

North Lincolnshire Council achieves the Skills Pledge

On 21 November 2008, North Lincolnshire Council showed its commitment to supporting their employees' development when the Chief Executive and the Leader of the council signed the Skills Pledge. With continual support from council leaders, the council has now achieved all four stages of the Skills Pledge.



Following the council's initial commitment, an action plan was drawn up of how the Skills Pledge would be implemented council wide, how a diagnostic of employees needs could be undertaken and what resources would be required to successfully achieve the pledge.

As a result of this planning, a new role was created within the council. Michelle Bennett, was appointed as Skills for Life Support Officer in September 2009 with the responsibility of raising awareness of the Skills Pledge across all levels of the council so that all employees could benefit from the commitment.

Michelle initially completed an audit of employees' skill levels, and worked with service areas to support employees in improving their basic literacy and numeracy skills, helping them work towards their first full Level 2 qualification.

Since the Skills for Life Support Officer came in to post, a wide range of activity has taken place such as:

- Open days to promote a wide range of opportunities for employee development.
- Presentations delivered across all service areas to raise awareness of and get support for the Skills Pledge and what it offers.
- Development of promotional materials to support the awareness raising campaign.

As a consequence of all this activity the Skills Pledge has now been integrated into the corporate induction programme. Employees are informed of the commitment, what it means to them and a skills audit is completed as part of the recruitment and selection process.



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Councillor Mark Kirk, Leader of North Lincolnshire Council, said:

'Reaching Stage four of the Skills Pledge is further evidence of this council's commitment to its employees. Investing in our workforce means we can improve the service we give the people of North Lincolnshire. I'm delighted our hard work has been recognised and we will strive for even more success in the future.'

STAR operates the Public Sector Brokerage service in Yorkshire and Humberside and has provided North Lincolnshire Council with a wide range of services, from the sourcing of economically valuable training and development to meet their needs, to offering advice and guidance on how to fulfil the requirements of the Skills Pledge, and assessing progress against the four stages. With a continuous, supportive relationship with the council, STAR offers advice, guidance, and the brokering service at any time that it is needed.

By achieving all four stages of the Skills Pledge, the council has achieved a higher standard of service delivery in many areas as employee performance has improved significantly. Training opportunities have not only helped individuals achieve qualifications that recognise the standard and quality of work which they provide on a daily basis, but they have also helped them feel more confident in their roles which in turn has helped them to feel more valued and motivated.

Due to budget restrictions in the current economic climate, the role of the Skills Broker has proved



'This pledge is another step forward to supporting our workforce and improving their skills and competencies. It will also help to develop talent for our future needs. And at the end of the day, the better our council officers perform in their roles, the better service they will provide for the people of North Lincolnshire.'

Chief Executive, Simon Driver

invaluable in being able to source value for money training provision, which employees may not have otherwise been able to access at full cost.

By offering qualifications under the Skills Pledge, the council has also been able to professionalise



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some services which may previously have not had a focus on this kind of training. An example of this is their School Crossing Patrols who have now been offered the opportunity to work towards a Level 2 NVQ in Customer Service.

On the support that STAR has offered, Skills for Life Support Officer, Michelle Bennett stated:

'We have developed a good working relationship with Lee, our Skills Broker, and would highly recommend the service to other local authorities who have signed up to the Skills Pledge.'

STAR have offered advice and guidance whenever we have needed it, and with their support we have become one of the first council's in the Yorkshire and Humber region to achieve all four stages of the Skills Pledge – an achievement that we are extremely proud of as it proves how committed we are to supporting our employees to develop new skills and gain qualifications.

The support and guidance provided by STAR has been of a high standard, and we will continue to work with Lee in the future to help us continue with the success we have already seen since signing up to the Skills Pledge.'

For more information regarding this project please contact STAR using the details below.

