	June 2019	Placement Managers & Graduates

\*dependent on advice from universities/colleges