

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Enterprise and Growth Committee

approval noting

Ref

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Parental Employability Support Fund Update

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Executive Summary

The Parental Employability Support Fund update seeks to inform the Enterprise and Growth Committee of the background to and the current status of the programme.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Enterprise and Growth Committee:

- (1) Consider and note the contents of this report.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority Improve economic opportunities and outcomes

Ambition statement (5) Grow and improve the sustainability and diversity of North Lanarkshire's economy

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council is the lead partner in a number of employability programmes and initiatives that deliver support to unemployed and underemployed residents of North Lanarkshire and currently attract external funding from the European Social Fund, the Scottish Government's No One Left Behind initiative and the Glasgow City Region City Deal. The programmes which are supported by external funds all have the aim of supporting those residents of North Lanarkshire who have multiple barriers to entering employment or securing increases in the rewards from employment for those who are underemployed. These are all delivered under the banner of *North Lanarkshire's Working*.
- 1.2 The programme detailed below will be delivered in the wider context of The Plan for North Lanarkshire and play a role in the Council's inclusive growth and tackling poverty work.

2. Report

2.1 Parental Employability Support Fund

- 2.1.1 The Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) is designed to support low income families to increase their income through work, both through supporting parents to access paid employment and in helping those in lower paid jobs to progress to higher income.
- 2.1.2 The Scottish Government has allocated £12 million from its Tackling Child Poverty Fund to a Parental Employability Support Fund, distributed to Local Authorities until March 2022. North Lanarkshire Council's allocation is £814,000, with 35% of funding to be allocated to unemployed clients (£284,900) and 65% to those in employment but who are underemployed (£529,100).

2.2 North Lanarkshire's Approach

- 2.2.1 The project will have two specific strands, with an offer for parents who are unemployed as well as those who are in employment but have been identified as being underemployed or in low paid employment. There are also priority groups of parents for the funding and these are those where children are more likely to be in poverty. These are lone parents, a parent with a disability, those with 3 or more children, minority ethnic parents, parents whose youngest child is less than one and parents who are under 25 years of age.
- 2.2.2 The main focus of the project will be around employability, with each client being allocated a Case Worker, or an In Work Support Worker depending on their employment status. The real difference that this project will make is the links with the Council's Financial Inclusion Team, whereby every client will be offered welfare rights and debt and money advice to ensure that they are in the best position possible in terms of their employability and financial situation.
- 2.2.3 A range of other support and interventions will also be available to the client through North Lanarkshire's Working Employability Pipeline, such as access to the Childcare Development Fund, Discretionary Fund, health interventions and training.

- 2.2.4 Once the client is job ready they will have access to vacancies sourced by North Lanarkshire Council's Employability Team, in particular with Living Wage employers, who will be granted a wage subsidy to incentivise them.
- 2.25 The project is in the planning stages at the moment. Key personnel have been identified from the Council's Employability Team, Financial Inclusion Team and Routes to Work Limited.
- 2.2.6 This funding will play a role in supporting the Council's Child Poverty Action Plan, a project action plan is currently being developed in conjunction with the Council's Financial Inclusion Team and other stakeholders to ensure that the Parental Employability Support Fund in North Lanarkshire has real and sustainable benefits for our communities.

3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 Fairer Scotland Duty

Assessment not required.

3.2 Equality Impact Assessment

Assessment not required.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Impact

The Parental Employability Support Fund is fully funded by the Scottish Government, with match funding being utilised from EU Funds where necessary where there are ineligible costs.

4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact

There are no HR/Policy or legislative impacts.

4.3 Environmental Impact

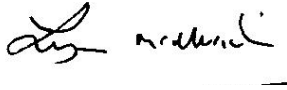
There are no environmental impacts.

4.4 Risk Impact

The risk management of North Lanarkshire Council's externally funded employability programmes is incorporated within the Council's risk register which is reviewed on a regular basis.

5. Measures of success

- 5.1 North Lanarkshire Council continues to play a leading role in supporting unemployed residents into employment.
 - 5.2 The Council's employability programmes play a significant role in supporting inclusive growth and tackling poverty in North Lanarkshire.
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Head of Communities