

**To the Chair and Members of the  
REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**WORK, SKILLS AND ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME GOING FORWARD AND  
UPDATE ON OPPORTUNITY CENTRES**

<b>Relevant Cabinet Member(s)</b>	<b>Wards Affected</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>
Peter Davies Mayor of Doncaster	All	
Cllr Cynthia Ransome	Adwick, Askern Spa, Balby, Bentley, Conisbrough and Denaby, Edlington and Warmsworth, Hatfield, Doncaster Central, Town Moor, Mexborough, Rossington	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report summarises the current position with regard to the future work and skills support offer within the Work, Skills and Enterprise programme (Success Doncaster) and also provides an update on Opportunity Centres.
2. Beyond March 2013 there is very little funding available to support WSEP activity at a time when it is a priority for the Council to respond to key challenges including high youth unemployment, the need for more apprenticeships and up skilling of the existing Doncaster workforce.
3. Doncaster's contribution to the Sheffield City Region City Deal also requires a concerted effort to create more apprenticeships and up skill existing employees through more focussed engagement with business. Doncaster's contribution to the City Deal will be to deliver 640 additional apprenticeships and a further 320 people upskilled to Level 3.
4. The landscape in which work and skills support is provided has changed dramatically through the introduction of new work and skills support provision including the Work Programme and Youth Contract funded through DWP. Based on the latest data available (April 2012) 4,370 residents had accessed the Work Programme in Doncaster.
5. The Opportunity Centres were established before the introduction of the work Programme and other related work and skills provision funded directly through central government. This new provision offers a comprehensive package of support services for residents seeking employment, help to address barriers to work and also support to enter training, education or skills. The Opportunity Centres therefore present a risk of duplication.

6. Many of the current Opportunity Centre outcomes could have been achieved by Jobcentre Plus and other partners being deployed in other Council and non-Council premises such as other libraries (council and community-run), Children Centres and Health Centres.
7. A review of Opportunity Centre performance shows a downward trend in the outputs achieved for people into jobs and those supported into education and training. The performance data provided in Appendix 1 demonstrates that the Opportunity Centres are not as effective as we would like them to be in responding to the current priorities of Doncaster's developing economy and are not providing good value for money in the context of limited resources.
8. In light of the above, there is therefore a strong need to respond in a different way to the changes outlined above. This should reflect the limited resources available to the Council and the opportunities provided by working with partners.
9. Maximising the job and skills opportunities arising from economic developments and inward investment requires coordination across the whole Borough. This can best be achieved by dovetailing the Council's own limited resources with the provision in place such as through Jobcentre Plus to improve take up.
10. In summary, the key economic outcomes (including into employment, additional Apprenticeships and up skilling to Level 3) can be delivered through a combination of better utilising existing frontline services, local Centres, partner delivery, support from Business Doncaster and the Business and Commerce service area.

## **EXEMPT REPORT**

11. N/A

## **RECOMMENDATION**

12.
  1. Note and comment on the proposed direction for future WSEP support
  2. Note the update on the Opportunity Centres

## **BACKGROUND**

13. The Council has a responsibility to help connect our people to services and opportunities. The establishment of the business led Work and Skills Partnership Board with a key priority of improving skills and creating more jobs provides the strategic impetus and drive to reshape the way in which work and skills support and services are coordinated and delivered.
14. There is a real need to prioritise support and improve employment prospects for 18-24 year olds. At the same time there is an increased focus on work and skills within the Sheffield City Region including the drive through the City Deal to create 4000 more apprenticeships and upskill 2000 existing employees

across the City Region. As one of the 8 Local Authorities involved, Doncaster's contribution to the City Deal will be to deliver 640 additional apprenticeships and a further 320 people upskilled to Level 3, representing 16% of the total City Region targets.

15. With the creation of Business Doncaster, partnership working with Job Centre Plus, Doncaster College and the Chamber will be strengthened to ensure easier access to support for businesses. This will include a joined up offer, access through a dedicated website and helpline and shared intelligence to inform future provision.
16. The introduction of new work and skills support provision funded through central government and other external sources provides a further opportunity to make more use of these resources. Examples of new provision include:
  - **Work Programme** – funded through the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) until 2015/16; delivered by 2 Prime Contractors in Doncaster - Action for Employment and Serco and operating through a supply chain of subcontracted providers. Provision includes pre- employment support and training, CVs, interview preparation and matching to jobs.
  - **Youth Contract** – a package of support worth almost £1billion nationally to help young unemployed people to prepare for work and find a job. Over three years from April 2012 the Youth Contract will provide wage incentives, work experience , apprenticeships and additional support for NEET young people
  - **Apprenticeship Hub** – as part of the Sheffield City Region City Deal this will provide an additional planned 640 apprenticeships in Doncaster and an additional 320 individuals upskilled to Level 3 over 3 years
  - The DWP funded **Support Contract** which operates across Doncaster and provides pre-employment support to unemployed individuals.
  - **DWP Skills Support for the Unemployed** - 18 to 24 year olds receiving Work Related Activity Group Benefit (JSA/ESA) employability skills, pre-employment training.
  - **DWP Skills Support for Redundancy**- for Individuals who have been or are under threat of redundancy receive support to either retrain or up-skill to improve employment opportunities - also includes CV writing, interview techniques, job search.
  
  - **Connexions** offer 13 -19 year olds careers advice and information on getting to where they want to be in life. For example, personal issues, information advice and guidance, job search, applications to colleges, work based learning, letters/CV writing, interview techniques and financial support. This service is currently under review in the light of changes to IAG provision in schools
  - The **National Careers Service** is free to every adult in the UK either online, telephone or face to face.
  - **National Apprenticeship Service** – IAG online and telephone number.
  - **Adult Skills Budget** providers (Colleges and appointed training providers) offer IAG 'drop in' provision including Employability Skills (CV, interview techniques, job search) and pre-employment training.

17. Work is currently underway to identify a solution which enables the Council to respond to this new work and skills landscape within the context of very limited resources. In consultation with internal and external stakeholders, the aim will be to develop and implement an approach to delivery which joins up existing frontline services, provides co-ordinated support to frontline workers and builds on existing networks, relationships and provision.
18. The delivery model will include services delivered by the Council such as through Libraries and the WSEP programme as well as external partners, stakeholders and community groups. All the existing core funded libraries want to include support for residents seeking work and skills as part of their service offer – this provides an opportunity to train and support these staff without the need to fund additional Customer Service Advisors.
19. Such an approach could be coordinated and facilitated through the Work, Skills and Enterprise programme within the Council's Business and Commerce service area Council. This will ensure a consistent but flexible approach that can be applied to various 'touch points' where residents come into contact with frontline staff operating from a range of venues including libraries, community owned buildings, Children's centres and other buildings.
20. Key elements of the proposed delivery approach include:
  - Increased engagement with new and existing businesses to create more job opportunities and apprenticeships for local residents, thus making it as easy as possible for employers to take on 'just one more' person
  - Identifying and responding more quickly with partners including Jobcentre Plus and Doncaster College to the future skills and job requirements of new investors and developers
  - Coordinating work, skills and enterprise support working with the Work and Skills Board and as part of Business Doncaster in order to deliver key priorities including apprenticeships, the Employer Pledge and better use of local LMI
  - Training for frontline workers to support residents to engage with the economy
  - Providing current, up to date briefing on Labour Market Intelligence and resources (including online) to help the frontline staff deliver
  - Provision of the mobile bus, reaching out to communities and engaging with local residents and businesses
  - Development of a multi partner 'task force' to support and deliver targeted campaigns in communities
  - Support to link people to job and skills opportunities through provision of job vacancies and brokering of training support
  - SLA's with key partners (for example, Job Centre Plus, National Careers Service) to utilise their resources for outreach delivery and joint working
  - Closer working with Neighbourhood teams to utilise their local knowledge and engagement with residents and relevant local community groups
  - Tailored to reflect key economic developments in communities e.g Rossington

21. With regard to Opportunity Centres the following key points are relevant:

- The Opportunity Centres vary significantly in terms of take up of services and outputs generated - outcomes have generally been low throughout the initiative and do not demonstrate value for money overall (Appendix 1 provides further statistical detail).
- Whilst acknowledging that some Centres have achieved better than others, they do not demonstrate good value for money given the limited financial resources available to support people into employment, the need to respond to the new works and skills developments outlined above (for example, City Deal Apprenticeship Hub and Business Doncaster) and do not enable the Council to respond to delivery of these borough wide.
- There are currently ten Opportunity Centres in existence. The five Opportunity Centres at Woodlands, Askern, Edlington, Mexborough and Bentley are integrated within the Library Service and therefore have core funding available through the use of shared resourcing assisted by some self-service facilities. The 6 Customer Service Advisors equating to 4.5 FTE in the five Opportunity Centres at Balby, Denaby, Intake, Rossington and Stainforth are only currently temporarily funded through WSEP until March 2013.
- The staffing for the 5 Opportunity Centres not integrated into the library service and therefore funded through the WSEP currently cost £97,880 per annum (covers staff only). All funding for these through WSEP ends in March 2013. Decisions have yet to be made about the use of any limited WSEP funding available post March 2013 and the Council in order to meet its work and skills priorities and responsibilities as described needs to shape the future direction of the WSEP programme to respond to this.
- From April-August 2012, 1104 clients accessed the 10 Opportunity Centres. 1069 (83%) of these were supported by the CSA's. 142 (13% of clients) entered employment. Of those reported to have gained employment, 86 (61%) were reported and claimed as a result of Jobcentre Plus outreach activity in the Opportunity Centres and 56 (39%) claimed as a direct result of the CSA's working within the Centres. If we look at these five months in isolation to provide an example of effectiveness of an Opportunity Centre, this equates to an average of 2.84 people per month supported to gain some kind of employment at each of the 10 Centres for each of the five months.
- Jobcentre Plus delivery staff currently operates an outreach service to assist many residents into employment and can be deployed to work within a wide variety of public access locations across the borough. They are not dependent on being in an Opportunity Centre. This also applies to the face to face IAG support provided through the National Careers Service.
- The stand alone centres in Balby, Denaby, Intake, Stainforth, and Rossington will not be sustainable in their current form without continued funding. Where appropriate, Area Managers have been looking into other potential sources of external funding and identifying any interest from local community groups who

may wish to take over the delivery of Opportunity Centre services in their area. For example, Denaby is currently progressing a community led funding bid. In other areas, the use of local volunteers is being actively considered.

- Going forward, there are opportunities for developing joint training and development of Council and partner's frontline staff working from a variety of locations including community owned buildings, local community partnerships, Children Centres, Health Centres etc. This would ensure appropriate referrals are made and enable us to unlock the potential we already have in the existing workforce without the need to fund separate buildings or specific staff.
- With regard to the Outreach & Engagement proposals, following a representation the Mayor asked for an investigation of the provision from an early contract termination. This caused a delay in being able to progress recruitment. Also at that point the City Deal came along with its developments such as the Skills Deal and the Apprenticeship Hub, which offer opportunities to deliver skills and job programmes in a different way. There had been a significant passage of time and it raised questions over the appropriateness of recruiting the outreach workers for a limited period. In light of the above there was a need to consider a way forward for delivery in view of the changing landscape, and limited timescales and resources. This report enables members of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel to comment on the way forward.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY PRIORITIES

22.

Priority Theme	Mayor's Priorities for 2011/12	Implications of this initiative
1. Creating a strong, connected and inclusive economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive forward the Doncaster economy</li> <li>• Get the balance of public and private transport right</li> <li>• Promote Doncaster as a tourist destination</li> <li>• Regenerate Doncaster's town centres</li> </ul>	The government's work programme, similar initiatives, Jobcentre Plus outreach and our libraries will continue to contribute towards increasing employment to improve Doncaster's economy at no extra cost to the authority.
2. Developing stronger communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage community harmony and cohesion. Treat people as individuals, not by reference to labels and artificial groupings</li> </ul>	The coordination of work and skills support with the Council working more closely with partners will encourage access to services.
3. Increasing and improving housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise housing standards</li> </ul>	
4. Protecting and improving all our children's lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to improve education and skills</li> <li>• Build on a strengthening Children's Service</li> </ul>	The focus provided by the Work and Skills Partnership will improve Information, Advice and Guidance, the

		links between schools and business and increase the number of apprenticeships. More young people will be aware of what local businesses require in Doncaster.
5. Improving health and support for independent lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage attitudes of self-reliance, self-improvement and mutual respect within Doncaster communities</li> </ul>	
6. Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce crime and all forms of anti-social behaviour</li> </ul>	
7. Creating a cleaner and better environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to protect the environment from developers, decay and architectural vandalism</li> </ul>	
8. Internal Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure local people get value for money from council services</li> </ul>	This initiative will ensure residents are not paying for duplicate services and they are as stream-lined as possible.

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

23. There are no risks attached to the recommendation within this report as all key economic outcomes ( including into employment, additional apprenticeships and up skilling to Level 3) can be delivered through a combination of existing frontline services, local Centre's, partner delivery, support from Business Doncaster and the Business and Commerce service area .

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

24. There is no statutory duty to provide this service. Under the Localism Act 2011 there is now a general power of competence, allowing a Local Authority to do anything that an individual can do (with some restrictions).
25. There is a specific duty in making this decision in relation to the Equality Act 2010.
26. The decision maker must know and understand the legal duties in relation to the public sector equality duty and consciously apply the law to the facts when considering and reaching decisions where equality issues arise. Meeting the general equality duty requires 'a deliberate approach and a conscious state of mind'. R (Brown) v Secretary of State for Work & Pensions [2008] EWHC 3158 (Admin).

27. The new public sector duty is set out at Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share that protected characteristic.
28. Having due regard to the need to 'advance equality of opportunity' between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not includes having due regard to the need to remove or minimize disadvantages suffered by them.
29. The Council's duty under Section 149 of the Act is to have 'due regard' to the matters set out in relation to equalities when considering and making the decision. Accordingly due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations must form an integral part of the decision making process. The decision maker must consider the effect that implementing a particular policy will have in relation to equality before making a decision.
30. A careful consideration of the equality duty documentation/assessment is one of the key ways in which the decision maker can show "due regard" to the relevant matters.
31. Where it is apparent from the analysis of the information that the policy would have an adverse effect on equality then adjustments should be made to avoid that effect (mitigation).
32. The duty on public authorities is to bring these important objectives relating to discrimination into consideration when carrying out its public functions. At the same time, the decision maker must also pay regard to any countervailing factors, which it is proper and reasonable for them to consider. Budgetary pressures, economics and practical factors will often be important. The weight of these countervailing factors in the decision making process is a matter for members in the first instances
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## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

35. The salary costs of the Customer Service Advisors working in the 5 Opportunity Centres not integrated into the library service are estimated to be £98k for 2012/13 and are funded from the Work Skills and Enterprise Programme (WSEP) until 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2013. The WSEP budget has not been allocated to support these posts beyond this date and the core Library Service budget does not have provision to fund the continuing salary costs of these sites.
36. Decisions regarding the allocation of remaining WSEP funding (approx. £300k) are yet to be made and these are subject to separate reports and financial implications.
37. Redundancy costs may arise if the affected employees leave DMBC employment. This cannot be quantified at this stage, but it would be expected that the resulting costs would be met from the corporate resources earmarked for severance costs.

## **HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

38. The sustainability of the independent Opportunity Centres after 31 March 2013 will potentially have an impact upon the staff employed. The Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004 give employees in organisations with those with 50 or more employees' rights to be informed and consulted about the business they work for and any proposed changes.
39. Dependent upon the proposals which are put forward and what the impact will be on the staff additional consultation and consideration will be required, for example:
  - An employer proposing to make collective redundancies must comply with the requirements under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (TULCRA) even if they have established separate consultation arrangements as a result of the Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004.
  - Collective consultation with employee representatives must take place as outlined in Section 188 of TULRCA where an employer is proposing to dismiss as redundant 20 or more employees at one establishment within a period of 90 days or less. Consultation with Staff and the Trades Unions should be meaningful and begin whilst the proposals are still at a formative stage to allow for adequate time for appropriate representatives to respond and for the employer to consider their responses. Consultation must be undertaken with Union representatives with a view to reaching agreement.
  - If a redundancy situation occurs dismissed employees, with two or more years' service, are entitled to a redundancy payment. If a redundant employee is age 55 or over and pays into the pension scheme they would be entitled to early access of their pension benefit.

- Other measures to be considered when addressing transformation of the service; offer of early retirement to volunteers; retraining or redeployment and natural wastage.
- The transformation may have an impact upon temporary, fixed term or casual workers within the service. The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 requires that fixed term employees should not be treated less favourably on the ground they are fixed term employees unless this is objectively justified.
- Modernisation of the service and the introduction of new technology may require staff to be appropriately trained wherever necessary.

## CONSULTATION

40. The relevant organisations and services will be consulted with to ensure the proposals are based on sound and accurate information.
41. This report has significant implications in terms of the following:

Procurement	Crime & Disorder	
Human Resources	Human Rights & Equalities	
Buildings, Land and Occupiers	Environment & Sustainability	
ICT	Capital Programme	

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix 1: Opportunity Centre Performance Statistics  
 Appendix 2: OSMC Opportunity Centre Action Plan

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