



REPORT OF: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATES: 24th JULY 2018

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GEARING UP FOR GROWTH APPRENTICESHIP PROVISION

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek the agreement of Policy and Resources Committee to allocate funding from the Gearing up for Growth Programme to support an increase in Apprenticeship provision in Pendle.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee agree to allocate £10,000 from residual balance of the Gearing up for Growth Programme towards supporting the promotion and recruitment of Apprenticeships as set out in the report.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To contribute to the Skills Development strand of the Gearing up for Growth Programme.

ISSUE

Background

1. At the last meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee, Councillors considered a report on the Gearing up for Growth Programme for 2018/19. As Councillors are aware, the Gearing up for Growth Programme has three strategic strands – Business Support, Employment Support and Skills Development.
2. As indicated in the last report, there is a balance of unallocated funding totaling £46,650 and it was suggested that this funding could be used to:-
 - Provide match funding for a joint approach to employer engagement with a partner organisation;

- Provide seed funding for projects within the Pendle Challenge;
 - Additional funding to support the Pendle Vision Board's objective of promoting Pendle; and
 - Support Pendle business in the recruitment of apprentices, following the introduction of apprenticeship reforms and the Apprenticeship Levy.
3. This report seeks the agreement of the Policy and Resources Committee to allocate £10,000 of the unallocated funding towards supporting activity which will lead to an increase in the number of apprentices in Pendle.

Apprenticeship Provision

4. As well as supporting businesses directly through the provision of grants, the Gearing up for Growth Programme has previously allocated small amounts of funding to work in partnership with other organisations to develop activity which will benefit the future workforce of Pendle. Examples include contributing to the cost of the Pendle Business Hub, holding the Pendle Business Week and doing targeted work with Year 9 Students via a Work Inspiration Event.
5. Pendle has a strong tradition of apprenticeship provision, with around 900 young people on average each year embarking on an Apprenticeship (known as 'Apprenticeship Starts'). Following major reforms to the Apprenticeship regime, with the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy, the development of Apprenticeship Standards in place of Frameworks and the introduction of Higher/Degree Apprenticeships as an alternative to normal degree qualifications, the landscape on apprenticeship provision and take-up has changed. As a consequence of that, it is proposed to work with other organisations to raise the profile of Apprenticeships, both as a potential career pathway for young people but also for those already in employment who may wish to retrain.
6. Examples of the type of activity that may be undertaken include:-
- working with Local Workplace Training Providers (such as Nelson and Colne College, Training 2000, Burnley College etc) to help them promote the range and availability of Apprenticeships to Pendle's young people and business;
 - working with UCLAN to promote the availability of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships as an alternative to general degree qualifications giving young people the ability to obtain a degree whilst working at the same time;
 - working with local Schools through the Enterprise Advisor Network to increase awareness of Apprenticeships to Year 7 to 11 pupils, again as a way of expanding their career opportunities;
 - establishing a Pendle Apprentice Ambassador Network as a means of using current and former Apprentices who are passionate about their career route can help to raise the profile of the range and quality of Apprenticeships for other young people;
 - ensuring SMEs are aware of how the Apprenticeship Levy works and how they could benefit from it;

- recognising Employers that have successful Apprenticeship Programmes and providing a forum, such as the Pendle Vision Board or Pendle Connects, to share their good practice with other Employers.
7. It is envisaged that the Council will work in partnership with a range of organisations on this including, for example, the National Apprenticeship Service, Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub and the various Workplace Training Providers on this project with a view to co-investing in activities.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy

8. There are no policy implication arising directly from the contents of this report.

Financial

9. As indicated in the report, the Council has allocated £367,300 towards the Gearing up for Growth Programme of which £46,650 remains unallocated. This report seeks approval to use £10,000 towards the cost of promoting and increase in the number of Apprenticeships in Pendle.

Legal

10. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

11. There are no risk management implication arising directly from the contents of this report.

Health and Safety:

12. There are no Health and Safety implications arising from this report.

Climate Change:

13. As with health and safety implications, there are no climate change implications arising directly from this report.

Community Safety:

14. There are no community safety issues arising directly from the contents of this report.

Equality and Diversity:

15. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the contents of this report.

APPENDICES

None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None