

HOUSING AND ANTI-POVERTY SCRUTINY PANEL	DATE 11 October 2018	ITEM NO 6
TITLE Corporate Employment and Enterprise Programmes	WARD(S) All	
CHIEF OFFICER Assistant Director for Employment and Skills	CABINET MEMBER Adult's Social Care, Health & Anti-Poverty	

I. **Purpose of Report**

- I.1 To update the Housing and Anti-Poverty Scrutiny Panel on progress and key achievements of the Corporate Employment Projects – Greenwich Local Labour Programme (GLLP), and the Highways Improvement Local Labour Schemes (HILLS).
- I.2 To note there is a projected underspend of (£2m) and a proposal is being prepared to support the continuation of the GLLP programme beyond March 2019 in line with Fairness Commission's recommendation. This will be subject to formal consideration.
- I.3 This could fund an additional 150 FTE placements beyond the 300 FTE, which the programme will deliver by March 2019.
- I.4 The proposal will also include work to support the roll out of Universal Credit (UC); improve access to apprenticeships opportunities, and support delivery of wider Fairness Commission Recommendations.
- I.5 The Panel is asked to note that resulting efficiencies have already been used to continue investment in the Council's E-Business Programme for a further 3 years to 2020.
- I.6 The first phase of the E-Business Programme, successfully supported over 700 local SMEs to embrace opportunities created by digital commerce and online trading. It resulted in over £17 million increased business turnover, over 1,000 jobs safeguarded and over 100 new jobs created in the borough.

2. **Introduction and Summary**

2.1 **Greenwich Local Labour Programme (GLLP)**

2.2 In 2016, the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) agreed a three-year funding package. This included £6.75m to fund the continuation of the Greenwich Local Labour Programme (GLLP) to deliver 300 full time equivalent paid supported work placements by 2019.

2.3 This followed the success of the first phase of the programme established in 2013, which over 3 years supported 392 participants. This included 103 apprenticeships ring-fenced and targeted to disadvantaged young residents leaving care, in supported housing and those out of work for 6 months or more.

2.4 The primary aim of the GLLP was to support those in poverty or at risk of falling into poverty by mitigating against the worst effects of government welfare reforms e.g. the benefit cap and under occupancy. The programme also provided priority placements for Families 1st (Troubled Families) clients.

2.5 In the second phase the eligibility criteria was expanded to include residents affected by a broader range of poverty indicators, including the very long-term unemployed 3 years plus, residents on health-related benefits, those at risk of homeless and older residents.

2.6 As at 31/08/18, phase 2 has delivered 281 opportunities, equivalent to 241 FTE placements – further intakes are due in October and November and the programme is on track to deliver 300 FTE placements by March 2019.

2.7 **Highways Improvement Local Labour Scheme (HILLS)**

2.8 Cabinet agreed on 11th December 2013 to allocate £5m funding resources to support an accelerated programme of repairs and improvements to the borough's local roads and pavements.

2.9 Alongside this enhanced programme of road improvements, approximately £1.1m was allocated to develop a training and local labour component. This created further employment opportunities for unemployed local residents, particularly targeted at young people, a key priority target group in the Council's Anti-poverty strategy.

2.10 The HILLS programme provides a four-week pre-placement training programme, which includes a range of accredited training such as

Construction Safety Certification Scheme (CSCS), Safe Working at Heights, Street Works Unit 2. On completion of the training, successful participants secured a placement with the Royal Borough's highways maintenance contractor (JB Riney) or the street lighting contractor at the time (Bouygues) or were placed within a Highways administration role in the council.

- 2.11 HILLs participants have made a vital contribution to a number of major road improvement programmes including the Eltham High Streets Improvement. Future HILLs participants will work on the Plumstead Town Centre Improvements, which forms part of the Council's successful "Embrace the Change" regeneration programme, funded by the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund.
- 2.12 The HILLs project met and exceeded its targets and 131 streets had improvement works completed between 2014 and 2017. Over this same period, the programme trained 112 residents. Of these 91 (82%) moved into further employment.
- 2.13 As a legacy of the project, and in recognition of the overall success of HILLs, the Highways department secured an additional £750k per annum of revenue funding for the continuation of the scheme. This includes a small amount set aside to fund participants' wages.
- 2.14 Both GLLP and HILLs offer supported paid placements. These are six month fixed term contracts paid at London Living Wage (currently £10.20 per hour).

3. **Welfare Reform and Referral Partnership**

- 3.1 In early 2013, the Council established a dedicated, multi-disciplinary team to contact and offer support to households affected by the Total Benefit Cap and social sector size criteria. The Welfare Reform Team (WRT), includes GLLaB staff and in the first phase there were JCP employment advisers working alongside Housing staff. The WRT has a strong focus on helping individuals on a path to sustainable employment.
- 3.2 Referral partnerships include Welfare Rights Service; the Point Housing Options and Support Services (HOSS), which refer residents facing homelessness to the scheme.
- 3.3 Since 2013, 1,162 households have had been affected by the Total Benefit Cap (TBC), the highest weekly cap to date is £312.27 worse off. The WRT has carried out 760 assessments with TBC affected households. Of those

assessed, 329 have started employment or long-term training including 174 that completed a GLLP placement.

- 3.4 To date the WRT have assessed a total of 631 households affected by the under-occupation charge. Of these, 141 have started employment or long-term training including 96 that completed a GLLP placement.
- 3.5 The overall onward employment for TBC and under occupancy residents assisted through GLLP placements is 77% and 73% respectively.

4. **Paid Support Work Experience Placements**

- 4.1. The majority of GLLP placements are in environmental roles, which include Waste Operatives; Street Cleansers in town centres, rapid response teams dedicated to tackling environmental crime; Gardeners and Park-Rangers in the borough's parks and open spaces; and Caretakers on Council housing estates. Providing placements in these roles has meant the Council has been able to deliver additional public realm enhancements to the Borough. Placements in administrative roles are hosted across the Council, including Housing Options and Support Services (HOSS), Planning, the Contact Centre and Registrars.
- 4.2. Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) placements were added for the second phase to offer a broader range of placements for economically inactive residents, such as those on health and disability related benefits for whom physically demanding roles in the Council's environmental services might not be suitable.
- 4.3. To date over 60 VCS placements have been hosted by third sector organisations including: Clockhouse Community Centre, Greenwich Citizens Advice Bureau, Greenwich Migrant Hub (within Greenwich Housing Rights), Middle Park Community Centre, The Forum and Volunteer Centre Greenwich.
- 4.4. This has added value to the programme and delivered wider community benefit. For example, a HER Centre client referred to GLLP was hosted by Greenwich Migrant Hub within Greenwich Housing Rights. Before the end of her placement Greenwich Migrant Hub identified some funding to retain the participant in an admin support role, enabling the service to continue providing enhanced support to the community.

4.5. **Childcare Brokerage**

4.6. Because of the targeted nature of the GLLP programme, a large number of GLLP participants are from large households. Since 2013, out of the 676 placements delivered by GLLP, 223 lone parents have joined the scheme (representing 33% of all residents joining the scheme), with 66% of these gaining onward employment. There are a total of 972 children in GLLP households, contributing to the total of 1,541 residents supported.

4.7. Both programmes offer a fully comprehensive childcare advice and brokering service. This ensures that participants get good quality and affordable childcare so that this does not become a barrier to them starting or continuing on a placement. It is also key to support smooth transition into onward employment.

4.8. **Wrap Around Support**

4.9. In addition to paid supported work experience, work-based skills and experience, the scheme offers:-

- One-to-one support from dedicated Placement Coordinators in each service area for GLLP roles
- Supported job-searching, interview preparation, vocational and skills training
- Ring-fenced interviews for scheme participants with employers, negotiated by GLLaB's job brokerage team
- Dedicated childcare support and brokerage service for participants
- Working with partners to provide additional support around housing, debt, mental health and domestic violence
- Access a range of training opportunities, e.g. linked to wider GLLaB and Adult and Community Learning programme to provide opportunities to upskill and re-train.

5. **GLLP funded Apprenticeships**

5.1. The introduction of the Apprenticeship levy has led to a new approach. The service has now been brought in house, with the Council directly employing the apprentices and arranging their training.

5.2. A key part of the new scheme will be the Greenwich Direct Apprenticeships Programme. Apprentices recruited through this approach will be employed directly by the Royal Borough on fixed term placements. The contract term

will be matched to the duration of their qualification, and graded at Scale I or the LLW, whichever is higher.

- 5.3. The GLLP scheme is funding placements targeted at new entrants into the Council who need additional support and typically might not be able to secure an opportunity in a highly competitive recruitment process. Funding and new entrant apprenticeships will be ring-fenced to borough residents recruited through GLLaB.

6. **Onward employment**

- 6.1 GLLP participants are encouraged and supported to apply for onward employment in a range of organisations. Many are successful at gaining positions within the Council, with 121 successfully securing onward employment with the Royal Borough, including within Street Services, Caretaking and the Contact Centre.
- 6.2 Although participants' general preference is to remain with the Council or their host employer, they are supported with applications and interviews for a range of roles using their transferable skills. As a result, 193 of GLLP participants have successfully gained onward employment with external employers, including Peabody, Scotscape Avante Care as well as specialist roles in schools and nurseries. Overall, onward employment for the GLLP cohorts is 69%.
- 6.3 Similarly, HILLs supported 82% of training and placement completers into further employment. Jobs secured included within the Council parking and street lighting teams, Town Centre Handyman and Waste Services and with a range of external employers including: EM Highways, AEG, Alcatel, Lovell, Sainsbury's, NHS, Hyde Housing, Thames Tideway, Network Rail, and Lloyds TSB. Over 70% of jobs secured were paying at or above London Living Wage.

7. Key Achievements

Headline GLLP achievements between April 2013 and August 2018

676 residents welcomed onto the scheme so far	69% of participants have secured onward employment
174 residents were affected by the benefit cap	77% of residents affected by the benefit cap have gained onward employment
95 residents were affected by the under occupancy charge (bedroom tax)	74% of residents affected by under occupancy have gained onward employment
89 Families First clients have been recruited	including working age children of families
Average length of unemployment of scheme participants is 6 years	67% of residents previously unemployed for 5 years or more have gained onward employment
223 lone parents have joined the scheme	66% of lone parents have secured onward employment
972 children are in the households of the participants supported by GLLP	Including participants, apprentices, their partners and children, a total of 1,541 residents have been supported by the scheme.
76 residents claiming health related benefits began on the scheme	61% of participants who signed off ESA to begin GLLP have secured onward employment since leaving the scheme

8. Impact

- 8.1 The HILLs programme, has successfully delivered very targeted employment support to young residents; 87 (71%) of programme completers were aged 18-24 years old. A high number of referrals (36%) to the programme come through The Point and Youth Offending Services (YOS).
- 8.2 The GLLP scheme was independently evaluated by TANK, who specialise in assessing the impact made by organisations that deliver key public services. TANK's report states that GLLP is "a successful model of delivering tangible results" and highlights the scheme's success in breaking

down long standing barriers to employment, effective joint working, extremely positive feedback from participants and outcomes that compare very favourably with other work schemes.

- 8.3 GLLP has proved particularly effective for the very long-term unemployed; 240 (46%) of scheme participants were unemployed for 5 years or more. The average length of unemployment for these residents is 11 years. Of the 207 scheme leavers previously unemployed for 5 years or more, 139 (67%) have been supported into onward employment.
- 8.4 Both programmes continue to support and track scheme leavers for 2 years. The latest figures for GLLP reveal that of those who gained onward employment, 77% were still employed after 24 months. Onward employment outcomes for HILL participants are also impressive and have proved the schemes supports those furthest from the labour market into sustainable employment.

9. **Next Steps**

- 9.1 GLLaB has been able to deliver a number of efficiencies to the programme following the full integration of GLLP into the service in 2015. This has enabled scheme participants to take full advantage of the increased range of training from providers offered through the Council's Adult and Community Learning programme, Skills Centres and wider regeneration opportunities.
- 9.2 Savings have also been made by bringing the payroll function in-house compared to the additional costs of up to £2k per participant using Manpower.
- 9.3 The above savings, has funded a second phase of the Council's E Business Support Programme, delivered by South East Enterprise, which has been successful in supporting businesses to increase turnover, create new jobs and safeguard existing jobs.
- 9.4 The scheme could also be expanded further to support the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) that is taking place this month. UC will have wide reaching impacts on a number of council departments and further implications to resident both out of work and those employed in low-paid jobs. Corporate employment Schemes will be a key feature and offer in the new UC Support Framework.

- 9.5 The continuation of this work will be key to supporting the council's commitment and emerging social mobility strategy, which aims to
- Help when times are very hard – focusing on those on or under the absolute poverty line.
 - Opportunities out of poverty – focusing on those around the Joseph Roundtree Foundation (JRF) measure of relative poverty (60% of median incomes) who may just be making ends meet through a mix of employment and benefits.
 - Moving on and moving up – focusing on these who may be above measures of poverty but whose social mobility has stalled.
- 9.6 The programme will also continue to support the improved access to apprenticeships opportunities under the new reformed system and wider Fairness Commission recommendations.

10. **Conclusion**

- 10.1 The key successes of the scheme are the residents with the most complex needs who have been supported into sustainable employment offering good quality jobs; as the range of case studies in appendix I serves to illustrate.
- 10.2 These kinds of successes with these cohorts cannot be underestimated. We cannot forget the startling statistic that was reported by the Parliamentary Select Committee report on Incapacity Benefit (IB). This stated that someone on (IB) for more than two years, is more likely to retire or die than to ever get another job.
- 10.3 Since the Select Committee report was written, employment support allowance was introduced in 2008, with assessments based on work capability instead of personal capability. While the focus on what individuals could contribute was welcomed, experience was mixed and resulted in a high number of initial fit for work decisions being overturned at appeal.
- 10.4 What is clear is that many of the individuals and families supported through the Council's corporate employment programmes faced a bleak future. Through the GLLP and HILL programmes, the fortunes of over 760 residents who have joined the scheme have been turned around. The schemes have increased economic and social mobility, positively impacting the whole household; including participants' children and partners. The scheme has benefitted 1,642 disadvantaged residents.

Background Information

None provided

Appendix

- Appendix I - Scheme participants' information

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