



Subject:	Update on JobStart Scheme
Date:	18th February, 2022
Reporting Officer:	John Tully Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Contact Officer:	Christine Sheridan, Head of HR

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To bring to Members' attention the Council's participation in the Department for Communities JobStart Scheme.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to note the update on the Councils participation in the Department for Communities JobStart Scheme.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Relevant Background Information
3.1	Members will be aware that for over twenty years, the Council has provided a variety of employability outreach activity, including work placements, job opportunities, the ring fencing of posts to the long term unemployed, delivery of pre-recruitment and training programmes and participation in government funded programmes such as Steps to Work and the Young

	<p>Persons Employment Initiative. Many of these programmes support our work on Inclusive Growth by targeting those furthest removed from the labour market and they aim to help people get “job ready” to apply for positions in the council and elsewhere as they become available. In July 2021, the Council was approached by the Department for Communities (DfC) to participate in a new initiative, the JobStart scheme</p>
<p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p> <p>3.5</p>	<p>Overview of the JobStart Scheme</p> <p>JobStart is designed to support young people facing additional employment challenges due to the impact of Covid-19. It will help to create job opportunities for 16–24 year-olds by funding positions with employers across all sectors, for a period of six months, increasing to nine months for those who meet additional criteria (i.e., for young people facing multiple barriers).</p> <p>The employer incentive scheme aims to develop employability skills for those at risk of long-term unemployment and to place young people in positions which align with their individual skills and interests. Participation on the scheme is voluntary. Employers will receive government funding for the temporary job opportunities they create.</p> <p>To engage in the programme, the Council must ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities offered must not replace existing or planned vacancies or cause existing employees, apprentices, or contractors to lose or reduce their employment; • job opportunities must last for six months, with a possible extension to 9 months for those who meet certain criteria; • job opportunities must offer at least 25 hours of employment per week; and • employers must develop a training plan to assist participants to gain new occupational and employability skills. <p>(DfC will perform due diligence and financial checks on all employers)</p> <p>To participate in the programme, the young person must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16-24 years old and on benefits or, • if not on benefits, they must fall into the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) category. (If a person falls within this category, they must be 18-24 years old).

3.6	<p>Several other public sector employers are engaging in the scheme e.g., Department for Communities, Department for Health, Department of Justice, and the Executive Office. The JobStart scheme is aimed at supporting young people who face multiple barriers e.g., disabled people, those leaving the care system, those leaving the criminal justice system and those at risk of paramilitarism. The job opportunity can be extended to 9 months for young people who meet these criteria.</p>
3.7	<p>Recruitment for the JobStart scheme placements is being managed through the Council's Youth Support Programme contracted provider, Workforce. Following engagement with Departments, Council identified 12 JobStart scheme placements and these opportunities were advertised from 27th January to 17th February, which included targeted outreach to employability organisations in all parts of the city.</p>
3.8	<p>Young people participating in JobStart will be supported by Youth Work Coaches in the Department for Communities Resources are also available within the Youth Support Programme to support participants by providing access to mentoring and a range of wraparound supports, to ensure that post JobStart, they have the capabilities to remain in secure employment.</p>
<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>	
3.9	<p>For each job opportunity offered the DfC will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of the relevant wage for 25 hours of work per week • the associated employer National Insurance contributions • employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions
3.10	<p>While these paid placement opportunities are funded by the Department for Communities, the Council will be required to contribute a small proportion as participants will be working to Belfast City Council job evaluated job descriptions. In addition, there is £1,500 of funding available for each participant which can be claimed for any other startup costs after a period of two weeks and after a training plan has been agreed.</p>
3.11	<p>Corporate Human Resources staff have worked with departmental HR staff to identify 12 suitable job opportunities. Departmental staff will be required to develop training plans for the successful candidates and provide adequate supervision throughout.</p>

3.12	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Corporate HR will work closely with the Department for the Economy and Department for Communities, and other partners including the ECNI, to ensure equality of opportunity and alignment to our inclusive growth aspirations. Employability outreach will be targeted at young people who face multiple barriers to employment.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None