



**FOR PUBLICATION**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**Thursday, 17 November 2022**

**Report of the Executive Director - Place**

**Adult Careers Service and Youth Hub**  
(Cabinet Member for Clean Growth & Regeneration)

**1. Divisions Affected**

1.1 County-wide.

**2. Key Decision**

2.1 This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or savings which are significant having regard to the budget for the service or function concerned (this is currently defined as £500,000) and it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral areas in the County.

**3. Purpose**

3.1 To seek Cabinet approval for £743,292 from the Covid Recovery Fund to support the growth in the Adult Careers Service and Youth Hub provision, as outlined in the Covid Economic Recovery Strategy, and to support with the Cost-of-Living crisis.

**4. Information and Analysis**

4.1 The Covid Economic Recovery Strategic Plan, and specifically the Skills and Employment Strategy, highlighted the need to work with both young people and adults. The four recovery priorities were identified as:

- Young People: ensuring Derbyshire's young people can follow clear progression pathways to skills and employment and maximise their life chances.
- Adults – Retraining and Routes to Better Employment: realigning Derbyshire's labour market to meet demand through investment in skills and employability support to support progression to better and more rewarding jobs
- Entrepreneurship: stimulating enterprise and business growth to provide new economic opportunities
- Future Skill Needs: a responsive skills system to maximise growth and opportunity in the post-Covid economy.

4.2 Each of these priorities for action requires the intervention of a professional Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance service (CEIAG), which in Derbyshire has been largely fulfilled by the Council's own Adult Careers Service.

4.3 Several of the actions identified within the Strategy and Action Plan have already started and are being delivered through the Council's Careers Service, and through the Careers Hubs run through the D2N2 (Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire) Local Enterprise Partnership.

4.4 The latest Derbyshire Economic Statement shows the challenges identified within the original recovery strategy remain, the need to support growing sectors with the right employees, many of whom will already be within the labour market (and will need to reskill), or will be returners to the labour market, responding to the cost-of-living crisis, especially those in the over 55 age group who decided to retire during the pandemic. Without professional CEIAG, these residents will not be in a position to make appropriate choices for their future and for the local economy.

4.5 As indicated, this report outlines the case for the use of Covid Recovery Funds to further develop the Council's response to Covid, by delivering more of the actions outlined within the strategy and to support residents during the emerging cost of living crisis.

#### **The Role of the Derbyshire Adult Careers Service**

4.6 The Council has been a sub-contractor to the Futures Group in Nottingham for the delivery of the National Careers Service (NCS) contract since its inception in 2012. The NCS provides information, advice and guidance for jobseekers and those in work aged 18 and older to help them manage their career and progress into learning, training, and employment.

- 4.7 The Council has had many years' experience in delivering this type of activity. Since 2018, the Council has helped Futures Group gain an Outstanding Ofsted (The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) rating for its delivery of the service. Since January 2022, the team has sat within the Employment and Skills Service, acquiring increased strategic alignment.
- 4.8 The Futures Group (Futures) has recently been successful in retendering with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for the NCS contract for the East Midlands, with the new contract due to start from October 2022, and the Council will continue to be the main sub-contractor covering Derbyshire. What is, however, of note is that nationally the NCS contract has been reduced in scale (as a result of a reduction in funding) with also a change in the emphasis of that funding, such that performance must be focused on individuals gaining a positive outcome (in either employment or learning). The impact of such a change will mean that the careers service will have to focus its offer to residents who have the greatest chance of progressing (if costs are to be recovered), at a time when the need is still high, especially in some communities where opportunities are few. Only if other sources of funding can be levered can the service give a more widely available offer.
- 4.9 Some of the additional funds required have already been secured by the Service offering careers support to other parts of the Council, including Adult and Community Education's 14-19 provision and Virtual School. The new Multiply programme will also support delivery. This funding, however, only secures the service as it currently stands and then only if the contracts are delivered in full; there is no core funding to allow the service to offer a more universal service.

#### **Derbyshire Youth Hub**

- 4.10 One of the initiatives that is delivered in partnership with the Adult Careers Service, and which supports the Recovery Strategy has been the development of the Youth hub, which was the subject of a Cabinet Member – Clean Growth and Regeneration Decision on 15 February 2022 and a link to it is in the background papers. The target group for the Youth Hub is young people aged 16 – 24-year-olds and currently operates until December 2022. The rationale behind the setting up of the Youth Hub is contained in the briefing paper.
- 4.11 Youth Hubs were introduced by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) as a means of preventing the long-lasting negative impact of the COVID19 pandemic on young people. Youth Hubs are intended to

provide an accessible resource for residents seeking access to a range of employment related services.

- 4.12 The DWP asked for partnerships between Local Authorities and local DWP offices to submit bids to its Flexible Support Fund to establish and operate Youth Hubs in local geographies for a period of one year.
- 4.13 This opportunity was taken forward in Derbyshire. A small working group of officers from key Council colleagues (Employment and Skills, Adult Careers Team, Adult Education, Public Health and Employment and Education Team) and local DWP colleagues secured funding from DWP, the Council's Public Health and in kind from other parts of the Council. As a result, a Youth Hub in Derbyshire was set up in January 2022 as a blended approach, with a physical hub in the Chesterfield locality, (at the Adult Education Centre at Hunloke) and a virtual digital offer to support the rest of the County. The physical offer has also recently been piloted as a "pop-up" version in Shirebrook for a 6-week period to establish demand, where the initial feedback has been positive, and a request has been submitted to repeat the exercise.
- 4.14 The model offers support via:
- A physical hub within a Derbyshire County Council building – Hunloke Adult Education Centre.
  - A single phone line that can be deployed within existing Council phone infrastructure.
  - A dedicated Council webpage giving all the necessary information and advice to help a young person, parents, carers, or service practitioners to make choices.
  - A facility on the webpage to submit an electronic form requesting assistance.
  - A text messaging service for individuals to seek assistance that can be deployed within existing Council infrastructure.

### **Performance**

- 4.15 Current performance of the whole of the Careers Service remains good, with the delivery to the Youth Hub and other Derbyshire Council Services being received well – see Appendix 2 for positive feedback. The National Careers Service contract, however, continues to stretch the team in terms of delivery. During the contract years of 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Covid impacted delivery. Covid required a complete change in delivery, with everything going online. Despite the changes, Covid inevitably resulted in a financial deficit as the contract is payment by results. Whilst partly supported through additional funding in 2019-20 by the ESFA, the same additional support from the ESFA was not

forthcoming in 2020-2021, resulting in a request for support from the Covid recovery pot of £70,000 to help cover the shortfall in NCS delivery in February 2022.

- 4.16 Since April 2022, the NCS contract has supported a further 911 Derbyshire adults (almost 90% of which have been priority customers), with 250 of these moving into learning or work to date.
- 4.17 From April 2021 – March 2022 the National Careers Service contract supported 1744 Derbyshire residents (88% of which have been priority customers) with 537 of these moving into learning or work.
- 4.18 From April 2020 – March 2021 the National Careers Service contract supported 1415 Derbyshire residents (81% of which have been priority customers) with 383 of these moving into learning or work. It is important to point out this contract year was delivered through covid restrictions and lockdown.
- 4.19 For the Pre covid period – April 2019 – March 2020 the National Careers Service contract supported 2333 Derbyshire residents (80% of which have been priority customers) with 808 of these moving into learning or work.

#### **Youth Hub Performance**

- 4.20 The Hub performance is detailed in Appendix 3 and shows that after a slow start, engagements with young people has grown rapidly, such that the annual target will be achieved three months early. The progressions for these individuals are still being collected and it is anticipated these targets will also be achieved by the end of the first year. What it has clearly indicated is that there is a demand for this type of bespoke brokerage service as set out in the recovery strategy, and that there appears to be demand in place to expand the offer with more physical locations. The recent success of the 6 week “pop-up” Hub in Shirebrook has also shown that at times of high demand in some localities, it would be possible to offer the service more locally, if only for a short period, whilst maintaining the ability to offer the digital service. Appendix 3 contains some of the case studies from both the Youth Hub and Adult Careers Delivery which gives some flavour of the level of need being met.

#### **Resources to Grow the Adult Careers Service and Youth Hub**

- 4.21 Following the success of the Hub and the demands of the Derbyshire Economy, there is an ambition to grow both the Youth Hub to support more young people, but also to strengthen the delivery of the Adult Careers Service to meet the needs of Derbyshire residents until at least

March 2025. Securing funding over this period will help secure the vital service offered to Derbyshire residents, but also help retain the professional and experienced staff the Council has in place to deliver the service.

- 4.22 The funds requested (£743,292) will aid the service to expand the Youth Hub offer to a total of three locations over the next 24 months but will also increase the capacity of the Adult Careers teams so that it can meet the increasing needs of residents against a backdrop of a declining budget nationally for Adult Careers. The addition of a senior Careers Coach will also ensure that the quality of the provision remains at the highest level, as the work grows, whilst also increasing the capacity of the manager to look for additional ways to help fund delivery, reducing the financial burden of the Council.
- 4.23 To support this growth the Council is also looking to secure funding for a second year from DWP (£94,000) for the Youth Hub (but this will require match funding from the Council). The budget outlined in Appendix 1 shows the proposed cash contribution made to the Youth Hub from Public Health (£27,000 for three years). Both these funds have yet to be discussed and agreed and; a further report will be brought to Cabinet with a request to make up any shortfall should these funds not be forthcoming. The estimated costs of this expansion are set out in Appendix 1.

### **Outcomes**

- 4.24 The performance of the Hub and other Adult Careers contracts is closely monitored as they are all on a payment by results basis. Therefore, any additional funding that may be secured from the Covid Recovery Funding can easily be monitored and its impact assessed.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Consultation took place with the stakeholders in setting up the first Youth Hub. This included the relevant professionals from DWP, Children's Services, Derbyshire Adult and Community Learning, Place, Public Health and others. This extension is supported by the same stakeholders.

## **6. Alternative Options Considered**

- 6.1 Do Nothing option. This option has been considered and would result in the Youth Hub closing (or operating at a very reduced level) after the first year, even if DWP funding was in place as the Council would be unable to match the full amount required to sustain the project. It would

leave the Adult Careers Service to continue, but at best with the same level of service as now, at a time when the need has increased.

- 6.2 Originally a pressure/growth bid was submitted to Place DMT to secure the funding for a further year for the Youth Hub. This was deferred as it was felt more appropriate that the funding was secured from the Covid Recovery Fund and could be linked to the wider need to secure the Adult Careers Service moving forward to support the identified needs in the Economic Recovery Strategy.

## **7. Implications**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

## **8. Background Papers**

- 8.1 [Economic and skills recovery strategy - Derbyshire Economic Partnership](#)
- 8.2 Cabinet Member Decision “Funding to Support Adult Careers in Derbyshire”, dated 15 February 2022 (Decision Ref. D308 refers)
- 8.3 Cabinet Member Decision “Youth Hub (YES Derbyshire)”, dated 15 February 2022 (Decision Ref. D307 refers)

## **9. Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Implications (Restricted).
- 9.2 Appendix 2 – National Careers Service and Case Studies.
- 9.3 Appendix 3 – Youth Hub Performance.

## **10. Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

- a) Approves the allocation of £743,292 to support the growth of the Adult Careers Service and, in particular, the expansion of the Youth Hub.
- b) Notes that a further request for funding will be made to Cabinet for the additional £175,000, should the funding from the Council’s Public Health and the Department of Work and Pensions not be secured.

## **11. Reason for Recommendations**

11.1 To support the Covid Economic Recovery Strategy and to deliver this important service to Derbyshire residents.

## **12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?**

12.1 No.

Report Author: Andrew Marsh

Contact details: Andrew.Marsh@derbyshire.gov.uk