

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 19 March 2013	Decision maker: Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care
Report title:		Award of Learning Disability Employment Grants 2012/13	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Head of Adult Commissioning	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Cabinet member for Health and Adult Care approves the recommended awards to voluntary sector providers as set out in appendix 1 for Learning Disability Employment services for a period of 12 months at an annual cost of £165,781.
2. That the Cabinet member for Health and Adult Social Care agrees that the recommended grant allocations for voluntary sector organisations set out in recommendation 1 be subject to:
 - A three month notice period to allow the Council to respond to any changes in future government funding settlements; and
 - Good performance and delivery of the outcomes specified in the grant conditions.
3. That the Cabinet member for Health and Adult Social Care notes that the work to finalise the Vision for Learning Disabilities Day Opportunities and implementation plan for the Council Economic Wellbeing Strategy will inform future grant allocations and service arrangements for 2014/15.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. The council's Economic Wellbeing Strategy has a clearly stated ambition that the support for people with the most complex needs be improved and that they can be supported to be ready to access other services and employment opportunities and be supported when in employment. The strategy underlines the importance of working strategically with a range of partner organisations including voluntary and community groups, and national / local businesses.
5. It is widely acknowledged that employment and steps towards gaining employment for all, and particularly Southwark's most vulnerable residents, is important. It promotes independence, supports individuals to build financial resilience and could help to mitigate against some of the potential impacts of forthcoming welfare reforms.
6. For people with a learning disability gaining and sustaining employment has an important role to play in enabling them to lead fulfilling lives as active members of their community. It promotes social inclusion and provides opportunities for people with disabilities to focus on their skills; giving them confidence and allowing them

to earn money and have their skills valued more highly.

7. When the council consulted with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers on its draft vision for day opportunities there was a call for more support to find employment opportunities and a call for the council to do more to create further job opportunities for people with learning disabilities.
8. In response to this, through its Adult Social Care departmental Innovation Fund bidding rounds, the council has prioritised innovation funding for employment support focused projects and the learning from these projects will inform the council's longer term funding priorities for employment services. Southwark Council created the Innovation Funds to help local voluntary sector organisations provide a wide range of high quality services, to give people who use personal budgets maximum choice over the social care they receive.
9. The grant funding recommended within this report will help to build on the council's existing work with a number of voluntary sector providers that has enabled Southwark to be in the top ten boroughs in 2011/12¹ in London in terms of percentage of people with a learning disability known to the council in employment.
10. In order to improve on this performance and as part of the development of a vision for day opportunities and community services for people with a learning disability, we have created a learning disability Employment Review Project Board which will be defining how we will:
 - Prioritise employment as a genuine opportunity for people with a learning disability (both within the council and with local employers)
 - Support an increase in the number of people with a learning disability in employment
 - Develop employment as our reablement offer for people with a learning disability to help increase independent living skills.
11. Bede Plus and Toucan Employment have been integral in our work to date and have enabled between them over 100 people to gain employment with many of them sustaining their employment for 12 months or more and some for many years as a result of the ongoing support provided to both the employer and employee.
12. Therefore while further work is needed to finalise the vision for day opportunities, given the clear message from users when consulting on the draft vision and the successes that the existing employment projects have delivered to date, it is important to maintain momentum in our existing support as the council determines its future investment priorities to support people with a learning disability into employment.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

13. Bede and Toucan Employment are both local voluntary sector organisations that specialise in working with people with a learning disability to find and maintain employment. They work collaboratively to reduce duplication and are held in high regard by other statutory bodies such as Job Centre Plus, Remploy and

¹ Department of Health Statutory Returns.

Connexions.

14. Both Bede and Toucan Employment are supporting the development of our vision for day opportunities and are continually seeking out opportunities to improve the service they offer to our residents. Within their existing funding this year, they have rebased their work efforts to introduce different ways of supporting people to gain or keep employment along with their existing, successful model of flexible person centred support.
15. The existing model of support offered by these two organisations has a successful track record in enabling people with a learning disability to find and maintain work and has managed to develop some strong working arrangements with local employers. For example Bede has developed a long term relationship with a firm of solicitors based in London Bridge which has enabled them to 'job carve'² opportunities for people with learning disabilities.
16. Continuing to develop a stronger and broader range of employer links will be important and the council, through its Economic Wellbeing Strategy, is well placed to support Bede, Toucan and other organisations in this work.
17. As noted earlier, access to and support to maintain employment promotes social inclusion which contributes to peoples overall wellbeing. As such the council considers that these services also support a preventative service model that can extend support to people who do not currently meet the councils FACS eligibility criteria. Supporting individuals to find and maintain employment, which often generates a broader support network, can mean that it is less likely they will need other paid for council services, through living more fulfilling lives and being more integrated in their local community.
18. Recognising the importance of employment and feedback from users on the draft vision for day opportunities, Bede are changing their model to embed employment support for all clients who have a spot purchased day service. This shift in focus towards primarily providing employment support for people who are FACS eligible has enabled them to support fourteen people into employment (six full time and 8 part time) with a further fifteen actively job searching.
19. Toucan are currently actively supporting 120-130 people. This includes work preparation, job searching, and job coaching/travel training, plus ongoing support to the individual or employer if any issues arise. Toucan are looking to see if any of these clients can be signposted to other services to ensure they continue to have capacity to support those new people who need the most help to find employment.
20. Toucan have supported 87 people who have been in sustained employment for 12 months or more with some individuals in the same position for more than ten years. 11 people were supported in finding work this year, showing that clients are still being successful in gaining employment even in this difficult economic climate.
21. It is therefore important that we continue to fund the existing work to support people with a learning disability in to employment while we review the outcomes

² Job Carving involves working closely with employers to consider forthcoming vacancies to establish which part of the role someone can do and how remaining parts of a role could be covered through other arrangements. It allows a focus on the skills abilities and things individuals can do rather than the potential problems or things they can't

achieved by Bede and Toucan as they evolve their approach and consider the learning from other employment focused projects that have received funding through the council's Innovation Fund Grants.

22. Future priorities and level of funding for employment services will need to be complemented by and link as effectively as possible with the wider resources the council invests in employment services, through the implementation of the Economic Wellbeing Strategy.

Policy Implications

23. The council is required to provide statistics on numbers of people with a learning disability in employment. The work carried out by Bede and Toucan Employment contribute significantly to this return.
24. The work undertaken by both organisations also supports the implementation of the Adult Social Care Vision and supports the council's Fairer Future Promises.

Community impact statement

25. The 2009 White Paper Valuing People Now set out the government's goal to address the gap between the employment rates of people with disabilities as a whole (48%) and people with a learning disability (10%).
26. Adult Commissioning Services have set up a learning disability Employment Review Project Board to review the current service offerings from Toucan and Bede, maximise the number of people with a learning disability known to services who are in paid employment, make stronger links with corporate strategies and develop new models as appropriate.

Overview of equality elements of the grant

27. Bede and Toucan are voluntary not for profit organisations and have been established in Southwark for many years. Both work with adults with learning disabilities of working age.
28. Bede are focusing on supporting people that meet FACS criteria and Toucan will continue to support people with a broader range of needs to find and maintain employment.

Equality considerations for recommended awards

Age

29. Both organisations work primarily with adults aged 18-64. Bede and Toucan additionally also work with special schools to find pupils work experience and encourage the expectation of work in children with learning disabilities.

Disability

30. Both organisations specifically work with people with learning disabilities.

Race/ethnicity, Gender/gender identity (including gender reassignment), Religion/belief, Sexual orientation

31. None of the recommended organisations are BME led organisations, however both the recommended services work with people from all ethnic backgrounds. Both of the initiatives are open to all people regardless of gender, religion/belief, or sexual orientation, both have an ethos of inclusion and human rights and no person would be excluded on any basis.
32. Both organisations need to continue to make sure they were taking appropriate steps to prevent and address discrimination, considering the different equality strands, as part of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Pregnancy and maternity and Marriage and civil partnership

33. These initiatives are not expected to have a differential impact on the equality strands of pregnancy and maternity or marriage and civil partnership (as outlined in the Equality Act 2010); consequently it has not been considered in detail here.

Resource implications

34. Monitoring and support of the allocations will be met from within the existing staff resource.

Legal implications

35. The Director of Legal Services notes the contents of this report and confirms that under the council's Constitution the approval of grants of over £2,500 to voluntary sector organisations is a matter that is reserved to Individual Decision Maker (IDM) for decision.
36. Where voluntary sector organisations are commissioned by means of contract(s), then the Council Officer leading the commissioning will need to ensure that any such contracts are let in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders and that appropriate advice as to the terms of any such contract(s) is obtained from the Contracts Section of Legal Services.
37. The report highlights the measures which have been taken to ensure the council complies with its statutory equalities duties.

Financial implications FI:/1010

38. This IDM seeks to establish the principle of continuing funding for Toucan Employment and Bede Plus to enable them to continue the success of their work and also to develop new ways of supporting people into work. The recommendation seeks to award £165,781 and there is an established revenue budget to implement the proposal in the 2013-2014 financial year.

Consultation

39. Formal consultation on the draft vision for day opportunities took place in 2012 and the feedback from the consultation was reported to Cabinet in January. Employment was seen as a keen area to address and it was clear the statutory programs of Job Centre Plus, Remploy, Work Choice and the Work Programme do not meet the needs of people with moderate to significant learning disabilities let alone those with more complex needs.
40. The National Development Team for Inclusion also stressed the importance of

employment – not only as a fulfilling way of spending the day but also to extend friendships beyond others with a learning disability and create real social inclusion.

41. Work is now underway to co-produce with stakeholders the final vision for day opportunities which will inform future priorities and funding for employment services.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Legal Services

42. Officers from Legal Services have advised that no legal concurrent is required for this report.

Departmental Finance Manager

43. The financial implications are contained within the report whilst officer time to effect the recommendation will be contained within existing budgeted revenue resources. There are no further financial implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Employment Support Grants Summary

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Jonathan Lillistone Head of Commissioning	
Report Author	Peta Smith, Commissioning Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	19 March 2013	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	19 March 2013	