

Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Social Services and Health

Date: 17 March 2004

By: Director of Social Services

Title of report: Castleham Industries

Purpose of report: To update the Scrutiny Committee on the present position of those supported employees who worked at Castleham Industries until 30 September 2003.

RECOMMENDATION -

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the present position of those supported employees who worked at Castleham Industries until 30 September 2004.

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The current wage cost to the Council for 18 people amounts to £17,400 per month, with £7,100 per month received by way of a Workstep grant. Net outturn costs for 2003/2004 and forward costs for 2004/2005 will not exceed budgeted provision within Employment Services.

1.2 The full year savings effect to the Council following the closure of Castleham, will be £300,000. These form part of the department's 2004/2005 budget savings requirements.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 At the time of closure there were 27 Workstep supported employees working at Castleham Industries and Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) took over the responsibility for securing new employment opportunities. In the intervening months two RBLI employment advisors have been charged with supporting the retraining and development of these employees in order to secure meaningful and sustainable employment. It has not been the intention to find people supernumery job roles where there is no opportunity for long term employment. Consideration has been given to the choice of the individual with regard to their career aspirations and this has led to the need to support people in developing new skills in line with the job market.

2.2 The result of this activity has been that almost everyone is in a work placement. There are only three people who have not been able to secure employment and this is still high on the agenda.

2.3 There are now fifteen people working in a supernumery capacity, nine of whom have every possibility to move on to permanent employment within the next eighteen months. Three of these employees are working within the Social Services Department. It is anticipated that the remaining six have now reached their full potential for work and are likely to remain in a supernumery capacity under the auspices of the County Council. In some cases this is by virtue of their disability and support needs.

2.4 No more people have taken redundancy since the last report to Committee. This amounted to seven people in all.

2.5 Five people have now obtained full supported employment status, two of whom are within Social Services. These employees are no longer a cost to the County Council, but are in full time equitable employment.

3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 Over the next six months efforts will be made to ensure that the three people currently not in employment are secured supernumery roles as a minimum. Work will then be targeted at those in supernumery roles, to help them develop and progress, where appropriate, towards full supported employment. The two employment advisors charged with employees last year have now been awarded permanent contracts by RBLI and as such are offering consistent support to the individuals seeking work.

DAVID ARCHIBALD
Director of Social Services

Contact Officer: Marion Johnson – Head of Service (Adult Protection). Tel: 01273 481126

Local Member: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Report to the Lead Member for Corporate Resources – 2 October 2003
Report to Cabinet – 24 June 2003
Report to Cabinet – 18 December 2001
Report to Cabinet – 31 July 2001