

**28<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

**Agenda Item: 5**

**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE  
SUPPORTING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROVISION**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on the progress of four projects funded from the Supporting Youth Employment reserve, including further detail on the additional provision delivered from the budget.

**Background**

2. £500,000 from the County Council Reserves was allocated to Supporting Youth Employment projects, to be delivered from April 2014 to March 2017. The funds were allocated as follows:
  - £342,000 to increasing SME take-up of apprenticeships, and;
  - £158,000 to supporting the employability of young people who are LLDD (Learners with Learning Difficulties & Disabilities) or NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)
3. In January 2015 and July 2016, Committee agreed to allow more flexible use of the allocated funding to support youth employment, and the development of two targeted initiatives to support specific skills gaps areas in the creative and digital sectors.
4. The contracted delivery partners are Futures advice, Skills and Employment for the apprenticeship provision, and Skills for Employment (now part of Inspire - Culture Learning and Libraries) for the LLDD and NEET employability provision. Negotiation with these partners has enabled delivery of broader provision without additional procurement costs or loss of contract value.

**Information and Advice**

5. In Nottinghamshire and Nottingham we have a very strong employer-led Skills and Employment Board (N2 SEB). Companies in sector groups come together to work with public sector partners on resolving specific skill shortage issues.
6. There has been a particularly strong partnership response to skills gaps in two sectors: the creative and digital sector and the health and social care sector. Partners in these two sectors have worked together to develop a number of initiatives which will raise awareness and

interest amongst young people, but which require funding. Flexibility and efficiency in the original projects has enabled further provision to be delivered.

7. The updated budget allocation for all Supporting Youth Employment provision is as follows;

Contracted with Futures Advice, Skills and Employment Company:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Say Yes to an Apprentice Grant programme	£294,670.00
Creative Apprenticeship Grant programme	£27,000.00
County Skills Shows (£10,000 per show)	£20,000.00
HSC employer handbook	£330.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£342,000.00</b>

Contracted with Inspire Skills for Employment:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Engage2Employ employment support programme (LLDD and NEET young people)	£128,000.00
Digital Traineeships programme	£30,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£158,000.00</b>

## **Update on progress**

### Project 1: Say Yes to an Apprentice Grant Programme

8. The Say Yes to an Apprentice project has raised the awareness amongst SMEs of the benefits of apprenticeships to their business, and provided an incentive grant (payable in 3 stages) to SMEs who have taken on their first apprentice.

8.1. The original target was 166 new apprenticeships (later revised to 176). In detail the numbers of young people and businesses supported are;

Number of young people supported to take up an apprenticeship	176
Number of SMEs taking on their first apprentice under the scheme	149
Number of SMEs taking on a second apprentice under the scheme	27
Percentage of apprentices retained after completing their apprenticeship (confirmed by employer to February 2017)	83%
Number of apprentices reported left the programme before completing their apprenticeship	44
Percentage of completed apprenticeships (58) where employer paid the Living Wage or above (Living Wage Foundation; £8.45)	36.2%

8.2. Of the young people leaving their apprenticeship early, most have left within the first 6 months, with a smaller number leaving between 6 and 12 months.

- 8.3. Where young people have left their apprenticeship before all 3 grant payments have been made, the remaining grant funding has been used to create additional apprenticeship places, either with the same employer or a new one.
- 8.4. Any outstanding grants will continue to be paid by Futures into the next financial year, for those apprenticeships which started after September 2015.
- 8.5. Futures have also estimated that at least a further 30 new apprenticeship places can be supported from the original grant funding allocation, which will create a new total of 206 young people supported to take up an apprenticeship. For those new places, a more streamlined grant process has been agreed with Futures, so that all outstanding payments will have been made by September 2017.
- 8.6. An evaluation of Nottinghamshire County Council’s approach to apprenticeships, and the Say Yes to an Apprentice project, was carried out in the summer of 2016. It concluded that “Overall the employers that applied for a ‘Say Yes’ grant and went on to recruit an apprentice were satisfied with the scheme, believed it worked well and were very positive about recommending apprenticeships to other employers. Overall the scheme was therefore well delivered, well received and offered strong value for money, given that the majority of employers intend to sustain their apprentices in employment”.
- 8.7. The evaluation also highlighted the need for sector specific responses, which has been followed through within the newer provision detailed in paragraph 10.

Project 2: Engage2Employ LLDD programme

9. The Engage2Employ (E2E) employment support programme has provided work placements with the potential to lead to employment, supported through job coaching, for young people who are LLDD (learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) and/or NEET (not in education, employment or training).
- 9.1. The original targets were 45 supported work placements, potentially leading to 30 supported internships and 15 employment starts. Additional targets were around the engagement of more partners and the development of partnership working models. In detail the outputs for the E2E project are as follows;

<b>Output</b>	<b>To Date</b>	<b>Target</b>
Number of young people starting a work placement	60	45
Number of young people progressing to a supported internship	25	30
Number of young people securing employment	10	15
Percentage of young people who were NEET at point of contact	35%	-

- 9.2. Of the above, 38 individual employers have offered work placements, including 8 County Council placements. 22 employers have gone on to offer supported internships and 5 employers have employed young people from the programme.
- 9.3. Of the young people who have progressed, 11 of those undertaking a supported internship had been NEET, 12 were LLDD and 1 of the employed young people had been NEET when she accessed the project.

- 9.4. Since the appointment of the new project coordinator in August 2016, more progress has been made on engaging new partners and on outreach work to engage with young people who may not already be with a mainstream provider.
- 9.5. Additional capacity to support the young people and employers has been secured through the recruitment of a pool of casual job coaches. These can be called upon when needed to provide job coaching to young people, helping them learn the job tasks and develop employability skills, and review progress.
- 9.6. Efficient use of the funding has enabled continuation of this project into 2017, which will enable more of the young people undertaking existing work placements to be further supported towards employment.
10. The additional provision negotiated with the existing contractors builds on existing good practice and supports a more targeted approach to some of the County's priority sectors.

### Project 3: Creative and digital sector

11. The Creative Apprenticeships project builds on a national Creative Employment Programme pilot. It provides a targeted support package to increase opportunities in the creative sector for 10 new apprenticeship places including; an employer grant of up to £1,500, a learner support fund and tailored creative industry training input. To date 4 new businesses have been engaged and vacancies will be recruited to soon.
12. The Digital Traineeship programme is an innovative pilot project to support 6 young people to develop digital and employability skills, and support 6 small employers to grow their business. It will provide an intensive and tailored package of support over 6 months with the potential to lead to the creation of new apprenticeship places. Employers are currently being recruited and then the places will be available for young people to apply.
13. A Digital Skills Show will be delivered in a central County location in June/July 2017 to support career aspirations and recruitment to the sector. Four hundred year 7 and 8 learners from schools across Nottinghamshire will attend to learn about the breadth of career opportunities in the Digital sector. Sector employer representatives will offer practical and engaging activities giving an inside view of their workplaces, through engaging 'have a go' activity and question and answer sessions with the learners.

### Project 4: Health and social care sector

14. The Nottinghamshire Health & Social Care Skills Show will stimulate discussion, inspire, motivate and inform young people about the breadth of career opportunities and progression pathways in the sector, with practical and engaging activities and information.
15. Four hundred year 7 and 8 learners from schools across Nottinghamshire will visit the show in September/October 2017. Kings Mill Hospital are being approached to host the event.
16. An online Health and Social Care handbook has been identified by the employer led sector working group as a key requirement to secure a sustainable future workforce and address the key challenge of recruitment and retention of workers at all levels (D2N2 Health & Social Care Skills Action Plan).

17. The handbook will be a simplified streamlined resource, to condense and simplify the complex information available to employers, schools, providers, young people and parents. Each segment will contain key information and provide links enabling the reader to visit external websites. The development of the handbook has been commissioned at a total cost of £1500, and will be funded by Nottingham University Hospitals, Health Education East Midlands, N2 SEB and Nottinghamshire County Council.

### **Other Options Considered**

18. Other options considered for the most effective use of funds include a continuation of existing provision. However the chosen options will provide a more diverse and targeted offer. Advice has been taken from the N2 Skills & Employment Partnership Manager about projects which could be quickly and efficiently delivered, and which would have the most impact on local skills priorities.

### **Reason for Recommendation**

19. The provision planned for the Supporting Youth Employment budget allocation has been delivered more efficiently than originally envisaged. Flexibility from both contract holders has enabled a wider programme of provision to be developed, which has benefitted more young people and businesses, and has been more closely aligned to local skills priorities.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

20. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, 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, sustainability and the environment and ways of working 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**

21. The funding for the activity described above is already allocated to Supporting Youth Employment from County Council Reserves. Efficiencies in delivery have enabled the availability of funds to deliver the programme on a wider scale than originally envisaged, at no additional cost. However, whilst every effort has been made to utilise the remaining £304,000 (from the original £500,000) by the end of the 2016/17 financial year, it is highly probable that some spend will slip into financial year 2017/18. Should that be the case, a further report will be presented to Finance and Property Committee for their consideration around the reserve slippage.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

22. It is recommended that committee notes the progress made in Supporting Youth Employment provision.

**Adrian Smith**  
**Corporate Director Place**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:** Hilary Porter tel.0115 9772146

**Constitutional Comments [EP 14.03.2017]**

This report is for noting only.

**Financial Comments [SES 15.03.2017]**

The financial implications are set out in the report.

**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.

- *Supporting Youth Employment Funding* (progress update and new initiatives proposal) – Report to Economic Development Committee published on 05/07/2016
- *Supporting Youth Employment* (progress update) – Report to Economic Development Committee published on 06/01/2015
- *Supporting Youth Employment* (proposal for allocation of remaining funds to E2E project) – Report to Economic Development committee published on 11/02/2014
- *Supporting Youth Employment* (proposal for allocation of remaining funds) – Report to Economic Development committee published on 19/11/2013
- *Supporting Youth Employment* ((proposal for allocation of reserves) for County Apprenticeship Project) - Report to Economic Development Committee published on 17/10/2013
- *Apprenticeships Update* – Report to Economic Development Committee published on 09/07/2013

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

- All