

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Community and Children's Services Committee	Dated: 16/ 01/2025
Subject: Supported Employment Programme -Connect to Work	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	Diverse Engaged Communities: Across our residents, workers, businesses, and visitors, everyone should feel that they belong. Connecting people of all ages and backgrounds will help build diverse, engaged communities that are involved in co-creating great services and outcomes. Providing Excellent Services: Supporting people to live healthy, independent lives and achieve their ambitions is dependent on excellent services. Vital to that continued pursuit is enabling access to effective adult and children's social care, outstanding education, lifelong learning, quality housing, and combatting homelessness.
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	Grant Supported from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Yes
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services Deborah Bell, Strategic Director for Education and Skills	

Summary

This report provides Committee Members with information about the recently introduced Supported Employment Programme, which is grant funded by the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP). The report outlines the programme's aims, objectives and its proposed method of delivery. Central Government has presented its clear intention to further encourage a collaborative, locally led approach as a strategy for addressing hidden unemployment.

The Supported Employment Programme will work with a wide range of local partners, including services such as social housing departments, health and social care providers, Job Centre Plus, Local GPs, practice nurses, allied health professionals, Community Care, Rehabilitation centres, and local faith groups.

The new Supported Employment Programme will be one of the first local developmental initiatives to enable local areas to jointly implement firm plans to address economic inactivity and identify employment opportunities. Its focus is on participants outside the workforce, especially those experiencing disadvantages when applying for work.

The Supported Employment Programme is a voluntary programme to help address economic inactivity by providing more targeted support. It is aimed at those individuals who meet the eligibility criteria and who are well placed to take full advantage of the prescribed support available. The type of support offered will be based on individual circumstance.

Eligible participants must be in one of the following groups:

- A disabled person, who has a disability or long-term health condition, as defined in the Equality Act 2010 or the Social Model of Disability, or a specified disadvantaged group.
- In the UK there are 1.8 million people who would like to enter the workforce but because of disadvantages, ill health or a disability, they are unable to benefit from employment opportunities. Local area partnerships, when fully established are estimated to help more than 100,000 disabled people. Participants who have ill health, or those with complex barriers to employment, will be supported for 12 months to assist them to identify suitable employment options.
- The Accountable Body, Central London Forward (CLF), will have responsibility to decide whether the Supported Employment Programme is appropriate for individual participants.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Government has been clear about wanting to take a collaborative approach to addressing some of the many issues that are associated with unemployment.
2. The Universal Support Programme will be used for a new locally delivered Supported Employment Programme. The aim is to introduce a fundamental change to employment support policy. This level of change will transform local partnership relationships, ensuring joint effective delivery strategies to help local people find good and sustainable work.
3. The new Supported Employment Programme will be part of an initial step to enable Londoners to address local economic inactivity and develop a range of initiatives to expand employment opportunities for local people, many of whom exist outside the workforce and who may be experiencing increased levels of labour market disadvantages.
4. Statistics shows that the UK has more than 1.8 million people who are willing to work but who are unable to do so. They have complex barriers, such as health issues, or disabilities. The new programme, when fully developed, will aim to work with those individuals and offer intensive, well planned programmes to identify sustainable work.
5. The Adult Skills Service will work in partnership with CLF and the 11 Central London local authorities to deliver the Supported Employment Programme for Londoners.

Current Position

6. The new Government has clearly stated that one of its five missions is to kickstart economic growth with worthwhile jobs and improved productivity in all geographical areas.
7. The aim is to create social mobility in work, allowing previously unemployed individuals to secure work and to progress within their work areas. Local collaboration will include local service providers such as health services, education services, community organisations and local employers.
8. The Adult Skills and Education Service will work with local partners and internal Adult Social Care specialist teams to develop a package of support.
9. The Supported Employment Programme in England will provide support for approximately 93,000 disabled people, those with health conditions and people with complex barriers to employment, to help them identify sustainable work.

10. This package will include additional support with basic skills such as maths, English, language and IT/digital skills, CV writing and job interview practise.

Options

11. Option 1: to work in partnership with CLF and the 11 Central London local authorities to develop an effective package of learning skills and employment support and opportunities to local people with health conditions or those who may be facing barriers to work.
12. Option 2: to reject the opportunity to develop a local employment package to reduce barriers to employment and to work in partnership with other 12 local authorities.

Proposals

13. The Supported Employment Programme will take a more collaborative and locally led approach to addressing what has been referred to as 'hidden unemployment'. The Adult Skills team will work with local health and social services and skill providers partners to develop high-quality support for disabled and unemployed local people.
14. The Supported Employment Programme is an investment to transform local people's lives, and can make a difference for disabled people, people with health conditions and other complex barriers to helping them find work.

Key Data

15. The proposal suggests that the delivery areas will be divided into clusters. Each local authority will be allocated an agreed number of participants. The City of London have been allocated approximately 48 participants. It is likely that the actual delivery targets will be 100 per annum.

The table below shows how participants could be split across delivery areas. (Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.)

Delivery area	Local authority	Rounded Indicative programme starts
Central London	Camden	300
	City of London	Less than 100
	Hackney	500
	Haringey	500
	Islington	300
	Kensington and Chelsea	300
	Lambeth	500
	Lewisham	400
	Southwark	700
	Tower Hamlets	500
	Wandsworth	200

	Westminster	600
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Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. Strategic implications – This proposal aligns with and will support the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024–2029.
17. Financial implications: None
18. Resource implications: None
19. Legal implications: None
20. Risk implications: None
21. Equalities implications – The proposal is compliant with our Public Sector Equality Duty 2010. The proposal outlined in this report will not have any negative impact on people protected by existing equality legislation – age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.
22. Climate implications: None
23. Security implications: None

Conclusion

24. The Supported Employment Programme will be a collaboration between the DWP, CLF, and 12 local authority areas. The programme aims to provide support to enable participants to secure good-quality work, and to provide people with an income, opportunities for social interaction, and a general sense of fulfilment.
25. The Supported Employment Agenda will be a locally led approach to tackling 'hidden unemployment'. The programme will help to provide local people with work, basic education skills, and employment skills support.
26. The programme will work jointly with other locally planned services to encourage economic activity and expand employment opportunities by joining up health, education skills and employment support systems. The Supported Employment Programme will assist participants who are currently outside the workforce and facing increased levels of labour market disadvantage.
27. Current Adult Skills Service work involves providing a skills and employment service to similar groups of participants. For example, more than 85% of the current client groups are registered from Job Centre Plus. These clients experience similar disadvantages with disabilities, ill health and unemployment.

Appendices

- None

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