

Subject:	Employment and Skills – Youth Employment Hub and Adult Education Hub Update		
Date of Meeting:	13 September 2021		
Report of:	Executive Director for Families, Children & Learning		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- I. This report provides an update on the implementation of the Youth Employment Hub, following a successful application to the Department for Work and Pensions, Flexible Support Fund. Approval to submit a bid was agreed at Policy and Resources Committee on 3 December 2020.
- II. The report provides an update on the council's Adult and Community Learning provision, funded by the Adult Education Budget, following the decision at Policy and Resources Committee on 30th April 2020, to bring it house.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee note the progress in establishing the Youth Employment Hub and new Adult Learning Hub.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION - Establish a physical and virtual Youth Employment Hub in the city

- 3.1 On the 3rd March 2021, the council adopted the City Employment and Skills Recovery Plan 2021-2022 https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-04/7132_City_Skills_Employment_Recovery_landscape_v5.pdf The plan highlighted the need to ensure that the national policy drivers announced by the government are implemented and delivered at a local level. For example, the 'Plan for Jobs', announced in July 2020, included a range of interventions:
 - the Kickstart Scheme - a £2 billion fund to create new high-quality meaningful 6-month roles for young people aged 16-24 on Universal Credit,
 - expanded youth offer - a 13-week programme to support people into work,
 - an increase in dedicated youth employability coaches to help young people furthest from the labour market.

- 3.2 The success of delivering government interventions is dependent on the ability to engage with young people physically and virtually. Without access to professionals in appropriate physical space there is a risk of disengagement. In Brighton and Hove, young people have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, with a 180% increase in unemployment for 18–24 year-olds at the peak. In response to this and following a successful bid to the DWP Flexible Support Fund, the DWP and council have worked in partnership to open a Youth Employment Hub for young adults in the city. The purpose of the Hub is to provide a person centred and holistic support programme which responds to the economic and social impact of unemployment on 18-24-year olds by increasing skills and confidence and facilitating an increased uptake of traineeships/apprenticeships and employment.
- 3.3 The position of Youth Employment Hub Co-ordinator was created to develop the offer at the Youth Employment Hub and deliver the project outcomes. An experienced Youth Adviser was appointed in May and the Physical Hub opened on the 1st June 2021 at Montague House, in Kemp Town. The ongoing Covid restrictions are influencing how the Hub operates. DWP funding for the Hub has been agreed for one year, however, there a possibility of repeat funding for up to three years.
- 3.4 The Hub enables young people who are job centre customers on Universal Credit to see their DWP work coach in a welcoming and well-resourced space. Additionally, there is access to an IT suite and package of support available through city partners connecting to the hub virtually and physically. The Hub provides a positive environment for organisations to co-locate, further strengthening existing partnerships and improving local intelligence of demand and opportunity. This partnership approach should translate into positive outcomes for young people
- 3.5 The Hub is also a base for councils Employability Services (The Youth Employment Service and Supported Employment Team) to see clients. There are also plans for the National Careers Service to support clients through telephone and face to face appointments at the Hub.
- 3.6 In the first two months 114 young people received support at the Hub. By visiting the Hub, young people have been able to:
- Attend their appointments in an engaging and positive environment
 - Access information, advice and guidance from DWP Youth Coaches and BHCC staff offering employment support services such as the Youth Employability Service and Supported Employment Team
 - Access the internet, printing and scanning facilities
 - Get support with CV writing, job applications and interview practise
 - Access a quiet and safe space for advice, reflection, planning, and active job seeking
 - Access free pre-loved interview clothes through our partnership with Revival Work Clothes
- 3.7 Further activities planned at the Hub include:
- Employers interview sessions for kickstart opportunities

- Group sessions and courses
- Provider workshops and introductory sessions
- Opportunity fairs
- Young person led steering group
- Access information 24/7 through our virtual Youth Employment Hub (now launched – see 3.9)

3.8 Virtual stakeholder information sessions took place in June and July for employers, voluntary sector organisations, training and educational providers, and council internal teams, to explain how they can get involved in the Hub and to share information about the Virtual Hub. These sessions will continue to be held monthly for anyone who would like to find out more about the Hub. This Is Me (TIM Talk) networking sessions have also been introduced for professionals working with young people. These will be held on the first Wednesday of the month, to strengthen professional relationships and provide opportunities for interagency working to support young people in the city.

3.9 The virtual employment hub was launched on the 20th July 2021. It has been incorporated into the council's website to ensure it remains sustainable beyond the lifetime of the project. The DWP will refer young people to the site during the universal credit commitment meetings and in subsequent coaching meetings. The site includes helpful information and signposting aimed directly at young people. The online Hub can be found here www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/youth-employment-hub. It enables clients to:

- Access a one stop multi-media shop of information and guidance
- signposting to services and resources
- message the Hub
- 24/7 accessibility
- Access to the Kickstart vacancies

3.10 Through both the virtual and physical offer clients will be able to access resources and information about employment, training, and personal development pathways to enable them to make informed choices about their future.

4. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION - Adult and Community Learning

4.1 Adult and Community Learning is a broad range of learning that brings together adults, often of different ages and backgrounds, to pursue an interest, address a need, acquire a new skill, become healthier or learn how to support their children. Learning may or may not lead to a qualification or result in direct progression to other learning / training but will usually have wider progression outcomes.

4.2 The council receives an Adult Education Budget (AEB) to provide accredited and non-accredited courses allowing adults to achieve qualifications as well as tailored programmes of learning, which do not need to include qualifications. The Council receives a non-procured grant each year. Our budget for 2021/2022 has been confirmed as £569,988 the same as our 2021-2022 allocation.

4.3 Historically the Council subcontracted AEB funding to local providers in the City via a competitive procurement process. In 2020, following the Friends Centre

closure, a strategic decision was made to expand direct delivery of the Councils Adult Learning offer. For the academic year of 2020 - 2021 there has been a mixture of direct delivery and subcontracted provision whilst the recruitment of lead roles and tutors take place.

- 4.4 The Council has identified key priorities which have informed the development of our curriculum offer:
- 4.5 Delivery of a locally determined learning offer that conforms to the Education and Skills objectives set out in the City Employment & Skills Plan and Economic Strategy and meets the core values of 'no-one left behind' and supporting 'learn to earn' transitions.
- 4.6 Operating in the context of strong local partnerships to ensure plans and strategies are underpinned by engagement with communities, partnerships, networks Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Skills Improvements Plans (LSIPs) and other key local stakeholders.
- 4.7 Ensuring curriculum delivery remains responsive to local need and is financially viable and operationally sustainable.

20/21 academic year

- 4.8 Our subcontracted partners have included Creative Process, Functional Skills UK and Aspire. They have delivered qualifications in functional skills, Math's, English and Digital skills. The Councils in-house provision has focused on Family Learning, Employability and ESOL programmes.
- 4.9 Up until the end of June 2021 the Council has supported 418 enrolments, forecasted to hit 600 by the end of the academic year. Delivery has been a mixture of face to face and online learning. In April 2021, the first full face to face programme called First Steps was launched. First Steps is a coaching and mentoring programme with a focus on business start-up and how to obtain sustained employment for ESOL learners. The course was run in partnership with the International Women's Network, a local charity in the City. Over the duration of the 8-week course 13 women attended regularly from a range of nationalities. The course has been extremely successful with one student registering and starting a business during the course, another student has been offered a job in education. This pilot has really changed lives and will be run again in the new academic year.
- 4.10 A pre-entry ESOL programme for new families settling in the UK, a general pre ESOL course and a wellbeing cycle programme have also been run.

Brighton & Hove Family Learning

- 4.11 Family Learning provides free learning opportunities for families to increase attainment, skills and wellbeing. This included courses where parents/ carers and children learn together, or where parents learn new skills that will benefit the whole family. Family learning is usually delivered to groups in schools and other community settings, during the pandemic courses have been delivered online.

- 4.12 Family Learning tutors continue to run these courses live online and give plenty of opportunities for parents to get involved and ask questions. Most of the families we have supported over this academic year have self-referred, however, towards the end of the academic year there was increased appetite from school's, who are now in regular contact with the team. This is pleasing as in the new academic year we hope to recommence delivery in the school environment, with particular focus on parents within our priority community areas.

The proposed curriculum plan for 2021/2022

- 4.13 From September 2021, the council will be welcoming adult students to the new Adult Education Hub at Morley Street in central Brighton. The Hub will be equipped with 2 large training rooms, including a computer suite. Courses will be offered throughout the day and evening. Recruitment activities are underway to support the new in-house model.
- 4.14 The curriculum plan has been designed in collaboration with key stakeholders in the private, public and 3rd sector. The curriculum offer supports identified skills gaps in the city and will help those furthest away from the labour market into sustainable employment or into further education. The plan aligns with key objectives set out in the City Employment Skills Recovery Plan. The offer will consist of two curriculum areas:

FEME – Family Learning, English, Maths and ESOL - focussing on courses that meet the governments essential skills agenda with an offer from pre-entry up to Level 2 qualifications, with clear progression pathways into further and higher education.

WELL – Wellbeing, Workforce development, Employability and Leisure Learning - courses designed to deliver progression outcomes with focus on further education and sustainable employment. We are planning to deliver pre-employment courses under this curriculum area in several sectors including Health and Social Care and Service Industries. Both City Clean and City Parks have been involved in discussion around delivering pre-employment, Sector Work Based Academy Programmes (SWAPS) that may lead to job opportunities.

Courses will also be developed for clients of the councils Employability Services and Youth Employment Hub due to the strong collaborative ethos within the Skills and Employment Service.

5. Community Engagement

- 5.1 The Adult Learning and Skills Partnership has oversight of the Youth Employment Hub and the Adult and Community Learning Hub as they are key priorities in the City Employment and Skills Recovery Plan 2021-2023 of which the [members of the partnership](#) provide a governance. The organisations represented through the networks includes Community Works, The Hangleton and Knoll Project, The Trust for Developing Communities and Voices in Exile. Additionally, both Hubs are well connected across the city with organisations supporting young people and adult learners. In partnership with Brighton and Hove Buses, the Youth Employment Hub is currently being promoted at bus stops with digital poster functionality across the city. The Youth Employment Hub is being promoted in September's edition of the Brighton and Hove Magazine. The campaign will inform readers of the virtual and in person support available.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Youth Employment Hub offers IT facilities, high quality services and provision in a welcoming physical environment, underpinned by a virtual hub offering information, sign posting, and facilities for direct contact. The Youth Employment Hub has had a successful start and the further activities planned will strengthen our response to the impact of youth unemployment in the city caused by the economic consequences of the pandemic.
- 6.2 The new Adult Education Hub at Morley Street is a significant and welcome development in the services strategy to move to in-house delivery. The curriculum plan has been created with partners to meet the needs of our residents and demands of local employers, it has been designed to create clear progression pathways into further education or into sectors with employment opportunities.

7. Financial Implications

This report provides an update on the implementation of the Youth Employment Hub and on the council's Adult and Community Learning provision.

The Youth Employment Hub funding of £183,905 is initially for one year to 31st May 2022 and it is important that the conditions of the grant are met and full details of the budget are provided.

The Adult and Community Learning Provision funding for 2021/22 is £569,988 and again it is important that the conditions of the funding and targets are met.

It is also key that the budgets are reviewed regularly in line with the Targeted Budget Management Timetable (TBM) to ensure there are no additional costs to the council during the financial year and that all the external funding is spent in line with the conditions of the grants.

Finance Officer Consulted: David Ellis

Date: 05/08/21

7.1 Legal Implications:

The law requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. The council have several statutory duties relating to youth participation to ensure all young people up to the age of 18 (25 for those with learning difficulties) participate in education or training, and these include: Raising Participation Age – encourage, enable and assist young people to develop a range of skills for adult life and reduce the likelihood of unemployment. To fulfil this duty councils are expected to provide strategic leadership in their area to ensure that there is a network of support available. The September Guarantee entitles all 16 and 17-year-old an offer of a suitable place in education or training, including a vocational offer. To achieve this councils are required to work with partners (schools, colleges and providers) to ensure that relevant processes are in place, and that each has a clear understanding of its responsibilities. Councils also have a statutory responsibility to track and record young people's progression in learning and training, and identify numbers of NEET (not in education, employment or training), or 'unknowns', and those at risk of becoming NEET at age 16. The report sets out the in person and virtual offer to promote prospects for employment and skills in the city.

Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson Date: 31.08.2021

7.2 Equalities Implications:

The implementation of the Employability Hub is an additional service which the Council is delivering in partnership with the DWP. By providing this service to meet the needs of young people the Council is recognising inequality in the employment market. To enable the Council to consider the service from an equalities perspective on how it impacts service users and staff and, ensuring it meets its' duty as a public sector organisation it is recommended that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is carried out. The service is also collecting equalities monitoring information, this should be utilised to identify areas of improvement for service delivery and accessibility, these can also be incorporated into the EIA's action plan.

7.3 Sustainability Implications:

Central locations are easy to get to by sustainable means - public transport, cycling or walking. This is beneficial as it supports the key council's policies and priorities i.e. Carbon Neutral 2030 ambition & Local Cycling & Walking Strategy (LCWIP). Utilising the existing council premises is the most sustainable solution.

Any Other Significant Implications:

None

Background Documents

1. City Employment Skills Recovery Plan <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/business-and-trade/support-businesses/city-employment-and-skills-plan-2016-2020>)
2. Agenda Item 41 [Brighton & Hove City Council - Agenda for Policy & Resources \(Recovery\) Sub-Committee on Wednesday, 3rd March, 2021, 5.15pm \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#)
3. Employment Hub Agenda 112 [Brighton & Hove City Council - Agenda for Policy & Resources Committee on Thursday, 3rd December, 2020, 4.00pm \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#)
4. Adult Education Agenda 167 [Brighton & Hove City Council - Agenda for Policy & Resources Committee on Thursday, 30th April, 2020, 4.00pm \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#)