
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

22 February 2022

Cabinet

Title: **Streetscene Environmental Skills & Training Academy – Intermediate Labour Market Initiative**

Purpose: To seek Cabinet support for the creation of a Streetscene Environmental Skills and Training Academy offering paid work placements for local residents to develop skills, work experience and qualifications to support their progression to future sustainable employment.

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

- a) Notes the proposed approach to the development of a Streetscene Environmental Skills and Training Academy ILM;
- b) Supports the proposal to develop an Intermediate Labour Market initiative within Streetscene providing paid work placements and a programme of additional environmental works.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Cabinet approved the allocation of £0.330m funding in June 2021 to support the development of an Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) initiative under the Recovery and Renewal Funding and Investment Proposals. This report seeks approval to create a Streetscene Environmental Skills and Training Academy, delivered in partnership with Streetscene and Economic Development and Regeneration Services.
- 1.2 The proposed approach is to create an environmental skills and training academy with a focus on creating paid work placements and training for unemployed residents. This model has been developed to align with the Recovery and Renewal Strategy and reflect the Council's values as a Community Wealth Building Council. It will contribute to Fair Employment through the creation of high quality, paid (Living Wage), vocational placements and the ambitions of the Land and Assets pillar by delivering environmental improvements to sites across North Ayrshire.

2. Background

- 2.1 Cabinet approved the Recovery and Renewal Funding and Investment Proposals on 15 June 2021. This investment was set within the Context of the Council Plan priorities and the Community Wealth Building Strategy. It aligns with the Recovery and Renewal Strategy and aims to maximise funding opportunities to support activity across the 5 strategic themes of:
- Economic Recovery.
 - Environmental Initiatives to support a green economic recovery;
 - Vulnerable families, citizens and communities;
 - Sustainable investment in physical infrastructure and open spaces; and
 - Mental health and well-being initiatives.
- 2.2 Streetscene currently host small groups of Modern Apprentices on an annual basis. Many of these Apprentices have performed well and went on to secure a longer-term career within the Service or the private sector. Through the Council's employability programmes Streetscene has been identified as an attractive work experience or placement host and that opportunities to undertake outdoor work and qualifications are popular with unemployed residents.
- 2.3 Streetscene endeavours to support and develop staff from within current resources and balance supporting these opportunities with the pressure on services to deliver as efficiently as possible. The Streetscene Academy approach has been designed to consider the important role that the Service can play outwith its core service objectives to provide a structure which takes an ambitious and co-ordinated approach to economic and social inclusion.
- 2.4 The proposed Streetscene Academy is based on a rolling programme of 26-week placements over the next three years. These placements will pay participants the Local Government Living Wage and offer a minimum of 30 hours employment per week. The main objectives of the approach are to:
- Create high quality vocational placements that will support long term unemployed participants progress into sustainable employment either with Streetscene or other employers;
 - Provide participants with accredited qualifications to support progression into employment;
 - Create a flexible and skilled team to deliver environmental improvements including new initiatives such as tree planting across North Ayrshire;
 - Provide and improve access to the local environment and greenspace which will support delivery of health, social, environmental and economic priorities;
 - Create a succession pathway of skilled people as part of Streetscene's future workforce development; and
 - Reflect our values as a Community Wealth Building Council and support a nurturing culture within Streetscene to support an inclusive economy, skills development and talent development.
- 2.5 The Academy will work with partner organisations to deliver pre-employment support for potential participants. This will address barriers to sustaining employment and provide pre-vocational training to support the transition from unemployment to employment. Wraparound employability support will be provided throughout the

programme to offer additional support as required. Support for participants to obtain long term employment will be also provided.

2.6 On completion of the placement, participants will have enhanced qualifications and experience and be well placed to secure employment with the Council or private contractors. It is recognised that Streetscene has an ageing workforce and that seasonal vacancies are recruited on an ongoing basis.

2.7 Further information on Academy approach is detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Next Steps

2.8 There is an implementation plan in place to implement this effectively with the recruitment planned to start the first cohort in Spring 2022 and a development plan to recruit a further 5 cohorts and deliver the Streetscene Environmental Skills and Training Academy over the next 3 years until Spring 2025.

3. Proposals

3.1 That Cabinet:

- a) Notes the proposed approach to the development of a Streetscene Environmental Skills and Training Academy ILM;
- b) Supports the proposal to develop an Intermediate Labour Market initiative within Streetscene providing paid work placements and a programme of environmental works.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1 The Academy will be funded from the £0.330m allocation from the Recovery and Renewal Fund allocation, employability funding and external sources of funding. The estimated financial breakdown is detailed at Appendix 1.

Human Resources

4.2 People and ICT have been consulted on the proposal. Engagement with Streetscene Trade Union officials has also been carried out in advance of this proposal being considered by Cabinet. Recruitment will be undertaken as required to implement the approach.

Trainees will be eligible to access redeployment and seasonal vacancies and will be supported by the Employability & Skills team to secure further employment, utilising the new skills, work experience, and qualifications gained.

Legal

- 4.3 There will be grant conditions associated with any external funding awards for the trainee and project costs. These will require to be reviewed with input from Legal Services prior to acceptance to inform delivery and to be managed appropriately.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 The project will assist in meeting our socio-economic duty as set out in the Fairer Scotland Duty. It seeks to reverse economic, social and physical decline and reduce socio-economic disadvantage. It aims to build community wealth and tackle local deprivation by providing employment opportunities, paid at the Living Wage rate, which will contribute to the regeneration of our local communities.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.5 The approach aligns with the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Challenge Strategy and will deliver environmental and sustainability benefits through the positive improvement of local sites including vacant and derelict land. It will contribute to the delivery of the Tree Planting Strategy.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 The approach will contribute to achieving a wide range of the Council Plan outcomes and ambitions: of an inclusive, growing and enterprising economy; for children and young people to have the best start in life; residents and communities enjoy good life-long health and well-being; and for a sustainable, vibrant, welcoming and attractive environment.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 The project will contribute to Community Wealth Building and have a significant positive impact on Council's ambitions under the following pillars:

Fair Employment: The Streetscene Academy approach will create employment placements and training opportunities within the environmental and grounds maintenance sector. This approach focusses on those who have the most barriers to securing Fair Employment.

Land and Assets: The Academy's work programme will support equitable land development and the improvement of underutilised assets for community use and benefit.

Financial Power: The Academy's work programme will invest in localities through the delivery of projects on the ground and leverage funding into North Ayrshire.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The proposed approach has been developed by Commercial Services and Economic Development and Regeneration. This has been informed by the Council Plan priorities, Community Wealth Building Strategy, Recovery and Renewal Strategy and Regeneration Delivery Plan (RDP). People and ICT have been consulted on the proposal. Engagement with Streetscene Trade Union officials has also taken place.

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Executive Director (Place)

For further information please contact **Louise Kirk, Senior Manager Regeneration**, on **01294 324766**.

Background Papers

Cabinet Report – Recovery and Renewal Funding and Investment, 15 June 2021

Appendix 1: Streetscene Skills and Training Academy; Approach and Work Programme

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The supervisory structure proposed to support the programme will enable the Streetscene Service to develop existing workers skills at a supervisory level allowing for succession planning through the grades. Role Profiles will be prepared for all three roles and job evaluation undertaken as required for these posts.

The Programme will be managed by 1 x Grade 7 Foreman responsible for managing the programme.

The trainees will be line managed on a day-to-day basis by 3 x Grade 5 Chargehands, offered to existing Streetscene Grade 4 postholders, assisting with succession planning within the Service and the substantive salary would be met by Streetscene. The uplift between a Grade 4 and Grade 5 would be met from the allocation £5k per chargehand.

Development Timeline:

Jan - Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	June 22	July 22	Aug 22	Sept 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 23	Jan 23	Feb 23
Feb 22: Appoint supervisory positions						Sept 22: Start 12 x all age Trainees offering a 26 week waged job placement, funded by Employability and/or project funding					
Mar/Apr 22: Recruit for 12 x 25+ age Trainees offering a 26 week waged job placement, funded by SG Employability Funding						Jan 23: Advertise 3 rd Cohort of Trainees					
July 22: Advertise 2 nd Cohort of Trainees											
Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	June 23	July 23	Aug 23	Sept 23	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 24	Feb 24
Mar 23: Start 12 x all age Trainees offering a 26 week waged job placement, funded by Employability and/or project funding						Sept 23: Start 12 x all age Trainees offering a 26 week waged job placement, funded by Employability and/or project funding					
July 23: Advertise 4 th Cohort of Trainees						Jan 24: Advertise 5 th Cohort of Trainees					
Mar 24	Apr 24	May 24	June 24	July 24	Aug 24	Sept 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25
Mar 24: Start 12 x all age Trainees offering a 26 week waged job placement, funded by Employability and/or project funding						Sept 24: Start 12 x all age Trainees offering a 26 week waged job placement, funded by Employability and/or project funding					
July 24: Advertise 6 th Cohort of Trainees											
In addition, 4 x Modern Apprentices will be recruited to start in August of each year											

Costs

The estimated costs are:

Supervisory Staff costs	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
G7	36,000	36,000	36,000
3 x G5 uplift	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total	51,000	51,000	51,000
Delivery Costs			
Machinery	12,000	0	12,000
Tools – excluding contribution from projects	3,000	0	3,000
Materials* – remaining costs to be met by projects	25,000	25,000	25,000
Vehicles	12,000	12,000	12,000
Fuel/oil	3,000	3,000	3,000
Insurance – to be met by Streetscene	0	0	0
PPE	3,000	3,000	3,000
Training	3,000	3,000	3,000
Contingency^	3,000	3,000	3,000
Total	64,000	49,000	64,000
Total Costs	115,000	100,000	115,000
Placement Costs			
24 Trainees per year (based on £10,000 per person)	240,000	240,000	240,000
Overall Project Costs	355,000	340,000	355,000
TOTAL	£1,050,000		

Funding

Economic Development & Regeneration receive funding from the Scottish Government to deliver an employability service to support and prepare North Ayrshire citizens to progress to sustainable employment. This funding is currently awarded on an annual basis and will contribute to funding this Academy, in addition to other sources of funding:

Fund	Value of Award	Duration	Purpose of Fund	ILM Allocation
Recovery and Renewal Funding and Investment Proposals	£330,000	Duration of ILM	Create an environmental skills and training academy model initially within Streetscene with a focus on recruiting, training and creating paid work placements for unemployed residents	£330,000 (confirmed)
No One Left Behind: Long Term Unemployed Programme	£650,000	22/23	To create new and addition waged job placements for people who are 25+ years of age and have been	£120,000 (confirmed)

			unemployed for more than 12 months	
Young Person's Guarantee	£1,281,000	22/23	To deliver a guarantee of a job, education, training or volunteering for all unemployed young people, aged 16-24 years of age	£120,000 (confirmed)
Young Person's Guarantee	TBC	23/24 & 24/25	To deliver a guarantee of a job, education, training or volunteering for all unemployed young people, aged 16-24 years of age	£240,000 (unconfirmed)
No One Left Behind	TBC	23/24 & 24/25	To deliver employability services which are person centred, tackle inequalities, are flexible and responsive to the changing labour market	£120,000 (unconfirmed)
External Funding	TBC	23/23, 24/25 & beyond	There are a range of sources of funding which could be explored	£120,000 (unconfirmed)
TOTAL				£1,050,000

External funding sources will be investigated to support the Trainee costs and secure funding for project delivery.

Programme of work

A series of indicative locations have been identified for the initial recruitment intake to tackle. These areas are not exhaustive or prescriptive and the intention is trainees will be responsive to local, environmental needs and demands. The work will involve general maintenance tasks, including grass cutting, strimming, weed removal, general clearance, pruning, thinning, and light arboriculture work depending on training and equipment availability. The trainees will also require to undertake some litter picking duties in association with any clearance and improvement work. A rolling work programme will be prepared for the Academy informed by input from a range of Council Services including Streetscene, Economic Development and Regeneration and Connected Communities.

Location	Summary
Across North Ayrshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified paths: General verge maintenance, weed control, vegetation control and litter removal. Rights of Way: management and reactive maintenance requirements Active travel routes: Vegetation management and site preparation for active travel improvements Local environmental enhancements work as identified through Place Framework development and community engagement activities Community Priorities: identified for example through the Community Benefit Wish List
Garnock Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lochshore Masterplan: Support the delivery of the masterplan Ladeside, Kilbirnie Lynn Glen: Works in support of Lynn Glen project

North Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCN Hunterston / Clydeport: General maintenance • Fairlie Peninsula path maintenance • Fairlie Coastal Path maintenance • Ayrshire Coastal Path maintenance • Kirkton Hall Glen, West Kilbride
Three Towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portland Place • Townhead at rear of bus stop • Old Caley walkway • Laird Weir (Galloway Burn) • Plantation, Ardrossan • Cannon Hill, Ardrossan including castle grounds
Irvine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • i3: support the delivery of the i3 masterplan • Montgomerie Park: support the delivery of the masterplan • Irvine Cycle Friendly Town delivery • Bourtreehill Park environmental improvements • Former Tileworks, Springside: environmental works • National Cycle Network environmental works and improvements
Arran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the management and maintenance of path networks across Arran
Kilwinning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirrans footpath improvements • Bridgend area environmental improvements • McLuckie Drive environmental improvements • Eglinton Country Park courtyard, woodland planting and maintenance
Tree Planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the delivery of the Tree Planting strategy including site identification site preparation, tree planting, maintenance and management works