

A1 **Employment and Skills Charter**

Objectives

The aim of the Employment and Skills Charter is to support employers operating in West Somerset by matching skills and training to job requirements and availability. The aim is for employers to agree wherever possible to recruit local people for local jobs and apprenticeship opportunities. When business development and economic regeneration is inclusive of surrounding communities it improves social inclusion. This leads to lower levels of crime and higher levels of social cohesion. These outcomes will have a direct impact on the quality of life and the willingness for other businesses to invest in the area.

The intention is that all major new employers will participate. Existing employers will also be encouraged to change their recruitment and training practices. The Council will aim provide the help and support to enable employers to participate in the Charters. The Charter is intended to be non bureaucratic and easy for employers to engage.

Construction

The employer will ask contractors to:

- Seek to employ direct labour locally including through Job Centre Plus and employment agencies;
- Seek to look to hire machinery and operators, such as excavators, road sweepers etc from local plant hire firms;
- Make arrangements for accepting a Construction Site Certification scheme training and testing venue on the site;
- Encourage local subcontractors to become part of a Group Training Association or join Employment Training Associations;
- Agree a programme of site visits for local schools, colleges and associated institutions

Pre employment

- Consider opportunities to assist all people of West Somerset including 16-24 year olds into work, including apprenticeships
- Conduct a review of recruitment processes to ensure they are as inclusive as possible
- Publish skills criteria for future jobs vacancies
- Operate local workshops, in conjunction with Job Centre Plus to help advise potential applicants on how to prepare for a job application
- Partner with local training providers to equip local candidates with the skills required pre-employment
- Deliver a widespread publicity campaign, running open days to ensure visibility of opportunities, and supported publicity within local communities to build awareness of job opportunities

- Work closely with relevant local partners to promote job opportunities in local housing estates and community centres, working to encourage family groups into training, development and employment
- Run a number of local recruitment fairs independently and in partnership with the local council and Job Centre Plus

Recruitment

- Provide a fair, consistent and transparent process for all applicants
- All candidates to receive a response on their application
- Work with local Job Centre Plus offices and local colleges to create and maximise opportunities for local candidates
- Offer a number of guaranteed interview slots for those applicants who have successfully completed an approved pre-employment training programme

Post-employment

The employer will:

- Enrol all newly appointed colleagues in training academy, working towards an appropriate qualification (e.g. apprenticeship, NVQ, Health & Safety certificate etc)
- Provide specialist job skills training to those who require it
- Buddy new colleagues with a mentor to support transition during probationary period
- Offer a number of work trial placements for long term unemployed (post site opening)
- All employees will receive a probationary performance review within the first 6 months of their employment
- Participate, with West Somerset District Council, in a post employment site review meeting 18 months after opening to report on employment statistics