

Responses to Scrutiny Review Recommendations

Report to Overview Committee

Title of the review: **Reducing Unemployment in Gedling Borough**

Date review completed: 15 December 2014

Date Presented to Cabinet: 12 February 2015

Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Hollingsworth

Chair of the review group: Councillor Bailey

Officer supporting the review: Jane Ansell/Helen Lee

Response due to the Overview Committee (28 days): 20th July 2015

Guidance

The final report and recommendations from the above review have been considered by Cabinet and a written response to the recommendations from the responsible Cabinet Member to the Overview Committee is required within twenty eight days of the date the review was presented to Cabinet.

If you need any further assistance in completing this response please contact the Officer that supported the review

Recommendation 1

In creating a seven-year EU (and other) funding strategy, consideration should be given to:

- An initiative to build on work with schools, targeting children from 12 -13 years of age upwards with access to careers advice and bridging skills to employment.
- Development of outreach/referral links and voluntary sector placement agreements with local voluntary organisations, establishing a conduit to mainstream training and employment opportunities.

- Consider the feasibility of using local community facilities such as the Newstead Centre and St Georges Centre as business incubation units and venues for employability training.
- Social Enterprise development linked to the Localities initiatives taking account of the above, with advice and support from Social Enterprise Link.

To be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☐ Partly accepted ☒ Do not accept ☐

Work is already underway to seek our European and other funding opportunities more strategically. Examples include the recent bid for direct funding through the ERASMUS+ programme to support the expansion of apprenticeships in the Borough. However, there remains a need occasionally to be opportunistic and to respond to funding opportunities as they arise and funding streams do change. Moreover, the Council's own Medium Term Financial Strategy looks forward five years. Therefore a 7 year strategy is not supported.

A project to target young people in Year 10 improving careers advice and job skills is being progressed through the National Careers Service with Gedling BC funding. All secondary schools in the Borough (and Joseph Whitaker School given around a third of its intake are from the Borough) are taking part in an Employability Audit during June/July and it is hoped that as a result all Year 10 students in the schools will soon have a full CV and have attended a mock interview. Precise details will depend on the outcomes of each audit.

When developing employability training in partnership with providers, location is always considered and delivery in the local community would always be our first choice location. When looking at venues community centre already especially like St. Georges where there is an onsite IT suite would be an ideal venue.

The Centres mentioned here are neither managed nor owned by Gedling Borough Council and other than the offices leased by our locality coordinators Gedling do not provide an ongoing income to them. However, we are in discussion with the Centre Manager at St Georges Centre to explore more collaborative working and it is possible that a pre-employment course focusing on basic skills will be hosted there in the near future. Further events may follow.

We have also looked at the potential to support a business incubation facility somewhere in the borough. The funding available to do this would come from external European funding and it would be the criteria attached to that which would dictate location. However it is recognised that there is a need for smaller flexible office spaces within the borough and this is something that both the Economic Development teams and Planning service are aware of and consider when looking at both land use and planning applications.

Recommendation 2

Improve access to jobseeker services, jobs, training and employment for Newstead residents, especially young people, by:

- Recognising where they currently attend school and college and access jobseeker services, which include Mansfield and Sutton in Ashfield, and raise awareness of more local alternatives.
- Making contact with the schools for which Newstead is part of the catchment area, specifically the Annie Holgate Academy and the National Church of England School, and linking those schools into the work of the Gedling Employment and Skills Group.
- Approaching Kirkby College and West Nottinghamshire College to join the Employment and Skills Group network, as Newstead young people attend those colleges.
- Examining how well served Newstead is in respect of inter district and cross borough travel.

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☐ Partly Accepted ☒ Do not accept ☐

We are working with the Newstead Locality Co-ordinator on a range of related activities in Newstead and will encourage development of an understanding of where Newstead residents access school, college and job seeker services where this has not already happened. We will look at whether the schools mentioned might want to be part of the Employment and Skills Group, though it should be realised that the students involved represent a very small cohort of each of these schools' intake, so more direct and ongoing liaison with the schools may be more efficient and effective. We will also continue to engage with Mansfield and Ashfield's equivalent of the Employment and Skills Group, monitoring activity which serves the Newstead catchment. West Notts College is now represented at the Employment and Skills Group.

We promote Jobs and Apprenticeship fairs being held in the Borough in the schools and colleges mentioned. Recognising Newstead's geographical position, we also promote Jobs and Apprenticeship Fairs being held in Hucknall to Newstead residents through the Locality Co-ordinator. We will approach Ashfield DC to explore whether they would be interested in rolling out the recent work employability work we have recently funded for Gedling Borough schools to the Ashfield schools mentioned, funded on a pro-rata basis.

In terms of connectivity, for a village of its size, Newstead is well served by public transport, with a regular bus service to Hucknall, Bulwell and Nottingham to the south and to Kirkby, Sutton and Mansfield to the north, in addition to train services

on the Robin Hood Line. It is true that cross-borough (i.e. across Gedling) travel opportunities are not available but that is largely a reflection of geography and the fact that local people are more likely to want and need to access services and facilities as locally as possible – which for Newstead tends towards Hucknall and Kirkby as outlined above. We will investigate to see whether any of the college bus services provided by West Notts College serve the Newstead area.

Recommendation 3

Help to address the Education and Employment needs of Forces and Ex Forces residents within the Employment and Skills group delivery plan, with specialist Forces Employment Support agencies such as **Remploy Veterans** represented on the Employment and Skills network.

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☒ Partly Accepted ☐ Do not accept ☐

We will carry out some further work to ensure that the needs of forces and ex-forces residents are reflected in the Employment and Skills delivery plan, where those needs are distinct from those of the wider community. This will include exploring whether job centres serving Gedling Borough have a work coach leading on engagement with ex-forces clients and whether any incentives are on offer to employers.

We will engage with agencies including the Royal British Legion and Remploy working with current and former service personnel and their families, encouraging their involvement with the Employment and Skills Group.

Recommendation 4

Continue to monitor rising youth unemployment in Carlton and seek out opportunities to extent job-seeking services to young residents of that area.

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☒ Partly Accepted ☐ Do not accept ☐

We continue to monitor youth unemployment in Carlton as we do for the whole Borough at each Employment and Skills Group meeting and are working with a range of agencies to ensure job-seeking services are fully available to residents of that area. Specifically, we are also looking to further improve engagement with the Nottingham City job centre which serves residents in these areas.

Young people attending schools in the Carlton area will benefit from our programme of Employability Audits and follow-up work, which is likely to see all Year 10 students have an up to date CV and interview training. Where new development subject to

Local Employment Agreements is progressed, we always reference the needs of the relevant local ward. We are also working with the development partner for Gedling Colliery to ensure construction and related opportunities on that site are promoted to local residents.

Recommendation 5

The partnership to undertake medium term tracking of the destination of individuals taking up local apprenticeships, to help support the continual progression of those young people that we have invested in.

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☒ Partly Accepted ☐ Do not accept ☐

We fully recognise the value of tracking the employment destinations of local people taking up apprenticeships but this has proved problematic in the past. We are strengthening our engagement with the National Apprenticeship Service to try to progress this and we also ask colleges represented on the Employment and Skills to provide numbers of Gedling residents on apprentices courses. We will look to strengthen this in our engagement with colleges going forward.

Recommendation 6

The Council and Employment and Skills partnership to consider creating and specifically promoting an employment, placement and training scheme in Social Care to raise the profile and importance of care work. This would increase take-up of jobs and training in that sector, foster intergenerational respect and understanding address the needs of our aging population and engage the voluntary sector

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☐ Partly Accepted ☒ Do not accept ☐

There are close links between Gedling Borough Council and the Job Centre so opportunities within social care can be highlighted. The jobs fair taking place in July will have representation from care providers highlighting the opportunities within social care locally. We will continue to work with partners on the Employment and Skills group including the job centre to promote both employment and training opportunities. These could include opportunities like a sector based work academy if there is a client demand.

Recommendation 7

Consideration to be given to ways in which organisations such as Gedling Homes, NNE CCG / Park House Clinic and Schools could be linked up to create work experience, mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities for young people in social care, repairs and maintenance and business administration/customer service.

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☐ Partly Accepted ☒ Do not accept ☐

All three employers listed can and will be approached to explore possibilities for them to be involved in delivery of the Gedling Menu of training and work experience opportunities. Gedling Homes and CCG have both previously submitted applications into the Gedling grant. Work experience opportunities can also be explored as we take forward the YouNG project in Gedling, though safeguarding issues can limit availability of some opportunities in schools and health care.

Recommendation 8

Consider linking a PR campaign about the importance of Social Care to a Carers category within the proposed 'Pride of Gedling' Community Award scheme.

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☐ Partly Accepted ☒ Do not accept ☐

We have included Good Neighbour and Outstanding Community Project awards in the 2015 Pride of Gedling Awards which include potential awards for outstanding carers. We will ask the Awards Panel to consider a more specific award for the 2016 programme.

Recommendation 9

Create high visibility links to ring fenced job opportunities, placements and apprenticeships on the Council's website.

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☐ Partly Accepted ☒ Do not accept ☐

Although it is not normally possible to “ring fence” jobs or placements for application only by Gedling Borough residents, where appropriate we do use wording in our advertisements to encourage application from local residents. Normally, placements and apprenticeships are either unpaid or low-paid and as such the candidate pool self-selects to be local in nature as high travel costs are prohibitive. We are creative in our use of advertising media appropriate to the type of job or placement being advertised and would normally expect to use our website as well as other existing social media channels run through our Communications Team.

Recommendation 10

As part of the skills audit of Members planned following the May 2015 local election, details of Councillors appointments to School Governing Boards to be gathered and shared with the Employment and Skills group to enable Members to support and advocate the work of the group. **(Referred to the Elections and Members Services Team).**

Part 1 – to be completed after the report has been presented to Cabinet

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted ☒ Partly Accepted ☐ Do not accept ☐

This information will be collected when a Member skills audit is undertaken and communicated to the Employment and Skills group at that time.