



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

Item: 9

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 5 June 2024.

Developing the Young Workforce.

Report by Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Overview

- 1.1. Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Orkney is responsible for developing the link between education and the world of work, increasing young people's career awareness and skills development. This is done by developing employer engagement opportunities for young people including work placement opportunities, workplace visits, employer talks and careers events. All of this is to help young people better understand their options, the various pathways into careers and enable them to make informed decisions about their future.
- 1.2. During financial year 2023/24, DYW Orkney has delivered employer activities to 2,953 young people, supported by 75 employers. DYW Orkney is fully funded by the Scottish Government.
- 1.3. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the key activities undertaken by DYW Orkney during 2023/24.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Scrutinise the key activities of DYW Orkney during 2023, as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Background

- 3.1. DYW Orkney comprises a Project Manager, an Administrative Assistant - who is undertaking a Modern Apprenticeship - and three DYW School Co-ordinators who work in the two Secondary Schools and three Junior High Schools. The DYW School Co-ordinators work closely with Skills Development Scotland Careers Advisers, their respective school's Senior Management Teams and Guidance staff, as well as other partners to support young people into a positive destination.

- 3.2. The DYW School Co-ordinators develop employer engagement activity to suit the needs of their individual schools.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1. DYW Orkney has been provided with a full year of funding from the Scottish Government, up to 31 March 2025, of £248,026.
- 4.2. This funding will enable the delivery of the third Orkney Careers Fair, which will be held in the Pickaquoy Centre in October and will be attended by all senior phase pupils in Orkney. The event will also be open to teachers, parents and carers and the general public.
- 4.3. DYW Orkney will continue to build on the work undertaken in 2023/24, offering more young people the opportunity to take part in activity such as the Midwifery Insight Session, Planning for the Future, Work Placements and other targeted employer engagement activity.
- 4.4. The team will continue to work with local schools, Skills Development Scotland, UHI Orkney, CLDE and other key employability partners to develop and deliver employer engagement activity to meet the needs of individuals.

For Further Information please contact:

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Implications of Report

1. Financial.

DYW Orkney received a grant of £248,026 from the Scottish Government for financial year 2023/24. This funding covers the salaries for all DYW Orkney staff and the activities developed and delivered by the team. The same funding has been provided for financial year 2024/25.

2. Legal n/a.

3. Corporate Governance n/a.

4. Human Resources n/a.

5. Equalities n/a.

6. Island Communities Impact n/a.

7. Links to Council Plan: The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:

- Growing our economy.
- Strengthening our Communities.
- Developing our Infrastructure.
- Transforming our Council.

8. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan: The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:

- Cost of Living.
- Sustainable Development.
- Local Equality.

9. Environmental and Climate Risk None

10. Risk n/a

11. Procurement n/a

12. Health and Safety n/a

13. Property and Assets n/a

14. Information Technology n/a

15. Cost of Living n/a

List of Background Papers

None

Appendix 1 – Summary of DYW Annual Report

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1. The Hub Group

- 1.1. Developed and delivered in partnership with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and the Council's Community, Learning, Development and Employability (CLDE) team, The Hub Group was a drop-in programme held from May until the end of the summer holidays for any young person aged 16-25 years. The group aimed to help young people to develop their confidence, learn life skills and increase their employability skills.
- 1.2. The group met weekly with sessions split into two, with one session being delivered by CLDE and the other by SDS and DYW Orkney. CLDE focused on supporting the young people to achieve Dynamic Youth Awards and Digital College qualification, as well as delivering inputs to develop life skills. These included inputs on online safety, confidence to cook and dealing with money.
- 1.3. SDS and DYW Orkney's sessions focused on the development of transferrable skills and increased career awareness. Participants were also supported to identify their skills, make a start on compiling a CV, searching and applying for jobs and preparing for a job interview.
- 1.4. As part of the employability strand the young people were given a tour of The Balfour, as many of them had expressed an interest in learning more about some of the jobs available with the NHS. The tour focused on non-clinical roles with a tour of the hospital kitchen, laundry, porter service and maintenance department. The young people were able to meet staff, learn more about their roles and ask questions.
- 1.5. In the last session, mock interviews were set up with two employers. This was developed to give the young people a chance to practice interview answers and help them become more confident in speaking to people they did not know. Verbal feedback given to them at the end indicated the employers were very impressed with how they had all performed.
- 1.6. Since the programme completed, one young person has successfully secured a job with NHS Orkney as a Domestic while other group members progressed onto college or remained at school for a further year.

2. Midwifery Insight Programme

- 2.1. Developed in partnership with NHS Orkney, the Midwifery Insight Programme gave pupils interested in a career in midwifery an insight into the role of a midwife.
- 2.2. This programme was developed in response to pupil interest in this area and due to the lack of opportunities to undertake a work placement in the maternity unit. It aimed to give the pupils a good knowledge and understanding of the job of a Midwife, confirm it was the right choice for them and help them with college, UCAS or job applications and interviews.
- 2.3. The programme consisted of four elements that pupils were expected to complete. First of all they completed the Solihull Approach for Young People – Understanding Yourself and Parenting course, which was delivered by the Council’s Early Years Team and provides an insight into early child development.
- 2.4. A visit to the Maternity Unit at The Balfour was then organised, giving them the chance to see the clinical environment they would work in. They also spoke to Midwives to learn more about their duties and the alternative pathways into the profession.
- 2.5. Pupils were then invited to attend a block of Parentcraft classes, which are delivered by a Midwife and attended by expectant mums and their partners. The four-week block covered topics such as labour, breastfeeding and post-natal care.
- 2.6. Finally, pupils were able to attend a virtual insight session delivered by Robert Gordon University to support pupils who want to apply for Midwifery. This online session offered hints and tips to help pupils complete their UCAS application and prepare for a university interview.
- 2.7. Nine pupils started the programme, with seven completing all aspects. Feedback sought from pupils afterwards indicated that the programme helped them to improve their knowledge of the role of a midwife, confirm if this was the right career choice for them or not and helped with UCAS applications and university interviews.

3. Apprenticeship Marketplace

- 3.1. An Apprenticeship Marketplace was held at Kirkwall Grammar School during Scottish Apprenticeship Week in March 2024, to highlight the range of apprenticeship opportunities available in Orkney. Employers who attended were able to advertise current apprenticeship opportunities to enable those who would be leaving school at the end of the academic year to apply.

- 3.2. The event was held over lunchtime and during the last two periods of the school day. All pupils were invited to drop in during lunch, while S3 pupils were taken to the event during period 6, and all S4-S6 pupils able to drop in during periods 6 and 7, if their timetables allowed. In total, 210 pupils came along to the event.
- 3.3. Fifteen employers attended and provided information about their business, apprenticeship opportunities and the skills and qualifications they look for. The sectors represented included construction, aquaculture, engineering, butchery, early years and healthcare.
- 3.4. UHI Orkney also attended to provide information on the range of apprenticeships delivered locally as well as entry requirements and how training is structured.

4. Agricultural Careers Event

- 4.1. Delivered in partnership with the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET), the Agricultural Careers Event was an early careers input aimed at S1 pupils to give them an opportunity to explore the wider careers associated with the Agricultural sector.
- 4.2. Eleven businesses or organisations attended the event, along with UHI Orkney. The areas represented included livestock transportation, veterinary science, butchery and agricultural engineering. Historic Environment Scotland also provided information on ancient farming practices used at places such as Skara Brae and Ness of Brodgar. The event was held at Orkney Auction Mart, so pupils were given a tour of the facility and a mock auction was held with the Auctioneer.
- 4.3. To enable pupils with additional support needs to attend, a quiet/relaxed session was held in the afternoon which was attended by pupils of all ages from Kirkwall Grammar School's curriculum support unit.
- 4.4. A total of 248 S1 pupils from Stromness Academy, Kirkwall Grammar School, Westray and Sanday Junior High Schools attended the event and broadened their understanding of the organisations that support farmers and the agricultural sector in Orkney.

5. Hospitality Inputs at UHI Orkney

- 5.1. Working in partnership with the Hospitality Department at UHI Orkney, a programme was developed to give pupils interested in a career in hospitality the chance to develop the skills and experience needed to enter the industry.

- 5.2. Pupils were invited to UHI Orkney to undertake barista training to learn the skill of making the perfect coffee. Many of these pupils undertake a Skills for Work course at UHI Orkney as part of their school timetable which included running a café in the college on a Friday morning, so learning how to use the coffee machine properly helped them with this activity. Pupils also reported it was beneficial in their part-time jobs in local cafes and restaurants.
- 5.3. Pupils were then given the chance to help with Christmas lunch service at UHI Orkney's Overblikk Restaurant. They were released from their school timetable for the day and helped set up the restaurant, undertook waiting duties and helped clear tables at the end of service.
- 5.4. The feedback from staff at UHI Orkney was very positive with the pupils working hard to build their skills of teamwork, communication and problem solving.

6. Other activity

- 6.1. In addition to the above activities, DYW Orkney also worked with the Orkney Construction Training Group to support the delivery of their Construction Careers Event which was held in October 2023 and attended by over 400 S3 and S4 pupils from local schools. This event offered pupils the opportunity to engage with 13 local businesses and 'have a go' at some of the trades, including joinery, painting and decorating, bricklaying and plumbing.
- 6.2. Work placements continued throughout the year with 100 pupils undertaking placements with 42 different employers. These included extended placements for Christmas leavers to facilitate an apprenticeship or training opportunity when they were able to leave school and placements to give pupils an insight into their preferred career, or to gain experience and skills to help them apply for a job, apprenticeship, college or university course.
- 6.3. Lunch with an Employer inputs continued at Stromness Academy with 13 employers attending sessions throughout the academic year, engaging with an average of 50 pupils per session. These inputs let pupils engage with employers in an informal, relaxed environment learning about job roles, pathways into careers and skills and qualifications.

- 6.4. Monthly employability inputs have been introduced for Senior Phase pupils at Kirkwall Grammar School during Terms 1 and 2. Held on a Monday afternoon, these inputs help pupils with their skills development, raise awareness of the variety of jobs available in Orkney and the different pathways into them. Inputs have been delivered by DYW Orkney (covering Employment Rights), the Council, NHS Orkney and UHI Orkney's Hospitality Department.
- 6.5. Planning for the Future, the school leavers programme that is delivered in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and is aimed at pupils who will be leaving school at the end of the academic year, was held in early February. Twelve pupils attended the two two-day sessions – one in Stromness and one in Kirkwall. They were given support to develop the skills they need to write a CV, apply for a job, complete an application form and prepare for an interview. The programme concluded with mock interview sessions with local employers, which resulted in two pupils being offered a work placement opportunity with a local construction firm, with a view to starting an apprenticeship.