

Employment and Employability Initiatives

Report of Corporate Management Team

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Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide an update to Cabinet on the council's employment and employability initiatives scheme, the government's employment policies affecting residents in the county, and to and seek approval to allocate an additional £500,000 from the Welfare Assistance Scheme budget to the council's employment and employability initiatives scheme.

Executive summary

- 2 In order to reduce poverty and the impact of welfare reforms on families in the county, the Poverty Action Steering Group has funded an employment and employability initiatives scheme.
- 3 £500,000 was directed from the council's Welfare Assistance Scheme with the overall aim of supporting individuals and families affected by welfare reform, and, either supporting them in becoming closer to the employment market or to assist those who would like to explore self-employment as a route to improving their life chances and achieving a positive outcome.
- 4 Effective management and regular monitoring has enabled the scheme to keep costs at the lower level of average spend which has enabled the council to support more people. To 11 May 2016 the scheme has been successful in: providing skills training to 267 individuals; assisting 308 individuals into employment; and supporting 59 people into self-employment.
- 5 The scheme has recently been reviewed with a view to extending it for a further year. As part of the review, existing national and local employment

schemes were examined, in order to ensure that the council's employment and employability initiatives scheme augments rather than duplicates the existing schemes, which include:

- a) the Department for Work and Pension's (DWP) Work Programme, which due to the nature of its contracts, tends to be more effective in supporting easier-to-place clients;
 - b) locally-developed complementary initiatives to the national schemes, which have been shown to be effective but are often time-bound and focus on specific client groups.
- 6 Recognising the cumulative impacts of changes to welfare legislation, a great deal of effort has been made to ensure that we continue to provide effective support across the county and in particular for specific geographic and demographic cohorts that require additional intervention to improve their chances of accessing sustained employment, for example the 25+ age group.
 - 7 Extending the council's Employment and Employability Initiatives Scheme would provide targeted help to these specific groups of people.
 - 8 An additional £500,000 has been identified from the council's Welfare Assistance Scheme budget to allow the scheme to continue and contribute towards the delivery of the relevant goals within the council's Poverty Action Plan - 'to increase opportunities to support residents into work', and 'to increase the opportunities for training to improve skills'.
 - 9 The scheme would be developed further to improve consistency and simplify referral processes to ensure that, regardless of age, location or benefit type, all residents can gain access to an appropriate level of support.
 - 10 Cabinet is recommended to note the progress being made by the council's Employment and Employability Initiatives Scheme; and approve the allocation of an additional £500,000 from the Welfare Assistance budget for the continuation of the scheme.

Background

- 11 Employment remains a major theme of government policy. Various stimulus measures were outlined in the 2015 summer budget, the autumn statement and the budget earlier this year, such as National Insurance and business rates relief for smaller businesses, changes to corporation tax to encourage growth and investment, expanding apprenticeships and an apprenticeship levy and major infrastructure and investment measures associated with the Northern Powerhouse, including Local Growth Fund allocations and new enterprise zones.
- 12 However, these are set within the context of continuing austerity and the removal of specific grants to local councils, which have had a marked impact on the support available for those seeking employment. For example, prior to 2011 there were a number of initiatives within local government and through One North East's Regional Employability Framework, which were designed to complement the national New Deals programmes run through Jobcentre Plus.

As public spending has been reduced, these complementary activities have had to be scaled back and withdrawn.

- 13 The main complementary initiatives, which are now withdrawn, included:
- a) the Working Neighbourhoods Fund - £12 million a year paid to the council, aimed at supporting local employability interventions. The resource was used mainly to commission (and sustain) projects from the voluntary sector and community partnerships, offering flexible packages of bespoke support to people within their own communities to help them back into work;
 - b) the Future Jobs Fund – this was introduced shortly after the financial crash of 2008 to support youth employment through a subsidised training and job placements programme with employers. DWP pledged 150,000 temporary paid jobs lasting six months for unemployed young people and people living in disadvantaged areas, with a maximum DWP contribution of £6,500 per job. In County Durham, 872 starts were achieved at an average cost of £4,900 per job;
 - c) Be Enterprising – a £3 million a year programme which ran from 2006–10, to support self-employment in disadvantaged communities through mentoring, financial support and promotion. It supported around 500 people a year into self-employment;
 - d) temporary “popup” jobcentres. Two centres were opened (one in Bishop Auckland and another in Peterlee) in 2009 for a 12 month period to give additional employment support to unemployed people;
 - e) economic infrastructure funding provided by One North East to create employment demand.
- 14 Whilst previous governments have sought to help people into work through various initiatives, the coalition and the present government placed a priority on ensuring that work was financially more preferable to benefits as a central feature of welfare reform and changes to the benefits regime. A number of contracted welfare-to-work reforms including the Work Programme, were introduced to encourage people into work, support the most vulnerable and help people break the cycle of benefit dependency and poverty. As part of these, sanction regimes were also introduced to encourage people on out-of-work benefits to take the employment or training opportunities available to them and to move off benefits into work.

Employment and Employability Initiatives Scheme

- 15 Using employment initiatives as a way of responding to the changes to the welfare system, the Poverty Action Steering Group (formerly the Welfare Reform Steering Group) set £500,000 aside from the Welfare Assistance Scheme budget to develop a specific employability and wage subsidy scheme to help disadvantaged people into work. The overall aim of the project was to support individuals affected by welfare reform and either support them in becoming closer to the employment market or to assist those who would like to explore self-employment as a route to improving their life chances and achieving a positive outcome.

- 16 The priority beneficiaries are:
- a) residents living in the county's most deprived settlements;
 - b) unemployed residents in receipt of JSA who would like to become self-employed but who were unable to meet the criteria or timescales of New Enterprise Allowance;
 - c) under-occupancy – those liable to pay the spare room subsidy or 'Bedroom Tax';
 - d) those affected by the Benefit Cap - those families whose benefit entitlement has been reduced to the maximum of £26,000 per annum;
 - e) ESA claimants- those in the Work Related Activity Group (although those in the support group willing to progress towards the labour market will be supported);
 - f) Those in the private rented sector, who have to contribute to their rent from out of work benefits, should their local housing allowance not cover the whole rent of the property;
 - g) Ex-forces - those discharged from the regular forces.
- 17 The scheme provides access to training and work-based learning, skills provision, financial support, wage subsidies for employers and targeted discretionary support where required. To 11 May 2016 the scheme has provided skills training to 267 individuals, assisted 308 individuals into employment and supported 59 people into self-employment.
- 18 Some examples of the skills training provided include: HETAS 03 (Registered installer of solid fuel, wood and biomass heating solutions), CPCD Dumper Truck, 17th Edition Electrical Installation, LGV Class 2, Gym Instruction, CPCD Crane Supervisor, Slinger and Signalling, Site Management, Level 3 Education and Training, Cytech Bicycle Mechanics and ADR Transporting Hazardous Goods.
- 19 Examples of where the discretionary spending has been used include licences, food and fuel subsistence until salary payments begin, rent and council tax payments, DBS applications, personal protection equipment, tools, a moped to support travel to employment in a rural area with poor transport links and travel to work.
- 20 The self-employment strand of the programme is managed by Business Durham but delivered through County Durham Enterprise Agencies: Derwentside, Chester-le-Street, South Durham and East Durham. The key elements of the project are an initial diagnostic to assess eligibility and the type of support needed, vouchers to buy one-to-one personalised support and advice (which can be used pre and post start) and access to a small start-up grant if needed.
- 21 The original budget is fully committed to existing applications for support. Interim arrangements have been agreed to release an additional £45k to cover the period from April to June 2016. However, as this is an average

spend, without further approval of funds, the initiative will need to be deferred, with no further applications being considered for support. The longer term consideration in this respect will be a lack of support and funding available to unemployed residents above the age of 24 (external funding mainly covers 16-24 year olds) and certainly restricts the potential of assisting individuals who are most adversely affected by welfare reform issues.

- 22 The lower level average spend per client outcome means that this funding has been able to support more individuals within the targeted cohort.
- 23 Geographical analysis of performance data for the scheme is only available at Area Action Partnership (AAP) level. A breakdown of how the scheme has helped residents by AAP area is contained in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Employability Outputs (data correct to 10/03/2016)

AAP	Referrals	Engaged with WRP	Engaged into Employability Provision	Skills training provided	Supported into Employment	Wage subsidies provided
3 Towns	30	23	22	8	9	3
4 Together	45	39	36	15	12	6
BASH	49	39	35	13	15	8
Chester-le-Street	59	57	56	30	19	8
Derwent Valley	24	18	16	7	10	6
Durham	41	34	32	9	13	9
East Durham	219	200	155	62	119	77
East Durham Rural	20	16	16	2	10	3
Great Aycliffe	37	22	25	1	4	1
Mid Durham	19	15	14	4	4	0
Spennymoor	28	25	26	9	13	6
Stanley	61	55	31	19	31	6
Teesdale	6	6	6	2	3	0
Weardale	1	1	1	1	1	0
Total	639	550	471	182	263	133

National schemes

The Work Programme

- 24 The Work Programme was launched in June 2011 and replaced much of the previously available employment support, including the New Deals, Employment Zones and Pathways to Work.

- 25 The Work Programme is delivered by organisations called prime providers, working under contract to DWP. Providers work with claimants sent to them from Jobcentre Plus at specified points in their claim and providers are paid by results.
- 26 Participation in the Work Programme is mandatory for JSA claimants and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) claimants (where the claimant's ill health is expected to adversely affect their ability to work for less than 12 months and who are therefore expected to be able to start preparing for a return for work). Financial sanctions (cessation of the relevant benefit payment for a period) can be applied for failure to attend or participate.
- 27 From April 2014, JSA claimants who have not secured lasting employment after two years on the Work Programme, are required to participate in the Help to Work programme, where Jobcentre advisers will tailor back-to-work plans for individuals according to the particular barriers to work they may have. This may include intensive coaching, a requirement to meet with the Jobcentre Plus adviser every day, or taking part in a community work placement for up to 6 months so claimants build the skills needed to secure a full-time job.

The Work Programme in Durham

- 28 PeoplePlus (formerly Avanta) and Ingeous are the prime providers in the North East. Ingeus undertake direct delivery of the Work Programme across County Durham, while PeoplePlus have sub-contracted to the following three organisations:
- a) Durham Employment and Skills (DES), which is part of the council's Regeneration and Economic Development service grouping (covering the north and west of County Durham);
 - b) Groundwork North East (covering Durham City and South Durham);
 - c) Acumen Trust (covering East Durham).
- 29 Durham Employment and Skills (DES) delivers the Work Programme in the north and west of the county, with offices in Consett, Stanley, Chester-le-Street and Crook. Interventions include: skills support such as Maths, English, IT and Employability; short courses such as First Aid, Food Safety and CSCS; and longer vocational programmes such as Customer Service, Financial Literacy, Be Active Feel Healthy and Emotional Resilience.
- 30 DES has received 2,846 customers referred from JCP since June 2011. There have been 2,383 customers who have now completed the mandatory two year provision on Work Programme and DES are continuing to support the remaining 463 customers via 'In Work Support' or to progress them toward employment opportunities.
- 31 Of the 2,846 referrals 1,075 customers successfully moved into employment and were supported by DES via an 'In Work Support' for up to two years until the customer gained secure employment. Of those who did not gain employment whilst with DES on the Work Programme, and following completion of the mandatory two year provision, they have returned to JCP.

Work Programme performance

- 32 A report by the National Audit Office in July 2014 acknowledged that since its start in 2011, the Work Programme had placed half a million people into a job, nearly 300,000 of whom, were still in employment after six months. It concluded that the programme had "improved after a poor start" and could potentially offer value for money over the long term.
- 33 However, the NAO also raised concerns about flaws in the contracts with scheme providers which necessitated the payment of bonuses, which were not justified by performance, leading to "unnecessary" costs.
- 34 The NAO also suggested the system put in place to keep track of workers - with contractors expected to contact employers 27 times during a two-year period - was delivering patchy results, with some employers not bothering to return calls.
- 35 In October 2015 the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee's inquiry into Work Programme performance reported that the programme deserved credit for producing results at least as good as previous systems at a "greatly reduced cost", but should do better. It concluded that too many long-term unemployed people remain out of work after two years on the programme and nearly 70 percent of participants are completing the Work Programme without finding sustained employment ('completers'). In particular, the Work Programme was not working well for people with more complex or multiple barriers to employment who need more intensive help.
- 36 Evaluation evidence for the DWP showed that statistically, these 'completers' were more likely to be men, to be older than 55, to have a health condition or disability, to have low or no qualifications, and to have no recent work experience prior to joining the work programme.
- 37 The Department responded by pointing out that almost half a million of the hardest-to-help claimants have been supported into employment through the Work Programme and welcomed the committee's finding that the programme is better value for money to the taxpayer than any and previous scheme.
- 38 Once a claimant has joined the Work Programme, regardless of whether this was on a mandatory or voluntary basis, the majority can be required to undertake activities and subsequently be subject to sanctions if they do not comply.
- 39 Evaluation evidence for the DWP stated most participants had little problem with the notion of conditionality and sanctions and it was generally accepted as reasonable in return for receiving benefits. However those who were actually sanctioned had mixed views – some acknowledged their behaviour had led to the sanction and subsequently changed their behaviour; others felt they were not justified.
- 40 Following this research, the DWP commissioned an independent review of the operation of JSA sanctions, which included the Work Programme. The Oakley Review made recommendations around how the process of benefit sanctions functions in these circumstances, and how well claimants

understand the system. In particular, recommendations focused on the clarity of information provided to JSA claimants about:

- a) the consequences of failing to take part in mandatory back to work schemes; and
- b) once sanctioned, the reason for the sanction and the processes of providing good reason, appealing a decision and applying for hardship.

41 As part of the 2015 spending review, the government announced that it would discontinue the Mandatory Work Activity programme, the controversial element of the Work Programme which required unemployed people to take part in up to 30 hours a week unwaged work or lose their jobseekers' allowance. Community Work Placements, a counterpart of the Mandatory Work Activity that involve placements of up to six months, have also been discontinued.

42 The programmes are to be replaced by a new "work and health programme", but details have yet to be provided on the form this would take.

Work Programme performance in Durham

43 DWP figures by local authority area show that by December 2015 over 18,000 participants were enrolled on the Work Programme in the county. Thirty four percent (6,200) of participants were aged 24 or under and nine percent (1,600) were over the age of 55. Only 18 percent (3,300) of total participants were ESA claimants.

44 Of these estimated 18,000 plus participants in County Durham, 27 percent (5,100) had achieved a job outcome by December 2015. This is slightly less than the national average of 28 percent. Of those, only 8 percent (400) were ESA claimants and nearly 44 percent (2,300) were aged 24 or under.

45 The latest data available from the DWP show that between January 2015 and September 2015 there were 1,900 JSA sanction decisions made in County Durham for failing to participate in the Work Programme. This is equal to 1.3 percent of total JSA sanction decisions made in England for failing to participate in the Work Programme.

46 Monthly data is available on the number of individuals receiving a sanction however aggregated data over longer periods is unreliable due to potential double counting in the dataset. This is due to an individual being able to be sanctioned more than once in a single period over several periods for the same reason or different reasons. However the latest sanction data for September 2015 shows that 29 percent (126 sanctions) of JSA sanctions in the county in September 2015 were for failure to participate in a work programme, compared to nearly 40 percent across England.

Local schemes

47 Running parallel to the Work Programme are a number of schemes where delivery is tailored specifically to residents within the North East and/or County Durham. These are as follows.

Department of Communities and Local Government's Stronger Families Programme

- 48 This programme is delivered by Durham County Council's Think Families Service. The 'Stronger Families' programme prioritises help and support for families who need it most to improve their lives permanently. This includes working with services across the council and other partners on issues such as unemployment and worklessness. The programme includes dedicated DWP employment advisors to help families into work and aims to work with 4,300 families by 2020.

Youth Contract 16-17 Intensive Support

- 49 The purpose of the Youth Contract programme for 16-17 year olds is to engage young people who are hardest to reach and support them into education, training or a job with training. Delivery of the programme across England began in September 2012. This programme operates to the end of 31 March 2016, and had an investment of £126 million. Delivery in Durham was subcontracted to Groundwork North East.

Generation North East

- 50 This is a collaboration between five local authorities including Durham County Council, and forms part of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership's Growth Deal. This £4.5 million scheme funded by the Cabinet Office, was launched in February 2015 to help 18-24 years olds across the North East who have been unemployed for more than three months by providing them with personalised employment and training advice, and by increasing sustainable employment opportunities for up to 2,000 young people.

Talent Match

- 51 This £8.7 million Big Lottery funded scheme will support 750 18-24 year olds in the North East who have been out of work or education or training for over 12 months. Youth Coaches support young people for up to two years to secure employment, take up training or other learning or create their own business by September 2018. Provision in County Durham has been subcontracted to Groundwork North East.

Targeted support programmes funded by partners and area action partnerships

- 52 The Council and partners have continued to maintain and expand programmes to help local residents into employment and targeted support programmes funded by individual partners and the area action partnerships (AAPs). Some of these programmes include:
- a) Work Choice Programme, delivered by Shaw Trust provides a voluntary service for people who are receiving Employment Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance or Income Support due to sickness or disability to help them return to work through one-to-one support from a personal development advisor;
 - b) Rural Employability Programme, funded by AAPs and delivered by the Council's Employability Team, this project seeks to address the causes

of long-term unemployment by providing mentoring support to individuals living in rural south west Durham;

- c) Job clubs, funded by AAPs aim to help people become more employable and help with functional skills, such as how to write a covering letter and CV, money management, as well with social support from their peers, and motivation. Areas include Willington, Stanley and Peterlee;
- d) Learning Working Earning, a programme delivered by County Durham Community Foundation to support unemployed individuals aged 16-25 living in the East Durham area who have been offered employment linked to an apprenticeship or accredited work based learning but who, without financial support, would be unable to take up the offer. It also supports businesses with funding towards the costs associated with employing those individuals;
- e) Brighter Futures, a project delivered by Derwentside Homes to get unemployed tenants back into work by providing support for CV writing and interview techniques and attaining qualifications;
- f) Social Housing Enterprise Durham, a social enterprise funded by Derwentside Homes providing employment and training opportunities for tenants to help them improve their chances of getting back into full time employment or training;
- g) Learning Hive, delivered by Derwentside Homes, offers training courses such as ICT, literacy, numeracy, and home budgeting, and, also provides ICT equipment to help with CV writing;
- h) Livin Futures, delivered by Livin Housing Limited, provides a support a range of activities and programmes to help tenants and family members secure employment including, training programmes, apprenticeships, CV writing and interview skills;
- i) County Durham Furniture Help Scheme Training Programme, delivered by the County Durham Furniture Help Scheme, provides a range of activities including work and voluntary experience and training to disadvantaged individuals;
- j) East Durham Partnership Employment Programme, delivered by East Durham Partnership providing work experience and training opportunities as part of an overall integrated back to work programme;
- k) Catch 22 Peterlee, delivers courses for young people aged 16-19 years to further develop the necessary employability skills to progress to employment, apprenticeship or further education;
- l) Support for Learning, delivered by Finchale Training College, provides customised programmes of vocational rehabilitation to unemployed disabled adults.

Policy changes and new schemes

- 53 The current provision of employability support is changing, both in response to adjustments to the programmes and finance available, but also in line with new government policy.

DWP Work and Health Programme

- 54 The Spending Review (November 2015) announced changes to the way claimants are supported into work. A new specialist Work and Health Programme (WHP) for claimants with health conditions or disabilities and those unemployed for over two years will replace the national Work Programme and Work Choice once contracts expire on 31st March 2017 although it is possible that WHP will not be commencing until October 2017. Jobcentre Plus will support all other JSA claimants up to their eligibility on WHP.
- 55 While much of the WHP detail is yet to be agreed, the LGA has stated that budget is likely to be £130 million per year for England and Wales and the devolved budget for Scotland may also have to come out of this. It is unclear how many claimants this is intended to support, but using the same unit price as the Work Programme this would support around 110,000 per annum.
- 56 Through devolution deals, the Government has committed to work closely with seven areas. Each will develop Employment and Skills strategies and contract package areas (CPAs) will be aligned to the geographic areas. This includes:
- a) co-commission WHP with Greater Manchester and London;
 - b) co-design WHP with the combined authorities of Sheffield, Tees Valley, Liverpool, West Midlands, and the North East.
- 57 DWP aims to establish a mechanism to work with all other areas, so that the WHP is as locally relevant as possible.

European Funding

- 58 A large proportion of the programmes to support unemployed residents is funded through the European Programme. Between April and July 2015 all support programmes from the previous round of European monies ceased accepting new referrals and are completing work with existing participants. Many aspects of the provision will be re-procured under the 2014-2020 European Programme, as part of the £48 million allocation of European Social Fund (ESF) for County Durham.
- 59 Unfortunately, delays in the agreement of the programme with the Commission mean that the majority of new activity will not commence until summer 2016 at the earliest. This has left a reduced package of support for residents.

Youth Employment Initiative - 'DurhamWorks'

- 60 The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) known as DurhamWorks was launched in April 2016. It will provide extra support to young people aged below 25 and living in regions where youth unemployment was higher than 25 percent in 2012. It will particularly support young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs), including long-term unemployed youngsters or those not registered as job-seekers. The total budget of the YEI is €6.4 billion for the period 2014-20.

- 61 £17 million for County Durham, made up of £12.78 million of YEI, European Social Fund funding and £4.26 million in match funding, has been made available to try to help around 5,830 young people progress into work, training, education or volunteering by summer 2018.

Mental Health Trailblazer North East Mental Health Trailblazer

- 62 The North East Growth Deal included the commitment that: 'the North East LEP and partners will work with the Government to jointly design and develop a mental health and employment integration trailblazer to inform future national and local support for people with mental health conditions. The trailblazers will further test support to boost employment and clinical outcomes for people with mental health conditions, as well as testing integrated and better sequenced delivery models to better complement public services at the local level at scale'.
- 63 Delivery in County Durham started earlier this year, with two employment coaches being employed through the NECA and seconded to the council.

Impacts on the county

- 64 The majority of the Council's externally funded programmes are now able to provide county-wide provision, e.g. Generation North East and DurhamWorks (Youth Employment Initiative). In addition, the local offer of apprenticeship support (although financially restricted), also has a county-wide coverage.
- 65 However, area specific projects still exist such as bespoke employability support funded through the AAPs, with initiatives such as the Mentoring Programme for 50+ which is available only in Bishop Auckland and Shildon. Although successful in delivery and ultimately results, the initiative has a limited lifespan because of the funding criteria attached and the potential for the AAPs to change direction in terms of specific priorities and therefore funding allocations.
- 66 In general, central government and European employability provision caters exclusively for 16-24 year olds with little or no funding available for 25+. As mentioned previously, DWP figures by local authority area show that by December 2015 only nine percent of participants enrolled on the Work Programme were over the age of 55.
- 67 The Council's portfolio of support has been able to provide access to funding, advice and guidance through the Welfare Assistance Scheme budget (Employment and Employability Initiatives scheme), with the average age of beneficiaries being 37 and over 81 percent of supported individuals being 25+. This has proven to be successful in terms of both employment and self-employment support and enabled the Council to extend its offer beyond the younger age group.
- 68 As mentioned previously, the AAP funded mentoring provision has assisted in the development of provision to any age group, with specific support now in place for 50+ residents in the BASH area of the county. This provision would ideally be extended across other settlements, with DWP/JCP looking to enhance the provision available through their own 50+ co-ordination.

Next steps

- 69 Recognising the lack of programme support and the cumulative impacts of changes to welfare legislation, a great deal of effort has been made to ensure some form of provision across the county. The triage review in conjunction with registered landlords and their tenants has identified that there has been a complicated network of provision which is inconsistent and difficult to refer into.
- 70 The delays in the ESF funded activity and our understanding of those requiring support, highlight some geographic/cohorts that require additional intervention to improve their chances of accessing sustained employment, for example the 25+ age group. The extension of the Council's Employment and Employability Initiatives scheme would provide targeted help to these specific groups of people.
- 71 An additional £500,000 has been identified from the Council's Welfare Assistance Scheme budget to allow the scheme to continue and contribute towards the delivery of the relevant goals within the council's Poverty Action Plan i.e. 'to increase opportunities to support residents into work, and to increase the opportunities for training to improve skills'. The scheme will be developed further to improve consistency and simplify referral processes to ensure that, regardless of age, location or benefit type, all residents can gain access to an appropriate level of support.
- 72 The current AAP funding approval process will continue to include Regeneration and Economic Development in the funding evaluation and sign-off process where bids are requesting funds for employment type projects. This will continue to ensure AAP resources complement the employment and employability initiatives scheme and mainstream support and reduce duplication.

Recommendations and reasons

- 74 Cabinet is recommended to:
- a) note the contents of this report and the progress being made by the council's Employment and Employability Initiatives scheme; and
 - b) approve the allocation of an additional £500,000 from the Welfare Assistance budget for the continuation of the council's Employment and Employability Initiatives scheme.

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Background papers

Cabinet, 21 October 2015, Welfare reform and poverty issues

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The £500,000 for employment and employability initiatives will be met from the 2016/17 Welfare Assistance Scheme budget.

Staffing – There are no new staffing implications contained within the report.

Risk – N/A

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – N/A

Accommodation – N/A

Crime and Disorder – N/A

Human Rights – N/A

Consultation – N/A

Procurement – N/A

Disability Issues – N/A

Legal Implications – N/A