

Decision Pathway Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 05 March 2024

TITLE	Future Bright Plus – Phase 3 extension of existing Future Bright Programme		
Ward(s)	Citywide		
Author:	Paul Gaunt	Job title:	Employment Support Manager
Cabinet lead:	Cllr Asher Craig, Cabinet Member, Children’s Services, Education and Equalities	Executive Director lead:	Hannah Woodhouse Executive Director Children & Education
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report: To seek approval to accept and spend funding in relation to the Future Bright Phase 3 Grant to extend and enhance the delivery of the existing Future Bright Programme providing Employment support for those who are in low paid, unsecure employment and dependent upon in work benefits to get by.			
Evidence Base:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In Bristol 15% of residents (72,300 people) live in the 10% most deprived areas in England, including 17,900 children and 7,600 older people. Bristol has 41 areas in the most deprived 10% in England, with the greatest levels of deprivation in Hartcliffe & Withywood, Filwood and Lawrence Hill. 21.8% of children are living in low income families. 2) 25,450 households in Bristol are estimated to experience fuel poverty; this constitutes 12.8% of all households “fuel poor” (national average 13.1%). 8% of households have experienced moderate to severe “food insecurity” in the last 12 months, doubling to 16% in the most deprived areas. 3) A November 2023 report by the Work Foundation at Lancaster University found that just 47.7% of Bristol workers were in secure employment and a further 34.8% had a moderately or low insecure job. Those from ethnic minorities also suffered greater inequality, with 24.2% having jobs considered severely insecure, while 19.6% of white workers did. 4) Recent figures show that of the 266, 500 economically active residents of Bristol, 255,700 were in employment. It is estimated that 18.6%, (47,550) of these are dependent upon in work benefits to get by. 5) The original three-year DWP funded Future Bright funding was awarded to the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). Bristol City Council led on the development of the bid, creating a highly effective model to assist individuals who are in low paid and insecure employment to achieve successful in-work progression. Due to the success of the programme, WECA funded a second phase of Future Bright and awarded BCC a further grant of £1.54m over a three-year period where the team worked with 1880 individuals of which 641 saw improvements in tangible work outcomes, 339 saw increases in income and 634 saw improvements in wellbeing.. 6) As a result of the success of the first two phases, we have been awarded a further £600,000 through UKSPF to extend the programme by an additional year. 			

- 7) The programme will enable Bristol City Council and partner providers to fulfil Mayoral social mobility commitments by working with 400 individuals who are in low paid work, including residents living in social housing or in temporary accommodation. The Council’s Employment Support Team will continue their joint delivery plan with the Housing and Temporary Accommodation Teams as well as the City’s Social Landlords, VCS organisations and employers. Future Bright Plus will result in participants enhancing their career prospects and skills levels, increased household income and a reduction in the dependency upon in work benefits and Council assistance.
- 8) The programme will lead to 180 participants having improvement in tangible work outcomes, leading to a reduction in their benefit claims for Universal Credit, Housing Benefit and Child Tax Credits. This will potentially have the effect of reducing Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit claimants as well as a reduction in the level of rent arrears.
- 9) This programme is operated on a full cost recovery basis. Within the funding is a ring-fenced redundancy contingency of £60,000

Officer Recommendation:

That Cabinet:

1. Authorises the Head of Service Employment, Skills and Learning and the Employment Support Manager in consultation with the Cabinet member Children's Services, Education and Equalities to negotiate with WECA and to accept and spend the Future Bright Phase 3 Grant funding on the delivery of the Future Bright Phase 3 programme as outlined in this report.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

The Future Bright Plus Programme aligns itself to the Council’s vision of “driving a City of hope and aspiration where everyone can share in its success”. It will “focus on empowering people in day-to-day life, helping them live independently of public services in ways which are better for them and for the city as a whole”.

City Benefits:

Future Bright will benefit the city by providing targeted employment and skills support to people in work on low pay so that they can increase their confidence, skills, knowledge and opportunities to progress into more sustainable careers that will enhance household earnings. We anticipate that many of our project participants will be from equalities communities and groups with protected characteristics, including women, BME communities and Disabled people. By helping address in work poverty, it is expected that this programme will also have a positive impact on health inequalities

Consultation Details:

Future Bright has been widely discussed with Bristol City Council Housing and Employment Support Teams, Social Landlords, Employers, support and advice agencies and potential participants

Background Documents:

Future Bright Interim Evaluation (October 2022) [Future Bright Interim Evaluation \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

Revenue Cost	£600,000	Source of Revenue Funding	External - West of England Combined Authority Grant through UK Shared Prosperity funds
Capital Cost	£0	Source of Capital Funding	N/A
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:		
1 Finance Advice: This programme as proposed is fully funded from external grant funding so presents no risk to the General Fund or other ring-fenced grants within BCC. As a mature work area there is little risk financially to BCC, however as noted in the report the project needs to carry ring-fenced redundancy contingency due to the potential for employees accruing sufficient service for employment protections.		
Finance Business Partner: Travis Young, Finance Business Partner Children & Education 12 February 2024		
2. Legal Advice: There are no specific implications arising from the receipt of grant funding. Where relevant, the procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Councils own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the grant agreement.		
Legal Team Leader: Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 12 February 2024		
3. Implications on IT: I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity.		
IT Team Leader: Alex Simpson – Lead Enterprise Architect 22 December 2023		
4. HR Advice: The report is seeking authorisation for HOS, Employment Skills and Learning to negotiate with WECA, to accept and spend the funding on the delivery of the Future Bright Phase 3 programme. Within the programme there are funds to cover costs for the exit of the temporary employees who work on the programme. We cannot make the employees permanent due to the nature of the funding, however when the contracts are due to expire they will have access to redeployment in line with the policy to try to mitigate against any redundancies.		
HR Partner: Lorna Laing. HR Business Partner. 20 December 2023		
EDM Sign-off	Reena Bhogal-Welsh	17 January 2024
Cabinet Member sign-off	Councillor Asher Craig	23 January 2024
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	5 February 2024

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice)	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO