

Report

11

Report to:	Enterprise Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	23 November 2011
Report by:	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Allocation of Funding to Support Employability Programmes
----------	--

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ seek approval to support a Working with Families initiative
- ◆ seek approval to increase the funding available to support employer engagement and Youth Jobs Fund

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that a contribution of £172,000 is agreed to support a Working for Families initiative
- (2) that an additional £121,000 is provided to support additional places and increased employer engagement through the Youth Jobs Fund

3. Background

3.1. The effect of the economic downturn and the recession that followed has disproportionately impacted on key groups and the fragile recovery is failing to offer equal access to opportunity. This proposal set out below will seek to improve the competitiveness in a tight labour market of young people and families who would face ongoing hardship should they not be able to secure employment.

4. Current position

4.1 The Council currently has in place a range of provision to support unemployed residents and address their barriers to employment. These projects were approved at the Committee's meeting on 17 March 2011. The availability of new funding allows the opportunity to target assistance and potentially achieve the end goal of sustained employment in challenging economic conditions. This adds value to the Council's overall employability services by encouraging more employers, particularly small to medium sized companies, to take on staff, provide work placements or support this employability effort in other ways

5. Working with Families

5.1 Through the Tackling Poverty Programme, research has been undertaken on the significant impact that worklessness has on families. A partnership approach to delivery with referrals coming from Housing & Technical Resources, Social Work Resources, NHS Lanarkshire and community and voluntary sector organisations is recognised to be the best approach.

5.2 It is proposed that a Working for Families programme is introduced to support households where more than one individual is experiencing unemployment. Through intensive support and signposting it is intended that the capacity of family groups to secure employment will be enhanced. This service will be procured through a mini tender under the South Lanarkshire Works 4 U Framework.

6 Youth Jobs Fund

6.1 This highly successful programme has been in operation since September 2009 and has delivered over 370 young people into jobs, with all of the young people completing the fifty weeks achieving sustained employment beyond the funding period. In recognition of the success, Clyde Gateway have provided £21,000 to fund places for an additional six young people from this area.

6.2 The demand for Youth Jobs Fund remains high and significantly outstrips the availability of resources. As a result, it is proposed to realign £100,000 of existing Regeneration Services funding to facilitate greater employer engagement and deliver a minimum of a further 30 places delivered by the contractor currently engaged through the Regeneration and Inclusion framework contract.

7. Employee Implications

7.1 There are no direct employee implications.

8.1 Financial Implications

8.1 The proposed £172,000 contribution to the Working with Families initiative and the £100,000 contribution to the Youth Jobs Fund can be met from existing budgets held by Enterprise Resources.

9. Other Implications

9.1 The contracted services specifically support the Council's agreed priority to meet the needs of disadvantaged residents seeking work in the current challenging labour market. Any risk associated with the award of funding will be minimised through close monitoring of the contracts.

10 Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

10.1 Initial discussions have taken place with key partners involved in the Tackling Poverty Officers Group from Housing and Technical Resources, Social Work Resources, NHS Lanarkshire and the voluntary and community sector.

Colin McDowall
Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

3 November 2011

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values/Improvement Themes

- Support the local economy by providing the right conditions for growth, improving skills and employability
- Tackling disadvantage and deprivation

Previous References

- Routes to Inclusion Reports to Enterprise Resources Committee

List of Background Papers

- None

Contact for further information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Simon Carey, Regeneration and Inclusion Manager

Tel: 01698 45 3812

E-mail: Simon.Carey@southlanarkshire.gov.uk