

URN: 21-093

Subject: Kickstart Programme – Progress Update

Report to: Executive Leadership Team – 26 May 2021
Economic Development Committee -

Report by: Victoria Mallender, Economic Growth Manager

SUBJECT MATTER / RECOMMENDATIONS

The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to create new jobs for 16 to 24-year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long-term unemployment. Employers of all sizes can apply for funding which covers: 100% National minimum wage (or National living wage depending on the age of participant) for 25 hours per week (for a total of 6 months), associated NI contributions and any relevant workplace pension contributions (automatic enrolment).

This report gives a background and update to the economic Development Committee on the progress made in terms of the Kickstart programme and the numbers achieved in the Borough

Officers are asked to:

- 1) Review and comment on the progress of the Kickstart Scheme and the agreed method of support via gateways.**

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 The Kickstart Scheme is a national government £2 billion scheme to create hundreds of thousands of high quality 6-month work placements for young people aged 16-24, who are claiming Universal Credit. It was launched on the 4th September, after the Chancellor announced the Kickstart Scheme as part of the Plan for Jobs.
- 1.2 Businesses of all sizes who are registered with Companies House or the Charities Commission looking to create quality jobs for young people can apply to create new 6-month job placements for young people who are currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. The job placements should support the participants to develop the skills and experience they need to find work after completing the scheme.
- 1.3 Programme details:
 - Government provides a wage subsidy to cover National Minimum Wage and national insurance for a minimum of 25 hours a week for 6 months, which is around £6,500 for the 6 months
 - Employees are eligible if they are either on Universal Credit or at risk of being long-term unemployed

- Employers can choose to engage directly with the scheme or can use a representative 'gateway' organisation
 - Scheme approval is effectively an eligibility test on the basis of: is the role new / not replacing existing, and are they providing sufficient wider employability support
 - Approved intermediaries / companies will share Job Descriptions with DWP, who take responsibility for sourcing possible candidates based on employers' requirements and available talent
 - Companies interview to make final hiring decision
 - A £1,500 grant is paid to the employer per employee to support setup costs, support, training and wrap around employability support to assist the placement to gain employment following the placement
 - A £300 fee per placement is available to representative organisations however, no fee is paid if application is made directly
 - DWP may make periodic assessments, including how far employability support is being provided
- 1.4 At the 26th October 2020 Economic Development meeting, members resolved to not to act as a gateway as an Authority but to endorse the schemes active promotion by council officers and, and these arrangements were formalised shortly thereafter.
- 1.5 Due to the extremely high levels of interest in the Kickstart initiative, the lead body managing the scheme (DWP) has been overwhelmed with applications from Gateway bodies. As such both DWP and Gateways are recording two sets of numbers: approved placements and live vacancies. Officers are working closely with all the key chosen Gateways to maximise all potential borough opportunities and promote the wraparound training service offered by East Coast college.

2 PROGRESS TO DATE

- 2.1 As reported in the October Economic Development Committee on 26th October 2020 there have been 3 Gateways approved as part of the Kickstart scheme in Norfolk – these are Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, Norfolk County Council and East Coast College. Officers are working closely with the chosen Gateways to maximise all potential borough opportunities and promote the wraparound training service offered by East Coast college.
- 2.2 The scheme was launched locally on 22nd December 2020 with officers providing regular and continued promotion to the borough's businesses through a wide range of communication methods. Webinars have been conducted in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and East Coast college. Feedback from attendees has been positive.
- 2.3 Officers, in conjunction with Gateways, have been supporting businesses throughout their kickstart journey, this engagement has been vital to ensure the appetite to offer placements remains high as delays with the DWP in processing applications have been frustrating for the businesses.

2.4 As stated in paragraph 1.5 – there are two sets of recorded data. Norfolk has achieved a good level of interest as a whole and as such the Gateways have achieved the below since the launch, recorded up to and including April:

- Norfolk Chambers of Commerce – 423 approved placements
- Norfolk County Council – 210 approved placements
- East Coast College – 108 approved placements
- University of East Anglia – circa 100 placements.

2.5 Confirmation from the key gateway bodies indicates that Great Yarmouth has around 120 approved placements with circa 67 being live (from 61 businesses). As placements take around 2 months to become live from being approved – a 50% conversion rate is a good achievement.

2 Forward Activity

Activity	Activity	Jun	Jul	Aug
B2B Engagement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate opportunity whilst promoting and supporting Queens award applications • Identify businesses within the borough whom we feel Kickstart could benefit • Use inward calls as an opportunity to promote the provision 	Daily engagement		
Digital Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media, Facebook, LinkedIn, twitter: • GYBC Website: full Kickstart details available + hyperlinks for Gateways • Weekly newsletters to be sent to circa 450 businesses • GYTABIA to promote Digital via SM and Newsflash updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly • Daily • Weekly • Weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly • Daily • Weekly • Weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly • Daily • Weekly • Weekly
Marketing campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with East Coast college to promote wrap around support for the business • Work with Great Yarmouth Comms department to produce a Kickstart campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly • Monthly 		
Webinars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused webinar promoting the Kickstart provision and how this can benefit the businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly
Gateway engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly updates with Gateway's to ensure we are fully informed • Implementation of best practice • Follow up applications to provide enriched support • Gateway's to GYBC referral process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly • Daily • As required same day • As required same day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly • Daily • As required same day • As required same day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly • Daily • As required same day • As required same day

3 SUMMARY

3.1 Continued efforts to actively promote and educate the key benefits of Kickstart to businesses within the borough with an aim to increase number of positions remains key and only achievable through comprehensive engagement and communication activity aimed at identified businesses to ensure the opportunity and benefits are fully understood. Partnered engagement, marketing and webinars with East Coast College will ensure those targeted will be most suited to the scheme and highlight the wraparound support and training available for local businesses.

3.2 Great Yarmouth Borough Council currently has 6 applications with the DWP for customer service roles with a view for the successful candidates to be identified as more department specific at the next stage. The suggested departments would include customer service, housing, inward investment, human resources, marketing and comms. Applications were made via East Coast College who processed smoothly but delays with the DWP approval system means processing time will far exceed the current 4 weeks.

Officers / Members are asked to:

1. Review the progress on the delivery of the Kickstart Scheme by Council officers to date'

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	As part of an ELT update.
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	As part of an ELT update.
Existing Council Policies:	Economic Growth Strategy, Pathway to Recovery Plan
Financial Implications:	None
Legal Implications (including human rights):	None
Risk Implications:	None
Equality Issues/EQIA:	None
Crime & Disorder:	None
Child Matters:	N/A