

**REPORT TO:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Environment & Economy

**SUBJECT:** 3MG skills and recruitment project

**WARDS:** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To update members on the 3MG skills and recruitment project which involved the Halton Employment Partnership handling the recruitment for the new Tesco chilled distribution centre and the Norbert Dentressangle recycling unit associated with it.
- 1.2 To share with PPB members the 3MG Skills & Recruitment Evaluation Report and agree some recommendations. about future skills and recruitment support.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That**

- 1. the report be received; and**
- 2. consideration is given to how similar projects can take place in the future in light of the withdrawal of Working Neighbourhoods Funding.**

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Following research with local employers in the borough, the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP) was established to offer a one stop shop service to local businesses and residents. The HEP can support companies and individuals with pre recruitment training, skills training, sourcing of apprenticeships and other workforce development needs. It can also provide employers with a recruitment and selection package of support. The Halton Investors' Handbook set out the offer to employers and this was shared with Stobarts as the 3MG landowner.
- 3.2 Initial HEP partners included the Halton Strategic Partnership, Halton Borough Council (including Adult Learning and Skills Development, Halton People into Jobs, Education Business Partnership and Major Projects), Job Centre Plus, Riverside College Halton, Sector Skills Councils, the Skills Funding Agency, and local training providers.

- 3.3 The Mersey Multimodal Gateway (3MG) is a 44 acre development established by Stobarts in partnership with Halton Borough Council, and a 528,000 sq ft chilled distribution centre provides the centre piece for the development. Following discussions between HEP and Stobarts over a 12 month period, Stobarts introduced HEP to their first tenant – Tesco – and the complete employment offer was presented to Tesco. Following on from this, HEP managed the Tesco and Norbert Dentressangle recruitment for the 3MG site.

#### **4.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 This was the first major recruitment project that the HEP had managed and the project was undertaken in a number of stages:
1. Commitment and buy-in from the Chief Executive (HBC) and the Employment, Learning & Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership
  2. Development of technical elements including a bespoke recruitment database, training of staff to handle recruitment hotline and compilation of a Frequently Asked Questions resource
  3. Identification of suitable accommodation for the various elements of the project including handling of returned application forms and interview base
  4. Identification of 3MG skills and recruitment project team and establishment of roles and responsibilities
  5. Preparation of literature to be sent out to potential job applicants
  6. Collating details of individuals who had already expressed an interest in 3MG jobs
  7. Registering names onto the bespoke database
  8. Delivery of pre recruitment programmes to those individuals that requested them
  9. Scoring of completed job application forms
  10. Arrangement of interview schedule
  11. Holding of interviews over an 8 week period
  12. Opening of the Tesco/Norbert depot and first people going into work
  13. Contacting all applicants to inform them of their outcome (successful or not)
  14. Close of project and analysis of job outcomes
  15. Evaluation of project
- 4.2 Tesco provided weekly statistics on job offers and these in turn were shared with HEP partners and other key stakeholders from partner organisations.
- 4.3 The full evaluation report is included at Appendix 1. However, in summary, the following job outcomes were achieved:

##### **Tesco**

- There were 377 new job starts at the Tesco distribution centre
- 75% of these were Halton residents

- 46% of the starters were previously unemployed and 82% of these were Halton unemployed residents. i.e. nearly 38% of the total new starters at Tesco were previously unemployed Halton residents
- There was a Widnes: Runcorn job outcome split of 60:40
- Of the 377 new job starters, 25 were female and 352 male
- Of the 377, 113 were married and 264 were single.
- 30% (i.e. 111) of the new starters were registered HPIJ clients

### **Norbert Dentressangle**

Of the 20 available jobs, the following were offered to local people:

- Shift coordinator - 1
- Chargehand - 4
- Bridge person - 2

In addition to this, a number of warehouse operative posts were offered but at the time of writing this report, these statistics had not yet been provided.

- 4.4 To ensure that the 3MG Jobs project was successful, agreeing roles and responsibilities of the HEP team was key. Each HEP partner involved in the 3MG skills and recruitment project was given a particular role to play. Roles and responsibilities ranged from project management, IT database development, dealing with calls coming into the 3MG Jobs hotline and opening and sending out of application forms.
- 4.5 Both Tesco and Norbert Dentressangle were very pleased with the support offered through HEP and comments made ranged from the high calibre of applicants being presented to the company to the professionalism of the HEP staff in handling the recruitment process.
- 4.6 The Halton Employment Partnership and its activities are funded through Working Neighbourhoods Funding (WNF), which is due to cease on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. HEP was able to gain insight into the types of jobs that would become available on the 3MG site. They were able to develop, alongside other providers, a range of sector specific employability programmes that were targeted, in the main, at local unemployed people. The result of this was that when the jobs became available, there was a readily available workforce – which is the key message contained within the Investors' Handbook around the Halton Employment Partnership, and is reflected in the feedback from Tesco and Norbert Dentressangle.

## **5.0 FINANCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The HEP as a collaborative has demonstrated that presenting businesses with a 'one stop shop' approach for recruitment and training cuts out many unnecessary layers of bureaucracy for them. It is also a great way to utilise the various expertise that individual partners can bring to the table. Being able to present potential investors with the 'complete employment offer' is a valuable resource for the local authority, but with that comes the need to finance this resource.

- 5.2 All existing WNF projects are to be reviewed during August/September 2010 and decisions made about which projects warrant further investment. The long term benefits brought by the Tesco/Norbert's recruitment will no doubt include an improved local economy and, it could be argued that, the complete employment offer should continue to be something Halton offers its future investors.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Supports key objectives C and E.

Logistics continues to be a growth sector in the borough. Ensuring children and young people are offered the opportunity to explore training and qualifications in this area will put them in good stead to apply for future jobs in this sector.

### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Supports key objectives B and C.

The 3MG Skills and Recruitment project supported those individuals from Halton, particularly those from priority groups, in gaining the skills needed to apply for and secure employment in one of the key growth sectors in the borough

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Supports key objectives B, C and E.

### **6.3 A Safer Halton**

None applicable

### **6.4 Halton's Urban Renewal**

Supports key objectives A and E.

The 3MG physical development brings many benefits to Halton in its own right. However, marrying up the physical aspects of urban renewal to the social aspects of employment, learning and skills allows for additional benefits to the local economy.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 None applicable

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 The Halton Employment Partnership operates within the LSP framework, which in turn operates under the Council's Equality and Diversity policy.

## **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

- 9.1 There are no background documents under the meaning of this Act.

A Complete Employment Offer



# 3MG SKILLS & RECRUITMENT PROJECT

# EVALUATION REPORT

August 2010

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Following research with local employers in the borough, the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP) was established to offer a one stop shop service to local businesses and residents. The HEP brings together expertise from various employment, learning and skills agencies who are ready to work together on a 'complete employment offer'.
- 1.2 Initial HEP partners included the Halton Strategic Partnership, Halton Borough Council (including Adult Learning and Skills Development, Halton People into Jobs, Education Business Partnership and Major Projects), Job Centre Plus, Riverside College Halton, Sector Skills Councils, the Skills Funding Agency, and local training providers. The 3MG recruitment project saw the number of partners involved in offering the 'complete employment offer' increase to include additional Halton Borough Council departments (Halton Direct Link, Corporate IT, Stobart Stadium Halton, Corporate Training, the Mersey Gateway Team, External Funding and Resources).
- 1.3 The HEP provides a single point of contact for local employers and local people and can support companies and individuals with pre recruitment training, skills training, sourcing of apprenticeships and other workforce development needs. It can also provide employers with a recruitment and selection package of support.
- 1.4 The Mersey Multimodal Gateway (3MG) is a 44 acre development established by Stobarts in partnership with Halton Borough Council, and a 528,000 sq ft chilled distribution centre provides the centre piece for the development. Following discussions between HEP and Stobarts over a 12 month period, Stobarts introduced HEP to their first tenant – Tesco – and the complete employment offer was presented to Tesco.
- 1.5 As a result of circumstances surrounding the closure of Tesco's other distribution centres in Middleton and Middleton, there was a lot of sensitivity associated with the recruitment project for the 3MG site. Initial discussions indicated 400+ new jobs at Tesco the majority of which would be Warehouse Operatives, with others being Maintenance Operatives and Clerical Officers.
- 1.6 Tesco advised HEP on the application process they use, including the use of a scoring matrix which identifies applicants in a red, amber or green category. Tesco wished to interview all green applicants and were keen to be presented with local people with some previous experience. Prior to the recruitment project commencing, it was agreed that Halton residents scoring green would take priority, followed by non

Halton residents and that the HEP would wait further instruction from Tesco.

- 1.7 Around the time that HEP was introduced to Tesco, they were also introduced to Norbert Dentressangle, the recycling partners of Tesco. They too were closing down other recycling sites and relocating to 3MG and were pleased to be presented with the complete employment offer.
- 1.8 This was the first major recruitment project that the HEP had managed and the project was undertaken in a number of stages.

## **2.0 Stages of Development of the 3MG/Tesco Recruitment Project**

### **2.1 Late 2008**

#### **Stage 1 'Commitment and buy-in'**

- Commitment from Halton's Employment, Learning & Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership to the establishment of the Halton Employment Partnership and a 'complete employment offer'
- Production of Halton's Investors' Handbook for Logistics Sector employers
- Introduction to Tesco Limited and Norbert Dentressangle facilitated by Stobarts
- Negotiation of a 'bespoke' offer for both customers
- Commitment and buy-in to HEP offer from Halton Borough Council's Chief Executive and partners
- Commitment from HEP partners to provide staff to support the recruitment drive (HEP partners committed to second staff to the project)

### **2.2 Early 2009**

#### **Stage 2 'Nuts and bolts'**

- Development of a technical database by Corporate IT, Halton Direct Link and the HEP to support the project and capture information relating to applicants and applications made
- Identification of anticipated 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQs) from interested applicants
- Training staff from HEP partners to use and maintain database
- Training of HEP staff to work in Halton Direct Link Call Centre and man the dedicated phone line
- At this stage partners including Major Projects, HPIJ, HEP team and Jobcentre Plus were collecting details of interest in potential 3MG jobs

### **2.3 Stage 3 'Filling in the gaps'**

- Marketing campaign developed with Corporate Communications
- Accommodation secured for different phases of project including Corporate Training Centre at HBC as the base for HEP administrative staff (to deal with incoming and outgoing application forms), and rooms allocated at Stobart Stadium for the interview process.

- Dedicated HEP PO Box set up and HEP stationery ordered
- IT suite established at the Stobart Stadium in preparation for Tesco management staff training
- HEP partners continued to maintain records of those people who registered an interest in 3MG jobs.

2.4 At this stage, however, the project was 'put on hold' as a result of the sensitivities associated with the closure of the Middleton and Middlewich sites. This was quite a disappointment to the project team as all systems were in place ready to go live. This delay meant that several staff that were originally involved and trained ready to support the project moved on to other work/roles within their organisations. The marketing campaign was again put on hold (in the end, the marketing campaign was not needed because 7000+ people came forward without any publicity). The IT suite at the Stadium was also not used as a management training facility by Tesco, but was used later as an admin office by Tesco/HEP staff.

2.5 February 2010

**Stage 4 'Round 2!'**

- Indication from Tesco Limited that the recruitment drive would start in the very near future – no definite dates given at this stage – negotiations continued to take place with existing staff at Middleton and Middlewich sites
- Project meeting called between all HEP partners to plan and agree the final package of support to Tesco
- HEP partners identified the final project team – this included interviewing some HPIJ clients to work on the project answering calls at Halton Direct Link Contact Centre
- Some members of original team had moved on or changed roles, therefore new staff had to be identified and trained accordingly
- Corporate IDs, e-mail accounts, internet access, and security passes for non HBC staff were arranged
- Access to the bespoke 3MG database was set up for the HEP recruitment team

2.6 **Stage 5 'Final touches'**

- Tesco advised that they would supply application forms, 3 job descriptions and company information for inclusion in the application packs
- Covering letter from HEP was agreed and printing was arranged
- Corporate Training Centre base was prepared – this included a room to compile the application packs and another room (Flexible Working Suite) to receive, mark and store completed application forms. In addition, this room housed a number of networked PCs allowing the bespoke database to be updated as applications were scored
- Daily postage collection from Sorting Office organised
- Postage charging, consignment notes, courier collection service organised through Corporate Resources



## 2.7 **Stage 6** 'Spreading the word'

- The 3MG Jobs website, text and email facilities were finalised in terms of content
- Further planning meetings took place and project staff were given a final brief before 'going live'
- HEP produced a letter for all those people who had previously expressed an interest in 3MG jobs with the various partners (JCP, HPIJ, HEP, Major Projects, JCP). The letter advised that interest in 3MG/Tesco jobs could be officially registered on the 3MG database from 17<sup>th</sup> February. It also asked if individuals were interested in any pre recruitment training.

## 2.8 **Stage 7** 'Registrations come rolling in'

- Registrations of interest were received from 17<sup>th</sup> February by 'phone, online, by text, email and through visiting Halton Direct Link offices
- All registrations were entered on the 3MG Jobs database in preparation for sending out application packs
- Live enquiries were dealt with by Halton Direct Link Contact Centre advisers
- E-mail enquiries and those not dealt with at the Contact Centre, were forwarded to the HEP e-mail inbox to be dealt with by HEP staff
- All requests for pre recruitment training were also sent to the HEP email inbox

## 2.9 March 2010

### **Stage 8** 'Project begins to roll out'

- HEP staff contacted those individuals who had requested pre recruitment training by telephone
- HEP staff organised and delivered pre recruitment sessions at 4 venues across Halton
- The 3MG project team were still awaiting application pack content from Tesco
- Original plan to issue packs by the end of April was revised and messages changed to say packs would be issued by the end of May
- Registrations of interest continued to be received and processed
- The 3MG Jobs database was 'cleansed' to delete any duplicated registrations

## 2.10 End March 2010 – May 2010

### **Stage 9** 'The core of the project'

- At a meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> March with Tesco they confirmed they wanted to start interviewing from the 12<sup>th</sup> April
- A template for the interview schedule was supplied by Tesco
- At this point, HEP were advised by Tesco to initially focus on the recruitment of Warehouse Operatives
- Received applications for Maintenance and Clerical positions were scored with the intention that these would be interviewed at a later date

- HEP recruitment staff were brought together to work on processing applications over at the Corporate Training Centre
- Application pack content collected from Tesco staff – however only the Warehouse Operative job descriptions were received and only 2000 application forms at this stage
- Application packs were collated at the Corporate Training base and were sent out to those people on the database, together with a covering letter from HEP, which provided guidance on returning applications
- Contact Centre IT staff developed 'labels run' for application packs
- Application packs were sent out to people on the database in batches of 500 and in order of date of registration of interest – the database was automatically updated with this information and the date of dispatch
- A consignment note for post was requested and collected each day
- A courier service collected post from the Corporate Training Centre each day and delivered it to the Sorting Office

#### 2.11 **Stage 10 'Identifying interviewees'**

- A mail merge for interview letters was developed by Contact Centre IT staff
- Each day, HEP staff collected returned applications from the P O Box
- On receipt, applications were scored as per the Tesco scoring matrix
- The date of receipt and scores were entered on to the 3MG Jobs database
- 'Greens' and, later, 'ambers' with experience, were allocated interviews dates/times as per the Tesco schedule
- Interview letters were sent out each day – first 2 week's interviewees were also contacted by telephone to give them their interview information as Tesco's timescale was extremely tight
- Tesco is a Local Employment Partnership (LEP) employer, meaning that they are committed to taking on local unemployed people. As such, Jobcentre Plus had a supply of LEP forms which collected information about the employment status of the interviewees as they arrived for interview
- Registrations of interest in 3MG Jobs continued to be made
- Further application forms were supplied by Tesco and more packs sent out
- HEP staff based at the Corporate Training Centre dealt with requests for interview rearrangements and rescheduled accordingly
- 'Regret' letters sent out regularly to 'red' applicants advising them that they had not been successful with their application
- During Stages 9 & 10 of the project, 4 - 8 staff would be working at the Corporate Training Centre base

#### 2.12 **Stage 11 'Interviews get underway'**

- HEP/Tesco negotiated facilities at the Stobart Stadium with the Stadium Manager

- 4 more HEP staff were allocated to work alongside Tesco at the Stadium in support of interview process; this included a 'meet and greet' service, photocopying of documents and other administration support
- HEP staff later gave support at the actual 3MG Tesco depot to the Drug and Alcohol testing process
- Weekly meetings took place between HBC's Skills and Recruitment Manager (Inward Investment) and Tesco's Project Manager
- Scored and sorted application forms were delivered to the Stadium each week in readiness for the following week's interviews
- Tesco's Project Manager emailed list of job offers to the 3MG Jobs Project Director (Divisional Manager Adult Learning & Skills Development) at the end of each week; these were disseminated to relevant stakeholders

#### 2.13 End May to June 2010

##### **Stage 12 'Depot opens'**

- Tesco depot opened end May 2010 and recruitment staff moved from the Stadium to the 3MG depot
- HEP staff continued to support Tesco HR staff at depot with interview process and administration, and drug and alcohol testing

#### 2.14 **Stage 13 'Closing the application process loop'**

- HEP staff based at the Corporate Training Centre continued to arrange interviews until early June
- The remaining 'red' regret letters were sent out to unsuccessful applicants
- After negotiations with Tesco and with support from Contact Centre IT staff, the Tesco 'keeping your details on file' letter was sent out to the remaining applicants which ensured that all applicants had then received some form of response from HEP/Tesco.

#### 2.15 **Stage 14 'Project ends'**

- Project ended – messages on 3MG phone line, text service, e-mail service and websites were changed to indicate that the recruitment for Tesco had ended
- Corporate Training Centre base was cleared
- All Tesco documentation handed over to Tesco

#### 2.16 July 2010

##### **Stage 15**

- Evaluation meeting for HEP partners involved in the Tesco recruitment was held to determine the key learning points from the 3MG Jobs project and agree content for the evaluation report
- Production of draft evaluation report by Skills and Recruitment Manager

#### 2.17 August 2010

- Final evaluation report completed

### **3.0 Recruitment on behalf of Norbert Dentressangle**

- 3.1 The HEP recruitment team were also able to assist Norbert Dentressangle, the recycling partners of Tesco Limited, in recruiting to a number of posts at their 3MG site. Using existing information from the 3MG Jobs database 500+ Norbert application packs were sent out to potential candidates. In this instance, Norbert's requested the applications to be returned directly to themselves and they made their own interview arrangements.
- 3.2 Types of jobs available were Shift Co-ordinators, Charge hands, Bridge person and Operatives. The numbers of jobs available to local people was small, at around 20 and this was as a result of staff at the Middleton site transferring across.
- 3.2 As with the Tesco recruitment, Contact Centre IT staff developed appropriate mail merge documents to contact relevant applicants. HEP assisted in collating application packs, sending these out with HEP cover letters and dealing with any enquiries that came up.
- 3.3 The HBC Skills & Recruitment Manager liaised regularly with the HR Manager at Norbert's to ensure a smooth recruitment process.

### **4.0 Project Reporting and Monitoring**

- 4.1 The 3MG Jobs database was developed to be able to produce statistics on the volumes of registrations of interest, applications received, applications scored and the results, correspondence issued to applicants and job outcomes. Reports on these statistics could be run at any time.
- 4.2 The database also contained the facility to record any comments or enquiries, and the responses to those enquiries. In addition, the database also recorded requests for pre recruitment support. These statistics were regularly shared with partners.
- 4.3 Progress throughout the project was reported on in a number of ways including:
- Quarterly report on the HEP Working Neighbourhood Fund Service Level Agreement to the Employment, Learning & Skills SSP
  - Monthly report from the Employment, Economic Regeneration & Business Development Department to the Chief Executive
  - Regular reporting to the Skills sub-group of the SSP
  - Regular e-mails and reporting to HBC senior management and partners from 3MG Project Director (Divisional Manager Adult Learning and Skills Development)
  - Weekly 1:1s between Skills Recruitment Manager and 3MG Project Director

4.4 Throughout the later stages of the project the Skills and Recruitment Manager supplied the Tesco Project Manager with weekly statistics on registrations of interest, applications received and interviews scheduled. The Tesco Project Manager provided weekly statistics to the 3MG Project Director on job outcomes.

## **5.0 Roles and responsibilities within the 3MG Jobs project**

5.1 To ensure that the 3MG Jobs project was successful, agreeing roles and responsibilities of the HEP team was key. The Divisional Manager for Adult Learning & Skills Development 3MG Jobs acted as the Project Director and she worked very closely the 3MG manager for Major Projects to secure the buy-in from the landlords (Stobarts) and their customers (Tesco and Norbert Dentressangle).

5.2 The Skills & Recruitment Manager (within Adult Learning & Skills Development) took on the role of 3MG jobs Project Manager and managed the operational side of the project, assisted by the Account Manager from Jobcentre Plus.

5.3 The Head of Customer Service at the council supervised the Contact Centre elements of the project, including overseeing the bespoke database and various methods of registering interest in the jobs (e.g. telephone, email, website etc). IT colleagues within the Contact Centre developed the 3MG Jobs bespoke database including setting up the mechanism for creating mail merges and label runs and developing appropriate reports. The bespoke database became the key ingredient of the overall project, which would not have been so successful without it.

5.4 A range of different departments and partners assisted in the project by seconding staff across to work on the recruitment project. Staff from the following organisations/departments were seconded to the HEP team:

- Adult Learning & Skills Development
- Jobcentre Plus
- Halton People into Jobs Intermediate Labour Market placement students
- External Funding (HBC)
- The Mersey Gateway Team (HBC)
- Riverside College business admin students

In addition, the following partners were key to the project:

- Halton People into Jobs – in offering Next Step Information, Advice & Guidance to potential candidates
- Stadium Manager – in securing suitable accommodation for Tesco and the interviews
- Corporate Resources – in organising the PO Box and courier service

- Corporate Training Centre staff – in offering up two rooms as the 3MG Jobs base
- Corporate IT – in organising corporate ID badges and email accounts.
- The Halton Employment Partnership Award team, Riverside College Halton and Ergon Solutions – in running pre recruitment programmes for applicants.

5.5 The Skills & Recruitment Manager organised the working rotas on a weekly basis, in partnership with Jobcentre Plus Account Manager to ensure that all key roles and responsibilities were covered. These included:

- Collection of post from Post Office
- Receipting returned application forms
- Sorting forms into job categories
- Scoring application forms using Tesco's matrix
- Inputting information onto the bespoke database
- Collation of application packs
- Printing of letters and labels
- Organising interview schedule
- Meeting and greeting at interviews
- Photocopying of proof of working in UK documents
- Organisation and delivery of pre recruitment programmes
- Admin duties for Tesco at both the Stadium and the 3MG depot
- Update meetings between Tesco and HEP
- Updating of content for website and messages for Halton Direct Link
- Project monitoring and reporting to senior officers and partners.

5.6 All key partners involved in the 3MG Jobs project were invited to a final evaluation meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2010, at which all final statistics and results were shared and the project evaluated.

## 6.0 Final Statistics

### 6.1 Tesco Project Final Statistics

#### **Final Statistics from 3MG database:**

- 7063 Registrations of Interest
- 4043 Completed applications received and processed
- 1298 Interviews scheduled

#### **Responses to registrations and applications:**

All those who registered interest were sent an application pack.

All applicants received some form of response to their application as follows:

- 'Green' applicants plus 'ambers' with logistics experience – sent Tesco

interview letter

- 'Red' applicants and 'ambers' not offered an interview – sent Tesco 'red' letter
- Maintenance and Clerical applicants sent 'keeping your details on file' letter

This means that a total of 4000+ letters were produced and sent out by the recruitment team, in addition to 7000+ application packs.

### **Response to enquiries:**

HEP staff dealt with 2571 requests for pre recruitment training and 427 queries from the HEP mailbox, plus additional queries from other sources.

### **Pre Recruitment Sessions:**

31 pre recruitment sessions were organised with 553 people booking on to the sessions. The sessions were delivered by HEP training staff and Riverside College at 4 different locations across Widnes and Runcorn. Average attendance at the sessions was just over 50%.

### **Contact Centre Statistics:**

6232 calls were made to the 3MG phone line at the Contact Centre -3714 were answered and dealt with, 1915 were abandoned and average waiting time was 43 seconds.

### **Job Outcomes:**

377 successful applicants had been made job offers by end June:

W/c 10<sup>th</sup> May – 55 starts of which 100% were Halton residents

W/c 17<sup>th</sup> May – 50 starts of which 75% were Halton residents.

W/c 24 May – 50 starts of which 72% were Halton residents.

W/c 31 May – 38 starts of which 68.5% were Halton residents

W/c 7 June – 34 starts of which 80% were Halton residents

W/c 14 June – 31 starts of which 58% were Halton residents

W/c 21 June – 31 starts of which 84% were Halton residents

W/c 28 June – 47 starts of which 66% were Halton residents

W/c 5 July – 41 starts of which 63.4% were Halton residents

This means that of the **377** new starts, **75% were Halton residents** (with a 60:40 split between Widnes:Runcorn).

Of the 377, 25 are female and 352 male; 113 are married and 264 are single.

**111 of starters were HPIJ clients.**

### **Job Centre Plus analysis:**

46% of the starters were previously unemployed and 82% of these were Halton unemployed residents. i.e. nearly 38% of the total new starters at Tesco were previously unemployed Halton residents. This figure can be broken down further into **JCP Priority Groups (PG)**, as follows:

**PG1 – 15 individuals**

Jobless Lone Parents including those on JSA.  
 Customers participating in New Deal for Disabled People or in receipt of a benefit due to a health condition or disability\*\*  
 Other Income Support, Carers Allowance and Bereavement Benefit customers who do not have the Person with Disability marker set

**PG2 – 63 individuals**

Jobseeker’s Regime and Flexible New Deal Stage 4 customers  
 Customers on JSA New Deals (New Deal 50 Plus, New Deal 25 Plus and New Deal for Young People) in non Jobseeker’s Regime and Flexible New Deal (JRFND) districts  
 New Deal for Partners and Partner WFIs  
 Employment Zones (for New Deal 25 plus and NDYP returner customers)  
 Unemployed customers with disabilities not included in Priority Customer Group 1  
 Customers claiming JSA for 6 months and over  
 Customers in receipt of JSA for under 6 months where the customer has been fast-tracked to Stage 3 in JRFND districts  
 Disadvantaged customers (Ex-offenders, refugees, drug misusers, alcohol misusers or homeless people)  
 Customers in receipt of Pension Credit

**PG3 – 50 individuals**

Customers claiming JSA for under 6 months (including JRFND Stages 1 &2 customers).

**PG4 – 14 individuals**

Unemployed customers not claiming benefits.

6.2 Norbert Dentressangle Project Final Statistics

**Number of applications for each post**

Shift coordinator - 6  
 Charge hand - 14  
 Bridge person - 25  
 Operative – 48\*

**Number of interviews offered for each post**

Shift coordinator - 3  
 Chargehand - 20  
 Bridgeperson - 12

**Number of posts recruited to**

Shift coordinator - 1  
 Chargehand - 4  
 Bridge person - 2

\*the HEP project team is still awaiting more information regarding the Operative posts.



## **7.0 Lessons Learned**

7.1 The 3MG Jobs Project Evaluation Group agreed that the following key 'lessons' have been learnt and should inform any future recruitment projects:

1. HEP needs early engagement with employer offering new jobs
2. The Partnership needs a clear (and unchangeable, if possible) brief from the employer as to their requirements
3. Project managers must negotiate reasonable timescales with employers within which HEP staff can work and deliver an effective service
4. The content of application packs should be agreed at an early stage and the content must be provided by the employer 'up front'
5. A clear offer should be made by HEP regarding what it can, and cannot, offer to support the employer including a limit on financial assistance
6. Strong partnership commitment and dedicated staff are essential to the success of any recruitment project
7. A dedicated venue with telephone line is necessary for HEP staff to be able to offer deliver an efficient service and to be able to deal with all enquiries first hand
8. More information needs to be gathered from applicants
9. There is a need to involve more support from experts at an earlier stage e.g. Resources/Procurement regarding postal arrangements
10. Staff need to make clear from start of project that it will not deal with agencies, only individuals
11. The Contact Centre will not offer text facility in future; many texts contained spelling errors
12. HEP need to consider the use of address authentication software
13. Agreed FAQs should go on to the website and be regularly updated as any new questions arise
14. Need to develop the facility for applicants to query database themselves via website to track the progress of their application
15. Any diversity targets the employer wishes support to achieve should be agreed with the employer up front

16. Dedicated telephone number for the recruitment base and include this on all correspondence to applicants

## **8.0 Publicity**

8.1 Prior to going live with the 3MG Jobs Tesco/Norbert recruitment, a number of publicity and marketing activities had taken place:

- Distribution of Investors' Handbook to Tesco, Norbert's and Stobarts
- Development of a marketing campaign
- Press release in Weekly News about job creation at the 3MG site.

8.2 As the project commenced, there was additional publicity including

- Stobarts Marketing day at 3MG site
- Production and circulation of a HEP learner case study (i.e. unemployed employability learner who had been supported with pre recruitment training and had obtained employment at Tesco)
- Quote from Tesco sent to David Lyon, Business Development, HBC to assist in promotion of Halton as a business location to inward investors
- Submission of an LGA report from the 3MG Jobs Project Director (Head of Adult Learning & Skills Development)

8.3 Now this particular recruitment project has ended a number of other publications and marketing avenues will be explored including:

- Account Manager, Job Centre Plus, is to put forward the 3MG Tesco Project for the Civil Service Awards 2010 as a good example of collaborative working
- Press release to be organised through Communications and Marketing, HBC (for publication mid August)
- Case Studies of successful applicants to be produced and utilised in further publications
- Promotion of Partnership to be undertaken using quotes from Tesco on their response to the project

## **9.0 Feedback from the employers**

9.1 Throughout the course of the recruitment project the response from Tesco staff to the service and support given by members of the HEP recruitment team was always very positive and good working relationships were quickly developed. The following is a quote from Tesco's Project Manager who managed the opening of the Tesco Widnes distribution centre:

*"Over the last few months Tesco have worked in partnership with Halton Borough Council and the Halton Employment Partnership for the opening of the new Tesco Distribution Centre in Widnes.*

*The service provided has been excellent with support offered around pre-employment, training and recruitment.*

*The entire Tesco application form process has been managed through the Halton Employment Partnership, including collating initial interest from local residents, issuing and screening of application forms and booking in all staff interviews.*

*A Recruitment Centre was established at the Stobart Stadium Halton and additional support was provided by the Halton Employment Partnership in terms of a meet and greet facility, interviewee welfare and co-ordination of the interview schedule.*

*The overall service has been of a high standard and it has been a fantastic benefit to Tesco in terms of a smooth opening of the new Widnes site. Through this partnership arrangement, we have been able to recruit 75% of the workforce from the local area.*

*All Halton Employment Partnership staff that have helped and supported have been very professional and all the work has been to a very high standard.*

*I would recommend the support of the Halton Employment Partnership to other businesses”.*

- 9.2 Responses from Norbert's on the support given by HEP was equally positive. The following quotes are from Norbert's 3MG Depot Manager and their HR Business Partner:

*'We received a very good response for all of the roles that were on offer at Widnes and the applicants were also of a high standard.'*  
*'We have had a great response - so thank you very much for your support!'*

## **10.0 The Future**

- 10.1 The Tesco/Norbert Dentressangle recruitment project was hugely successful in terms of offering a full package of support from pre recruitment support and training to administrative support to Tesco during the interview process – and, of course, in helping local people obtain employment. Through early discussions with Tesco, facilitated by the Major Projects department in the council initially, HEP was able to gain insight into the types of jobs that would become available on the 3MG site. They were able to develop, alongside other providers, a range of sector specific employability programmes that were targeted, in the main, at local unemployed people. The result of this was that when the jobs became available, there was a readily available workforce – which is the key message contained within the Investors' Handbook around the Halton Employment Partnership.

- 10.2 The concept of the Halton Employment Partnership and the development of sector specific pre employment programmes related to growth sectors in the borough were developed by the Employment, Learning & Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership back in 2008. The recruitment at 3MG helped see the concept develop into reality. The level of success of the project would not have been possible without the use of Working Neighbourhoods Funding, which paid for a full time Skills & Recruitment Manager to oversee the project on an operational basis, as well as funding the various pre employment programmes (HEP Award in Logistics, Fork Lift Truck Licences, Interview Techniques short courses, etc).
- 10.3 The HEP as a collaborative has demonstrated that presenting businesses with a 'one stop shop' approach for recruitment and training cuts out many unnecessary layers of bureaucracy for them. It is also a great way to utilise the various expertise that individual partners can bring to the table. Being able to present potential investors with the 'complete employment offer' is a valuable resource for the local authority, but with that comes the need to finance this resource.
- 10.5 All existing WNF projects are to be reviewed during August/September 2010 and decisions made about which projects warrant further investment. The long term benefits brought by the Tesco/Norbert's recruitment will no doubt include an improved local economy and, it could be argued that the complete employment offer should continue to be something Halton offers its future investors.

August 2010