

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

NAIRN AND BADENOCH AND STRATHSPEY AREA COMMITTEE – 11 JUNE 2014

Agenda Item	7.
Report No	NBS/11/14

Workskills and Development – Update

Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure

Summary

The Report summarises recent employability related activity in the Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey Committee Area and asks Members to comment on the priorities identified for development in the current year. Members are asked confirm the award of three grants from the Deprived Area Fund and agree to the delegation of decisions for the balance of the Funds in 2014-15.

1. Background

- 1.1 The previous Reports to the Area Committee have included information about employment and unemployment in the area and the administration of the Deprived Area Fund (DAF) which has been delegated to the Committee for 2014-15. (10 September 2014)
- 1.2 Three proposals have been received for the Deprived Area Fund to date and these have been considered by the Nairn Ward Members. Nairn Ward Members have been consulted and approved the applications in principle:
 - Nairn & District Citizens Advice Bureau – £5,000 – additional adviser support to Nairn Work Club.
 - Nairn River Community Council – Social Enterprise feasibility study - up to £5,000.
 - Nairn Academy – £5,000 – school leaver activity programme running through school year.
- 1.3 Members are asked to agree these awards which will be subject to detailed checking and outcome monitoring through the Council's Single Grant process.
- 1.4 The Awards do not commit the full DAF available for 2014-15 (£20,000) and Members are also asked to agree that the award of the balance of funds for 2014-15 is delegated to the Director of Development and Infrastructure following consultation with the Area Committee Chair.

2. Employability Services

- 2.1 Information about the provision of Employability Services in the Area is contained in Appendix 1 to this Report. This uses a template which it is proposed to use for future reporting highlighting particular events and case studies. In particular, attention is drawn to two examples of innovative partnership working in the Badenoch & Strathspey Ward with the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust

and the Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust. These organisations are providing training and work experience opportunities that are tailored to the specific geography and economy of the area.

- 2.2 Other highlights from this report are the two Jobs Events held recently, in Nairn and in Aviemore. These events are the result of considerable discussion and planning between the employability partners and represent an important step in joint service provision in the area, especially in engaging directly with businesses to assist with recruitment and meeting their business needs.
- 2.3 Attention is also drawn to the work being done in the community allotment in Nairn and the stories that have been collated illustrating some of the benefits to individuals.
- 2.4 The priorities for the Employability Service were discussed at the Development and Infrastructure Committee on 14th May 2014. In the Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey Area these will include:
- supporting the development of the projects to be supported through the Deprived Area Fund – particularly the outcome of the feasibility study;
 - seeking to consolidate and extend the innovative projects with the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust and the Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust; and
 - conduct as a more detailed analysis of the outcomes for school leavers and delivery of post school learning programmes in the area in conjunction with Skills Development Scotland and Inverness College.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource

The services described are funded through the Employability Service – some with part funding from the European Social Fund.

3.2 Legal, Equality, Climate Change, Gaelic, Risk

There are no direct Legal, Equality, Climate Change/Carbon Clever, Gaelic or Risk Implications arising directly from this report.

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree:

- The award of Deprived Area Funds to
 - Nairn & District Citizens Advice Bureau – £5,000
 - Nairn River Community Council - up to £5,000
 - Nairn Academy – £5,000
- The award of the balance of funds for 2014/15 is delegated to the Director of Development and Infrastructure following consultation with the Area Committee Chair.

Members are asked to comment on the provision of Employability Services in the area.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

Date: 28 May 2014

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Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey

Innovative Grant funded Services:

Highland Small Communities Housing Trust – The Trust has been developing an innovative approach to skills development through their Cairngorm Construction Skills Project. This has engaged 28 young people in Badenoch and Strathspey in a joint learning programme with Inverness College. The trainees are offered Construction skills training at the College and 2 days a week work experience with the contractors working on the Trust’s housing contracts or other community benefit projects in the CNPA area. The Trust has raised a considerable sum of money from charitable sources to fund the project to date and the Employability Service has provided £16,000 each year over the past two years. The proposals for a three year period (2014-18) involve expanding the model to provide for core management costs and the roll out of the training provision to other geographic areas as part of the construction contracts for 400+ houses.

Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust (COAT) – This Trust provides accredited training and employment for people in environmental management and footpath building in the National Park Area. Trainees are offered work experience and obtain SQA accredited qualifications in Environmental Conservation. Each course includes 6 trainees and 19 will have completed training over the three year period ending November 2014. The Employability Service has supported this partnership project with £13k in 2013/14. It is also supported by EU, Scottish Government and National Park Authority funding.

Local Employability Partnership (LEP)

2 local employability partnership networks operate one for Nairn and for Badenoch & Strathspey. In Nairn there is a Link up lunch bringing organisations together. In Badenoch & Strathspey the Youth Opportunities group involves Council; DWP; SDS, NHS, Learning/ Training providers, third sector & voluntary sector working together to ensure alignment and coordination of partner activities.

Recent LEP Activity

Aviemore Jobs Event, The Hub, Aviemore – 15th May

- Event targeted at 16 -24 year olds
- 20 stands, 8 employers & 12 providers
- Excellent networking event testing the needs of the community, employers, volunteering, Activity Agreements, C.V's & Job Search

LEP are in process of evaluating the event.

Nairn Jobs Event, Nairn Community Centre, Nairn – 21st May

- Event targeted at employed/unemployed people
- 12 employers & 10 providers
- Practical advice available on the day, employers, volunteering opportunities, training, C.V's job search, college opportunities and business start ups

LEP are in process of evaluating the event.

Nairn Allotment – Growing towards Employment

- COURSE CONTENT: Volunteer attendance at community allotment with associated horticultural activity and personal development.
- How to grow a range of foods (fruit and veg)
- Transferable gardening skills from sowing to harvest
- Wild foraging Team building day
- Health and economic benefits of growing food
- Learning about the care and growth of flowers and shrubs
- Employability sessions
- Possible work experience and paid work

Highland Council Employability Service

Employment Support Advisers:

Deliver a client centred service that assists people who are furthest removed from the labour market to be job ready and move into the world of work

- 1 Adviser (covering Nairn and B&S)- - providing 1 to 1 support to individual clients; attendance at Work Clubs; mentoring of Council trainees; work with school leavers and support to partnership events.

Work It Out - Short-term and part-time “pre-employment” events and courses aimed at building confidence and allowing people to consider their options and to progress onto mainstream employment or learning programmes.

- 2 x Nairn– pre-employment courses 17 participants in total

Work Clubs - Support is offered for looking and gaining a job in conjunction with on-line IT access support, numeracy and literacy issues.

- 3 venues supported; 2 sessions – average 15 attenders (Nairn) and 4 (Aviemore) and 6 Grantown On Spey

Youth Employment Initiative – coordination of activity directed at assisting school leavers to obtain employment or further learning leading to employment or further education.

- Implementation of Activity Agreement and GO4IT! school leaver programmes

Youth Trainee Programme – 6 month paid training/work experience within different sectors within the Local Authority

- 3 x Nairn, 1 x Kingussie

Deprived Area Fund – targeted funding to areas of disadvantage

- Received 3 applications for Deprived Area Funds

Create & Employ – Highland Council/Business Gateway offer recruitment advice and wage support for new employees.

- The number of posts supported through the project is 7 for the area

Case Studies:

Recently a client who attended a short course has become involved in recycling bikes. He has a long term medical condition and had little confidence. He loved the group and the encouragement and motivation he received. He now travels from home on a weekly basis and continues to enjoy the new structure in his life.

A mother who recently had a family bereavement has been attending the Work club weekly. She has had one to one support from us to go on and do the WEA (Work It Out) course. She enjoyed the social interaction on the course plus it built up her self - esteem and confidence. She is now a volunteer in a charity shop. Through support and her own determination she is progressing, looks and feels better.

A man who attended the work club who was a chef but due to ill health has not worked for 4 few years. He did some IT classes then we looked at him doing his ECDL. He is sailing through this and loving it so much to his surprise. At the Jobs Fair I talked to a Company and they said they would definitely take on someone with his abilities. Spoke with the client who was delighted. He is now in part-time employment. He has a polite manner is now very motivated so his future which he thought was doom and gloom with no job prospects is looking very positive.

A man attended the work club and has been supported by the Adviser. He suffered from mental health problems and had not worked for 6 years. He had no confidence, very quiet and uncertain of himself. He came along for several weeks and through the work club was assisted in putting together a c.v for him and assisted to boost his confidence. Through another voluntary organisation he was able to work on voluntary basis in a private garden with supervision. He now works part-time in a garden centre.