

Report of the Chief Executive

BOROUGH WIDE JOB CLUBS INITIATIVE1. Purpose of report

To fulfil the Committee's request for a report exploring whether job clubs are a relevant initiative that could be supported as a Borough wide activity. The Committee are asked to endorse a proposal to commit resources to supporting further work in 2022/23.

2. Detail

Job Clubs first appeared during the 1980's at a time of mass unemployment. They have remained a targeted intervention and their prevalence has fluctuated within economic cycles. Economic Development part funded a Job Club, together with Police Crime Commissioner's Office and Eastwood Town Council, during 2017 to 2020. This ceased with the pandemic. Eastwood remains an area of the Borough where there are significant pockets of underemployment. Inspire Learning also created a Job Club at Stapleford Library. which is thought to have received ESF support under a Nottinghamshire County Council funded initiative. It is delivered by Nottinghamshire Charity HOPE and may have recently re-started. Members of the Committee have asked officers to explore rolling out this type of provision to all areas of the Borough where there is a demand for it. If the Eastwood "model" was rolled out to 10 localities the programme would cost somewhere between £10,000 and £12,000. Currently the Service lacks the budgetary resource to underpin a Borough wide activity, but could commit to supporting a targeted intervention of up to £4,000, to be met by re-profiling existing service commitments. The initiative is timely because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic; many people have changed how, where and when they work; there is evidence that some geographic areas and demographic groups continue to be challenged by this.

Appendix 1 is a project development diagram explaining the work undertaken to date and the next phase of work to understand local demand, and any additional resource availability, particularly in-kind support. Appendix 2 is a letter which officers propose to use to reach out to all Parish and Town Councils as part of this work. Appendix 3 is a "mapping exercise" showing the types of funded support in Nottinghamshire. There still appears to be unmet demand and the Committee is asked to endorse a proposal to support Job Clubs next financial year.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that subject to there being proven demand and an absence of alternative support, a commitment of up to £4,000 from the existing 2022/2023 Economic Development Service Budget be approved.

Background papers: Nil