

11<sup>th</sup> February 2014

**Agenda Item: 5**

## **REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, POLICY, PLANNING AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

### **SUPPORTING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To agree 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.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. In October 2013, Committee approved a proposal to deliver a new County Apprenticeship Project with Nottinghamshire Futures with a value of £342,000. This was out of a total allocation of £500,000 towards youth employment activity which was agreed by Council in February 2013.
3. £158,000 of this youth employment allocation remains and Committee requested that further work be undertaken to ascertain where gaps in addressing youth unemployment exist and how best these could be met through the County Council's investment.
4. A report was brought to Economic Development Committee in November 2013 discussing the unallocated funding and it was resolved that
  - further detail in respect of the tender requirements and outputs related to the contract is considered at a future meeting;
  - delegated authority be granted to the Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to commission activity which meets the objectives set out in this report

#### **Background research**

5. Significant research has been undertaken to understand where gaps in provision remain and how these funds can complement the delivery of the 'mainstream' County Apprenticeship Project. Research has confirmed that the outstanding gaps in provision exist in supporting learners from two groups:
  - Young learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)
  - Young people who are Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET)

6. These two client groups can be looked at as one cohort with a range of challenges e.g. LLDD, 'looked after children', children in social care.
7. In considering how these two client groups can be best supported, examples of local and national good practice have been reviewed – for example, in July 2012 a partnership led by Nottinghamshire County Council secured funding of £20,000 from the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) to develop supported employment placements for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in Ashfield and Mansfield. Partners were Skills for Employment, Futures, Bracken Hill School, Portland College and Vision West Notts. Employers for the pilot were the Linney Group and the Belfry Hotel.
8. The pilot proved a success with many positive outcomes e.g. two ongoing paid internships with the Linney Group. Case studies from an independent evaluation of the pilot are available with this report at Appendix A.
9. This pilot activity has created a strong partnership in Ashfield and Mansfield which could form the foundation for a countywide approach to supporting young people from these groups into paid employment. It uses the skills and experience of internal County Council services and partners to deliver high quality interventions which have a positive impact on outcome rates

## **Proposal**

10. It is proposed that the LSIS pilot should be used as the basis for the Council's investment in supporting the employability of young people from the LLDD and/or NEET cohorts. This would mean an internal arrangement with the Skills for Employment team, which will be managed through a Service Level Agreement, rather than open commissioning.
11. The Mansfield/Ashfield partnership is well established and constitutes a model that could be built upon and replicated. Initial suggestions for two additional partnerships would be:
  - Broxtowe/Gedling – Central College, Skills for Employment (Stapleford), Foxwood Special School, Portland College. Portland College already have established links.
  - North Nottinghamshire – North Notts College, Landmark Specialist College, St. Giles Special School, Skills for Employment
12. The creation of new partnership infrastructure and management of this wider activity will require in-house resource. Indicative costs are:
  - 0.5 FTE post to coordinate and establish two new partnerships, this is estimated to be circa £72,300 over two years + on costs (NCC post)
  - Systematic Induction Training (SIT) for Job Coaches approximately £12,000
  - Employer incentives - £15,000
  - Transport during the work experience phase - £10,000
  - Job coach costs - £40,200
  - Contingency - £4,000
  - Evaluation - £4,500

**Total - £158,000**

13. Using the remaining youth employment funds in this way means that new infrastructure is developed to support the identified groups of young people. Sustaining this activity may be possible through new European Funds, which, as Members are aware, will be available from late 2014 or early 2015. The European Social Fund (ESF) would be an appropriate vehicle to be considered for the further sustainability and expansion of these models following the County Council's initial support.

## **Outcomes & Outputs**

14. It is anticipated that over a two year period, outputs would be:

- 30 learners would benefit from four weeks of work experience
- The majority of these learners would progress into a 'Supported Internship' of 6 months
- A sub set of these learners would progress to an extended 'Supported Internship' of a further 6 months
- A cohort of these learners would move into paid employment, it is estimated that this would be a minimum of 15 learners.

15. It is recommended that an employer incentive of up to £1,000 is made available to those employers who offer one of the learners a permanent paid role. The incentive would be to support the continued professional development of the learner and would be agreed with due regard to the size of the company concerned (i.e. a smaller company may attract a higher incentive).

16. A progress report will be presented to this Committee after the first 12 months of the project have been delivered. An independent evaluation will be commissioned during year two of the delivery of the project, which will inform future development and possible funding through the European Social Fund.

## **Reason for Recommendations**

17. Committee requested further options in terms of the allocation of £158,000 of resources for youth employment activity that was not allocated through previous resolutions.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

18. 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**

19. 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, as outlined in paragraph 12.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

20. That Committee approves:

- (a) the proposal to deliver youth employment support through the remaining budget as outlined in this report; and
- (b) delegated authority for the Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services in consultation with the Chair of Committee to enter into an internal Service Level Agreement to deliver the activities as outlined.

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

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Fiona Anderson - extn 72688**

### **Constitutional Comments (NAB 28.01.14)**

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

### **Financial Comments (SEM 29/01/14)**

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

Supporting Youth Employment, - report to Economic Development Committee, November 2013

LSIS: Phase 2 Support and Aspiration, the Nottinghamshire Cluster, Evaluation Report 31-07-13

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

All