

BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Meeting:	Economic Partnership
Date:	7 th December 2009
Subject:	Local Area Agreement, Progress Towards Worklessness Target
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1 Recommendation

1.1 The Economic Partnership is asked to:

- A) Note progress to date towards the LAA Worklessness Target.
- B) Consider other activities/interventions that could support the achievement of the target.
- C) Consider how the good practice developed can be continued.

2. Background

- 2.1 Bromley Council entered into a Local Area Agreement (LAA), on behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), with the Government Office for London (GOL), to deliver a range of targets across service areas (including Children and Young People, the Environment and Economic Development). One of the targets is to help address worklessness. The target for 2007/10 “to assist 100 local residents in receipt of an Incapacity or Lone Parent related benefit for 6 months or more supported into sustained employment (of 16hrs + pw for 13 weeks +)” was agreed in 2006.
- 2.2 GOL required a worklessness target from each local authority but agreed a zero base line (excluding Job Centre Plus contracts) for Bromley, accepting the argument that this is a new area of work for LBB. Officers negotiated flexibility regarding geography and eligibility; however the target was originally considered as very challenging. The economic recession, with rising unemployment and falling job vacancies makes the target even tougher. The Council receives up to £435,000 if it achieves the full target.

2.3 Management Arrangements

The Local Economy and Regeneration Division of the Council leads the delivery of the target and set up the People into Employment (PiE) project in 2007/08 as the mechanism for bringing partners and resources together. Data sharing protocols with partners are in place together with referral mechanisms and joint promotional activities. LBB departments are involved in PiE to varying degrees. A list of partners is included as Appendix 1

The Local Economy and Regeneration Division looked to learn from the experience of local authorities which had agreed similar targets a year earlier. On this basis it was planned that Year 1 was primarily setting up the project, processes and bringing partners on board with the main delivery in Years 2 and 3 and the greatest outcomes in the last 12 months of the project.

3. Reporting Arrangements

3.1 The Project Steering Group meets every 6-8 weeks and monitors progress and reviews activities agreeing new area of work and collaboration. The group comprises:

- JobCentre Plus
- Broomleigh
- London Borough of Bromley
- Oxleas
- Prospects
- Cotmandene Community Centre
- Mottingham Learning Shop

3.2 In addition reports have been given to;

- Bromley Lifelong Learning Partnership and in March 2009 to the new Skills and Employment Sub-Group of the Economic Partnership
- The Local Strategic Partnership at which partners were invited to consider how they could contribute.
- The Local Economy (now Renewal and Recreation) Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee.

4. Key Activities + Interventions

- Targeted 1>1 support for clients in particular through Local Economy and Regeneration, Outreach Centres and Oxleas. The PiE Co-ordinator estimates that she is in personal contact with 200 people registered on the programme.
- Increased collaboration with JobCentre Plus i.e. Tesco Orpington success – open days for Morrison's in Welling August 09. JC+

vacancies and pre-employment training offers are e-mailed to the team and to partners.

- Bromley Council Departments currently provide over 20 placements; this has increased over the past few weeks and the PiE team will be aiming for more efforts with contractors and partners.
- The Council agreed to contribute to European Social Fund (ESF) monies to create the Penge/Crystal Palace and Crays ESF projects. These started in May 2009.
 - To date 16 registered on Pathways4Crays scheme (Broomleigh) which runs until March 31st 2011, and 23 registered on Work4Health, the Penge/Crystal Palace (Prospects) scheme, which has the same timescale as the stretch target. Of the total of 39 registered, 21 have been unemployed for over 3 years. The Crays programme, delivered by Broomleigh Housing Association, is also able to support those on JSA, but these do not count these towards the LAA target.
 - Payment to Prospects and Broomleigh is based on outcomes, including employment entry and sustained employment. While no participant has yet entered employment, Prospects, with their time-limited programme, will be monitored closely this quarter and any remedial action will be implemented accordingly.
 - Pathways4Cray is held to be an excellent programme and is on the ESF website as an example of good practice.
- Clients receive regular information on training, placements, JCP open days etc via the PiE Newsletter sent to all those registered, individual mailing, telephone and email as appropriate.
- Mentoring and tailored courses to meet the specific needs of clients close to or already 'job ready'.
- Pro-active research into seasonal employment opportunities has resulted in 4 PiE participants gaining work at Marks and Spencer's.
- Discussions re linkages with Future Jobs Fund bids are ongoing, however locally this is restricted to those up to 24 years old.

5. Progress to Date

Three hundred and thirty three residents are registered on the scheme. Approximately two thirds are in regular contact with staff and partners.

- 5.1 Table 1 sets out the latest position to July + Sept regarding clients' progress to employment.

	July	Sept	Nov
Completed 13 weeks 16 hours +	39	54	67
Started work 16 hours + still to complete	1	6	4
Started working 16 hours per week	11	9	7
Others in work evidence to be seen	11	6	12

	July	Sept	Nov
Those confirmed working to be traced	5	2	2
Current placements	22	26	27
Others involved in training/job search support ect	62	68	68

- 5.3 The target is supported considerably through the two outreach centres in the borough (the Mottingham and Cotmandene Centre), who promote the programme, register and refer participants and provide in-house training, job search and support either from staff or partner agencies such as Working Links (operating a job club in each centre). Next Steps, Orpington College and Broomleigh who use the Cotmandene Centre as one of their “recruiting” bases for Pathways4Crays. Discussions are taking place with Broomleigh regarding IAG support at the Mottingham Community and Learning Shop, provided by a trained volunteer.
- 5.4 Broomleigh have placed additional bids to London Councils for the forthcoming round of ESF co-financed programmes both of which will benefit Bromley residents if approved. The first is to continue the work of Stepping Up, the training and employment support project with those in temporary accommodation or homeless; the second is to provide employment support for workless families in the borough (where one or both parents are not working). This will not be geographically specific. These programmes will commence in April 2010 if funding is approved, and could potentially provide a referral route after March 31st for PiE participants who have not found work and still require support.
- 5.5 Research by London Councils is looking at examples of good practice and low cost employment projects. PiE has been identified as one of the projects for examination.
- 5.6 The PiE Steering Group has expressed the view that the continued co-ordination of activity to help residents back into work would be useful beyond the life of the PiE project and in particular has:
1. Improved the information available for clients.
 2. Increased knowledge and awareness of existing programmes and support for partners to access.
 3. Improved referral between agencies and take-up of support by clients.
 4. Created work placement opportunities.
 5. Increased client awareness of potential issues and access of how they can be overcome.
- 5.7 The Economic Partnership is asked to consider how the benefits and lessons from the PiE project could be integrated into ongoing activity.