

Title of Report:	Match funding request from Roe Valley Community Education Forum for Learn to Earn Programme
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	15th October 2019
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Accelerating our Economy and Contributing to Prosperity
Outcome	All people of Causeway Coast and Glens will contribute to and benefit from a thriving economy built on a culture of growth, entrepreneurship, innovation and learning
Lead Officer	Business Development Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£20,000 matching funding per year for 2019-2022 (£60,000 in total)
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	None attached to this programme

Screening Requirements	<p>Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.</p> <p>Screening for this programme has been completed by Causeway Learn to Earn Consortium as part of its bid to the relevant government department.</p>
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1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to ask Members to consider matching funding for the Learn to Earn Programme as requested by the Roe Valley Community Education Forum.

2.0 Background

As part of the business planning preparations in 2018 for the 2019 financial year, Prosperity and Place made a call for expressions of interest for any contributions to external programmes which had accessed external funding and required match funding from Council. This was due to the number of requests for funding which had been received, in previous years, after the business planning period.

Only one expression of interest for such match funding was received, from the Roe Valley Community Education Forum. The expression of interest also represented BCW Ballycastle, and West Bann Coleraine.

These three organisations have formed a consortium - Causeway Learn to Earn – to respond to needs in the Causeway area where unemployment levels and economic inactivity are above the national averages.

The consortium has accessed over £400,000 of funding from the European Social Fund to deliver the Learn to Earn Programme. The European Social Fund provides help and support to develop the skills and confidence needed to find work. It offers a variety of projects which are delivered within the community. Taking part is voluntary.

As the business plan for this year's programme has not yet been ratified by Council, and as the only substantial request for matching funding, it has been held back for consideration by Members. At the recent budget meetings with Members, further information was requested.

3.0 Proposals

The consortium will deliver programmes of training and development to groups of economically-inactive, unemployed and underemployed across the area of interest over a 4 year period 2018-2022. These initiatives will help address the economic development through increased employment within the CC&G area.

The aims of the programme are:

- To combat poverty and enhance social inclusion to benefit people who are unemployed, underemployed, long term unemployed and/or economically inactive.
- To deliver direct employability skills and NVQ Level 1 training qualifications across the Causeway Borough to empower and benefit those unemployed and/or economically inactive.
- To provide personal development soft skills tutoring and supportive mentoring to build the confidence of people who have been out of work for years.
- To offer actual live work placements in the thematic area pursued by the client to build their CV and gain valuable work experience.
- To reduce economic inactivity, increase skills base and offer a working future for participants.

The intended target audience is the economically inactive, under and unemployed, aged 18-65 years of all genders.

Targets include:

- 130 participants from across the Borough, each year. (80 Coleraine, Ballycastle, Ballymoney, 50 Limavady).

- Year 1 targets in terms of participation have been met.
- 16% of participants to gain employment sustained to 26 weeks, as measured by ESF outcomes team.
- 100% of completers to gain a recognised qualification measured by certification.
- A minimum 16% of completers to employment recorded and measured by the ESF database reporting system.

Activities include career ideas and CV support, workplace experience, assisted job search, gaining a qualification and dedicated mentor support. Some of the courses and skills development available include NVQ Level 1 in Hairdressing, Childcare, Construction, Numeracy and Literacy, Certificate for IT Users, Employability Skills and CV Writing Skills.

4.0 Funding

The proposal was received after the commencement of the first year of the programme, which runs over four years – 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 2021/2022. The consortium has funded the first year from their own available reserves, which are now under pressure due to a range of funding cuts from central government.

The total cost of the programme is £634,503.

The breakdown of funding is as follows:

Roe Valley Community Education Forum	£60,799 (own reserves and staff costs)
BCW, Ballycastle	£40,479 (own reserves and staff costs)
West Bann, Coleraine	£60,799 (own reserves and staff costs)
ESF/DfE	£412,425 – confirmed
Request to Council	£60,000 (£20k per annum for this year and following two years)

5.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council that matching funding, as outlined above, will be set aside for the period requested by Causeway Learn to Earn consortium; and that the reporting for this scheme will be captured and monitored by Prosperity and Place Staff within its usual evaluation framework.