

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
<b>City Bridge Trust</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Employment & disability – <i>Bridge to Work</i> Programme	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Chief Grants Officer	<b>For Decision</b>

### Summary

This report asks you to agree to commit up to £3.3m towards a detailed programme to get young disabled Londoners into work and to help maintain their employment.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Agree the name of this programme as *Bridge to Work*
2. Agree the general allocation of funds as outlined in Table 1, with designation of £1.3m as at 31 March 2017 and agreement in principle of £2.0m for the next financial year
3. Instruct officers to bring recommendations on the specific funding to named organisations to your May Committee

### Main Report

#### Background

1. In July 2015, in the City Bridge Trust's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, the Court of Common Council agreed an uplift to the CBT core grants budget, equating to an extra £3m in 2105/16; an extra £4m in 2016/17; and an extra £5m in 2017/18. These additional funds were to be used to provide a 20% lift of your Investing in Londoners grants programme and to support specific areas of interest, including strategic funding to support the most disadvantaged into work.
2. Your Committee agreed that 40% of the additional annual sums be set aside for "*grants, on a pro-active, strategic basis, to support the most disadvantaged Londoners towards/into employment*". This equates to £1.2m in 15/16; £1.6m in 16/17 and £2m in 17/18. As no funds were committed last financial year, the amount currently available for this particular stream is £2.8m, with an additional £2m being added in 2017/18. It has been agreed that these funds be targeted at disabled people and those with mental health problems. A report elsewhere in your papers today will recommend that you allocate £1.5m to support people with mental health needs whereas this report addresses the issue of disability and employment.

3. For the purpose of this programme, which we would like to call *Bridge to Work*, we have defined the beneficiary cohort as people with learning difficulties and/or people who are physically disabled. The aims of the programme are to:
  - Support a significant number of disabled people aged 16-30 into paid employment.
  - Sustain disabled people in paid employment (through advice, support and developing good practice).
  - Strengthen the links between potential employers and disabled young Londoners (including improving recruitment processes).
  
4. At your meeting in November 2015 you agreed a broad set of principles for the focus and allocation of these funds; and that officers bring you this further report in early 2017 which made specific recommendations for funding. Some of the key principles include:
  - Targeting the 16-30 age group
  - Supporting selected organisations which the Trust has recently funded or is currently funding and are known to have a good track record in this field
  - Supporting initiatives which increase the quantity and quality of work experience and internship opportunities for disabled people
  - Funding work which provided employers with the support, skills and resources to increase the number and quality of opportunities for disabled people
  - Supporting sustainable progress through longer term funding, preferably up to 5 years but subject to satisfactory progress being determined after 3 years
  - Determining and aiding individual and collective progress through commissioning independent, formative, evaluation; and using ongoing learning to inform policy makers, funders and commissioners

## **Current Position**

5. Since your last meeting there have been extensive negotiations with some of the potential partners and with others with expert knowledge of this subject. From this, it is recommended that the Trust now funds delivery of the following outcomes:
  - a) Getting a significant number of people aged 16-30 into paid employment
  - b) Sustaining people in paid employment (through good quality personal advice and support; and developing good practice)
  - c) Strengthening the links between potential employers and disabled young Londoners (including improving recruitment processes)

## **Proposals**

### **Funding selected organisations**

6. The following organisations (most of which have been actively involved in working with the Trust currently or in the recent past on this issue) have been

invited to apply and most of their initial requests have been received. The final, individual allocation of funds to them is subject to a financial assessment of each organisation, which will take place within March & April and brought to your May Committee.

- Inclusion London
  - Action on Disability
  - Action for Kids
  - National Autistic Society
  - Muscular Dystrophy UK
  - Whizz-Kidz
7. Inclusion London and Action on Disability have proposed to work together on a joint venture. Other organisations which are likely to have an important role to play in this scheme (eg Disability Rights UK; Mencap; Leonard Cheshire) are currently being consulted to see how they could be best involved, including on policy development or influencing work. Scope, which was originally included in the above cohort, is now being considered under your main Investing in Londoners criteria at their own request as they wish their work to reach some who fall outside the 16-30 age category. Should their request be successful they will still be included within the network, learning and policy elements of this scheme. It may well be that, in time, other organisations/projects should be incorporated, hence the incorporation of a contingency sum in the outline budget at Table 1 to cover this and to maintain flexibility.
8. Provisional requests and notional allocations in relation to the above organisations amount to a total of £2.4m over 5 years, as shown in Table 1.

### **Supporting paid work experience and internships**

9. One of the strongest messages from the consultation process on this programme was on the value of meaningful, longer-term, paid, work experience or internships for young disabled people aiming to get into employment.
10. It is proposed that you make available a pot of £350,000 to support paid work experience or internships for disabled Londoners aged 16-30. Although still subject to fine tuning the general approach would be that organisations could apply for up to a maximum of £8,000 (which could be allocated over more than one year). Each placement/internship must be for a minimum of 200 hours per person and beneficiaries must be paid at least the London Living Wage, with the grant supporting a wage level up to a maximum of £20ph. Guidance and support will be available as to how work experience can be structured to ensure the best possible outcomes for the employee. The overall sum of £350,000 includes costs associated with managing this scheme should it be placed with an external charity. If it is to be managed “in-house” then any savings would remain within the pot available for distribution.
11. Whilst some of this fund would support paid placements/internships in charities and third sector organisations, it is also proposed that the private sector – specifically London SMEs – could avail of it. This would greatly open up the

range of employment opportunities. Specific eligibility criteria would be established (eg SMEs are defined as employing a minimum of 10 people and a maximum of 250 and/or have a turnover of <£250m). This aspect of the fund may need to be managed on the Trust's behalf by a suitable charity to comply with your policies. Agreement on the specifics of this arrangement will be sought at your May Committee.

### **Developing and sharing best practice**

12. Central to the programme will be continuous learning, and the development and sharing of best practice and of influencing. This will be achieved through participatory organisations and others (eg GLA, CoL) committing to regular network meetings/workshops; the development of online resources (incl video); and the commissioning of external, formative, evaluation throughout the length of the programme. Learning will be shared amongst organisations involved and with the wider community, including through special events and seminars from time to time. Where possible, efforts will be made to use the learning to influence and improve wider policy and practice on this issue.

### **Engaging & supporting employers**

13. This will be a key component of Bridge to Work and essential to ensuring both short and long term success. It is hoped to utilise the resources and connections of those currently in this field (eg Business Disability Forum, Heart of the City, Economic Development Office; City HR Association; East London Business Alliance) so that the respective voices of the employer and of the disabled community can be heard and their respective needs met – or at least for any gaps to be narrowed. Whilst some of the individual elements of Bridge to Work may be targeted at particular sections of the business world (eg SMEs) the underlying principle is for the scheme to embrace and be relevant to *all* sections and sectors – as the aim is to maximise the opportunities available to young disabled Londoners.

### **Project management (incl of employer engagement process)**

14. Whilst there is some relevant knowledge and (limited) capacity within the existing CBT staff team, neither is sufficient to take this important programme forward to the standard that it warrants. For this reason it is proposed to engage an external consultant with the relevant expertise to assist CBT staff and to take the lead in managing the network process and, importantly, the employer engagement programme. Much of the initial engagement will be front loaded in the period April - July 2017 to account for the bulk of the work needed at that time to liaise with partners, develop new contacts, develop the evaluation framework, establish the networks and reporting systems, and assist with communications and development of policy. For the period post July 2017 their engagement will be less frequent but in the region of 2-3 days per week averaged over a year, to oversee on-going progress, support the networks and to act as a resource and point of contact for the participating organisations.

## Budget and costings for the period April 2017 – March 2022

15. As at March 2017 there is £2.8m available (plus an additional £2m coming on stream in 2017/18) for this initiative plus a parallel initiative on mental health. A report elsewhere in your papers recommends an allocation of £1.5m for the mental health strand, leaving a notional £3.3m available from April 2017. This report requests that these funds be allocated as set out in Table 1 below. Although the final figures presented are for the full five year period the final two years of funding should be subject to review and to satisfactory progress having been made until that point.

Table 1

	<b>Total for 5 years</b>
1. Funding to selected organisations*	2,400,000
2. Work experience/Internship fund + management costs	350,000
3. External evaluation (based on £20kpa)	100,000
4. Resources, events, seminars, project costs, etc	70,000
5. Project management/Employer engagement (based on £40k pa)	200,000
6. Contingency/additional projects	180,000
	<b>£3,300,000</b>

*\*the individual sums to be awarded to these organisations will be presented to your May Committee*

Of the above £3.3m, we request that approval be given for £1.3m to be designated to this project as at 31 March 2017. We are seeking agreement in principle at this meeting for the funding of £2m available in 2017/18 to be directed to this project.

## Consultation & City Context

15. In addition to extensive consultation with key organisations within the disability sector in London, the Trust has also learned from the Power of Diversity programme instigated by the Lord Mayor's Appeal. This report has also been circulated to specialists within the Corporation of London, including colleagues in the Economic Development Office; Heart of the City; the Corporation's Head of Access; and the Staff Disability Inclusive Network. Feedback received has helped shape this final report and strategy whilst some of the comments received include:

*"I'd like to say how welcome I find the initiative to support disabled people into work. Research has shown that disabled people can be some of the best employees, they are often determined to go the extra mile for results, they stay in a job longer and show a strong commitment to their employer – that's without the fact they generally have lower rates of absenteeism."*

*"This looks to be an excellent initiative, bringing together a range of organisations that should be able to make a real difference."*

16. In February 2016 the Policy & Resources Committee agreed the City Corporation's Employability Framework for supporting young Londoners into work and the steps proposed to take that forward. This programme (*Bridge to Work*) reflects the "5 guiding principles" of that Framework in that it: provides targeted support where needed; encourages collaboration amongst City institutions and expert organisations; considers the value of investing in small-scale and local activity as well as larger institutions; recognises the importance of measuring the impact of support offered and of learning from experience; and offers opportunities through work experience, internships, etc. Bridge to Work will also reflect the City Corporation's policy of looking systematically at how to develop exemplar employment practices.

## **Conclusion**

17. The Bridge to Work programme aims to narrow the disability employment gap by funding projects which provide employability support for young disabled people in London and which help to strengthen links between employers and the disabled community. Aiming for long-term success, it will support projects which demonstrate best practice in this field.

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