

REPORT TO WEST AREA PEOPLE BOARD
12th March 2014

Enterprise and Personalisation – Supporting Existing Businesses

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of its priorities for the year 2013 - 14, West Area People Board identified Job Prospects as a priority and wanted to build upon the success of the previous enterprise scheme funded through Area Committee.
- 1.2 The People Board in looking at the transformation of Adult Social Care considered the link between enterprise and the Personalisation agenda and how the establishment of new enterprise may assist in not only creating new employment opportunities but also offer greater choice and control to Sunderland residents requiring support and assistance to maintain their independence.
- 1.3 The Board and Committee agreed to fund a pilot programme to assist in the establishment of ten new businesses in the West of the city based upon residents increasing support needs and the opportunity personalisation offers.
- 1.4 The board also requested that consideration be given to and research undertaken into how existing businesses can be supported to grow and prosper and afforded the same opportunity the Personalisation agenda may offer.

2. Identifying Businesses

- 2.1 In order to identify the support requirements of existing businesses, work would need to be undertaken with the businesses to understand what and where support was required.
- 2.2 There are a number of options that could be considered in terms of identifying existing businesses:
 - Use information already held including those businesses previously established supported by Committee, the Community Directory which includes VCS organisations and local traders in the shopping centres across the West.
 - Buy in a survey which will identify the majority of all businesses in the West at a cost of roughly £2000.
 - Deliver an event which could be marketed to businesses in the West.

3. Identifying Support Requirements

- 3.1 On identification of the businesses a diagnostic could be undertaken with each of the enterprises to establish what support and advice they may need in order to:
 - Grow the business
 - Expand services delivered
 - Get over difficulties they may be experiencing which are putting the business at risk.
- 3.2 The diagnostic would be undertaken on a one to one basis with each of the businesses to identify individual need. This information would be analysed and collated to identify those businesses who require support and the type of support required. The estimated cost of a diagnostic survey with 100 businesses would be £6,500.

4. Providing Support

- 4.1 The analysis of work undertaken with the businesses will initially identify:

- Businesses keen to grow
- Businesses keen to expand service delivery
- Businesses that are struggling

4.2 Within each of these areas businesses may require a range of support e.g marketing, financial advice, training, increasing the workforce, accessing business premises, how to tender for contracts etc.

4.3 On identifying the types of support required the programme would look to divert businesses into support that is already available at no cost e.g. dementia training, training for procurement and tender, advice on business premises and how these can be accessed etc.

4.3. The support offered would also ensure that organisations were linked in to the achievement of Area Committee priorities and delivery of positive outcomes for the area including but not limited to recruitment to the apprenticeship and work experience programme, environmental improvements particularly in shopping centres, dementia friendly venues and organisations and an age friendly city.

4.4 The analysis will also identify types of support businesses/organisations require that are not currently available and exist as gaps in the market. These gaps could be met by designing a programme of support for those organisations to be delivered on a one to one basis or as a group.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Consider and make a recommendation as to whether the proposal should Progress to Area Committee.

5.2 Consider and make a recommendation as to whether we work with businesses for whom we hold information, buy in the information, deliver an event or a combination of the proposals.

5.3 Consider and make a recommendation as to the use of a diagnostic meeting to identify support requirements.

5.4 Consider and make a recommendation as to the type and level of support required offered; business growth, expansion of services, struggling businesses or a combination of all three areas.

5.6 Agree to receive a further report on gaps in support available should the recommendations to proceed be favourable.