

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Education, Children and Adult Services Committee
8 October 2015

Agenda Item	3.
Report No	ECAS 79/15

Achievement Awards

Report by Chief Executive of High Life Highland

Summary

This report summarises the range of achievement awards available in the area for young people. At the Committee, High Life Highland will provide an overview of its work in this area and two young people who are undertaking their Gold Youth Achievement Awards will summarise how they have benefited from their participation in them.

1. Achievement Awards

- 1.1 High Life Highland (HLH) delivers and supports the delivery of a range of achievement awards (**Appendix A** contains further detail on each award):
- i. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE);
 - ii. Youth Achievement Awards;
 - iii. Dynamic Youth Awards;
 - iv. HLH Leadership Award;
 - v. Saltire Awards;
 - vi. John Muir Award;
 - vii. Lord Lieutenant's Award for Young People; and
 - viii. Young Scot Rewards.

2. The Place of Achievement Awards

- 2.1 HLH youth work staff are using achievement awards as one way of structuring their support to young people in need as a contribution to the prevention agenda. Recognising learners' achievements increases self-esteem, improves motivation and engages young people in learning. Achievement awards encourage young people to reflect on their learning and help them to consider how to apply the skills gained in other contexts. **Appendix B** contains some case studies to provide examples of the impacts that participation in achievement awards can have.
- 2.2 Recognising achievement has become a part of the Curriculum for Excellence and there has been an increased use of achievement awards by schools with support often being provided by youth work staff. Achievement awards therefore make up a part of the "accreditation" which some young people leave school with.
- 2.3 Achievement awards, and DofE in particular are highly valued by universities and employers with the gold award being valued alongside formal academic qualifications:

"Whilst academic achievement remains a core element of our entry criteria,

the university is placing increased emphasis on applicants' wider achievements.... applicants to all courses are expected to demonstrate ... a commitment to the principles of Curriculum for Excellence, through involvement in community projects, charity work, part-time jobs, personal development programmes (such as Duke of Edinburgh Awards) etc."

Professor Frank Cotton, vice principal for learning and teaching at Glasgow University quoted in The Scotsman by Tom Peterkin, 27 March 2013.

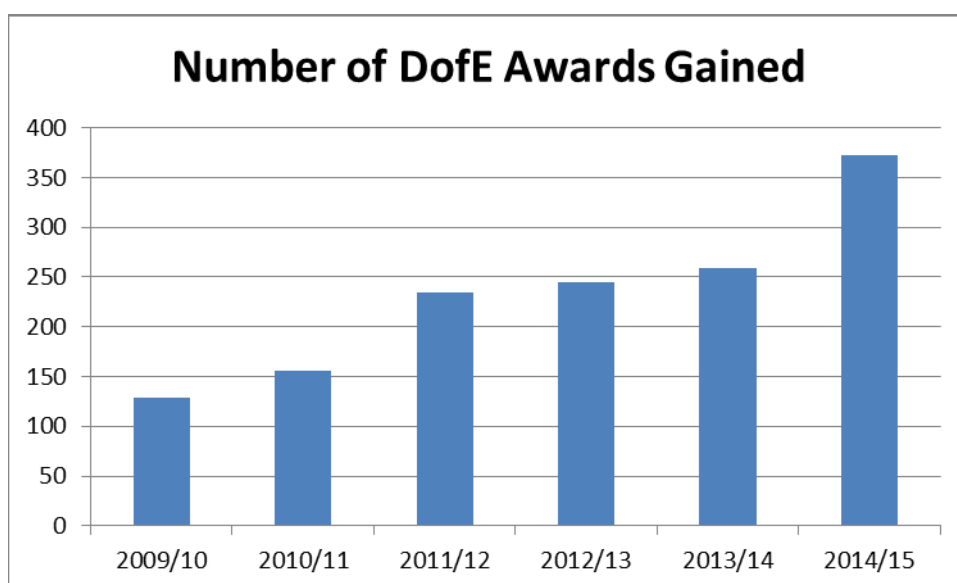
3. Award Structures

- 3.1 Recognising that every young person is different, the HLH approach to achievement awards is to make available a range of types of award and to help the young person choose the award(s) best suited to them.
- 3.2 HLH's role varies for the different award schemes. The DofE Award and Youth Achievement/Dynamic Youth Awards are quality assured by the national organisations responsible for them. HLH operates the DofE licence on behalf of the Council; and is directly licenced to manage and deliver Youth Achievement Awards. DofE in particular requires a range of partners for it to be delivered successfully and relies heavily on schools and school volunteers with HLH providing operational guidance; training for volunteers and quality assurance of awards.
- 3.3 Youth Achievement/Dynamic Youth Awards; Saltire Awards; the John Muir Award; Recognition Awards; and Young Scot Rewards are all delivered directly by HLH youth work staff. There are other providers of these awards in Highland such as school staff; voluntary youth groups and youth agencies.
- 3.4 The HLH Leadership Award has been developed by HLH's Active Schools staff and offers six levels of awards that recognise a young person's level of commitment to leading a range of activities in sport and youth work.
- 3.5 Having a wide range of awards means that HLH staff can support and tailor awards programmes for young people and it also encourages young people to take ownership of their own learning.

4. Award Delivery

- 4.1 HLH youth work staff are increasingly using achievement awards to support young people in need and young people who might leave school with fewer academic qualifications than their peers. The awards are often key to the development of skills such as increased self-esteem, improved motivation; and engagement in learning generally.
- 4.2 The DofE Award requires input from a range of partners to deliver it. HLH supports a local charity, the Highland Award Partnership, which monitors local activity and raises funds to assist volunteers to run DofE. DofE Scotland has a Development Officer for the North of Scotland who assists with guidance; training and quality assurance.

- 4.3 The number of young people gaining DofE awards in Highland has grown as can be seen in the graph below.



- 4.4 Last Year (in addition to DofE) HLH youth work staff were involved in supporting young people to complete a total of 698 awards as can be seen in the table below. As HLH and the Council place a greater emphasis on supporting young people in need (as a contribution to the prevention agenda) HLH has set a target of delivering 800 achievement awards in 2015/16.

Youth Achievement Awards Gained						
	DYA	YAA	John Muir	Saltire	Other*	TOTAL
2012/13	64	48	41	244	97	571
2013/14	60	39	58	321	94	495
2014/15	55	32	91	480	40	698

*e.g. ASDAN; Youth Scotland - Involvement Training; and “Bored” Meeting training.

5. Future Developments

- 5.1 The renewed focus on achievement awards brought about by the need to target resources to support the prevention agenda and the delivery of the curriculum for excellence means that HLH staff have built the following into the Youth Work Operational Plan for 2015/16:
- i. a target for increasing the number of awards delivered through youth work staff to 800 in 2015/16 (in addition to DofE);
 - ii. a focus on the Duke of Edinburgh and Youth Achievement Awards because they are nationally accredited/moderated;
 - iii. devolving some of the tasks associated with Youth Achievement Awards to local staff to improve efficiency and effectiveness such as developing “participation units”, local staff directly tracking participant progress as various elements of awards are met, ensuring that the award is quality assured to meet national standards and maintenance of accurate

- performance reporting; and
- iv. increased training of local staff and volunteers in the delivery of Youth Achievement Awards and implementing a peer assessment/moderation approach to ensure that they meet national standards.

6. Implications

- 6.1 There are no resource, legal, equalities, climate change/carbon clever, risk, rural or Gaelic implications arising from this report.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 It is recommended that Members:
- i. note the range and content of the various awards; and
 - ii. note and comment on the presentation and the benefits for young people participating in achievement awards.

Designation: Chief Executive of High Life Highland

Date: 15 September 2015

Appendix A Achievement Awards – Summary Descriptions

The Duke of Edinburgh Award

The Duke of Edinburgh Award is operated under license which HLH holds on behalf of THC. There are 34 Duke of Edinburgh Award centres in Highland which are supported by 160 volunteers who support young people to achieve the award and supervise expeditions. There are four components to the award: skill; physical; volunteering and residential. Within the Highland area award is also offered by other organisations such as Scouts; Guides; Boys Brigade and Girl's Brigade.

Youth Achievement Awards and Dynamic Youth Awards

Both of these awards are operated under a license from Youth Scotland and HLH's Youth Work team administer and manage the delivery of them. They are flexible and can be incorporated into youth work and school programmes with young people being encouraged to self-assess and then peer assess each other's achievements. Dynamic Youth Awards are for ten to fourteen year olds with Youth Achievement Awards being for fourteen to twenty five year olds.

The Youth Achievement Awards are recognised by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) as follows:

SCQF Level	Youth Achievement Awards	SQA Qualifications	Higher Education	SVQ
9			Ordinary Degree	SVQ 4
8			HND	
7	Platinum (16*)	Advanced Higher (32)	HNC	SVQ 3
6	Gold (14)	Higher (24)		
5	Silver (11)	Credit Standard Grade (24)		SVQ 2
4	Bronze (7)	General Standard Grade (24)		SVQ 1
3		Foundation Standard Grade (24)		

(*Indicates credit points for the volume of learning undertaken to achieve the qualification.

HLH Leadership Award

The Leadership Programme offers a selection of awards from High Life Highland using existing courses from Sports Leaders UK, National Governing Bodies for sport and Youth Work. There are six levels to the awards which develop the experiences of leadership in both school and community settings. The Leadership Programme is

open to young people under the age of 25, and while underpinned by leadership in sport and youth work, the awards can be used by young people volunteering in various settings.

Saltire Awards

Saltire Awards are a way of recognising volunteering for 12 - 25 year olds and includes four levels of time commitment:

Challenge - a day event;

Approach - 10 and 25hrs;

Ascent - 50, 100, 200 and 500hrs

Summit - completed the "Ascent" but have exceeded expectations

John Muir Award

The John Muir Award is an environmental award focused on wild places. It encourages awareness and responsibility for the natural environment through fun and adventurous exploration. The award is the educational initiative of the John Muir Trust. There are three levels:

- Discovery Award (introductory level) minimum 4 days (or equivalent);
- Explorer Award (intermediate level) minimum 8 days (or equivalent); and
- Conserver Award (advanced level) minimum 20 days (or equivalent) over 6 months.

Within each level there are four Challenges: Discover - Explore - Conserve - Share. The award requires a structured approach that involves coordinating the participants to plan what they are going to do and seeking local information and advice including any permission required for outdoor access.

Lord Lieutenant's Award for Young People

In 2013 HLH was invited to be part of a working group led by the Lord Lieutenant for Ross and Cromarty (also includes Skye and Lochalsh) to develop a Lord Lieutenants Award for Young People. The Award has been established and there have been 165 young people who have had their achievements recognised through it.

Young Scot Rewards

Young Scot Rewards are reward points. They play a part in encouraging young people to participate in a range of activities which will benefit their personal and professional development. The scheme operates through an online portal where young people can redeem vouchers, which can be used for "money can't buy experiences" rewards that improve health and well-being; contribute to their community and enable unique work experiences.

Participation opportunities include volunteering, contributing to consultations or participating in opportunities around sport, health, arts and the environment. They participants are able to use points gained to access exclusive offers and special deals which include the chance to shadow Michelin starred chef Andrew Fairlie at Gleneagles Hotel, get free driving lessons with BSM and swim with sharks at Deep Sea World.

DofE and Additional Support Needs

HLH Youth Work staff worked with Nansen Highland (a voluntary organisation based in Easter Ross which provides training for adults with learning and associated disabilities) to deliver DofE for young people with disabilities.

The achievements of the group exceeded those expected by the staff at Nansen, the parents and more particularly the young women involved. They all completed their Expedition section which was the most challenging part for them and are all working hard towards their other sections.

Dieter Devriendt, support worker at Nansen said *“They have come a long way since starting the DofE; especially the Expedition part has made a big impact. Some of them had never camped before and they were excited and very nervous at the same time, but by supporting each other they all made it till the end. Learning how to set up a tent and being able to do this independently was a big achievement for the girls. Another highlight was that each one of them had the chance to lead the group by using a photomap and after some hesitation, they did this brilliantly. But the biggest achievement of all was that the 4 girls became good friends during the preparation, the practise and the real expedition. The DofE experience has given each one of them loads of needed confidence and positivism to continue learning different social, independence and life skills”.*

Saltire Award

A was involved in a football coaching project in Acharacle and Strontian. Over the course of two years A delivered football training sessions at youth clubs in Ardnamurchan. In addition, he provided additional tuition in Maths and Physics to various young people in his peer group and this was recognised through him gaining a Saltire Award. A's father stated that the increased social skills he has gained through his volunteering roles has improved his chances of gaining a place at college. His youth worker has noticed that A now enjoys passing on his skills and knowledge to others and through that he has become more able to empathise with others.

DofE; Youth Achievement Award and Saltire Award

B started working with her youth worker and gained recognition of her volunteering at the Smithton & Culloden Youth Club through the Saltire Awards. These volunteering hours also formed the basis of the 4 challenges B needed to complete her Bronze

Youth Achievement Award, which gained her seven credit points at SCQF level 4 (general standard grade – credit points 24).

The final challenge of her YAA allowed B to develop the volunteering section of her DofE programme by being a peer mentor to a youth club member with additional support needs allowing her to complete her Bronze DofE award with the Inverness Open Group.

Youth Achievement Award

A youth work member of staff was working with a young person who was quiet, didn't engage well and was a "loner". He was encouraged to take on a Youth Achievement Award but felt it was not for him but agreed to have a go anyway.

When the group he was with started working on a project for Young Scot he became involved in the film development aspect of it but was not comfortable working out-with the school environment and did not wish to attend the over-night stay. The flexible approach encouraged as part of the award allowed the youth work member of staff to work around those two limitations and he eventually completed the award.

In spite of the early challenges he later went on to complete the silver YAA and as a result of some of the work he was involved in he was nominated for an award that led to an invite to the BBC studio in Glasgow. He now has a sessional post as an Assistant Youth Worker for HLH.

His Youth Worker said - "he has been on an incredible journey and his confidence had soared."

DofE for additional needs

A young person with complex additional needs was struggling to complete her DofE expedition and the DofE licence manager and HLH DofE Development Officer worked with her, her teacher and school peers to consider what could be done to allow her to participate in the award. As part of the flexible approach of DofE the HLH youth work member of staff was able to approve the following variations:

- other young people who had previously completed their Bronze expedition agreed to accompany the young person and support her where necessary;
- the young person was allowed to carry a small day sack and receive support in the carrying of other equipment by her peers; and
- the young person was allowed to use a basic camp site (DofE normally involves "wild" camping) and her peers assisted in the preparation and cooking of her meal.