

# **Enterprise and Learning Committee**

EL(3) 28-09 (p4) : 9 December 2009

## **Deeside College - 'Generating Jobs for the Green Economy'**

### **Introduction**

Further Education has an important role to play in support initiatives in the green economy linked to curriculum, staffing, construction and general corporate social responsibility. Deeside College is aware that under relevant environmental legislation it is paramount to recognise and reduce its key environmental impacts. The College accepts the need to ensure that the next generation is well versed in the subject and is prepared to invest and work hard in order that students understand and appreciate the need to preserve the environment and embrace new technologies to support the fight against climate change. Deeside College would welcome the opportunity to participate further in discussions following this written response.

### **Impact of the recession**

Further Education provides the largest number of vocational training places in Wales and as such could be adversely affected by tightening budgets. This would lead to less training places available to support companies in gaining the appropriate skills and labour resource. This means that Wales could ultimately lose the skills race in clean technologies and renewable energies due to lack of investment in the training infrastructure. The College can demonstrate excellent examples of using public funding to work with partner agencies across Wales to develop new training opportunities in fields such as Opto-electronics which help develop apprentice technicians. These technicians will be working with laser and light technology to develop products that use less energy both in the manufacturing process and the finished design. Tightening of public finances for education cause potential future skills shortages but also affects the green economy in a more immediate way.

The College has been supported with public money to improve the learning infrastructure. This means engaging local contractors to both build and redevelop buildings that conform to exacting environmental standards. The latest programme of building works is funding a new Land Based learning centre that conforms to BREEAM excellent standard. Extensive care taken to

protect existing wildlife and reduce the impact on the environment. In addition the building will benefit from,

100% ground source heat pumps

Energy and waste monitoring during construction

Maximum natural sunlight and ventilation using sun tubes and wind catchers

Automated lighting and heating controls with sub metering

Build and insulate with materials which support the ethos of sustainability

Landscaping designed to support bio diversity

Development of a “green” travel plan

Without continued investment the college would be unable to continue upgrading the infrastructure and become more energy efficient. This would also have a negative impact on the specialist contractors we use.

### **Low carbon and Waste Management initiatives**

The College has actively embedded environmental sustainability across the curriculum areas and has not limited the development to areas such as construction and engineering. This will ensure we educate the next generation to work within the ideals of a green economy regardless of their chosen Sector of employment

Examples of these cross curricula activities include:

- Integration of sustainability into the personal tutorial system to raise awareness of green issues
- Deeside College has taken the lead in the development and provision of the new Welsh Baccaureate qualification. This course of study has been developed with Global Citizenship and Sustainability modules included, and have created significant interest in sustainability throughout the College and wider communities.
- Integration of Education and Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship into Work Based learning programmes.
- Support community based programmes and initiatives which demonstrate best practice and promote the need for a sustainable future.
- Ensure College staff are trained and aware of their environmental responsibilities and provide / support others in obtaining environmental training.
- Introduction of a “waste pays scheme” to foster a culture of recycling and raise awareness of green issues amongst students.

### **Advice and Support Measures**

In addition to cross curricula developments to raise awareness of green issues, the college continues to work with sector skills councils and other

external partners to support sector specific initiatives that have been supported with public funding.

### **Engineering/ Manufacturing**

- Support for paper manufacturers in North East Wales in partnership with ProSkills to develop qualifications to support the manufacture of recycled paper products within the new cleaner technological processes
- Leading the development of skills in the Manufacture of Aircraft made from Composite materials. These Aircraft are lighter and produce less emissions but require a different skills set to metallic aircraft structures. In partnership with SEMTA, HE partners and private sector the college are working to develop programmes from level 2 to Masters Level.

### **Construction**

- Use of A4B funding to support the construction industry to develop ideas for training to support the use of sustainable building materials.
- Introduction of training for solar panel installation

### **Land Based Education**

- Promotion of courses linked to organic production in horticulture to support the natural environment and reduce the use of pesticides.
- Promotion of native species of plants in horticulture training.
- Development of a rare breeds unit to support development of skills in conservation and animal husbandry.

By working with the Sector Skills Councils, Deeside College is committed to increasing training opportunities in this new and promising sector of the 'Green Economy' which in turn will improve the knowledge or understanding of company's existing workforce and be able to provide tailored support to jobseekers to enable long term benefit to individuals and the local economy. However Further Education is limited in the number of places it can offer each year in both full time and work based learning.

### **Impact of Consumer attitudes**

- **Leading by example**
  - Deeside College was the first educational establishment in Wales to achieve the Green Dragon award at Level 5 and by successfully retaining the accreditation the College is still the

only educational establishment in Wales to hold Level 5 status and one of only seventeen businesses from all sectors across Wales to have achieved the highest possible level. This knowledge and support could be passed onto local businesses.

- **Driving Economic Growth**

- Deeside College is an independent corporation providing an education and training service for the Welsh Assembly Government, local business and commerce with over 20,000 enrolments per year. This places Deeside College in a prime position to aid in driving the local economic growth forward by working closely with local businesses and responding to the recession to enhance the economic performance of Wales.

## **Conclusion**

Deeside College is committed to promoting the green agenda and providing outstanding training across a broad range of sectors. By working with learners, employers, staff and the wider community, we can embed the principles of sustainability into all courses and aspects of college life.

The College offers skills training across a broad range of curriculum areas to support the green economy for the future. By working with employers we can also ensure the workforce of today have the skills and knowledge to apply technologies and practices to reduce the carbon footprint of the economy.