

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**SUPPORTING NOTTINGHAMSHIRE YOUNG PEOPLE AS THEY MAKE
KEY CHOICES ABOUT THEIR FUTURE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to develop a suite online resources and jointly sponsor a Nottinghamshire virtual careers fair to showcase options for young people, by March 2021.

Information

2. Employment and skills are a cornerstone of the Council Plan 'Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future' which is focused on increasing the number of jobs within the economy and ensuring that businesses can access the skilled workers they need, both now and in the future. Specific reference is made to working in partnership with skills and employment practitioners to ensure people can acquire the skills and qualifications they need to build a rewarding life and career.
3. With people's job prospects and living standards suffering under COVID-19 the role of the Council in supporting the local economy has never been so critical. The Council puts children and young people at the heart of everything it does and sets great store on its role in achieving better and consistently good outcomes with its range of existing support.

The Nottinghamshire County Council Approach

4. For over a decade, the Nottinghamshire Outstanding Achievement 4Uth Award has recognised young people who have achieved a great deal and pushed their personal boundaries, whatever they are. It is a County Council initiative to celebrate the achievements of young people across the county. The 2020 awards will recognise young people in Nottinghamshire who have responded positively to the impact of COVID-19, and the actions they have taken to support themselves, their friends, family or their community.
5. The Council are committed to engaging young people to consider the career options available to them in local government and the wider public sector. As a large employer for the public sector the Council offers short term, unpaid, work experience opportunities in support of its aspiration to be an exemplar of good employment practice through encouraging people back into the workplace. The Workforce and Organisational Development team are currently developing a range of virtual work experience packages to ensure that young people continue to have the opportunity to learn about career options available to them within local authority.
6. It is already recognised that young people will be disproportionately impacted by the changes in the job market as a result of the COVID pandemic and the need for the Council

to take a leadership role in creating new opportunities for young people, particularly those who have left care, have a disability or who are from an ethnic minority currently under-represented in the Council's or wider local workforce. Personnel Committee will consider a report on 20 January which seeks approval for the Council to become a Gateway employer under the Kickstart programme. The report also seeks to celebrate the various graduate trainee cohorts demonstrating two very different aspects of the Council's offer to promote employment opportunities for young people. This fits within the wider programme of work experience, supported interns, the Leonard Cheshire Change 100 programme, apprenticeships as well as graduate traineeships to create an offer which meets the differing needs of our young people.

7. The Council makes a significant contribution to promoting jobs and growth in the local economy through high-quality apprenticeship and graduate schemes. In providing apprenticeships and offering training opportunities for young people, the Council is showing the difference local leadership can make to people's lives and their futures and is leading the way in prioritising jobs and opportunities for young people. Creative use of the apprenticeship levy is providing further opportunities for young people to achieve a qualification in areas not traditionally part of the employment offer in the Council.

The Nottinghamshire County Council COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan 2020-2022

8. Nottinghamshire County Council places importance on developing a culture of aspiration and high achievement and supporting those who are not yet achieving their full potential, for whatever reason. The Council wants all children to have the same opportunities and life chances, and to be provided with the skills to help create the right conditions for a strong local economy. As detailed in Nottinghamshire County Council's COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan 2020-2022, actions to tackle the potential burgeoning youth unemployment is vital to ensure that young people are receiving crucial careers support.
9. Supporting young people as they make key choices about their futures is more important than ever in light of the current pandemic. It was for this reason at its 16 July 2020 meeting, the COVID-19 Resilience, Recovery and Renewal Committee approved the creation of an employment and skills portal. The aim being to make things a little easier by bringing together all the information needed in relation to training, employment and skills and putting it in one place. The portal is accessible online at:
<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/jobs-and-working/employment-and-skills-portal>
10. Gatsby Benchmarks are the foundation of the Careers Strategy, a statutory requirement for secondary schools and colleges. The Gatsby Benchmarks are a framework of eight guidelines that define excellent career guidance, which the Department for Education (DfE) expected schools and colleges to meet by the end of 2020. The benchmarks are not a statutory framework but by adopting them, schools can be confident that they are fulfilling their legal duties. In other words, the benchmarks will help schools measure and improve their career provision.
11. With the recent closure of classrooms, research shows that the education gap is widening. The cancellation of work experience placements means that young people are missing out on developing fundamental workplace skills. It is therefore important that we find innovative ways to give young people the support they need to keep on learning and thriving and provide an awareness of the workplace and opportunities available to them.

12. The Council part funds two enterprise co-ordinators in Nottinghamshire and works in partnership with the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) to ensure all secondary students in Nottinghamshire experience at least four meaningful employer encounters throughout the lifetime of the programme. This action helps increase students' knowledge about careers opportunities and how to access them.
13. Despite lockdown, there has been significant progress in the CEC Co-ordinators and Nottinghamshire Enterprise Adviser Network. Three salient points merit reference:
- maintained contact with all our schools
 - organised online network events for Careers leaders, for Enterprise Advisers and for interested groups to promote making encounters with employers meaningful
 - New Enterprise Advisers signed up and matched with schools following: training, on-boarding and disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks.
14. To respond to the needs of young people, school and business, it is proposed that officers collaborate with the Enterprise Co-ordinators, our jointly-owned social enterprise Futures Advice, Skills and Employment and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), to develop a suite of virtual and online resources and jointly sponsor a virtual careers fair.
15. In lieu of a physical event due to COVID-19, the proposed virtual careers fair will take place on social media, with Nottinghamshire County Council's Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn pages set to feature regular posts. Young people who are starting to look at their future career and further and higher education options, will be encouraged to register and come along, ask questions and find out more about what their future may hold. The initiative will be promoted via schools, academies and other educational establishments, as well as via the participating employers and organisations.
16. Subject to member approval, this would be the first virtual careers fair the Council will have organised during the COVID-19 lockdown. Job vacancies and current opportunities will be posted in partnership with DWP. There will be a range of helpful information about services, such as the Government's "Jobs Help" campaign, further details of which can be accessed online at: <https://jobhelp.campaign.gov.uk/>. The virtual careers fair will create a positive buzz to show that businesses are still seeking student and graduate talent despite the challenges of coronavirus and will:
- provide information on study and progression routes, labour market information and access to employers
 - provide an opportunity for employers and recruiters to engage with Nottinghamshire schools and students
 - help schools achieve Gatsby Benchmarks 5 (encounters with employers and employees) and 6 (experience of workplaces), through interactive careers information.
17. The Enterprise Co-ordinators have undertaken research with schools, receiving 55 responses. There was unanimous support for an event. Having canvassed opinion, feedback has settled on what the virtual careers fair could look like:
- Pre-recorded/able to re-visit or replicate
 - Range of post-16 providers
 - Employer interaction - opportunity to ask questions via a panel model
 - Information for students with education, health and care plans (EHC plans) and special educational needs

- Talks from employers, Further Education/Higher Education providers and apprenticeships (including Higher and Degree)
- A good cross section of career areas represented
- Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) representation
- Ability for students to follow up later
- Special education needs and disabilities (SEND) matters - make this an opportunity to promote SEND careers.

18. A small-scale pilot is being explored to test the functionality of the agreed platform, interaction between employers and schools, and delivery methods.

Other Options Considered

19. Supporting young people to understand the world of work and the opportunities available to them in Nottinghamshire is critical to growth as we seek to both recover from the impact of COVID-19 and confront the challenges of the future. Given the many and significant challenges facing young people, the 'do-nothing' option was discounted.

Reason for Recommendation

20. The proposed suite of virtual and online resources, coupled with a virtual careers fair, supports both the Council Plan 2017- 2021 and the COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan 2020 to 2022 objectives. They will provide practical support and guidance for young people of Nottinghamshire who have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Statutory and Policy Implications

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment 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

22. In collaboration with Futures, the programme can be delivered within a maximum budget of up to £10,000. Subject to member approval, the cost can be met by the 2020-2021 Growth and Economic Development initiatives budget.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Policy Committee:

- 1) Approve the allocation of up to £10,000 from 2020-21 Growth and Economic Development initiatives budget to support the development and promotion of a suite of online resources and jointly sponsor a virtual careers fair for Nottinghamshire young people.

COUNCILLOR MRS KAY CUTTS MBE
Leader of the Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Nicola McCoy-Brown, Growth and Economic Development ext. 72580

Constitutional Comments (EP 14/12/2020)

23. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Policy Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (RWK 14/12/2020)

24. The report proposes that a sum of up to £10,000 be allocated from the 2020-21 Growth and Economic Development initiatives budget to support the development of suite of virtual and on-line resources and a virtual careers fair for Nottinghamshire. The committee's 2020-21 revenue budget includes an allocation of £515,036 for the Growth and Economic Development initiatives budget.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- *COVID-19 Crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan 2020 to 2022*, accessible online via: <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/policy-library/78888/covid-19-crisis-economic-recovery-action-plan-2020-to-2022>
- *Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Economic Recovery Framework*, report to COVID-19 Resilience, Recovery and Renewal Committee, published on 16 July 2020
- *Careers Provision for Young People Entering the World of Work*, report to Policy Committee, published 18 March 2020
<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/4283/Committee/515/Default.aspx>
- *Enterprise Advisor Network*, Report to Policy Committee, published 12 September 2018
<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/4129/Committee/515/Default.aspx>

Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All