

Employment Summit Programme - Update report

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report relates to the Employment Summit Programme. It describes the activity delivered during 2016 culminating with the Employment, Health and Skills Fair in October 2016.
- 1.2 The Employment Summit Programme was established to raise the awareness amongst stakeholders, residents and employers of the barriers faced by residents with health related barriers securing and maintaining employment. An inclusive approach was taken to include all residents but with a particular focus on those with health related barriers. This approach has maximised the investment and not marginalised individuals with particular barriers.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Local economic data:
 - Contradictory to the national economic recovery, the percentage of economically active residents in Bury, aged 16 to 64, has fallen by - 2.9% (April 2014 to March 2016). This can be partially attributed to long-term sickness.
 - 29.7% of Bury's working age population, that are economically inactive, are known to be long-term sick (March 2016), which is much higher than Greater Manchester (26.2%) and Great Britain (22.4%) data.
 - Bury's long-term sickness rose by 8.1% (October 2012 to March 2016), which is not proportionate to the rise regionally (1.1%) and nationally (0.6%).
 - Employment Support Allowance/ Incapacity Benefit claimants continue to account for the vast majority of out of work benefit claimants (73% - 8,430 residents in February 2016).
 - 1,320 residents are accessing disability out of work benefit (February 2016). Disabled residents, who are not accessing relevant benefits, are a hidden cohort.
- 2.2 The Employment Summit Programme aims to bring together existing activity by linking local provision and building networks of support that members of the public are both aware of and can access easily.

Currently there are multiple health, skills and employment support services available across the borough. The programme has been designed to avoid

duplication and reduce silo working across partnerships, through stronger partnership working and referral pathways.

This has been achieved through a series of activities:

- Meet the Provider Event (see section 3).
- The Workplace Wellbeing Charter (see section 4).
- An Employment, Health and Skills Event (see section 5).

2.3 The Employment Summit Programme Outcomes and Performance Measures can be viewed within Annex 1.

2.4 This work and all associated activities resides within the Team Bury Employment and Skills Task Group with the associated outputs feeding into the Stronger Local Economy agenda and contributing to Team Bury's Economic Strategy (2010 – 2018) and the emerging Growth Plan.

3.0 Meet the Provider Event – 14th January 2016

3.1 A Meet the Provider Event was established to:

- Map and align the wide range of employment, health and skills provision accessible within the borough.
- Raise the profile of these services and foster stronger partnership working/referral pathways.
- Invite key employment, health and skills representatives to present to all services, alongside a speed networking activity and market stall networking.

3.2 The event generated the following participation:

- Representatives from over 120 different organisations/ departments attended the event.
- 5 guest speakers presented to the audience, highlighting best practice and the need to adopt new ways of working to align the employment, health and skills agendas.
- 30 representatives also enrolled onto the speed networking activity, alongside 21 exhibitors who publicised their service within the market stall.

3.3 Post event, Bury Council's Health and Employment Officer has subsequently met over 150 organisations, creating links and referral pathways, smoothing communication between services which inevitably help our residents. Collectively, the Meet the Provider event has:

- Contributed to the mapping exercise of employment and health provision.
- Demonstrated the importance of working in partnership, as a lot of services have been working with the same client group (even the same individual clients).
- Enhanced the local appetite for more frequent events, to continually improve partner relations and referral pathways. Additionally, there is a

list of contacts requesting to participate in future speed networking activities.

- Been crucial to supporting individuals who need extensive support, helping to facilitate the social prescribing pilot at the Radcliffe GP Surgery. The model allows GP's and health professionals to access support for their patients through a single access point.
- Contributed to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter, which combines local, regional and national provision (see section 4).

4.0 Workplace Wellbeing Support

- 4.1 Bury Council's Health and Employment Officer is a trained assessor for the national Workplace Wellbeing Charter, which aims to encourage and support local employers to invest in the health and wellbeing of their workforce.

Recognising the national Workplace Wellbeing Charter is intensive, which can be off putting to some local employers, a local Workplace Wellbeing Support package has been created and went live in March 2016.

The local package aims to promote information, advice and guidance available to employers and their workforce, in conjunction with face to face support from the Health and Employment Officer.

- 4.2 Engagement so far:

- 160 businesses have contacted the Health and Employment Officer to discuss health and wellbeing within the workplace.
- 35 businesses are accessing the local Workplace Wellbeing Support package.

- 4.3 Working with these businesses has provided more opportunities for their staff to access training, saved organisations money on recruitment and will have an impact on the health and wellbeing of their staff.

Further benefits include raising employee motivation, attendance at work and team morale, which therefore increases productivity, reduces staff turnover, reduces sickness absence and enables a business to utilise resources differently i.e. expand or employ more staff.

5.0 Employment, Health and Skills Event – 19th October 2016

- 5.1 The event will be hosted by the Elizabethan Suite on 19th October (2pm-7pm). Exhibitors will include:

- **Employers with live job vacancies** who are looking to recruit. Residents will have an opportunity to meet employers and hear more about the various jobs they currently have available and possible career opportunities.
- **Skills providers** will be available to discuss resident training and development needs from functional skills (like English and Maths), practical life skills, work experience opportunities, college and apprenticeships to higher education.

- **Health and support providers** will offer a wide range of information, advice and guidance to help residents find and remain in employment. There is also an opportunity to hear about and share good practice.

- 5.2 The event will also raise the profile of support available to employers, who have employees with health related and/or training needs. Employers will also be encouraged to share workforce management best practice, notably whereby they have supported an individual with health related needs.
- 5.3 Post event evaluation will encompass exhibitors and more importantly, where relevant permissions are provided, a tracking mechanism to understand the event's impact. The data collection exercise will also contribute to the identification of individual barriers to employment and skill opportunities, influencing future interventions.

6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 Continue to promote the national and local Workplace Wellbeing Charters, and other related activity encouraging employer participation from across the borough.
- 6.2 Coordinate another Meet the Provider Event in January 2017, building on previous engagement and an oversubscription to the speed networking.
- 9th January 2017: Speed networking exercise.
 - 18th January 2017: Full meet the provider event.
- 6.3 Subject to budget and the success of the 2016 event, the Bury Employment and Skills Task Group will coordinate a further Employment, Health and Skills Event in 2017.
- 6.4 Continue to support local and regional programmes, such as Working Well and Troubled Families, encouraging referral pathways into employment, health and skills provision.
- 6.5 Utilise the Business Engagement Team and Bury Directory to share best practice associated with employing and/or engaging individuals with health related needs.

Annex 1 – Employment Summit

Activities

- Meet the Provider Networking Event – 14th January 2016.
- Business Expo and the Workplace Wellbeing Charter going live – 17th March 2016.
- Employment, Health and Skills Event – 19th October 2016.

Outcomes

Residents of the Borough with any health related barriers have improved access to employment, health and skill opportunities

- Raised awareness of support for people of the Borough with a health related barrier to obtaining employment.
- Raised awareness of support for people of the Borough with a health related barrier to maintaining employment.
- Raised awareness of support for employers with an employee who has, or develops, a health related barrier.
- Good practice is collected, shared and built upon where disabled employment is thriving.

Measures

- The number of organisations achieving accreditation through the Workplace Wellbeing Charter, Disability Confident and/or Access to Work initiative.
- The number of event attendees invited to interview by any exhibitor.
- The number of positive steps into employment, skills or health provision.
- Businesses and individuals feel more informed and engaged.
- Reduction in the number of people on employment related benefits as a result of the event.