

Report



Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Part 1

Date: 29 September 2021

Subject DWP Black and Minority Ethnic ESOL Employability Grant

Purpose To seek approval from the Cabinet Member to commence formal delivery of the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) Black and Minority Ethnic ESOL Employability Grant within Newport. 'Go Live' is expected to commence in September 2021

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Ward City Wide

Summary In June 2020 NCC received an invitation from DWP to bid for funding to deliver ESOL employability training to Black and Minority Ethnic residents in Newport. A successful bid was submitted by the Council, resulting in £56680 funding being awarded to deliver 12 months support across this city.

This project will provide Black and Minority Ethnic residents with an opportunity to learn new skills, linked to securing and sustaining employment. The project delivery package includes support for the following areas of development:-

- Confidence building and Personal development
- Team work
- Time management
- Travelling training
- Food
- Lifestyle
- Jobs and C.V introduction
- Customer Services and Employment
- Childcare availability
- Where to access ongoing support so they can sustain employment

We are working with Adult Community Learning to tailor the curriculum so it is modern, interactive and fits the methods required to secure employment in current times.

Black and Minority Ethnic residents (including Reach+ ESOL and refugee support project participants) will benefit from this support over the next 12 months.

Proposal To seek formal approval to commence delivery of the project across the city from September 2021.

Action by Acting Head of Regeneration Investment and Housing

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Strategic Director - Place
- Head of Law and Regulation – Monitoring Officer
- Head of Finance – Chief Finance Officer
- Head of People and Business Change

Signed

Background

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has identified gaps in project delivery for Black and Minority Ethnic residents who require bespoke employability support.

DWP have identified the following areas where additional support/work needs to be undertaken:-

- Need to engage Black and Minority Ethnic communities who are finding it difficult to access our services whether due to English being their second language or cultural barriers.
- Identify transferrable skills and qualifications and their relevance to the current labour market
- Provide support to overcome barriers, such as practical English language, which will enable Black and Minority Ethnic communities to better engage with the labour market, support them for interviews, communicate with team members, highlight personal responsibilities as an employee.
- Provide tailored support to reflect their language needs, motivation and confidence
- Identification of secondary barriers to overcome e.g. for women this could relate to use of child care
- Understand and address perceived barriers to learning, volunteering and employment
- Develop close working relationships with DWP Work Coaches

DWP award Newport City Council £56,680 funding, under the Flexible Support Fund Programme, to help address the above. The Council's Work & Skills Team will work alongside NCC Adult Community Learning, to deliver a programme that address the above requirements over a 12-month period.

The outcomes and targets for this project will measure the following:-

- Increase in confidence of participants
- Better use of existing/transferrable skills
- Improved understanding of how to job search
- Improved understanding of help available
- Improved confidence in speaking to their Work Coach, seeking advice
- Numbers going into learning, attending job interviews, job applications
- Job Entries
- Improved understanding of various support available e.g. different child care options and funding to support

Approval is sought to accept the funding offered by the Department of Work and Pensions, and begin delivery from September 2021 onwards.

Financial Summary

The finances model for this project is set out for the life of the delivery (12 months).

Item of Expenditure	£
Venue/room hire for delivery of training	15,000
£300 x 50 days	
Community Tutor Grade 7 : 0.5 FTW	20,000
Economic Inactivity Work Grade 5 : 0.5 FTE	16,000
Laptops 2x £500 per laptop	1,000
Mobile phones 2x £235 per mobile	470
Mobile Phone Monthly fees - £8.75 x 2= £17.50 x 12	210
Project costs :-	
Accreditation £600/Printing £2500/Postage £400/Staff Training £500	4,000

GRAND TOTAL	56,680
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Both salaries included in the above are inclusive of on-cost, and are costed at mid-point. The posts are fixed term for 12 months.

The tutor will be supplied by Adult Community Learning and they will provide classroom and online learning for the project participants.

The Economic Inactivity Worker will liaise with DWP, Triage workers and project participants to ensure that the project achieves its outcomes.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Referrals are lower than expected, this could reduce monthly and overall payments	High	Medium	We will work with DWP, partner organisations, Neighbourhood Hub Triage workers to promote the project so we can obtain the required referrals.	?
Impact on existing work and skills projects (C4W, Journey to Work, Skills at Wil), if staff transfer to Re-start, which has a longer lifespan	Low	Low	This project will offer additional support to current projects, helping to develop participants' skills so they can successfully complete accredited qualifications and secure employment.	Strategic Lead – Work & Skills
Covid may also affect the amount of face to face engagement with participants	Medium	Medium	Delivery staff can offer digital appointments but these have proven to be less effective on other similar programmes	Strategic Lead – Work & Skills

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Participation on this project and supporting people into employment will contribute to the Aspirational People, Resilient Communities and Thriving City themes within the corporate plan. Participation will also contribute to achieving the following well-being goals:

1. improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities;
2. promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment;
3. enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient;
4. Build cohesive and sustainable communities.

DWP Restart Programme provides interventions that address the well-being objectives adopted by Newport City Council from the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and will seek to maximise the contribution to the achievement of the seven Well-being Goals for Wales by;

- Improving the skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities (Objective 1)
- Promoting economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment (Objective 2)
- Enabling people to be healthy, independent and resilient (Objective 3)
- Building cohesive and sustainable communities (Objective 4)

Options Available and considered

To agree to deliver the project

Agree not to deliver the project

Preferred Option and Why

To deliver the project in Newport to assist the residents of Newport into sustained employment thereby supporting the City's economic growth and regeneration. Newport has many years of experience and a robust infrastructure of delivering employment programmes with excellent results

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The financial model included in this report sets out the planned spend and demonstrates that this project will be fully funded by the Black Ethnic Minority Grant. Any increases to a particular line of expenditure over the life of the project will need to be offset with reduced spend elsewhere within the grant, thus there will be no impact on core revenue budgets.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. Delivery of the ESOL employability training to Black and Minority Ethnic residents in Newport, utilising the DWP grant funding, is in accordance with the Council's general well-being powers under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. The grant funding includes the cost of two fixed time posts and there could be redundancy implications if the posts are terminated when the funding is discontinued and there is no suitable alternative employment available for the post-holders. However, as the posts are only for a fixed term of 12 months, then new starters will not have accrued any redundancy entitlement at the end of this period and, therefore, there would be no financial implications for the Council.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

The programme has the potential to provide both economic and social well-being benefits to participants, their families and the wider community.

The report writer has fully considered the Well-being Goals the council's Well-being objectives and the sustainable development principle of the Well-being of Future Generations Act when developing this report.

The report requests the creation of additional employees as a result of adopting the DWP Black and Minority Ethnic ESOL Employability Grant. There is no direct impact on existing members of the team and recruitment to be undertaken to find suitable applicants to fulfil the roles.

It should be noted that should employees accrue more than two years continuous service with a Local Authority, or those covered by the Modification Order, the employees would be eligible to receive a redundancy payment of which the Council will be liable to fund.

Comments of Cabinet Member

Cabinet Member has been briefed on this report.

Scrutiny Committees

N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities.

Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act is not overly prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take to ensure due regard, although it does set out that due regard to advancing equality involves: removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

The Black and Minority Ethnic ESOL Employability Grant is a Department of Work and Pensions backed initiative and does not impact children and families directly and therefore there has been no targeted consultation specifically aimed at gaining the views of children and young people. Nevertheless, the broad aims of the project in improving life chances and the economic wellbeing of the long term unemployed will have an indirect impact.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

A prosperous Wales: The Black and Minority Ethnic ESOL Employability Grant is designed specifically to help people into work to enable its target group to lead more prosperous and rewarding lives. The project focusses on the Black and Minority Ethnic residents who are unemployed and is a results based project

A healthier Wales: Finding work for Black and Minority Ethnic unemployed will have a number of benefits particularly to self-esteem and wellbeing. Regular work may also break cycles damaging behaviours and improve home life for some benefitting a wider family group.

A more equal Wales: Breaking the cycle of unemployment will help create a more equal Wales and help people feel more involved and being a stakeholder in the system.

A resilient Wales: The greater the number of people in work for more vibrant the economy which in-turn helps create resilience in the economy and in our communities. Once in work it is much easier to stay in work in-turn helping people falling back in to worklessness.

The proposed policy support's the ways of working expressed in the Future Generations Act as follows:

Long-Term: The Black and Minority Ethnic ESOL Employability Grant targets the impact of long-term unemployment and help change people's lives for the better. The results payments are partly based on the quality of employment, and the impact of participation will make a difference to some of the clients and the potential to change their life chances for the long term.

Preventive: The prospect of moving Black and Minority Ethnic unemployed people into stable employment provides the opportunity to make life changes that prevent a range of mental health issues, provide structure in otherwise potentially chaotic lifestyles and build self-confidence and a sense of wellbeing. For some involvement may avoid slipping into criminality.

Integration: The employment advisor will sit alongside colleagues offering a range of support to people seeking work enabling a more joined up approach to work and skills support.

Collaboration and Involvement: Newport's Black and Minority Ethnic ESOL Employability Grant offer will be delivered through the hub network and will benefit through the integration with other community-accessed services

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

Consultation

Comments received from wider consultation, including comments from elected members, are detailed in each application report in the attached schedule.

Background Papers

None

Dated: 29 September 2021