

Report

Report to:	Equal Opportunities Forum
Date of Meeting:	23 February 2022
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Parental Employability Support Programme – Making it Work
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update the Forum on the development of the Making It Work project in South Lanarkshire

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted.

3. Background

3.1. Parental Employability Support, “Making It Work” project is a targeted programme that supports parents with health conditions or a disability. Making It Work for parents is available throughout South Lanarkshire.

3.2. The programme provides key employability support, contributing to Child Poverty targets, increasing access to fair work opportunities. It supports 60 parents move into good quality employment opportunities, providing specific, tailored employability support as well as health, wellbeing, financial and childcare support.

3.3. The impacts of COVID-19 continue to impact on many parents struggling to make ends meet balancing childcare, financial and health related matters with increasing stresses affecting everyday life and their mental health.

3.4. Making It Work focuses on quality employment being good for health and wellbeing. The benefits to the individual, society and wider economy are recognised. The benefits of work are greater than just economic reward. Work is recognised as an essential activity, which supports longevity, health and wellbeing.

4. Programme Delivery

4.1. Key Worker Support

Most referrals are from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Disability Employment Advisors (DEA), who identify parents who are eligible for support. Each parent is assigned a key worker, a single point of contact, supporting them on their journey towards sustainable employment. Each parent is required to undertake an initial assessment of needs detailing the employability support required alongside a health assessment. The initial employability and health assessment generates an action plan to support parental needs. The key worker manages parents’ expectations and supports them into fair work opportunities, further education, or training.

4.2. **Health and Wellbeing Services**

To maximise parents' progress, key workers have a 'toolbox' of accessible interventions which will include commissioning group and individual interventions from health assessment through counselling, groupwork (stress management, mindfulness, emotional literacy), physical therapies and in work support including consideration of workplace adaptations, Employment Recruitment Incentives (ERIs) and Individual Placement and Support (IPS). All the interventions have been designed to support overcoming barriers and assist parents to move closer to re-entering employment.

4.3. **Personal and Social Skills Development**

Parents participate in a 6-week motivational programme designed to inspire and empower people to take up fair work opportunities. In addition to supporting parents to develop their personal and social skills, the 'learning safari' course also provides parents with the opportunity to complete an Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) level 3 qualification. To better prepare parents for interview and increase their confidence and self-esteem they are also able to access The Dressing Room, an initiative delivered by Routes to Work South (RTWS), to support both males and females experiencing financial hardship, with appropriate interview clothing and hygiene packs

4.4. **Training and Upskilling**

Various employability modules provide parents with an opportunity to develop work related skills and provide the foundations for future career development. The employability modules include CV development, supported application and job search sessions, employer expectations, behaviours in the workplace, Interview techniques and mock interviews. Customised certificated training is also available including a British Sign Language (BSL) course and Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) childminding accredited course

4.5. **Additional Support**

Financial support is available to cover participant travel whilst attending training, pre-employment and during the initial transition from welfare into employment. Additionally, where there is no mainstream provision available, Parental Employment Support (PES) will provide funding and support parents to establish flexible childcare.

5. **Impact - Outcome/Outputs**

- ◆ engage with 60 disabled parents
- ◆ 24 parents to participant in a personal development course
- ◆ 20 parents to obtain a qualification
- ◆ 12 parents to participate in a BSL training course
- ◆ 10 parents to participate in SCMA childminding training and work towards self-employment
- ◆ 25 parents into fair work opportunities
- ◆ 15 parents into further education and training

12 parents registered for the December programme, 10 have completed the Safari personal development course, of which 8 completed the ILM Level 3 component of the course and 1 has progressed into employment. A further 12 participants will start the Safari programme in February. An additional 12 participants have registered to start the BSL qualification.

Now that lockdown restrictions have eased, we anticipate greater engagement and face to face groupwork, and the course will run until June 2022.

6. Next Steps

The project will continue to support parents to meet key performance targets in the next year and we will be able to report parent's individual journeys following completion of the programme.

7. Employee Implications

7.1. This project can be accommodated within the existing employee resource.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. The funding for the project has been provided by the Scottish Government. For this programme £122,000 has been made available.

9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

9.1. There are no climate change, sustainability or environmental implications associated with this report.

10. Other Implications

10.1. Taking part in this initiative allows the Council to deliver key employability support, supports the work to reduce child poverty, and increases access to fair work.

10.2. In addition to this programme, Parental Employability Support Funding allows the Council is providing Key Worker Support and in-work support for an additional 60 participants who are parents experiencing in-work poverty.

11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

11.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function, or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

11.2. There was also no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in this report.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

1 February 2022

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable
- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Working with and respecting others
- ◆ Excellent employer
- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent
- ◆ Ambitious, self-aware and improving

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

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

Gill Bhatti

Ext: 5604 (Tel: 01698 455604)

E-mail: gill.bhatti@southlanarkshire.gov.uk