

Delegated Decision Report

19th July 2021

Subject: Youth Employment Partnerships

Report of: Head of Inclusive Growth

Portfolio: Education, Inclusion and Skills

Report Summary

The overarching ambition of Youth Employment Partnerships to bring key partners together to tackle the impact of COVID-19 on youth unemployment. The Youth Employment Partnerships (YEP) which will involve NTCA, DWP, local authorities and providers of employment and skills support, will ensure any gaps in provision for young people are addressed, and there is additional capacity to improve engagement of young people. The activity will add value to the existing system of employment support for young people aged 16-24 – improving availability and access to employability and mental health services and indirectly positive outcomes associated with these for young people.

Youth Employment activity has two streams of approved funding, NTCA and DWP Flexible Support Fund (FSF) and total programme costs are identified in the table below.

Organisation	Funding amount
DWP Flexible Support Fund (FSF)	£243,324
NTCA Investment Fund	£391,500
Total costs	£634,824

Specifically, the Youth Employment programme of activity will:

- Employ 3 partnership co-ordination and 3 employer engagement roles (one of each in each Local Authority area). These roles will be funded by the DWP Flexible Support Fund and employed by the three Local Authorities or their chosen delivery partner.
- Establish a flexible small grants programme to support VCSE led community-based activities that will engage and support young people who face additional barriers to accessing mainstream employability services. This element of the programme will be supported by the NTCA Investment Fund, and will be managed by a third-party organisation, which will be procured.

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for NTCA to receive £243,324 Flexible Support Funding from DWP, entering into that agreement with DWP and the subsequent award of the funding to each of the 3 constituent Local Authorities to support Youth Employment programme activity. NTCA will retain £9,289 of FSF funding to support the programme management activity.

Reason for delegated decision:

Cabinet at its meeting on 29th September 2020 agreed to authorise the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with Investment Panel and the Portfolio Holder for Employability and Inclusion to consider business cases for funding in relation to Youth Hubs and to finalise any funding awards.

Recommendation

The Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Employability and Inclusion and Investment Panel is recommended to approve the following:

- NTCA receive £243,324 Flexible Support Funding from DWP and enter into that funding agreement: and
- The subsequent award of funding to each of the 3 Local Authorities and entering into funding agreements between NTCA and each authority below:

Local Authority	Amount
Newcastle City Council	£77,058
North Tyneside	£70,763
Northumberland	£86,214

1. Background Information, Proposals and Timetable for Implementation

- 1.1 The overarching approach to Youth Employment Partnerships will bring together DWP, Local Authorities, employability, and skills providers and the NTCA to support young people and tackle the youth unemployment that results from the economic impact of COVID-19. The partnership will help bring together, coordinate and maximise existing capacity, and commission activity to fill gaps. Youth Employment Partnerships will ensure:
- additional provision is provided to young people addressing any gaps in the existing support framework.
 - additional capacity is provided at a local level, including through the voluntary sector, to improve the engagement of young people with existing services and support to improve reach into communities and maximise existing capacity.
 - improved understanding of need and ability to meet demand for support. This in turn will maximise the return on investment in NTCA wide programmes such as Kickstart. Insights and intelligence gathered will help NTCA advocate to government on the needs of young people, and the investment required to support an improved system wide response in the medium to long term.

Investment Panel

- 1.2 Following the report brought to Investment Panel on 20th October, where the broad direction of travel and approach to our youth employability work was supported, a subsequent report was submitted in May 2021 which summarised the outcome of the appraisal undertaken on a business case to provide funding for partnership and employer engagement roles which will support and coordinate our Youth Employment Partnerships approach – including provision of a small grants fund to support VCS led community engagement and wraparound support activity to support young people to access and engage in mainstream employability support.
- 1.3 The programme of activity has two streams of funding, one from NTCA and the other from DWP.

Organisation	Funding amount
DWP Flexible Support Fund (FSF)	£243,324
NTCA Investment Fund	£391,500
Total costs	£634,824

DWP Flexible Support Funding (FSF)

- 1.4 DWP FSF (£243,324) will fund 3 partnership co-ordination and 3 employer engagement roles (one of each in each Local Authority area), these posts will be employed by the three Local Authorities (as listed above) or their chosen delivery partner. The roles will:
- Support partnership coordination and the engagement of local youth providers in a common vision and coordinated approach – including identification of gaps and informing the commissioning of small grants provision with local intelligence.
 - Engage employers on behalf of the wider partnership.
 - Improve coordination and engagement with local JCP offices and staff, community-based services and ensure young people not currently engaged with the benefit system are engaged.

NTCA Investment Fund

- 1.5 Will be used to establish a flexible small grants programme to support VCSE led community-based activities that will engage and support young people who face additional barriers to accessing mainstream employability services. This element of the programme will be supported by the NTCA

Investment Fund, and will be managed by a third-party organisation, which will be procured. The small grants programme will enhance capacity within local VCSE led community-based activity to engage and support young people into mainstream services and provide added value community-based support.

Evaluation of the programme

- 1.7 To enable NTCA to measure the success of the VCSE small grants programme, costs (12,000) have been included to appoint an external consultant to undertake the evaluation. It is anticipated that the appointed consultant will have worked in a variety of programme contexts and have also worked with a diverse range of stakeholders to enable them to draw on their experience to inform the content of the evaluation. A separate delegated decision is already in place in respect of the appointment of that consultant.

2. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 2.1 Youth Employment Partnerships support the NTCA pillar 'Hotbed of talent' empowering our people with the skills and resources they need to take ownership of their futures and secure good jobs with fair wages. We want everyone to have the opportunity to thrive, with access to good employment and progression. Supporting the availability of good quality, well paid work, whilst providing the right support for people to access these jobs and further training, is crucial to our economic and social success.

3. Key Risks

- 3.1 Programme risks are managed in line with agreed processes and individual project risks have been considered as part of the Business Case. Monthly meetings have been arranged with DWP to monitor, manage, and mitigate any risks associated with the DWP FSF funding element. Appropriate legal agreements will be developed by Legal Services at Newcastle City Council (on behalf of NTCA) to ensure that the terms and conditions of funding which NTCA are subject to are passed on to each of the local authorities receiving funding.

4. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 4.1 Resource implications are being picked up within existing capacity

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Interim Monitoring Officer's comments have been incorporated within this report.

6. Equalities Implications

- 6.1 As required by Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Combined Authority has considered its obligations regarding the Public Sector Equality Duty and there will be no anticipated negative impact on groups with protected characteristics from these proposals.

7. Inclusive Economy Implications

- 7.1 The Combined Authority believe the approach taken will positively contribute to creating a more inclusive economy in the North of Tyne with specific positive impact on addressing the needs of young people.

8. Climate Change Implications

- 8.1 The Combined Authority has considered the implications relating to climate change in decisions regarding the delivery of Kickstart and believe there will be no negative impact as a result.

9. Consultation and Engagement

9.1 Local Authority and stakeholders have been fully engaged in the development of Youth Employment Partnerships through a Project Management Group and Stakeholder Group. Both groups will continue to oversee the strategic delivery of the partnerships.

10. Background Papers

10.1 The report 'Supporting Young People into Employment' was approved by Cabinet on 29th September 2020

11. Contact Officers

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12. Glossary

12.1

NTCA	North of Tyne Combined Authority
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
FSF	Flexible Support Fund

Sign-off

1) Portfolio holder: Yes	2) Director: Yes	3) Chief Finance Officer: Yes	4) Monitoring Officer: Yes
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