

**19<sup>th</sup> November 2013****Agenda Item: 4****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, POLICY, PLANNING AND  
CORPORATE SERVICES****SUPPORTING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT****Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider proposals for the allocation of the £158,000 that remains from the budget set aside by the Council in February 2013 to support the delivery of the Youth Employment Strategy. This includes:
  - endorsing the proposals for the commissioning of activity to meet the objectives set out in this report; and
  - delegating the authority to commission this activity to the Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services in consultation with the Chair of Economic Development Committee.

**Information and Advice**

2. In February 2013, Policy Committee approved the following objective to support young people into employment:

*The establishment of a £500,000 programme of investment to support the delivery of a Nottinghamshire Youth Employment Strategy aimed at increasing young people's access to employment opportunities through the development of employability skills and more effective employer engagement.*

This was subsequently approved by Full Council in the budget meeting of February 2013.

3. Committee has expressed an intention to increase apprenticeship opportunities and take-up around the County as the main focus of this investment. It is proposed that this will be achieved by funding activities under the following 4 broad headings:
  - Differentiated incentive payments to employers to encourage new apprenticeships with a particular focus on sustainable job outcomes;
  - Promotion of apprenticeships to young people in school;
  - Promotion of apprenticeships to businesses; and
  - Preparation of young people for apprenticeships.
4. These activities meet the objective set out in the Nottinghamshire Growth Plan, under the theme of Aspiration and Talent:

*“Increase the competitiveness of Nottinghamshire by creating the conditions to grow an increasingly skilled and productive workforce.”*

5. In October 2013, Committee approved the following proposals:

- the delivery of a £342,000 County Apprenticeship Project; and
- to delegate authority for the Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services in consultation with the Chair of Committee to enter into a contract with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Futures to deliver the proposals.

6. This has resulted in £158,000 remaining unallocated at this stage. Committee approved recommendations to undertake further work to ascertain where gaps in addressing youth unemployment exist and how best these could be met through the County Council's investment.

## **Proposal**

7. In order to ensure that best value be achieved for the investment of these funds, it is proposed that the Council invites tenders for the delivery of the project work. This process will also enable professional organisations working within the complex area of employment and skills to be able to devise the most appropriate vehicle(s) for delivery, as they are best placed to do this.

8. As the County Apprenticeship Project, which is being delivered by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Futures, will primarily address the need for additional apprenticeship placements within the County and the promotion of these to Nottinghamshire businesses, it is proposed that the remaining funds be focussed on the objectives of:

- Promotion of apprenticeships to young people in school; and
- Preparation of young people for apprenticeships;
- Up-skilling young people in growth sectors, aligned to those of the D2N2 LEP (i.e. advanced manufacturing, low carbon energy, food and drink, visitor economy, construction)

Activities will be commissioned which include targets for young learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD).

9. It is also proposed that the successful project will deliver services that link with the County Apprenticeship Project and complement projects which are being delivered by the Council's established internal services (e.g. iWorks; Skills for Employment).

## **Outcomes & Outputs**

10. The project will deliver a range of outcomes linked directly to the objectives set out earlier in this report and those outcomes already approved through the emerging contract with Futures for the County Apprenticeship Project. New outcomes to be addressed by the remaining funding are as follows:

- An improved transition into apprenticeship opportunities for young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET);
- An increased awareness within Nottinghamshire schools of the benefits of apprenticeships

11. Outputs will be devised to inform the development of the tender specification, but are likely to include:

- Increased conversion rates of NEET young people into apprenticeships;
- Increased participation in apprenticeships of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- Increased participation of young people in apprenticeships in identified growth sectors;
- Increased proportion of young people moving from school into an apprenticeship.

12. It is proposed that potential delivery organisations are invited to detail the activities which will deliver these outputs within their tender responses.

### **Performance management and evaluation**

13. The project will be contract managed by the Council's Economic Development team, with an external evaluation built into the programme.

14. A progress report will be presented to this Committee, after the first 12 months of the project have been delivered.

### **Reason for Recommendations**

15. The Committee is required to approve a proposal for inviting tenders to meet the objectives outlined in this report.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

17. The project will be delivered over the 2013/14 to 2015/16 financial years and will be fully funded from the £158,000 remaining budget for youth employment. In order to meet the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations and EU procurement rules, an Office of the Journal of the European Union (OJEU) compliant tender exercise will be run.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

18. That Committee approves delegated authority for the Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services in consultation with the Chair of Committee to commission activity which meets the objectives set out in this report.

**Report of the Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services – Jayne Francis Ward**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: James Mann - extn 72686**

**Constitutional Comments (NAB 08.11.13)**

The Economic Development Committee has authority to approve the recommendation set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

**Financial Comments (SEM 08.11.13)**

The financial implications are set out in the report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Nottinghamshire Youth Employment Strategy and presentation to Economic Development Committee, 28-03-2013

Apprenticeship Update – report to the Economic Development Committee, 09-07-2013

County Apprenticeship Project – report to Economic Development Committee, 17-10-2013

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All