

REPORT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT KICK-START SCHEME

A Member requested a report on the government's Kick-Start Scheme and PCNPA's involvement. This short report responds to that request.

Background

In September 2020, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority joined, in partnership, the other UK National Parks to apply for funds under the Government's Kick-Start Scheme.

The Scheme was set up at UK level to:

1. fund 6 month job placements for young people (aged 16 - 24) currently on Universal Credit;
2. give young people the opportunity to develop skills to find long term employment;
3. provide employers 100% funding of the minimum wage (plus minimum NI and auto enrolment contributions) for 25 hours per week; and
4. encourage participating employers to create 'additional / new' jobs.

At a macro level, the Scheme was set up to aid a Green Recovery, linked to a key government agenda around job creation.

It was a condition of Government funding that individual employers could only apply directly to the Scheme if they were creating more than 30 jobs, which is why the National Parks submitted a partnership bid.

PCNPA's participation in the Scheme.

Recruiting Managers were engaged in creating meaningful placements, which resulted in PCNPA successfully bidding for six posts. The six posts available to applicants are:

- Archaeological Support Assistant
- DM/Planning Support Administrator
- Business Administration *
- Rights of Way Support Assistant
- Customer Service and Site Warden Assistants x 2 (Carew and Castel Henllys)

*the Business Administration role will support short-term assignments in Finance, Democratic Services (including Reception) and Human Resources.

Recruitment adverts were posted in April 2021, with candidates asked to apply via the DWP's Universal Credits website and/or directly through PCNPA's Job Page. The adverts will continue running through April and May to attract the highest number of applications.

The Authority has already had significant interest for the Customer Service and Business Administration roles.

Employability skills

As part of the funding bid and to improve employment skills of those successful, the Authority's Human Resources function will develop and deliver an Employability Programme that sits alongside the placements. This will include:

- A Work Placement Contract setting out candidate skills and career targets and PCNPA expectations for successful completion;
- A Skills and Personality Profile Inventory to increase self-awareness;
- A career planning workshop, including advice on the various pathways into employment;
- Advice on improving confidence and interpersonal skills in the job market;
- Help on improving employability skills;
- A C.V writing and interview skills workshops; and
- Specific skills training using a blended approach of class room and eLearning.

Recruiting Managers will be involved in ensuring work-place skills training takes place, to ensure a successful outcome for all participants of the Scheme. The Education team will also be involved in helping to develop content for the Employability Programme.

Candidates will also be assigned a mentor within PCNPA to help them navigate the world of work and they will receive regular supervision and coaching through the line management structure.

Time-line

Candidate interviews will take place in early to mid-May, and it is anticipated that the first appointment to the Scheme will be made from mid-May onwards. This will be slightly later than anticipated, which was unfortunately unavoidable due to Covid-19.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

(Further information is available from the Kelland Dickens, Human Resources Manager, on 01646 624825 – email kellandd@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk)