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**FUTURE JOBS FUND**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor John Williams, Economy Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek agreement to release £299,000 Future Jobs Fund funding for 2010/11.

**Summary**

2. On the 6 October 2009, Cabinet agreed to the release of £370,500 of external funding through the Future Jobs Fund scheme to create 57 job opportunities for 2009/10 and 2010/11. This scheme is currently running and hitting all spend and output targets, and Darlington Borough Council have been successful in securing additional monies to create a further 46 job opportunities to support residents of Darlington into employment opportunities.
3. Darlington Borough Council has received the offer of grant under the Future Jobs Fund scheme from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for the provision of 46 new jobs. The Council is the lead partner and acting as accountable body for the scheme which involves a wider partnership that is committed to assisting medium-term unemployed residents of the local JCP district (which extends beyond the boundaries of the Borough) into sustainable employment. The total value of the grant is £299,000. The grant is to assist 19-24 year olds and eligible workless people within Darlington's unemployment hotspots (Bank Top, Central, Cockerton West, Eastbourne, Haughton East, Lascelles, North Road, Northgate, Park East and Pierremont), back into sustainable employment by addressing barriers to employment, providing a suitable job that can last a minimum of six months combined with appropriate on-the-job training opportunities.
4. Confirmation has been received that this offer of funding is still available and will not be affected by the Government's spending decisions review. There will, however, be no future rounds of Future Jobs Fund, as the Government intends to end all existing welfare to work programmes and create a single welfare to work programme.

**Recommendation**

5. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the acceptance of Future Jobs Funding.

## **Reasons**

6. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons :-
- (a) To enhance the environmental, social and economic well-being of the Borough.
  - (b) To support medium-term unemployed in Darlington and increase their chances of entering sustainable employment.
  - (c) This project is of greater significance to Darlington in comparison to the other four local authorities within Tees Valley. This is because Darlington Borough Council does not receive funds such as L.E.G.I. (Local Enterprise Growth Initiative) or WNF (Working Neighbourhoods Fund).

**Richard Alty**  
**Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)**

## **Background Papers**

There were not background papers used in the preparation of this report.

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S17 Crime and Disorder	<p>Any job placement will be set with Crime and Disorder in mind. Some job placements will be focused on improving the environmental features of the town and will therefore help people feel secure and safe.</p> <p>Unemployment and financial instability are proven to be key risk factors in terms of both juvenile and adult offending. The Council and its partners have developed a range of initiatives to support and improve access to training and employment for those at risk of offending within the Borough. Partners involved in this scheme are encouraged to support individuals at risk of offending or who have offended, however, this will be subject to partners discretion and recruitment procedures.</p>
Health and Well Being	Project increases people's aspirations and feeling of well being, engaging them as part of an active member of their local community.
Sustainability	All partners involved in the project have been asked where possible to extend the job placement from 6 months to 12 months to offer a more sustainable job placement.
Diversity	The Future Job Funded placements will be open to all who are eligible for the scheme.
Wards Affected	<p>The eligibility of the Future Jobs Fund is split into 2 groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 19-24 year olds - across the whole of Darlington</li> <li>2. 25+ - eligible if within unemployment hot spots – wards which have unemployment rates 1.5% above the national average. In Darlington – the following wards are eligible - Bank Top, Central, Cockerton West, Eastbourne, Haughton East, Lascelles, North Road, Northgate, Park East and Pierremont.</li> </ol>
Groups Affected	As stated above, there is an eligibility criterion based on length of time workless; otherwise it is open to all under 25, but for those who are outside of this bracket, the only restriction is where they live as they must be within an unemployment hotspot.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This report is not a Key Decision
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This project particularly meets the 'One Darlington' priority of the Council's SCS. It is ensuring that people are not disadvantaged by their lack of income, where they live or by another potential disadvantage. By assisting long term unemployed

	<p>residents of Darlington into sustained employment, this project meets several of the priorities under the Prosperous Darlington theme such as increasing the average earning to narrow the gap between Darlington and the rest of the Country, increasing Darlington's employment rate and increasing economic prospects for people living in the most deprived areas (unemployment hotspots). This project will contribute towards National Indicators NI166, NI153 and NI151.</p>
Efficiency	<p>Involvement in the Future Jobs Fund project will involve a commitment of officer time, particularly within the Economic Regeneration and External Funding teams. The projects identified for the funding can be accommodated within officers' existing work programmes.</p>

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

#### The National Picture

7. Nationally, the Future Jobs Fund is an allocation of around £1billion to support the creation of jobs for long term unemployed young people and others who face significant disadvantage in the labour market. The fund is run by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in partnership with the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). The fund aims to create the following jobs:-
  - (a) 100,000 people between 19-24
  - (b) 50,000 people in unemployment hotspots (areas where unemployment is 1.5% above the national average).
8. The fund will support those who have been unemployed for more than 10 months (for those in the 19-24 bracket) or 12 months (for those in the employment hotspot bracket), by getting them a job offer or training lasting at least 6 months. There was a strong preference for partnership bids – which aim for the creation of a minimum of 30 jobs over a 6 month period. Other criteria includes:
  - (a) All jobs MUST benefit the local community
  - (b) The work will be under way quickly
  - (c) Jobs must be for at least 25 hours a week paid at least national minimum wage (six month placements)
  - (d) The FJF allocation for each job will not exceed £6,500

#### The Tees Valley Picture

9. Unlike all the other authorities across the Tees Valley, Darlington does not have access to key regeneration funding such as Working Neighbourhoods Fund. There are therefore limited employability projects and opportunities in Darlington compared to the other authority areas within the Tees Valley. The Future Jobs Fund in Darlington is therefore crucial in ensuring that Darlington's unemployed residents can have access to a programme which seeks to offer them sustainable employment opportunities with training and dedicated support.

#### The Darlington Picture

10. In early 2010, it was decided that Darlington Borough Council would pull together a further bid for funding to the Future Jobs Fund scheme to build up on the success of the first bid. To pull together this bid Darlington Borough Council sought expressions of interest from both departments within the Council and third sector organisations to develop joint bids. They were successful in identifying 11 other partners. The following tables identify the partners and the number of jobs each will be creating and the category of jobs that will be created.

Through the existing Future Jobs Fund scheme, 44 young people are now placed in employment opportunities across the partnership within Darlington.

Table 1: Darlington FJF by partner:-

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Number of FJF jobs</b>
Darlington Borough Council	19
School of Rock and Pop	2
Darlington Association on Disability	1
Age Concern Darlington	3
Hurworth IT	1
CODE PR & Marketing	2
Mikom Systems Ltd	1
St John of God Hospitaller Services	1
Darlington Football in The Community	1
eVOLution	4
Tees Valley YMCA	8
Morrison Trust	1
Connexions	2
<b>TOTAL JOBS</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 3: Darlington FJF by category of job:-

<b>Category</b>	<b>No of FJF jobs</b>
Social Benefits	43
Environmental Benefits	2
Cultural Benefits	1
<b>TOTAL JOBS</b>	<b>46</b>

11. For Darlington, the criteria for the jobs means that there is a defined, and small, pool of individuals who are eligible for this project. As the project is only looking initially for 46 jobs, this is realistic for the size of the pool in Darlington. For all individuals referred onto a FJF funded post, there are a number of benefits which are designed to improve their prospects for entering long-term sustainable employment:-
- (a) The referral process is to be as easy for the target groups as possible. All individuals referred through JobCentre Plus, will have an initial assessment of their strengths, weaknesses and potential barriers to employment.
  - (b) This initial assessment of an individual will identify any barriers that that individual faces. Once in employment through the scheme, the employer and the placement support worker will then dedicate time to assist the individual in addressing/minimising these barriers so that they are manageable and where ever possible, overcome completely. Through doing this intensive work, the individual will be able to enter into long-term sustained employment after the FJF intervention as they will be able to address/minimise such barriers.
  - (c) Confidence building - for an individual, being unemployed for 10 months plus can mean that the thought of entering employment is quite daunting. Through the support from the employers and the placement support worker, individuals will be able to “acclimatise” to the world of work much easier.
  - (d) Experience building though the initial assessment, training needs will be identified and in the vast majority of cases will be very transferable and not job specific. Therefore as well as receiving confidence and experience, they will also be given the skills (and where applicable qualifications) which will assist greatly in their ability to secure

further employment. Where appropriate this may include accredited and/or vocational training.

- (e) All employers will provide the individual with employability skills such as job search and CV writing – which will give individuals the skills and knowledge to look and apply for jobs in the future. This will be either provided in house or through using other partner organisations – which have expertise in running such provision.
- (f) N.B If it transpires that a chosen individual is not suitable for a FJF job, then the employer can use the remainder of the funding left for that post to secure another individual through FJF.

## **Finance**

- 12. As each job attracts £6,500 worth of funding, the total amount of leverage is **£299,000**. Each job/employer requires different amounts out of this £6,500 per job. However, for each job there is a minimum of 5% ring fenced as a contribution to Job Coaching Service. In total there is a minimum of £14,950 available for this service and Darlington Borough Council will seek to appoint an organisation experienced in delivering employability services to deliver this support element at the point the clients take up the employment opportunity. This service will be available to all partners and individuals on the programme. This element is thought to be essential as it gives partners greater capacity to work with medium term unemployed and will ensure individuals stay in a job and feel supported for the full 6 months of their job.
- 13. As well as the coaching resource, the funding bid also contains 2 Future Job Fund Administrators which are Future Job Funded position (and therefore both the salary and training costs of this posts are covered through the project). This post will work and be supervised by Darlington Borough Council who as lead partner are responsible for establishing systems, submitting claims and keeping all paperwork/evidence trails etc. These systems have now been set up through the first Future Jobs Fund scheme, and will be rolled into the second phase of funding.

## **Resource Implications**

- 14. The project requires the following resources:
  - (a) Job Coach
  - (b) Admin support
  - (c) Management support for individual jobs
  - (d) Management support for the project
- 15. The Job Coach and Admin support costs are part of the total project and are being recovered through the FJF as outlined above under ‘finance’. The management support for individual jobs will be the responsibility of those departments the job sits under. Darlington Borough Council has a total of 19 jobs which are as follows (please note all these jobs are new, and not existing positions):

## Darlington Borough Council Future Job Funded Positions

Service	No of posts	Job Role
Transport Policy	2	Transport Policy Assistant - Providing travel advice to the public through the workplace and at events, gathering and analysing traffic and travel information and helping out at public events promoting sustainable travel.
Connecting With Communities	1	Welfare Rights Assistant - Providing assistance with appealing, claiming and retaining benefits.
Connexions	1	Skills 4 Me Admin Support Officer - To be responsible for undertaking administrative, organisational and financial checking processes for the 'Skills4me' programme. To assist with the planning and development of admin support
Connexions	1	Employment Support Trainee - To support and assist Placement Support Worker in the Council to ensure young people who are NEET's who progress into employment through the Skills 4 Me Project are supported through the transition to work. Opportunity to shadow Worker, and undertake on the job training.
Regeneration	2	Business Engagement Assistant - Assist in the preparation of the business news letter (populating web templates), in raising awareness of employability schemes to businesses and the wider community and with updating the employability and business website and other general Admin duties
Development and Environment	1	Estates & Property Assistant - Support the Estates & Property Section to ensure statutory compliances are in place for public use buildings and facilities are fit for purpose.
Regeneration	1	Community Funding Assistant - To assist with the administration of the Council's Planning and Economic Strategy Unit - the main duty of the post is to assist the work the team carries out directly with the Community and Voluntary Sector including funding searches, compiling and issuing monthly funding bulletin.
Regeneration	2	Future Jobs Fund Assistant - To assist with the administration of the FJF, including the registration of jobs, timesheets and progressions as well as running filing systems to keep all information on file.
Community Services	6	Community Enabler - Supporting people to use public transport independently and also access a range of community facilities to develop their personal skills.

16. As Darlington Borough Council does not have a team dedicated to programmes such as WNF, it is using existing project management and monitoring resources to manage the overall project. A maximum of 4 hours per week of existing staff time will be diverted to this function across Regeneration. The project will also have implications on other sections across the Council – such as finance, HR and legal. However, it is envisaged that the impact will be minimal and likely to be predominantly in the start up of the project with ongoing input from finance through the management of budgets, payroll, etc.

### Processes

17. Referrals to fill the jobs will come via Jobcentre Plus (JCP). Darlington Borough Council Officers have regular contact with JCP which will ensure that as soon as the information is available it will be implemented across the project and the partnership.

### Outcome of Consultation

18. This project has been consulted with as follows:

- (a) Project partners – the 11 partners as outlined in Table 1 have been fully consulted with during the bid writing stage. They are all committed to hosting job placements, which

- will be directly employed through their own organisations. A partnership agreement is being drafted to ensure all partners are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (b) On the 21<sup>st</sup> August, the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) were made aware of the FJF, as part of a wider presentation on addressing worklessness in Darlington. HR representatives, elected members with an interest in HR issues and Union representatives attended the meeting.
  - (c) Throughout the bidding process, Darlington Borough Council has consulted with Job Centre Plus in shaping and defining the Darlington project. This consultation is ongoing and Economic Regeneration Teams have built up strong working relationships with Job Centre Plus.

## **Conclusion**

- 20. Darlington does not receive the key regeneration funds that the other four Local Authorities within the Tees Valley receive. Therefore by accessing the Future Jobs Fund, the Council has provided a project which is important for Darlington, in assisting long term unemployed residents into sustainable employment – by addressing barriers to employment and through the use of training. The first phase of this project now has 44 people in employment opportunities, and is a success in terms of outputs and spend.
- 21. To build upon this success and to create further opportunities for Darlington, a further 46 job opportunities have been secured through an additional bid to the Future Jobs Fund. This project will target 19-24 year olds from across Darlington and people within its unemployment hotspots (Bank Top, Central, Cockerton West, Eastbourne, Haughton East, Lascelles, North Road, Northgate, Park East and Pierremont). This will also have a wider positive effect of creating opportunities for employment in Darlington, in response to job losses suffered as a result of the combined impact of the credit crunch and economic downturn.