

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 23 June 2022

Parental Employability Support

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Executive All 7, 31
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee:
 - 1.1.1 Note the update on the Parental Employability Support (PES) programme, which is funded by the Scottish Government for delivery of initiatives to support parents into and to progress in employment;
 - 1.1.2 Approve the recommendations for the core PES programme (as set out in Appendix 1);
 - 1.1.3 Approve the proposal to recruit a team of key workers to develop an employability service to further support parents and to ensure local implementation of the Scottish Government's plans to implement the "Best Start, Bright Futures" delivery plan to alleviate child poverty;
 - 1.1.4 Approve the development and delivery of a childminder training programme;
 - 1.1.5 Approve the direct award of £268,000 of funding to Capital City Partnership (CCP), as part of their Service Level Agreement (SLA) with City of Edinburgh Council, to commission a Disabled PES programme of services; and
 - 1.1.6 Note the work currently being undertaken by consultants Ekosgen to review the Affordable Childcare for Working Parents Service.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Philip Ritchie, Contracts and Programme Manager, Business Growth and Inclusion

E-mail: philip.ritchie@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel: 07771 344587

Parental Employability Support

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report considers the work already undertaken by City of Edinburgh Council and local employability partners to put in place services for parents and seeks approval to extend current services for parents looking to gain or progress in employment and to put in place additional services required as part of the Scottish Government's Best Start, Bright Futures, four year delivery plan from 2022-2026.

3. Background

Parental Employability Support

- 3.1 Late in 2019/20, Scottish Government awarded City of Edinburgh Council £677,000 of Parental Employability Support (PES) funding over three financial years 2019 - 2022.
- 3.2 This funding was provided under the Tackling Child Poverty strategy and was intended to complement the No One Left Behind (NOLB) strategy for the delivery of services to support parents into and to progress in employment.
- 3.3 The client groups who are eligible and benefitting from the PES fund are:
- 3.3.1 Lone Parents who are unemployed or experiencing in work poverty;
 - 3.3.2 Parents with a disability or families who are unemployed or experiencing in work poverty and have a disabled child;
 - 3.3.3 Parents who are unemployed or experiencing in work poverty and have three or more children;
 - 3.3.4 Parents from a minority ethnic background who are unemployed or experiencing in work poverty;
 - 3.3.5 Parents who are unemployed or experiencing in work poverty and have a youngest child under one; and
 - 3.3.6 Parents who are aged under 25 and are unemployed or experiencing in work poverty.
- 3.4 To ensure that delivery could begin quickly to meet the timescales set out by the Scottish Government, funding awards were approved, under delegated authority, by

the Executive Director of Place on 18 September 2020 and subsequently reported to the Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on [5 November 2020](#). These awards were administered through a process managed by Capital City Partnership (CCP).

- 3.5 The programmes were all funded for 18 months, and delivery started either in November 2020 or January 2021.
- 3.6 The Council were subsequently awarded £132,390 and £194,000 as 'PES Boosts' in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively. And, in 2021/22, an additional award of £268,000 was made specifically to support parents with disabilities into employment.
- 3.7 Boost funds for 2020/21 were awarded to existing well-established providers of PES and through the delivery of Maximise! under the City Region Deal Intensive Family Support Project, as agreed by the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on [14 January 2021](#).
- 3.8 Due to the support already in place, and uptake being low, the Boost funds for 2021/22 and the funding specifically aimed at disabled parents were not utilised therefore permission to carry forward this forward to 2022/23 was sought and received.

Affordable Childcare Service

- 3.9 The Council currently funds an Affordable Childcare Service, which aims to help low-income parents gain or sustain employment. The Affordable Childcare Contracts were awarded at Finance and Resources Committee on [7 March 2019](#). The overall contract size is £876,000 and was agreed for an initial period of three years from April 2019 – March 2022 with the option to extend for a further two periods of 12 months each, at the discretion of the Council.
- 3.10 The four providers of the service are – North Edinburgh Childcare, Smile Childcare, Childcare Connections and Kidzcare and they each receive varying amounts of funding to deliver pre-school nursery and after school (0-12years) care.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The Scottish Government has awarded the Council £467,000 in 2022/23 to continue the delivery of the PES services. This is in addition to the £268,000 which was carried forward to provide additional support for disabled parents and the £180,000 'Boost' which was also carried forward.
- 4.2 The Scottish Government also plan to significantly increase employment support services for parents this year. In addition to the PES funding, they have allocated a further £81m for local authorities in Scotland to support the Best Start, Bright Futures delivery plan. Officers are currently awaiting further details on the quantum and delivery requirements for this funding and will report back to Committee once this has been clarified.

Core PES Funding

- 4.3 The Scottish Government have indicated that they are committed to continuing PES funding until “at least 2025”, and officers understand that it is likely that a multi-annual award offer will be made to extend PES beyond 2023.
- 4.4 Committee is therefore asked to approve extending the PES grants which were awarded in September 2020 where services have been successful at engaging the target client group and have been able to support them to achieve the required outcomes.
- 4.5 In order to provide continuity and quality of service, it is requested that these grants be extended, at a cost of £196,250 per annum, until 31 March 2025, subject to Scottish Government funding being made available and satisfactory performance against annual targets.
- 4.6 Details of the proposed award extensions are outlined in Appendix 1.
- 4.7 It is proposed to use the remainder of the core PES Funding (£270,750) to recruit a citywide team of specialist employability key workers to strengthen and increase the capacity of the Joined Up for Families Network.
- 4.8 These roles would be to support parents across the city and to co-ordinate the network of services available so that services are prepared for the implementation of the Scottish Government Best Start, Bright Futures Delivery Plan before March 2023.
- 4.9 This team would follow the person-centred Activity Agreement model of employability delivery that has been successfully implemented for young people. This will ensure that parents who need the services most and may not be aware of what support is available are accessing the support required to be able to gain and progress in employment.
- 4.10 This model of delivery would also complement the specialist services provided through the grant awards (Appendix 1) and by other providers in the Joined Up for Families Network and ensures consistent delivery of services for all areas of the city in line with the 20 minute neighbourhood model. Key workers would operate geographically to monitor outcomes and target delivery as required and ensure that there are no gaps in provision for parents.

PES Boost

- 4.11 Anecdotal evidence indicates that one of the key barriers to employment for parents is access to (affordable) childcare. While one of the criteria for PES funding is that it cannot be used for childcare costs, it can be used for developing childcare provision, so it is recommended that the 2021/22 is spent on developing and implementing a programme for individuals, and especially parents, to set up as childminders.

PES Funding for Disabled Parents

- 4.12 To utilise the additional funding from the Scottish Government for disabled parents, it is recommended that specialist services are commissioned. A coproduction

process to identify the services required and the gaps identified by stakeholders has been initiated by the Council and CCP. With delivery required to be completed by 31 March 2023, it is recommended that the £268,000 funding for this programme be directly awarded to CCP, to commission the services. The programme would be monitored by Council officers along with other services and grants that are part of CCP's SLA with City of Edinburgh Council.

Affordable Childcare for Working Parents

- 4.13 With the introduction and planned expansion of the Scottish Government's 1,140 hours of funded childcare, plans for implementation of free wraparound care for priority school children, as well as the childcare element of tax credits and Universal Credit to help families pay for childcare, the Council needs to review our funding of these services to ensure that we are receiving best value and that the relevant families are benefitting from the current delivery offer. A consultant (Ekosgen) has been secured to carry out this review and should provide their report in late June 2022, with recommendations for the future direction of these services to be made to a future Committee.
- 4.14 The current contracts have been extended to the end of March 2023 to allow time to fully review the services currently being delivered.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If Committee approves the recommendations of this report:
- 5.1.1 Officers will work with CCP Contract Managers to set up grant funding agreements with the successful projects and ensure exit arrangements have been put in place with those projects where funding is not extended;
 - 5.1.2 Officers will also liaise with CCP to commission services to support disabled parents seeking employment, coordinating with existing and new training providers.
 - 5.1.3 Reporting on spend and targets will be conducted via CCP's regular quarterly report to Business Growth and Inclusion and the CCP Board. CCP will also report on spend and targets via the Council's Child Poverty Group; and
 - 5.1.4 Recruitment of the specialist employability key workers will be progressed.
- 5.2 Officers will link with Scottish Government and other local authorities to develop and implement the Best Start, Bright Futures Delivery Plan for Edinburgh. Scottish Government are expected to imminently provide further information on the allocation of funding available specifically for Edinburgh and the conditions of the grant offer that is expected.
- 5.3 A report with recommendations, following the review of the Affordable Childcare Service for Working Parents, will be presented a future Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There is no financial impact to the Council as all delivery costs for the proposals are contained within the grant awards from Scottish Government.
- 6.2 The funding awarded to external organisations and for the programme for disabled parents will be contract managed by CCP under the existing SLA and Council officer time to support this would be supplemented through current No-One Left Behind staffing and the grant award as above.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The impact on this client group will be positive as the projects will enable them to enhance their employability and develop new skills to help them to secure or progress in employment. There is also a link to income maximisation advice which will ensure that these families benefit in real financial terms.
- 7.2 Partnership working is at the heart of the development of this proposal, both between Council departments and other partners and has been designed to complement the current strategic skills pipeline. This includes undertaking Integrated Impact Assessments to ensure no-one is adversely affected by these proposals and programmes.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Council Commitments – Delivering an Economy for All](#)
- 8.2 [Scottish Government's Parental Employment Support Fund](#)
- 8.3 [Scottish Government - Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26](#)
- 8.4 [Scottish Government's No-one Left Behind policy](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Recommendations for Parental Employability Support Fund Grant Awards 2022 – 2025.

APPENDIX 1

Recommendations for Parental Employability Support Fund Grant Awards 2022 – 2025

Applicant	Project Name	Annual Award	Suggested action/comments
Access to Industry	Access: Data	£40,000	Recommend extension until March 2025, dependent on Scottish Government funding and annual performance evaluation.
Access to Industry	Access: Progress	£72,250	Recommend extension until March 2025, dependent on Scottish Government funding and annual performance evaluation.
The Broomhouse Centre (SPACE)	WorkSpace	£42,000	Recommend extension until March 2025, dependent on Scottish Government funding and annual performance evaluation.
The Datakirk	BAMELYTICS	£42,000	Recommend extension until March 2025, dependent on Scottish Government funding and annual performance evaluation.
Enable Scotland	Progress for Parents	£0	Project has completed and services for parents with disabilities will be provided through the newly commissioned services.
Children 1st	Maximise! Every Chance	£0	Additional funding for Early Years focussed service has been secured via Communities and Families.
Enable Scotland	Progress for Disabled Parents	£0	Project has completed and services for parents with disabilities will be provided through the newly commissioned services.
Canongate Youth	Networks	£0	There was insufficient demand for this service and it has now ended. Officers will continue to work with Family Nurse Partnerships to ensure good referrals into employability support for young parents.
FUSE	Pass Programme	£0	Will be integrated into the Vocational Training Framework so no request for funds
		£196,250	