

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT ON: Policy and Resources Committee - 13 August 2007

REPORT ON: European Union of Supported Employment

REPORT BY: Assistant Chief Executive (Management)

REPORT NO: 413-2007

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report notifies the Committee of the election of Mr Mike Evans, Manager of the Council's Employment Unit, to President of the European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE), and seeks authority for Mr Evans to participate in EUSE activities.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Committee is requested to:-

- note that Mr Mike Evans has been elected to the position of President of EUSE;
- approve the participation of Mr Evans in the activities of EUSE.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The role of the President will involve attendance at meetings, delivering workshops and providing assistance and guidance to member national associations of EUSE. The costs will be borne either by EUSE or member national associations.

4 SUSTAINABILITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Anti Poverty and Social Exclusion

The activities of EUSE will have a direct impact on the equality of employment opportunities for disabled people at international, national and local levels.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 One of the key roles of EUSE is to influence national policy on equal opportunities and social inclusion issues for disabled people.

5.2 It is expected that, directly and indirectly, EUSE and the position of President will have an impact on securing equal opportunities for disabled people who are most disadvantaged within the open labour market.

6 BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

- 6.1 The Employment Unit was originally formed by Tayside Regional Council to address the unmet employment needs of people in the community with disabilities or health problems. At local government re-organisation, the 3 Tayside local authorities agreed to collaborate in the continuation of the Employment Unit. The Employment Unit is widely recognised as a leader in the field of employment and disability and each year supports more than 100 disabled people into new jobs. The Unit has won many national awards for the high quality of its services, including a European Commission Scottish Equality Award and a COSLA Quality Award.
- 6.2 EUSE is a non governmental organisation whose aim is to promote the supported employment model through the exchange of information and good practice. EUSE also provides a platform for its members to network with other organisations and national associations.
- 6.3 Supported employment enables people with disabilities to have real jobs in the community with appropriate guidance and support. Most people benefiting from supported employment have been disengaged from the labour market for many years, with some disabled people having never worked at all.
- 6.4 The Scottish Union of Supported Employment is one of 17 member countries of EUSE. In 2001, the 5th EUSE Conference was held in Edinburgh and was attended by 620 delegates from 37 countries. The Manager of the Employment Unit organised this event, which was a great success.
- 6.5 EUSE has a formal constitution which elects 17 members to its board. At the recent 8th EUSE Conference held in Belfast, Mr Evans, was unanimously elected as President for a term of 2 years. He has held the position of Vice President since 2003, participation in which role was approved by the Personnel and Management Services Committee, at its meeting of 16 June 2003.
- 6.6 The future action plan and activities of EUSE includes the organisation of the 9th EUSE Conference, developing quality standards in supported employment, improving information exchange between countries, identifying and securing funding for the organisation, influencing national and European policy and encouraging new European member states to develop supported employment activities.
- 6.7 Mr Evans was chairman of the Scottish Union of Supported Employment from 1997 until 2002, during which time the organisation expanded its membership to 96 organisations and delivered 4 national conferences, the first of which was held in 1999 in Dundee. Through the organisation and delivery of the EUSE Conference in Edinburgh, both the Scottish Union of Supported Employment and the Employment Unit have enhanced their reputations as delivering high quality services to service providers and people with disabilities.
- 6.8 The appointment of Mr Evans to the position of President of EUSE will provide a development tool for all staff at the Employment Unit and will reinforce the good name of Dundee City Council at a European level.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Depute Chief Executive (Finance) have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

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Assistant Chief Executive (Management)

6 August 2007