

Update to Health & Wellbeing Board on the City Deal Labour Market Programmes

1) Purpose

- 1.1 To update the health and wellbeing board on the progress with the City Deal Labour Market programmes which were included within the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) as part of our response to workstream 5b - "Tackle health related barriers to accessing and sustaining employment".

2) Background

- 2.1 As part of the Portsmouth & Southampton City Deal, a labour market programme was agreed with central government. This programme had two strands; one of which was about dealing with access to the labour market by young people, and one about helping people with health conditions back into the labour market. It was agreed that both of these elements would be picked up within the JHWS as part of workstream 5b which is concerned with tackling health related barriers to accessing and sustaining employment.
- 2.2 The specific actions agreed as part of the workstream were:
- A £6m "Fit to Compete" programme will be implemented across South Hampshire that will look to integrate support services for long term unemployed people
 - City Deal Labour Market Programme for Young People
 - A proposal from RECRO is being explored as a potential way of addressing barriers to employment due to personal circumstance: learning difficulties, mental health, physical disability, drug and alcohol misuse, disturbed family background or limited educational attainment each reduce work opportunities
- 2.3 The Government are regarding the "Fit to Compete" programme as a pilot to see whether the extra interventions achieved significantly better outcomes. These extra interventions including intensive integrated support looking at health and employment issues and the opportunity to undertake a paid transitional employment programme placement. City Deal only provided 50% of the funding for the Fit to Compete programme and match funding was due to come from European Social Fund. There has been a significant delay in being able to access this funding and so it has not yet been possible to start the full programme. It was therefore decided to use some of the City Deal funding to do a small pilot of around 100 people across the two cities and this commenced at the start of 2015.

3) Update on performance

- 3.1 Southampton City Council has employed a City Deal programme manager on behalf of the two cities. She has set up the small pilot and has worked with PCMI who are delivering the programme in Portsmouth. The full evaluation of the pilot is yet to be completed although early indications are positive and suggest that a higher proportion of

referrals will get paid employment than if they had been through the Work Programme. Bearing in mind that the people referred to the programme have complex needs and have often already gone through the work programme this is considered a positive result. By the end of June there had been 78 referrals in Portsmouth and 50 of these (the maximum) had started the programme. 41 of the people who had started the programme had engaged with the activity and 17 of them had started work placements. Across the whole programme 31% had started the transitional employment programme and 7% were into sustained jobs. This was very early in the process and the figure is expected to rise to over 20%.

- 3.2 A recent evaluation workshop was held which looked at some of the issues that have become apparent through this small pilot. This workshop looked at issues around eligibility, referral routes and programme design and this will all feed into the design of the main programme (which will be a national pilot). The matched funding is available through a DWP European Social Fund "Call for Proposals". It is possible that the successful application will not be from Southampton and Portsmouth and so this would mean a fundamental rethink of the programme. The call closes on 9th October and if the application is successful it is likely that any procurement for the new activity would happen early in 2016. There is less funding available than was originally envisaged and it has to cover the Solent LEP area and so this will also lead to a reshaping of the programme.
- 3.3 In terms of the Youth Programme the two cities have agreed a 2 year programme which aims to address gaps in current provision for 16-24 year olds. The programme will:
 - i. Improve the central co-ordination and systematic referral processes
 - ii. Respond to the reduction in support for post 18 year olds
 - iii. Improve information sharing and case management
 - iv. Help with employer focussed interventions
 - v. Provide employment and learning engagement and support targeted to the needs of the young person
- 3.4 The Portsmouth part of the programme has been fully operational since the beginning of May with two full time staff and two part time staff recruited. The team are working closely with two staff who are working in a number of schools with young people at risk of not making a good transition to post 16 education or training. In addition the data tracking team, responsible for the statutory function of tracking young people and completing returns on participation to the DfE, have been integrated into the procedures established as part of the programme. Already there has been a positive impact on the NEET monthly data, particularly for year 13, where we have a high level of NEETs.
- 3.5 The final part of the workstream concerned a proposal from RECRO (an employment and recruitment consultancy). It was decided not to commission this service.