

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 1 AUGUST 2000

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT FUNDS

Report by Director of Development Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the nature of the funds approved by the Employment Services for targeted employment support measures in East Ayrshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Whilst unemployment in East Ayrshire has fallen over the last 2/3 years, in common with the rest of Ayrshire it is still stubbornly 2% above the West of Scotland average, and double that of the UK as a whole.
- 2.2 The Council together with Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, has continually kept the pressure up on both the Scottish Executive and the Department of Trade and Industry at UK level about East Ayrshire's position.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT

- 3.1 On 12 July 2000 the Government through the Employment Service announced three new employment pilot projects in the UK aimed at supporting new innovative measures targeted at helping the long-term unemployed back into the job market.
- 3.2 The geographic areas to be covered within East Ayrshire are as follows:

Wards

- 16 – Riccarton
- 17 – Shortlees
- 24 - Muirkirk, Lugar, Logan
- 26 – Ochiltree, Skares, Netherthird, Craigens

These areas above have been designated in advance by the Employment Service and in their view represent areas where there are specific problems.

- 3.3 The funds that have been made available are £1.5m for a one year only pilot, and the use of these have been kept as wide as possible in order that they can complement existing programmes, e.g. New Deal, various Scottish Enterprise training measures etc.

4. LOCAL STRUCTURES

- 4.1** Local responsibility for the disbursement of the funds will be with the Employment Service but partnership working will be critical. Local partners to the initiative will be the Council, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, community groups, local employers, colleges etc.
- 4.2** The Council has offered the Employment Service the use of its two local offices, one in Muirkirk (led by Muirkirk Enterprise Group) and the other in Shortlees. These will be used as local access points for local people in dealing with local projects. This has been well received by the Employment Service. Other areas are being looked at also.

5. TYPES OF PROJECTS

- 5.1** As noted above, the criteria for the use of the funds has purposely been kept as wide as possible, but indicative areas of support could include: special transport support, i.e. linking areas where there are unemployed individuals to areas where there are jobs, but no transport connections; loans for cars; special training support where local employers are having difficulty in recruiting staff in the local economy.

6. PROJECT OUTPUTS

- 6.1** One of the critical areas of success will be the number of people who are supported in securing jobs in the employment market. It has been agreed that the Council will work closely with the Employment Service to ensure the success of the pilot and ensure that the funding support continues into the future.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** None

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** None

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1** The Committee note the report, and note that a follow up report will be produced in six months time highlighting the outputs of the pilot.

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Director of Development Services

17/7/00

RP/CF

AGENDA

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

For further information please contact Robert Paton, Head of Economic Development ext 6142.