



Belfast City Council

Report to: Development Committee

Subject: Bursary Scheme

Date: 4 December 2012

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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	A proposal to develop a Bursary Scheme to support young people in the city take part in further education, training and employment was presented at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22 June 2012.
1.2	At that meeting Members were advised that £300,000 had been made available through the Council's Investment Programme over the next three years to provide financial help to young people aged 16–24 who face financial barriers to participating in education or training, provided they meet agreed criteria set out by the Council.
1.3	Members were also informed of the proposed arrangements for programme management and administration including a proposal to work alongside existing support initiatives as offered by both Belfast Metropolitan College and the Prince's Trust.
1.4	As part of the discussion Members considered the levels of funding available through the scheme and agreed to two different types of bursaries being made available in year 1 of the programme. These included a £70,000 annual budget for further/higher education support initiatives and £30,000 for other initiatives helping individuals into training or education (not at further or higher level) or helping them access employment.
1.5	To ensure the scheme would be in place for the 2012/13 academic year it was agreed that support would be channelled through the Belfast Metropolitan College and the Prince's Trust in the first year of the programme. In the case of the proposal to work with Belfast Metropolitan College bursaries would be used to incentivise young people to take a particular course of study which would lead them towards employment in the key growth sectors including computing, IT and multimedia, science and tourism and hospitality. In the case of the proposal to work with the Prince's Trust, bursaries would be provided to help disadvantaged unemployed young people access education, training or employment.

1.6	In order to meet all of the Council's auditing requirements associated with implementing this scheme, Belfast Metropolitan College confirmed they would be prepared to administer the bursary within their existing resources.
1.7	Similarly with the Prince's Trust they would use their income from fundraising activities to cover the costs associated with the awards administration. All of the Council funding would therefore be aimed directly towards the bursary recipient. The Prince's Trust would make direct payments for the agreed items e.g., clothing for a job interview or course fees to gain a certain qualification required for a job etc. The end result of this approach is that there are no additional costs incurred for the Council for administering the scheme.
1.8	Furthermore Members agreed to an application process being put into action with both partner organisations and for eligibility criteria to be established, both of which would help assess an individual's suitability to receive an award.
1.9	At the same time Members gave consideration to how the programme might develop for years 2 and 3 and agreed that information on programme participants, including employment/training outcomes, would be gathered and reported back to the Council at a later date.

2	Key Issues
2.1	In light of the above review, an overview of progress during the implementation phase of the scheme, along with detail on next steps, is set out below.
2.2	<p><u>Eligibility criteria</u></p> <p>Eligibility criteria for the two separate bursaries were set and agreed with both project partners. To be eligible for financial support via Belfast Metropolitan College individuals must be resident in the Belfast City Council area; aged 16-24 at the date of application; must meet the criteria set out by the College for the HE bursary fund and must be preparing to study or currently studying on a full-time further/higher/vocational education training course at Levels 2-5 in one of the priority areas identified in Appendix 1. Criteria for the College's HE Bursary Fund are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student must be enrolled on a full time HE course - Student must meet the academic progression criteria - Student must have paid College fees - Student must meet UK residency criteria - Joint household income must not exceed £55,000 - Attendance record must be 100% - exceptions given for valid medical reasons
2.3	Recipients of this Award are required to complete at least 80% attendance at all classes and must complete all appropriate examinations and assessments. At the time of agreeing a proposal with the College it was anticipated that up to 140 bursaries at a value of approx £500 each would be allocated in Year 1.
2.4	The second of the small bursary schemes is aligned to the Prince's Trust Development Awards and targets unemployed young people aged 16-25 who live in all areas of Belfast, and specifically in the city's most deprived electoral wards including Whiterock, Falls, New Lodge, Shankill, Crumlin, Clonard, Ardoyne, Upper Springfield, Duncairn, Water Works, Ballymacarett, Woodvale, Shaftesbury and the Mount. The aim of this programme is to support 145 young people and help over 80% of those who receive a Development Award to achieve a positive outcome, progressing into education, training or employment.

2.5	<p>Through this scheme, young people are offered help with action planning and ongoing support to help them achieve their goal. The Prince's Trust will track each individuals progress at three months following receipt of an Award and collate and report back to the Council on the young person's electoral wards, what the award was used for and the outcome for the young person.</p>
2.6	<p><u>Performance to date</u></p> <p>The information presented below provides an interim update on the delivery of Prince's Trust award scheme to the start of November 2012. To date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – £10,063.25 in Development Awards has been issued. (Average Award: £176). – Development Awards have been provided to 57 disadvantaged young people aged 16-25 in Belfast City Council area. (Average age of recipients: 21 years old). – 79% (45 Awards) have been provided to young people living in the top 25% of deprived wards in Belfast (NISRA multiple deprivation measure 2010). – 96% (55 Awards) have been provided to young people who are unemployed. The remaining 4% (2 Awards) were provided to young people progressing into training/education. – 72% (41 Awards) have been provided to young people who have little or no qualifications – educational underachievers. – 87% of young people who have received a Development Award from The Prince's Trust in Northern Ireland this financial year have achieved a positive outcome, moving into education, training or employment. – Now that the programme is fully operational we expect to see an increased level of activity over the remainder of the financial years, with over 42 Awards currently in the pipeline over the next month alone.
2.7	<p>With regard to Belfast Metropolitan College work is still underway in terms of finalising details of a proposed bursary scheme and a Funding Agreement between the Council and the College is being finalised. At this stage it is anticipated that up to 140 bursaries at a value of approx £500 will be allocated via the College in year 1 of the programme. It is also envisaged this programme would be launched at a breakfast event to be hosted by the Lord Mayor early next year. Details of this event are outlined below.</p>
2.8	<p><u>Next steps</u></p> <p>As part of the project development work on the scheme, Members suggested that they would be keen to maximise leverage from the private sector in order to increase the budget available and it was confirmed that consideration would be given to progressing this, once the scheme was operational. At the same time it is important for the Council to now consider implementing a targeted promotion and awareness campaign across the city to promote the Bursary Scheme. It is therefore proposed that a number of promotional events be held early in the New Year including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A breakfast event, hosted by the Lord Mayor, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, for the key business and community and other relevant sectors. This breakfast would help demonstrate the potential impact of the scheme to other

	<p>public and private sector funders and may help in increasing the size of the fund for future years. Potential contributors to the Bursary Scheme would be targeted to attend and we would consider using channels such as the Business Alliance and the Employers' Forum, which is to be extended to include the whole city, as a conduit for engagement with private sector businesses – both as a means of maximising resources available and also in ensuring that the bursaries are linked to a training or employment outcome, where possible.</p> <p>– A celebratory event for recipients of the awards which would help to demonstrate that the Council is taking direct action to support young people to take part in learning and further education, and that funding for the Bursary Scheme is being provided by way of the Council's Investment Programme.</p>
2.10	Members are advised that any future promotional campaign is likely to involve council communication channels (press releases; facebook, twitter etc) as well as targeted promotion through our facilities in the communities (principally leisure and community centres) and engagement with partners organisations e.g., schools, colleges and training organisations across the city.
2.11	Members are also asked to note that should the Council wish to continue to work alongside the College or other educational establishments in year 2 of this initiative then branding of next year's programme will need to be agreed by the start of the calendar year. Members are advised that any future branding of the programme will be in line with the council's Investment Programme to ensure that Council's intervention is visible.
2.12	Further reports on this new initiative will be brought back to this Committee and to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee once clarification is sought on the outstanding points.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>A budget of £100,000 annually over the period of the Investment Programme has been set aside for this activity.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>The work required will be undertaken by existing staff resources.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no specific equality or good relations implications to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

Appendix 1 – Belfast Met – Full-time courses 2012-13

Course	Title	Level
C3071	Access Certificate in Foundation Studies Maths & Computing (QUB)	3
C3077	Access Diploma in Computing with Business & Multimedia (UU)	3
C3048	Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Hospitality	3
C5055	Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND Diploma in Graphic Design	5
C5017	Foundation Science Degree in Hospitality & Tourism Management (UU)	5
C5019	Foundation Degree in Events Management	5
C2077	(Games, Web & iMedia) Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Diploma in Creative Media Production	2
C3110	(Games) Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production	3
C3110	(Film & TV) Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production	3
C3110	(Interactive Media) Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production	3
C3110	(Media) Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production	3
C3037	Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Electrical/Electronic Engineering	3
C3116	Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in IT	3
C5048	Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND Diploma in Computing & Systems Development	5
C5060	(Computer Games Design) Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND Diploma in Creative Media Production	5
C5060	(Media) Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND Diploma in Creative Media Production	5
C5101	Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND Diploma in Electronic Engineering	5
C5054	Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND Diploma in Interactive Media	5
C5042	Foundation Degree in iMedia (UU)	5
C5045	Foundation Degree in Software Engineering (UU)	5
C5112	Foundation Degree in Architectural Technology with Sustainable Design (UU)	5
C5029	Foundation Degree in Building Services and Renewable Energies	5
C4039	Foundation Degree in Product Design and Development	5
C2039	Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Diploma in Travel and Tourism	2
C3326	Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Travel and Tourism	3