

To: COATBRIDGE LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP		Subject: FLEXIBLE SUPPORT FUND ACTIVITY IN COATBRIDGE
From: HEAD OF PLANNING & REGENERATION		
Date: 29 JULY 2014	Ref: HG/IH	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to respond to specific requests for information on the performance in Coatbridge of the Council's Flexible Support Fund 2 contract with DWP which ran between November 2013 and June 2014. This is additional employability activity over and above the services provided through North Lanarkshire's Working and the Youth Investment Programme which is the subject of a separate report to all area committees.

2. Flexible Support Fund 2

- 2.1 Following the delivery of a Flexible Support Fund (FSF) contract with DWP between September 2012 and March 2013 when Jobcentre Plus clients accessed North Lanarkshire's Working services, the Council was invited to apply for further FSF monies, but aimed at specific issues which hampered the employment prospects of local people, which included:

- Digital Exclusion
- Lack of awareness of the world of work
- Lack of confidence and motivation

- 2.2 To address these issues, local community organisations based throughout North Lanarkshire were appointed to deliver IT element because of their links to the local community and the range of additional services they delivered, including access to further IT support, either individually or in groups; job club provision within the centres; or other training opportunities and childcare support as well as access to a Routes to Work key worker or a Jobcentre Plus adviser. The community venues chosen to deliver the support were:

- Airdrie /Coatbridge - The SAGE Centre
- Coatbridge - Kirkshaws Neighbourhood Centre
- Bellshill - Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre
- Shotts - Shotts Healthy Living Centre/Getting Better Together
- Cumbernauld - Cornerstone
- Motherwell - LAMH Recycle
- Wishaw - North Lanarkshire Arts Association

- 2.3 A training organisation was appointed to deliver a work awareness course called "Work!" and a motivation and confidence course called "Up For It" in all of the venues outlined above.

3. Outcomes

- 3.1 94 IT courses were delivered across all six community venues between 11 November 2013 and 4 April 2014. 553 people started the courses and 524 people completed them.
- 3.2 22 "Work!" courses were delivered over the same time period with 118 starts and 117 completers.
- 3.3 18 "Up for It" courses were delivered over the same time period with 119 starts and 116 completers.
- 3.4 In total, in less than a five month period (taking account of the festive break), 134 courses were delivered for 757 completers.
- 3.5 All course participants were referred to Routes to Work, but Jobcentre Plus made an additional 177 referrals directly to Routes to Work, giving a total of 934 FSF2 clients for the duration of the programme..

4. Flexible Support Fund in Coatbridge

- 4.1 39 residents from the Coatbridge LAP attended "Work!" courses and 24 residents attended "Up For It" courses. 54 residents attended IT courses delivered at Kirkshaws Neighbourhood Centre and the SAGE Centre.
- 4.2 By April 2014 all these clients were referred to Routes to Work for additional key worker support, and access to a range of North Lanarkshire's Working barrier removal services that will help them secure further training, support or employment. An additional 37 Coatbridge LAP residents were referred directly to Routes to Work from Jobcentre Plus advisers and despite the short period of engagement, 9 clients have already entered employment.
- 4.3 Routes to Work registration and job outcome figures for June 2014 are not yet available which means that to the end of May 2014, 154 residents from the Coatbridge LAP area took part in FSF activities. The 154 participants represents a 16.5% share of the overall North Lanarkshire FSF figure of 934 which is reflective of an even allocation across the whole of the Council area.
- 4.4 Participation rates were as follows:

	Coatbridge South	Coatbridge West	Coatbridge North and Glenboig
IT	19	19	16
Work!	10	13	16
Up For It	7	9	8
Key Worker	14	13	10
Total	50	54	50

5. Further Developments

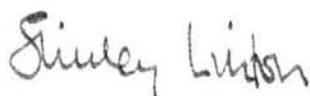
- 5.1 Work is currently underway to submit a tender to DWP to deliver services within a third FSF contract aimed at supporting Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) clients towards employability and it is envisaged that some of these services will be delivered in the Coatbridge area.

5.2 Following the experience with delivery in Kirkshaws, the Council has been able to support a Scottish Government "Brighter Futures" programme being delivered by Kirkshaws Neighbourhood Centre. This programme offers 10 weeks employability training followed by a paid work placement. The Council's intervention means that the placements can run for nine months instead of six with priority given to unemployed residents from Coatbridge.

6. Recommendation

6.1 This report provides information as requested. FSF delivery took place from the 11 November 2013 to the 5 April 2014, with additional key worker support being delivered by Routes to Work to the end of June 2014.

6.2 It is recommended that the Local Area Partnership note the content of this report.



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For further information on this report please contact Ian Hunter on 01236 638955

2 June 2014