

Director: Angela Taylor, Director of Resources

Author: Rachel Murphy



Report to: West Yorkshire and York Investment Committee

Date: 12 July 2017

Subject: Skills Shortage in Leeds City Region

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To note the plan being developed to address the Skills Shortage in Leeds City Region.
- 1.2 To agree the recommendations to progress the project to the next stage.

2. Information

- 2.1 There is a recognised Project Management (and Digital Programmer/Data analyst) skills shortage across the West Yorkshire region and a national shortage of civil engineers.
- 2.2 Local Government bodies have the added difficulty of competing with attractive private sector salaries. However, these are exciting times for WYCA and, having secured funding for West Yorkshire Transport fund and Growth Capital, working at the Combined Authority is fast becoming an attractive option and is strengthened by our working links with District partners in the Region.
- 2.3 WYCA is coming to the final stages of its Organisational Design (OD) process, involving a full review of in-house project management skills and experience to enable us to utilise current skills resource.
- 2.4 The process has enabled a new clearly defined career progression within the Delivery Directorate to strengthen WYCA's ability to recruit and retain talented project managers.
- 2.5 In the HR/OD area, an external consultant has been appointed to assess our approach and act as a 'critical friend' to the new team structures, HR operating/business model and advise on developing a long term, future-proofed People Development Strategy.
- 2.6 This paper sets out the strategy WYCA is adopting to address the skills shortage and recruit the right people for the right roles and the short and medium term solutions we are proposing.

2.7 Short Term solutions/proposals:

- We have appointed specialist recruitment agency 'Matchtech' to source talented candidates for our Delivery Directorate, focussing on talent outside of the Region in recognition of concerns expressed about losing skilled staff from our District Partners.
- Strong links are being forged with Leeds University, Leeds Beckett and the Institute of Transport Studies, to further explore opportunities to recruit the highest calibre undergraduates and post-graduates to the CA. Contact is also being made with Universities/Business Schools in the Region: Bradford, Huddersfield, York and Leeds.
- We are talking to our contacts at Leeds Beckett University to get an 'in' to undergraduates.
- We are joining the Yorkshire & Humber (Local Authorities) Employers' Association to enable a cross Region dialogue/working group on talent/skills.
- We are attending the Urban Transport Group (UTG) OD group on 27/06/17 and leading an item on skills shortage and attracting talent.
- We are working with the Head of Employment and Skills to understand the reasoning behind the Regional skills shortage to enable an effective approach and action plan to tackle this.

2.8 Medium Term solutions/proposals:

- WYCA are working with West Yorkshire Districts on a project with 'Timewise' around tapping into pools of potential employees who want to work flexibly - evidence shows that there are potential employees who would be attracted into our organisations and help address the skills shortage, should we improve our employee benefits and flexible working.
- Whilst the CA already embraces flexible working, we are looking at how we can be even more flexible about working base, the research shows this is a priority for the 'Millennials' we are trying to attract. We are also reviewing how we advertise and publicise that we have a flexible approach to posts early in the recruitment process.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 None as a result of this report.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 None as a result of this report.

5. Staffing Implications

5.1 WYCA HR are leading on this project, working with partners and stakeholders as required.

6 External Consultees

6.1 None

7. Recommendations

7.1 To develop this paper into a strategy with an action plan underneath it. 8.1 outlines the high level plan which is being developed further.

8. WYCA plan and strategy – PM skills shortage

8.1 Table 8.1 – WYCA plan and strategy - HR action schedule 2017

Strategy actions underway	Timeframe
Specialist recruitment Agency, Matchtech appointed by WYCA to actively source project managers (primarily outside the Leeds City Region) to deliver Capital projects and programmes	Appointed June 2017
HR Representative to meet with contacts at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leeds Beckett University Institute of Transport Studies 	July 2017
HR Representative to meet with contacts at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bradford University Huddersfield York 	July 2017
External consultant 'Critical Friend' review HR operating model and approach and advise HR in developing a future-proofed 5 year People Development Strategy	July/August 2017
Urban Transport Group (UTG) working with the UTG OD group to explore joint working on skills shortage and whether a cross organisation talent pool could be created.	September 2017
Planned Actions	
Working with Michelle Burton, Head of Employment and Skills to understand the reasoning behind the Regional skills shortage to enable an effective approach and action plan to tackle this.	July 2017
Review employee benefits and flexible working to attract wider range of employees	September 2017
Join Yorkshire & Humber Employers' Association to establish working group talent/skills.	October 2017