

# METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

## CABINET REPORT - 14 MARCH 2002

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### CONTRACT WITH EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

#### Executive Summary

1.0 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to continue and extend the provision of the Gateway Support Programme. The current programme comprises one full-time youth worker through a contract with Employment Services. Approval is sought to establish two further posts in order to extend this contract to provide additional support to over-25's and young people who are leaving care and moving into the employment of the local authority.

#### Background

- 2.0 The Gateway Support Programme was established as result of a partnership between Employment Services and the then Youth Service, in July 2000. It was the first programme of this nature, nationally. The programme provided a package of focused support for young people entering the four-month 'Gateway Period', which is the first stage of New Deal. The purpose of the Gateway Support Programme is to ensure that young people do not fail the opportunity provided by New Deal because of a personal barrier to engaging with the process. Young people were not engaging in the options because of health issues, lack of basic skills, and welfare rights issues.
- 2.1 Young people access Gateway Support via referrals from New Deal Personal Advisers. The Gateway Support youth worker meets with the client and together they identify the issues holding the client back. An individually tailored action plan is drawn up with the client and the programme begins. Usually the programme lasts about 8 weeks and includes one-to-one support, group work, trust building and a residential.
- 2.2 Specialist support services are accessed via Response and other local agencies for issues such as housing advice, counselling, debt guidance, drug and alcohol misuse.
- 2.3 It is intended that at the end of the 8 week programme, the clients are more able to make decisions about their future. Often this is a move to employment or training. Clients attend Gateway Support on a voluntary basis; there is no threat to benefit if they do not participate. Clients attend because they have acknowledged that if their lives are to improve they have to be part of the process. They have made the decision to make positive changes to their lives.
- 2.4 The programme has met all expectations in helping young people move on in their lives and also towards and into employment and training. It has also been successfully inspected by Ofsted and The Training Standards Council.

#### Proposals

3.0 Both the Employment Services and the Youth and Community Service are keen to extend this programme. It is intended that in the next phase of the Programme will support young people who have left the care of the Local Authority and wish to enter the Subsidised Employment option of New Deal.

- 3.1 Similarly there is currently no parallel programme of support within New Deal for clients who are aged 25+. These clients have needs which are as valid as the 18-24 age group. It is intended to increase the Gateway Support programme to encompass this wider age range. This will be the natural progression of a good model of practice encouraging social inclusion and lifelong learning.
- 3.2 The employment of 2 additional workers will allow for an increase in the target number of clients from 103 to 222. Negotiations are currently taking place with Employment Services to agree a new fee per client. The proposed rate from the Youth & Community Service is £326 per client. If agreed, the new rate will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2002. The target of 222 Clients has been set to ensure that the funding required for the staffing and project costs are covered. In 2000-2001, 103 clients were engaged on the Gateway Support Programme. The proposed increase in staff will enable the project to meet its new target as the demand has always outstripped capacity.

### **Financial and Staffing Implications**

- 4.0 The cost of this proposal for the two JNC 2 (2-10) posts at maximum of the grade is £56181, including oncosts at 22.8%. In addition, £16550 is required to meet the shortfall of the Senior Youth Worker JNC 3 (1-4) post, the total cost of which will be £31550 at maximum of the grade including oncosts at 22.8%. Planning & Economic Development will be making a contribution of £15000 towards the JNC 3 (1.4) Senior Youth Worker post. The total cost will be £72731, at the top of the grade (excluding Planning & Economic Development contribution). The senior worker will support young people who are Care Leavers and who are taking up employment in the Local Authority under New Deal opportunities. This worker will oversee the project.
- 4.1 The programme is externally funded by Employment Services on the basis that the Authority claims a fee for each Gateway client. To date the fee claimed has been £293 per person. Targets were set and achieved at 103 clients per annum. This equates to £30,472 income. The excess income has covered project expenses, admin support and other necessary expenses.
- 4.2 The workers will be managed by the Youth Liaison Worker and the new areas of work supported and monitored through the Youth & Community Service line management.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 5.0 The programme is specifically for young people who may have been previously at risk of social exclusion. Underpinning principles of the programme are promoting social inclusion and equality.
- 5.1 The proposed continuance and extension of the provision will enhance the equality of opportunity of some of the most long term unemployed people and those in the care of the local authority.

### **Human Rights Implications**

- 6.0 This report supports Article 2 of Protocol 1 of the Act in that it will increase access to a variety of educational opportunities to a wide range of people who may have previously been excluded from education.

### **Local Agenda 21 Implications**

7.0 These proposals will directly tackle social exclusion by supporting people into accessing training and employment, thus improving the local economy and quality of life of people in Wirral.

### **Community Safety Implications**

8.0 There are no community safety implications associated with this report.

### **Planning Implications**

9.0 There are no planning implications associated with this report.

### **Local Member Support Implications**

10.0 There are no Local Member Support implications associated with this report.

### **Background Papers**

11.0 None.

### **Recommendations**

12.0 Establish the post of Senior Youth Worker JNC 3 (1-4) (£28967 - £31549 including 22.8% oncosts) and a second post of JNC 2 (2-10) (£21183 - £28090 including 22.8% oncosts). This matter will be reviewed as of 31 March 2003. This proposal is based on the New Deal contract being awarded to the Youth & Community Service.

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