

## Record of operational decision

<b>Decision title:</b>	Decision to accept the Department for Work and Pensions/Job Centre Plus (DWP) grant for the Youth Employment Hub
<b>Date of decision:</b>	8 January 2024
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Corporate Director Children and Young People
<b>Authority for delegated decision:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The decision is within the chief executive’s scheme of delegation - CYP-18 Tracking and reduction of those not in education, employment or training and CYP-20 commissioning of children and young people’s services</li> <li>• The decision is within the directorate scheme of delegation (lines 120,122 and 124) and provides the necessary authority to take the decision</li> <li>• The authorisation within the financial procedure rules is sufficient for the decision and that the officer has authority under the contract procedure rules</li> </ul>
<b>Ward:</b>	Countywide
<b>Consultation:</b>	Legal and finance
<b>Decision made:</b>	Acceptance of the DWP grant of <b>£99,664.72</b> for the period 1 February 2024 to 31 January 2025 to match fund the creation of a Youth Employment Hub (YEH) in Herefordshire. The DWP grant will fund the YEH Youth Employment Hub Co-ordinator and a Careers and Employment Advisor.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>	<p>The government announced through its Plan for Jobs strategy a range of supporting interventions, including Youth Hubs and dedicated youth employability coaches aimed at supporting young people aged 16-24 claiming Universal Credit.</p> <p>The DWP approached the council with a proposition to open a Youth Hub to support young people aged 16 to 24 in Herefordshire, funded through the DWP’s Flexible Support Fund with match funding from the council.</p> <p>It was agreed previously by the council’s Section 151 officer to proceed with the application to the DWP’s Flexible Support Fund and match funding was secured through the council’s Covid 19 Recovery Fund for the Youth Hub. The application to DWP has been successful.</p> <p>The Youth Hub in Herefordshire named the Youth Employment Hub (YEH) to avoid confusion, will bring together a wide range of statutory, voluntary and private organisations to provide multi-agency support, in one place. The aim of which is to support 16- to 24-year-olds into education, employment or training, not just those claiming Universal Credit.</p>

The YEH will provide careers advice, referral into employment, education, training opportunities, provide resources, job application and interview guidance to young people. Young people will be supported by a YEH co-ordinator, two full-time careers and employment advisers, JCP youth work coaches, National Careers Service advisers, the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Services (SENDIASS) along with partnering with local education and training providers who can also give advice on appropriate training pathways and career opportunities and provide specific training to develop skills. The YEH will also work with voluntary and community sector including HVOSS and their partners.

The YEH will support young people to:

- Access information, advice and guidance
- Meet local providers face to face to find an appropriate pathway
- Opportunity to learn new skills
- Access to IT and WIFI and support with applications/CV's
- Meet employers promoting opportunities or providing careers information In-work support
- Information and guidance on self-employment
- Advice on benefits
- Signposting to advice and support on housing and health and wellbeing

The Hub will operate on a Hub and Spoke model with the primary hub operating from 57-59 Blue School Street, Hereford. It will expand countywide working with and alongside the Talk Community hubs, young people and other key stakeholders, to identify other locations across the county, to provide outreach and 'pop up' service.

The physical Hub will be supported by a website hosted on the Talk Communities website, which will offer young people access 24/7 to a range of information including, apprenticeships, college courses, and careers information.

The YEH will:

- Provide better support and guidance for 16-19 year olds who are at risk of being out of education, employment or training. (Herefordshire Children and Young People's plan 2019/2024).
- Provide more opportunities to develop the skills needed for the world of work. (Herefordshire Children and Young People's Plan 2019/2024).

There is clear evidence that prolonged unemployment, particularly while young, can cause long-lasting issues with future earnings, employment prospects and health and wellbeing. The effects are likely to be particularly pronounced due to the nature of prolonged lockdown means that those who become unemployed will find it harder and take longer to get a new job. It increases the likelihood that these people will become welfare-dependent later in life; people unemployed at a young age are likely to be paid less later on in life; their mental and physical health will be negatively affected; and they are more likely to get involved in anti-social activity. Youth unemployment also results in significant costs to the public purse because of higher spending on benefits, lost income to the exchequer through tax receipts forgone, and higher spending on publicly funded services such as the NHS and criminal justice system as well as many local government

	services.
<b>Equality Considerations</b>	The aim of the youth employment hub is to facilitate supportive interventions which avoid young people from becoming long term unemployed. By offering a physical and online presence, working with key stakeholders and joining up activity. The hub offers a greater level of accessibility and cohesion to those seeking support.
<b>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</b>	<p><b>Risk controls</b></p> <p><b>What if the project is not delivering outcomes?</b></p> <p>Monthly performance reports presented to the steering group will identify any areas that the project is not delivering. An action plan will be agreed.</p> <p><b>What if young people do not engage?</b></p> <p>An agreed communication plan will be in place to ensure young people, families, providers, voluntary and community sector know about the service. Staff will work out in the community through partnership organisation such as talk community hubs. Young people will be involved in the monitoring and design of service.</p> <p><b>Will there be cover if the YEH Co-ordinator is off work due to illness?</b></p> <p>We will redeploy someone from Herefordshire council or a partner organisation to support this work until a solution is found.</p> <p>We will employ two full-time Careers and Employment Advisers to ensure cover is maintained during periods of annual leave and sickness.</p> <p>What if the current offer of training and education provision doesn't meet the needs of the individual? we will report this back to the Steering Group which includes the Post 16 Learning and Skills Team and DWP, so that they can work with providers to consider adapting provision and consider this in their commissioning of services.</p> <p><b>Finance implications:</b></p> <p>The DWP grant of <b>£99,664.72</b> will fund the costs associated with employing the YEH co-ordinator, one of the full-time careers and employment advisers and an apprentice, for one year only. The council will provide the building, ICT and associated running costs and fund one of the full time careers and employment advisers. Funding for this was agreed as part of the Covid 19 Recovery Plan <a href="#">Decision - Covid 19 Recovery Plan - Herefordshire Council</a>. There have been delays due to unforeseen circumstances such as having to commission a ventilation system for the building.</p>

	<p><b>Legal implications:</b></p> <p>The contents of the grant funding agreement sets out the terms under which the grant is provided and is acceptable.</p> <p>The Council owns 57-59 Blue School St, Hereford HR1 2AR and therefore the arrangement for use of the building will be made internally and an agreement will be put in place with DWP/Job Centre Plus.</p> <p><b>Equality considerations:</b></p> <p>The aim of the YEH is to facilitate supportive interventions which avoid young people from becoming long term unemployed. By offering a physical and online presence, working with key stakeholders and joining up activity. The YEH offers a greater level of accessibility and cohesion to those seeking support.</p> <p>The YEH will support young people who are furthest away from the labour market and those who belong to groups that are disproportionately under-represented including those with a history of illness; Care Leavers; People with learning disabilities. People with low or no academic qualifications; Homeless people and those insecurely housed; People on low income/seasonal or zero hours contracts; un-employed; Young adult carers.</p> <p>The YEH will monitor attendance and participation to ensure that all young people are able to access services. It is proposed that the Herefordshire SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service Herefordshire) young person’s adviser will be co-located in the Hub.</p>
<p><b>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</b></p>	<p>The option of not doing this was considered but rejected. The YEH will be filling a gap in services for young people in Herefordshire and will build on and strengthen existing partnerships. By employing a YEH co-ordinator and co-locating services will ensure better co-ordination and avoid duplication. We will do this by bringing together DWP/JCP, local authority services, such as housing and the 16+ care leaver team, National Careers Service, further and higher education, independent training providers and community-based organisations and services such as HVOSS.</p>
<p><b>Details of any declarations of interest made:</b></p>	<p>None</p>

Signed:

Date: 8 January 2024