

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH STRATEGY 2020-2030

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Policy Committee approval to:
 - a) adopt the Employment and Health Strategy 2020-2030, attached as **Appendix 1**
 - b) establish posts to support employment opportunities across the Council and the County
 - c) approves funding from contingency for the posts mentioned above
 - d) endorse the Implementation Plan setting out how the Strategy will be delivered to be reported to the Improvement & Change Sub-Committee.

Information

2. The Council Plan 'Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future' (2017-2020) explicitly references how the Council will ensure that it considers health factors in all its decisions and recognises there is a lot that can be done to keep people independent, whilst acknowledging that some people will need extra help and support. The Council believes that a disability or health condition should not dictate the path a person is able to take in life, especially in the workplace. There is overwhelming evidence that good quality employment is essential for a person's health and wellbeing, providing them not only with an income but also with status, purpose and positive relationships with others.
3. In September 2019, a report was submitted to the Improvement and Change Sub-Committee reporting progress with the establishment of a cross-cutting programme of work designed to improve employment opportunities with a focus on supporting people who are currently furthest away from work.
4. The Council has made this work one of its key priorities and good progress has been made in order to identify the aims, ambition and key areas of focus for the Council in this area, and to develop an appropriate employment strategy to take this forward. As well as a universal approach to health and wellbeing at work, the Strategy targets those furthest away from work, including actions to support people with disabilities and long-term health conditions, and young people leaving care to find, and remain in, employment.
5. A focus on the importance of employment to people's health is also being driven through the Health and Wellbeing Board and strategic partnerships with health and other public

service organisations. A report to the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2019 reported on a successful workshop for action held in October 2019 which involved over 50 stakeholders from the public sector and health and social care provider landscape. The aims of the workshop were to explore the relationship between good work and health in Nottinghamshire, understand the gaps in employment for those with health needs and complex social issues, and the barriers they face to employment; and identify and commit to actions to improve opportunities for employment for these groups. A detailed action plan for all partners was produced and will be monitored through the Health and Wellbeing Board.

6. At the Full Council meeting in December 2019 a motion was passed on the Council's commitment to investigate what further proactive, cost-effective measures can be taken across all areas of the Council's work to encourage a local mind-set focused on what people can do, rather than what they cannot. Whilst anchored with this Committee, all service committees will apply this principle in the areas of work most relevant to their remit.
7. The Strategy has been developed through the Employment and Health Steering Group, which includes representatives from across the Council and is led by the Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health.
8. The Strategy focuses on the role and influence that the Council has with regard to the employment and health agenda as a system leader, one of the largest employers in the County and a significant commissioner and provider of services. It demonstrates the importance and impact of being in employment, and of not being in employment, and highlights the groups of people that are less likely to have access to employment and how the Council aims to tackle this through a series of key workstreams and activities.
9. The Strategy presents high level milestones at five-year intervals to 2030. A full Implementation Plan will be delivered to Improvement and Change Sub-Committee. This will incorporate the plan in place at Health and Wellbeing Board and actions falling out of the Director of Public Health Annual Report.
10. It is recognised that there are many barriers to work, such as housing, debt, navigating the welfare benefits system, and transport. A place based approach with co-operation from Partners is required to address these wider determinants of health and wellbeing.
11. Strategic development and initiatives are currently led in different ways and through different fora. For example, the Industrial Strategy is led by the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Town Centres Fund led by District Councils. There are clear ambitions to improve productivity and increase employment opportunity, but in order to achieve benefit to residents stronger links between those objectives are needed.
12. The skills agenda is an area that receives a lot of attention and funding from Government through the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (D2N2 LEP). Further, multiple reviews have argued for further devolution of skills budgets to the local area. As identified in the (2017) *D2N2 Skills Mismatch Report*, some employers are still not getting what they need, with examples of courses being delivered that have little to no employer backing, and that fail to prepare the learner for work or progression or add value to the local economy. There are examples of duplication of provision, some poor performance of contracts, limited oversight of how this meets the needs of Nottinghamshire or our employers and little

flexibility in the funding regime to allow providers to respond quickly to changing demand and supply. A key part of this work is to provide political and system leadership to continue to influence for better join up of the skills and employment agenda to ensure investment is maximised.

13. Alongside development of the Strategy, work has taken place on a submission of a Healthy Work bid in partnership with Futures and as part of the D2N2 LEP. The County Council is providing match-funding in support of the bid (£643,600). If successful, the Council will receive specialist staffing resources to implement the proposed delivery model in Nottinghamshire. These posts will support and increase current activity within the Council's existing employment support services. There is no financial risk or gain associated with this bid and the benefit will be better outcomes for people in the County.
14. The Council has also been successful in obtaining support from the Local Government Association (LGA) through their Work Local programme. This programme is aimed at improving employment and skills services in England through local public-private collaborations. The Council has been involved in an initial workshop with other selected local authorities and is planning how to make best use of the resources provided through the LGA to develop the work already underway in the County. A spring seminar to progress an approach to developing a productive economy and inclusive growth will be supported through this work.

Establishment of posts to support employment opportunities

15. Under the oversight of the Employment and Health Steering Group, an external partner was commissioned to undertake an audit of the Council's employment support services. The audit was primarily focused on services provided to adults with disabilities. The review also produced recommendations more broadly for how the Council works in this area. A service improvement plan is in development to address the findings.
16. To progress recommendations on how to make the most of existing investment in employment support and wider Council opportunities for access to employment, it is recommended that the Council establish a full-time equivalent Employment Opportunities Manager post with a Council-wide remit to generate employment opportunities. This post will be in the Place Department and report to the Group Manager, Growth and Development. As phase two of the work, approval is also sought to establish a full-time equivalent Co-ordinator post. Recruitment to this post will be subject to a management review of the approach at three months.
17. It is intended to develop job descriptions for the posts further to Committee approval of the requirement for resources to support this work. This will be subject to established Council processes for evaluation of the posts, but early indications suggest they would be close to Hay Band C (Employment Opportunities Manager) and Band A (Employment Co-ordinator).
18. It is proposed that these posts would be established on a permanent basis. An illustration of how they would work is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Other Options Considered

19. As stated earlier, this programme of work has been prioritised by the Council and is being highlighted in national initiatives as well. Evidence demonstrates that Nottinghamshire can do more to bring the County in line with the national average for employment of people with disabilities and long-term health conditions, therefore the 'do nothing' option was discounted.

Reason for Recommendations

20. The Committee's approval of the Employment and Health Strategy will support the progression of this work led by the Council, as will the establishment of the posts highlighted in **paragraph 16**.

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. The costs of establishing the posts detailed in **paragraph 16** are estimated at £98,000 (including on costs), which will be funded from contingency.

Human Resources Implications

23. The posts will require a new job description which will be subject to the Council's evaluation process to establish a final grade. The posts will be situated in the Place department and will report to the Group Manager, Growth and Development.

Implications for Service Users

24. It is the intention of the Council that the proposed direction of travel, actions and milestones identified in the Strategy will have a positive impact on the employment opportunities and career progression of people in Nottinghamshire, especially those that are currently furthest from the labour market.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Policy Committee:

- 1) approves the Employment and Health Strategy 2020-2030, attached as **Appendix 1**

- 2) approves the establishment of the following staffing resources required to generate and monitor more cross-council inclusive employment opportunities:
 - 1 full-time equivalent Employment Opportunities Manager
 - 1 full-time equivalent Co-ordinator
- 3) approves a contingency request from Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee for funding the staffing resources as shown in **paragraph 16**
- 4) approves that the Implementation Plan setting out how the Strategy will be delivered is reported to the Improvement and Change Sub-Committee.

Councillor Kay Cutts MBE
Leader of the County Council

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Constitutional Comments (KK 02/03/20)

24. The proposals in this report are within the remit of Policy Committee.

Financial Comments (KRP 05/03/20)

25. The estimated cost of the additional posts is £98,000 in a full year. As noted in the report a request for a contingency allocation will be made to Finance & Major Contracts Management Committee to fund this.

HR Comments (GME 02/03/20)

26. The work of the newly created posts will liaise closely with colleagues within HR to build on the current provision for apprenticeships, supported interns and the approach to developing new pathways into paid employment which the Council already provides. The Council has already taken the decision to apply to move from Disability Confident to Disability Confident Leader and work on developing employment opportunities internally and externally for people with disabilities or long term health conditions will enhance the portfolio of evidence for this submission which will seek to demonstrate the Council's community leadership in this area.

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.

[Employment and Health Programme – report to Improvement and Change Sub-Committee on 23rd September 2019](#)

[Developing a health and work approach in Nottinghamshire – report to Health and Wellbeing Board on 4th December 2019](#)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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