

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

**Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:
2 September 2009**

Subject: Future Jobs Fund

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to inform the Members of the allocation of £1.57 million of Future Jobs Fund to West Dunbartonshire from the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) and to gain Members' support in the Council, providing up to 70 temporary posts to Future Jobs Fund participants.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Future Jobs Fund is a UK-wide fund of approximately £1 billion which was announced in the most recent Budget as a response to the economic downturn. The fund is to support the creation of jobs for long term unemployed young people and others who are long term unemployed in unemployment hotspots. In June bids were invited from local authorities, social enterprises and charities.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** A bid was made to the Future Jobs Fund through the Economic Development Section for creation of up to 250 jobs over an 18 month period from October 2009 - March 2011. The bid, for £1,573,000, was submitted in June 2009 and it was announced last week that the bid had been successful.
- 3.2** The fund aims to provide work for at least 25 hours per week over a 6 month period for young people aged 18 - 24 who have been unemployed for approximately a year or more and for all longer term unemployed people in areas which are unemployment 'hotspots'. West Dunbartonshire is a hotspot area since the rate of unemployment here is 5.8% which is more than 1.5% higher than the national rate.
- 3.3** The fund provides for up to £6,500 per person towards wages, supervision and equipment. The Future Jobs Fund employees must be paid at least minimum wage. Future Jobs fund jobs are additional to existing jobs and aim to develop people's skills to make sure they stay connected with the labour market and do not suffer the adverse effects of long-term unemployment.

- 3.4** The Council, as the lead Agency on the Community Planning Partnership, Regenerating and Growing the Local economy Theme, developed the bid in partnership with employability partners and in particular with Job Centre Plus. The 250 jobs will be delivered through public, private and social economy companies and under the terms of the DWP guidance should benefit the social and physical environment of the area. It is estimated that one third of jobs will be 'green jobs'.
- 3.5** Seventy jobs have been allocated to the Public Sector (mainly WDC), 80 within the private sector and 100 within the social economy sector. Early discussions with Council Departments and with partners have indicated that these numbers should be achievable.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There will be a need to establish a core team to co-ordinate and administer the fund. These staff will be financed through the overall income from the fund and will be managed within the Skillseekers Section. Until staff are in place, the Economic Development Officer (Employability) will co-ordinate activity.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The financial cost to the Council will be the 'in kind' supervision costs of these employees within Departments.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** None, similar contracts with DWP such as New Deal have been run through the Department for up to 10 years. Established rules and practice limit risk.

7. Conclusions & Officers' Recommendations

- 7.1** The Future Jobs Fund allocation of £1.57 million will assist 250 unemployed people within West Dunbartonshire into jobs which will generally enhance the physical and social environment of the area as well as enhancing the long term employment prospects for the individual.
- 7.2** It is recommended that the Committee delegate the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to discuss and agree with the Director of Corporate Services, how the Council can play its part in supporting the participants of this programme.

Elaine Melrose

Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Date: 7 August 2009

Person to Contact: Kevin Neeson - Development Services Manager, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU,

telephone: 01389 737415, e-mail kevin.neeson@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices: None

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All wards