

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – STRATEGIC POLICY, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND BUDGET**

14 April 2015

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

TO SUPPORT THE COST OF AN APPRENTICE SKILLS SHOW EVENT

(1) **Purpose of Report** To seek the Cabinet Member's retrospective approval to use £4,000 of the County Council's Apprentice Grants for Employers (AGE) Grant Phase 1 approved budget to support the delivery of a skills show event. Retrospective approval is sought following the cancellation of the Cabinet Member meeting on 24 March 2015.

(2) **Information and Analysis** On 20 September 2011, Cabinet agreed to consider proposals to support apprenticeships in an effort to help address the County's rising levels of youth unemployment (Minute No. 261/11 refers). After investigating a number of options, two apprenticeship delivery models were established for which the Council sought competitive tenders. On 13 December 2011, Cabinet agreed to award contracts to Learning Unlimited (Minute No. 365/11 refers), part of the Chesterfield College Group, to:

- Deliver the Council's Internal Apprenticeship Scheme.
- Administer the Council's AGE Grant Scheme.

The Internal Scheme is designed to create 500 internal apprenticeship placements and is being delivered by the Council's Corporate Resources Department, Human Resources Division. The aim of the AGE Scheme was to provide 200 cash incentive grants of £2,500 to Derbyshire businesses to employ and support a young person to complete an accredited apprentice framework. The grant was paid to eligible businesses in three instalments:

- £750 after the apprentice had been in employment for six weeks.
- £1,050 after the apprentice had been in paid employment for 26 weeks.
- £700 when the apprentice completed all elements of the apprenticeship framework.

This approach was adopted partly to protect the Council's financial interest and has resulted in £18,550 being reimbursed by Learning Unlimited in the financial year 2014-15 due to apprentices not completing their framework.

It is important to note that now AGE grants are funded by Government, it is deemed not appropriate to consider delivering a further round of AGE grants, funded directly by the County Council. However, in developing the County Council's approach in relation to youth employment, the Cabinet Member is asked to retrospectively approve the use of £4,000 of the reimbursed funding to support an apprentice event led by Derbyshire County Council that was held at Chesterfield College on 26 March 2015.

The event qualified as a Skills Show event (World Skills UK) and therefore enabled European Social Funds to be levered in, subject to public match funding equal to 50% of the eligible costs.

An estimated cost for the event was in the region of £9,250, with £1,250 coming from the Skills Funding Agency via Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) (which cannot be used as match funding), £4,000 European Social Fund (ESF), and £4,000 public match funding.

Generally, the event was very successful and was targeted at 14-24 year olds and "have a go" sessions were provided promoting apprenticeships and providing a platform for providers and employers to bring along live vacancies. This provided an opportunity for young people to talk about real vacancies that are either currently available or will be available in the coming weeks/months. Information was also provided on apprenticeships for young people or parents who are still undecided as to what they would like to do and support offered to register on the National Apprenticeship Vacancy system. Chesterfield College also secured the services of the National Apprenticeship Champion, Michael Johnson from the Gelder Group, to attend the event.

The event was publicised through Derbyshire County Council (YouthInc), District and Borough Councils, Destination Chesterfield, Sheffield City Region (SCR) and D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), via schools, County Council's Care Leavers Service, Jobcentre+ and multi-agency teams. In the region of around 30 different training providers and employers attended the event.

(3) Financial Considerations The £4,000 funding to support this event is available from the reimbursed funding held within the AGE Grant Phase 1 Cost Centre.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(4) **Key Decision** No.

(5) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(6) **Background Papers** Held on file in the Economic Regeneration Service of the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Andy Williams, extension 38342.

(7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member:

7.1 Approves the use of £4,000 reimbursed grant from the Council's Apprentice Grants for Employers Phase 1 scheme.

7.2 Approves the signing of the appropriate match funding certificate.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director - Economy, Transport and Environment

