

Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee

Visit to Chirton Engineering Ltd 16 September 2015

Present: North Tyneside Council
Councillor Joan Walker – Deputy Chair
Councillor Tommy Mulvenna
Councillor Paul Mason
Councillor David McMeekan
Jamie Clark, Young Cabinet Member for Ready for Work & Life
Anne Taylor, Youth Participation Officer
Shona Duncan, Principal Manager, Employment and Skills
John Angus, Business Development Officer
Michael Robson, Democratic Services
Chirton Engineering
Michael Moore, Business Development Manager
Ryan Tweddle
Nathan Allen
Charlotte Brass

Chirton Engineering:

- specialises in precision engineering components, dealing particularly in the fields of offshore oil & gas manufacturing (80%) and also customers such as McClaren cars;
- began 10 years ago with four employees and now employs 75 staff, including 2/3 apprentices;
- moved to a larger 46,000sqft factory in April 2015 at Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate (former Grange Kitchens);
- significant investment in premises and machinery;
- is committed to an in house training programme where existing employees can pass on the skills and knowledge that they have to our apprentices.
- clearly a good employer, committed to building positive relationships with schools and colleges to provide training opportunities and to identify and nurture young people with the required skills.

North East Machine Academy (NEMA)

- Chirton Engineering have constructed facilities within their premises for a 50 place engineering training facility for young people.
- A specific Diploma qualification has been developed for trainees
- The opening of the facility is on hold due to funding not being released.
- £65,000 investment has been pledged by other companies
- alternative funding is being sought.

Apprentice A

- Former pupil at Whitley Bay High School
- unsuccessful in pursuing a career in the Royal Navy
- engineering teacher at school had given encouragement to secure an engineering apprenticeship.

- Apprenticeship at Chirton obtained having attended an event at St James's Park about interviewing techniques when representatives from Chirton Engineering had been impressed.
- completed first year of apprenticeship
- working toward Level 3 qualification, with option to progress to HNC and HND but would have to part fund.

Apprentice B

- former pupil of Burnside College
- apprenticeships were never mentioned as an alternative to either entering the 6th form or entering college.
- University presented as the best option for securing employment.
- When at TyneMet, had visited Chirton Engineering and had taken up an offer of work experience which had led to securing an apprenticeship
- completed 2 years of his apprenticeship

Apprentice C

- attended Walbottle High School where completed a GCSE in Engineering in final two years.
- Had sought a career in electrical engineering and had gained experience at various employers including the Rolls Royce Academy.