

TITLE	WORKingham Internship Programme
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 November 2018
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Children's Services - Pauline Helliar-Symons

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

- Contributes to the Wokingham Borough Council 0 to 25 SEND Strategy 2017-19 (*WBC SEND Strategy 2017 - 2019*) to support successful transition to adulthood (*high level aim p27*)
- Creates a vehicle to measure accountability for the £44,287 awarded to WBC for Work Preparation for SEND in 2018 (*)
- More opportunities for post-16 SEND students to access supported internship, apprenticeships and employment (*WBC SEND Strategy 2017 – 2019 - Ref 11.15 p20*)
- Supporting parents and carers by adding to the Local Offer, local resources become available to secure and sustain a range of training / internship opportunities for SEND 19-25 e.g. leisure centres, parks, schools
- Internship jobs lead to job carving of routine tasks; these tasks are ideal jobs for SEND young adults. Results in WBC paid staff being able to focus on more strategic work – impacts community service users.
- Mentoring and developing interns develops WBC employee skill level and increases staff morale and retention. Widespread in borough through inclusion of wider council services as internship programme facilitators.
- Enable WBC to develop best transition practise (*WBC SEND Strategy 2017 – 2019 - Ref 11.18 P20*). See for a model of good practice [Shropshire County Council](#).
- Contributes to the consolidation of services to secure operational efficiencies through working directly with Addington 'Routes to Work' team; specialised input without incurring cost. (*WBC SEND Strategy 2017 – 2019 Ref 12.2 P21*)
- Turning disability into capability; enabling people with SEND to become independent contributors to the workforce
- Positive PR – local council supporting local people in their local area contributing to personal growth and development

The Department's expectation is that local authorities will use the funding provided to: set up local supported internship forums - we anticipate that a local forum will bring together education providers, local authorities, employers and other key figures to identify local opportunities and overcome the local barriers to create a supported internship programme

[SEND Preparation for Employment grant](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Wokingham Borough Council approve the WORKingham Internship Programme working in Partnership with Addington 'Routes to Work' team.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines an innovative work support programme to be managed and run by Addington School a maintained school that provides specialist learning for students with additional needs (SEND). This work programme takes the form of an internship using the Council's Directorates to provide placements for young people.

BACKGROUND

Background:

Addington school is responsible for the education of up to 215 children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Children attending the school are aged between 5 -16years and have a wide range of additional needs. Most of the children are local to Wokingham although there are some placed by other neighbouring Authorities.

The school is judged by Ofsted as outstanding.

One of the major challenges for both the school and students is vocational training along with support into the world of work. There has in recent years been considerable effort made to source training and development opportunities for young people to help prepare them for potential employment. Young people have been placed with a range of local employers in the service and related sectors along with retail and other like organisations. The local authority café/restaurant, Shutters, which operates on a Thursday is run entirely by students from Addington School. It is a high quality, successful business that provides much needed opportunities for young people to improve their skills and work readiness. A number of students have successfully used the opportunities provided to go on to permanent employment.

Despite, success in these areas there is a growing need to expand opportunities for young people with additional needs. This report proposes the development of an internship arrangement for students attending Addington School. This will be an arrangement organised, run and managed by the school using placements provided by the Council.

It is a proposed stand alone project run by Addington School who are looking for support from the Council in terms of potential future placements. The proposal has been the subject of intensive long term discussions with the 3 previous Directors, but has not as yet received formal Council support. This has mainly been due to the previous postholders moving on before formal decisions could be confirmed. There is little doubt as to the considerable merits of the proposed programme and it is unfortunate that delays have prevented the school moving forward with this.

It is intended that initially up to 4 young people would take part in the programme. Depending on its success this would be expanded to 8 in the second year and 12 the following year. Students would receive extensive support from job coaches funded and employed by the school. Funding of the job coaches will be from student place funding and DfE Access to Work Funding. Depending upon the levels of support provided by Directorates these numbers could be expanded over time.

At this stage discussions have not taken place with Directorates within the Council although it is envisaged that a number of Departments would be interested and willing to take interns. The school is particularly interested in exploring the possibility of placements to include: Parks, Leisure Centres, Graveyards etc.

Issues

Before adulthood, it costs on average £24,000 per annum to educate a SEND student from age 5-19; £336,000 per student throughout their education. There are currently 4000 + SEND students in the Wokingham borough; there is currently a low investment return on this spending.

Despite being awarded the SEND support for employment grant (£44287) which was designed to directly counter learning disability unemployment figures, there is not yet an SEND supported internship programme being developed at Wokingham Borough Council as part of the Local Offer. This grant was awarded as part of a nationwide strategy to create SEND supported internship programmes to address the 94% of people with learning disabilities who remain unemployed. Minister for Disabled People, Justin Tomlinson, states that it is "unacceptable" that so many people with learning difficulties continue to be overlooked for work. Link to BBC article: [SEND Unemployment](#).

Addington's Routes to Work supported internship programme will establish a framework to enable SEND young people to secure paid employment. 65% of students who accessed Addington's 'Routes to Work' supported internship at the National Grid progressed into paid employment.

The proposed supported internship programme at WBC will get more young people from the borough with learning disabilities into paid employment, thus reducing their reliance on further funding as they move into adulthood.

Implement a Supported Internship programme via Wokingham Borough Council (WORKingham) to increase the opportunities for young adults with SEND.

The programme will be led by the Council's outstanding rated SEN school, Addington, in partnership with WBC and Activate Learning. Addington school will work in partnership with WBC to implement, develop and expand the Supported Internship at WBC. Addington school will lead the project due to its SEN expertise and prior experience of setting up similar projects, e.g. the supported internship at National Grid.

The aim is for the project to become self-funding and self-supporting; initially based out of WBC and making use of WBC wider services. Expansion relies on the support and influence of WBC.

Addington will continue to provide overall implementation, development and co-ordination of the programme. Wokingham would provide work experience opportunities and Activate Learning (Reading and Bracknell and Wokingham Colleges) will provide both suitable young people and appropriate work related training for those young people with SENDs over the age of 16 on their roll.

The programme will draw down on allocated grant funding to cover set up and year one costs, with a clear direction and associated plans to ensure this programme becomes self-funding, negating the reliance on government grants to run.

To begin the project the Council need to:

- Agree to work with Addington Routes to Work team to find placements for interns across the council.

- Senior Leadership commitment to promote the project across the council.
- Agree a venue within Shute End for a base room (for 6 people to be based for parts of the day).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Other Financial Information

Funding for the proposed project would be met from within existing school resources along with dedicated DWP grant.

There are no financial implications for the Council.

List of Background Papers

None

Contact Jim Leivers	Service Education
Telephone 0118 974 6205	Email jim.leivers@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank