

To: BELLSHILL LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP		Subject: NORTH LANARKSHIRE'S YOUTH INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - UPDATE
From: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES		
Date: 18 TH JANUARY 2013	Ref: PJ/GR	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Bellshill Local Area Partnership on the Youth Investment Programme.

2. Background

- 2.1 North Lanarkshire like many areas in Scotland is facing a significant challenge with high youth unemployment, a lack of local jobs, lack of confidence in business community and cuts in public sector spending. Despite this, North Lanarkshire Council and its partners are determined to do whatever can be done now, to prevent the long term damage that we know youth unemployment can cause to individuals and communities.
- 2.2 In February 2012, the Regeneration Committee approved an additional investment of £1.7 million to tackle youth unemployment in the area. The proposal set out an ambition to support 5000 people back into work over three years and set out a resource requirement that would increase the number of opportunities for young people in North Lanarkshire.
- 2.3 In March, the Minister for Youth Employment announced North Lanarkshire would be among six "hot spot" areas to receive additional funding. North Lanarkshire's allocation of £1.825 million was the second highest in Scotland behind Glasgow.
- 2.4 This funding has allowed the launch of the "Youth Investment Programme", with the objective to secure resources in subsequent years to provide for a three year programme to 2015.

3. The Youth Investment Programme

- 3.1 The programme offers employers an incentive to recruit young, unemployed residents of North Lanarkshire. The programme is designed to support businesses financially to create additional job opportunities. There are three strands to the programme:
- Apprenticeships (16-24 years) – 50% of wages for 12 months
 - Xtra Hands (16-18 years) – 50% of wages for six months
 - New Start (18+) – 50% of wages for six months
- 3.2 The target for the Youth Investment Programme is to support 5000 unemployed residents back to work over 3 years. The targets are broken down as follows:
- Apprenticeships, Xtra Hands and New Start will provide 1200 jobs a year. The balance will then be made up of North Lanarkshire Council's own apprenticeship scheme along with young people we support into employment without an attached wage subsidy.

- The programme will cost £5 million annually to deliver. Additional investment has been required but schemes such as the council's apprenticeship scheme were already in existence and funded.

3.3 Regeneration Services are managing the Youth Investment Programme and staff promote several key messages to employers:

- There must be the chance of a sustainable job.
- The young person must be unemployed and resident in North Lanarkshire.
- The job needs to be advertised through the Council.
- The employer will be expected to appoint a mentor.
- Support is available if there are problems

3.4 Agencies working with young unemployed residents are being asked to promote key messages to young people about the scheme, they should:

- Check the website www.northlanarkshiresworking.co.uk
- Apply for jobs online where you meet the criteria.
- Engage with Careers or Routes to Work Ltd.
- Still be competitive in the jobs market.
- Don't rely on this opportunity, it is only part of the solution.

A number of key target groups have been identified for the programme – such as young people leaving school to negative destinations and young people who have progressed from training courses but need that extra help into employment. The objective is to get a balance between helping those most in need and providing employers with job ready candidates.

3.5 Since the launch of the Youth Investment Programme, work has continued to develop new programmes, with a particular focus on what more the council can do as an employer. Due to the financial restrictions, it is clearly difficult for the council to provide new and additional jobs, however it can play a role in terms of providing quality and long term work experience which will assist young people in their journey back to work. Additional resources have been identified to fund 200 six-month work placements for young people and 30 graduate internships. These opportunities will be targeted at particular groups who are suffering significant disadvantage in the labour market such as long-term unemployed. It is hoped this scheme can be launched early in 2013.

4. Youth Investment Programme/Bellshill Local Area Partnership

4.1 The unemployment rate in Bellshill is 6.6% which is higher than both the North Lanarkshire average of 5.8% and the Scottish average of 4.3%.

The youth unemployment rate in Bellshill is 10.6% which is higher than both the North Lanarkshire average which is 10.1% and the Scottish average of 7.1%.

4.2 The Youth Investment Programme was launched in late February but has already secured 770 job and apprentice opportunities for unemployed residents. There is a natural time lag in filling vacancies and reporting on them and to date, 683 unemployed residents have now been supported through the scheme.

To date, 97 of the people supported into employment have come from the Bellshill LAP area and the break down is as follows:

	Youth unemployment	Number of people into jobs through YIP
Bellshill	11.8%	46
Mossend and Holytown	12.3%	35
Thorniewood	7.6%	16

4.3 The figures show that the Bellshill LAP area as a whole seems to have had an appropriate share of the Youth Investment jobs to date, however it is early days for the programme. The initial results perhaps do show a need to focus efforts on the Mossend and Holytown area, to ensure this high unemployment area fully benefits from the programme. It is proposed to take this issue to the Local Area Team to promote partnership involvement. Additionally the key stakeholders - Skills Development Scotland, Job Centre Plus and RoutestTo Work, will undertake to promote the programme as far as is possible in such areas of particular need.

4.4 There are a number of ways in which local area partnerships and in particular the Local Area Team can assist in delivering the objectives of the Youth Investment Programme.

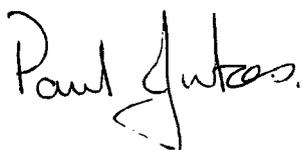
- Promote to employers.
- Promote to young people in most need.
- Assist registration and applications.
- Get young people motivated and "job ready".

5. Conclusions

5.1 The Youth Investment Programme has made encouraging early progress, however, targets remain challenging in the current economic climate. Regeneration Services require the support of all stakeholders and partners to make this a success and are open to feedback from partners on how the programme can be improved.

6. Recommendation

6.1 It is recommended that the Local Area Partnership note the content of this report and refer to the Local Area Team for action.



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For further information on this report please contact Greig Robson on 07734595682

24th October 2012