

Title of Report:	Exploring Enterprise Programme 2022-23
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 February 2022
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Local Economy
Outcome	Council contributes to increasing early-stage entrepreneurial activity in line with the norm for Northern Ireland
Lead Officer	Interim head of Service Prosperity & Place

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Up to £20,000
Included in Current Year Estimates	NO in estimates for 2022/23
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	32003
Staffing Costs	n/a

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the progress achieved through match funding support for the Exploring Enterprise Programme 2021 and to seek approval for match funding to support the programme for 2022/23 financial year.

2.0 Background

Exploring Enterprise Programme (EEP) is a pre-enterprise programme which seeks to support people who are considering self-employment as their route to enter and/or return to the labour market. The programme is a mixture of group training and one to one mentoring support. Participants do not need to have a specific business idea to join; the programme provides an insight into starting a business whilst allowing participants to work towards achieving the OCN endorsed Level I qualification in Understanding Business Enterprise. In addition, there will also be an emphasis with regards guiding and assisting individuals into and through the mainstream business support/further education options. Pre-enterprise support is an essential first stage in the continuum of support required to encourage entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland. The EEP will help boost the economy by initiating business start-ups and skilling individuals to become more employable.

Council has supported the Exploring Enterprise Programme over the last three years at a cost of up to £25,000 per annum reducing to £15,000 for 2021/22. The current activity report 31st December 2021 details that 70% of target has been achieved to date with 46 participants taking part in the programme. **[Full report Annex A]**

The programme is delivered throughout the Borough to all people, providing equality of opportunity and particularly for those hardest to reach people and places where disengagement is prevalent:

- Long term unemployed or long term economically inactive.
- Living in areas of deprivation.
- Where the number of workless families is high.
- From underrepresented groups such as lone parents, women, ethnic minority groups; prisoners.
- Individuals with no or low education and skill levels.
- From areas suffering from the economic impact as a result of major employer closures and redundancies including significant Covid-19 related job losses.

The programme activity aligns with the Economic Development Strategy to increase the interest in starting a business by providing enhanced 'exploring enterprise' programmes from school age and up.

Programme is flexible in approach to meet individual needs and focused on 4 key areas to enhance a self-employability outcome:

- Participants are provided with knowledge to achieve the OCN Level 1 Understanding Business Enterprise qualification.
- Participants are provided with soft skills and confidence to implement their knowledge.
- Participants are provided with one-to-one support tailored to their needs from qualified and experienced staff.
- Participants are signposted to additional support which is relevant to them to further enhance their self-employability outcomes

3.0 **Proposal**

Enterprise NI request match funding of up to £ 31,101.74 for 7 Exploring Enterprise Programme courses to be delivered under Call 3 of the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2014-2020 in the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023. [see full programme structure and request **Annex B**].

Description	Year 3 Apr 2022 - Mar 2023
Total Funding Requirement	£ 88,862.11
Funding from ESF / DfE (65%) secured	£ 57,760.37
Match Funding Requirement (35%)	£ 31,101.74

Council match funded up to 20% for previous years' programmes. In 2021-22 the match fund amount was £15,000. Based on the table above 20% match fund equates to £17,772.42. Prosperity & Place budget estimate for 2022/23 has included £20,000 for exploring enterprise activity [22.5% of programme costs].

Programme Proposed outputs:

- 7 courses delivered by Causeway Enterprise [4] and Roe Valley Enterprise [3].
- 75 Participants enrolled.
- 53 people (70%) will achieve a recognised qualification – OCN Level 1 Understanding Business.
- 34 participants (47%) will have an enhanced outcome either entering Self – Employment or progressing to further education and training.
- 16 new jobs.

4.0 **Recommendation(s)**

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council one of the following options in relation to the Exploring Enterprise Programme for 2022/23:

Option A – Match fund at 20% £17,772.42

Option B – Match fund at 22.5% £20,000

Option C – Match Fund at 2021 level £15,000 [16.8%]

Annex A
Exploring Enterprise Programme 2021/22 Report 31st Dec 2021



Report Subject:	Exploring Enterprise Programme
Report by:	Enterprise Northern Ireland in collaboration with Enterprise Causeway and Roe Valley Enterprises
Report to:	Economic Development Department
Date:	31st December 2021

Exploring Enterprise Programme Report

1. Purpose of the Report

To update on the delivery of 6 Exploring Enterprise Programmes in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council area over the period 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Relevant Background Information

Exploring Enterprise Programme is a pre-enterprise programme which seeks to support people who are considering self-employment as their route to enter and/or return to the labour market. The programme is a mixture of group training and one to one mentoring support. Participants do not need to have a specific business idea to join; the programme provides an insight into starting a business whilst allowing participants to work towards achieving the recognised CCEA Level I qualification in Understanding Business Enterprise. In addition, there will also be an emphasis with regards guiding and assisting individuals into and through the mainstream business support/further education options.

From 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022 6 courses will be delivered in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council area:

- 4 delivered by Enterprise Causeway (Large Courses)
- 2 delivered by Roe Valley Enterprises (Medium Courses)

2. Current delivery and results

Enterprise Causeway course 8 is complete.

Enterprise Causeway course 9 is almost complete with 3 participants to finalise Post-Training Mentoring.

Enterprise Causeway course 10 participants are completing Pre-Training Mentoring with Training scheduled to start in January 2022.

Roe Valley Enterprises course 8 participants are completing Post-Training Mentoring.

The remaining 2 courses will be delivered in January - March 22

	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Target (Across 9 Courses)	Progress to date
Number of Courses delivered	6	4 underway
Number of individuals enrolled	66	46
Number of individuals securing an accredited qualification in Understanding Business Enterprise	54	23
Number of individuals obtaining employment / self-employment	13.48	9
Number of individuals into Further Education / Training	6.06	2

Enterprise Causeway Course 8

GENDER	STATUS UPON JOINING PROGRAMME	AGE	POSTCODE	OUTCOME	SECTOR
Male	Unemployed < 6 months	28	BT52 2EX	No Positive Outcome	
Female	Unemployed 6-12 Months	24	BT55 7RJ	In Self-Employment More Than 16 Hours Per Week Upon Leaving	Arts & Creative Industries
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	60	BT52 1WX	In Employment 16 Hours or More Per Week Upon Leaving	Health & Well-being
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	37	BT51 3GH	No Positive Outcome	
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	54	BT51 4SQ	In Employment 16 Hours or More Per Week Upon Leaving	Health & Well-being
Female	Unemployed > 12 months	44	BT51 4XE	In Employment 16 Hours or More Per Week Upon Leaving	Arts & Creative Industries
Male	Unemployed < 6 months	47	BT56 8AP	No Positive Outcome	
Female	Economically Inactive	56	BT56 8AP	No Positive Outcome	
Male	Unemployed < 6 months	61	BT51 3RL	No Positive Outcome	
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	57	BT51 3RL	No Positive Outcome	
Male	Unemployed < 6 months	26	BT57 8SR	No Positive Outcome	
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	29	BT44 8FB	In Employment 16 Hours or More Per Week Upon Leaving	Professional Services
Male	Unemployed 6-12 Months	30	BT44 0SQ	In Employment 16 Hours or More Per Week Upon Leaving	Accommodation & Food Services

Enterprise Causeway Course 9

GENDER	STATUS UPON JOINING PROGRAMME	AGE	POSTCODE	OUTCOME	SECTOR
Male	Economically Inactive	19	BT52 1BT		
Male	Economically Inactive	29	BT51 4LQ	No Positive Outcome	
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	23	BT51 3SP	In Education/Training Upon Leaving	Go For It
Female	Economically Inactive	35	BT44 0JU	No Positive Outcome	
Male	Unemployed 6-12 Months	29	BT52 1RL	In Employment 16 Hours or More Per Week Upon Leaving	Health & Well-being Paramedic
Male	Unemployed > 12 months	46	BT52 2DR	Gained A Qualification Upon Leaving	
Female	Unemployed > 12 months	56	BT54 6GD	In Self-Employment Less Than 16 Hours Per Week Upon Leaving	Professional Services - Counsellor
Male	Economically Inactive	38	BT55 7JZ	Gained A Qualification Upon Leaving	
Female	Unemployed > 12 months	49	BT55 7LL		
Female	Unemployed > 12 months	51	BT71 0DL	No Positive Outcome	
Male	Unemployed > 12 months	39	BT57 8AG	Engaged in Job Searching Upon Leaving	
Female	Economically Inactive	41	BT53 6TN	In Education/Training Upon Leaving	Go For It
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	43	BT51 4NX	Gained A Qualification Upon Leaving	
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	27	BT56 8BT	In Self-Employment More Than 16 Hours Per Week Upon Leaving	Creative Arts - Eco Art Club
Male	Unemployed < 6 months	27	BT56 8BT		

Enterprise Causeway Course 10

GENDER	STATUS UPON JOINING PROGRAMME	AGE	POSTCODE	OUTCOME	SECTOR
Male	Economically Inactive	29	BT52 2LF		
Female	Economically Inactive	61	BT56 8HF		
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	56	BT55 7BF		
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	38	BT53 6TN		
Male	Unemployed > 12 months	55	BT52 1TP		
Male	Unemployed > 12 months	61	BT53 7RA		
Female	Unemployed > 12 months	24	BT53 7HX		
Female	Unemployed < 6 months	47	BT53 7NT		
Male	Economically Inactive	25	BT52 1WS		
Male	Economically Inactive	29	BT53 8RZ		

Roe Valley Course 8

GENDER	STATUS UPON JOINING PROGRAMME	AGE	POSTCODE	OUTCOME	SECTOR
Female	Unemployed > 12 months	43	BT49 9JY		
Miss	Unemployed < 6 months	19	BT47 4TB		
Miss	Unemployed > 12 months	40	BT47 4HL		
Ms.	Economically Inactive	55	BT49 0QD		
Miss	Economically Inactive	32	BT49 9PY		
Mr	Unemployed > 12 months	30	BT49 9PT		
Miss	Economically Inactive	40	BT47 4RW		
Ms.	Economically Inactive	48	BT49 0RX		

Annex B

Match Funding Request received from Enterprise NI

EXPLORING ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To request match funding of up to £ 31,101.74 for 7 Exploring Enterprise Programme courses to be delivered under Call 3 of the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2014-2020 in the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Exploring Enterprise Programme (EEP) is a pre-enterprise programme which seeks to support people who are considering self-employment as their route to enter and/or return to the labour market. The programme is a mixture of group training and one to one mentoring support. Participants do not need to have a specific business idea to join; the programme provides an insight into starting a business whilst allowing participants to work towards achieving the OCN endorsed Level 1 qualification in Understanding Business Enterprise. In addition, there will also be an emphasis with regards guiding and assisting individuals into and through the mainstream business support/further education options. Pre-enterprise support is an essential first stage in the continuum of support required to encourage entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland. The EEP will help boost the economy by initiating business start-ups and skilling individuals to become more employable.

EEP flexible design allows participants to receive support which meets their individual needs whilst remaining within the framework of a structured and manageable programme offering.

There are four key areas that we focus on to enhance the self-employability outcomes of participants:

- Participants are provided with knowledge which is underpinned by the OCN Level 1 Understanding Business Enterprise qualification.
- Participants are provided with soft skills and confidence they require to use their knowledge.
- Participants are provided with one-to-one support tailored to their needs from qualified and experienced staff.
- Participants are signposted to additional support which is relevant to them to further enhance their self-employability outcomes.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Stage 1: Pre-Training Mentoring (6 hours per participant)

The Business Mentor will identify participants unique development requirements and create a personal action plan which provides a framework which ensures that support is focussed on the participants specific needs.

Stage 2: Training (45 hours)

Training is delivered in small groups of 5-10 participants using OCN approved training materials and additional support materials which are specific to the needs of the group. A range of learning experiences are provided including peer-to-peer support and team working which allows softer skills such as networking, problem solving, communication and confidence building to be enhanced.

Participants can work towards achieving the OCN Level 1 Understanding Business Enterprise qualifications which incorporates three mandatory units: Developing a Business Idea, Factors Contributing to being a Successful Entrepreneur and Being Enterprising.

Additional workshops are also delivered which cover the key skills (Business Operations, Introduction to Business Finance, Know your Market, Marketing and Promotion, Pitching an Idea) required to start and run a business.

An Employability workshop is also offered which covers CV development, employability skills and interview techniques aimed at participants who decide that self-employment is no longer their preferred pathway.

Workshops are supplemented by guest speakers from external organisations such as Accountants etc who provide expert advice. Additionally, participants have the opportunity to speak to local entrepreneurs to gain valuable insight on running a small business.

Stage 3: Post Training Mentoring (10 hours per participant)

Personal action plans are reviewed to determine the participants progress following training and any additional areas that need to be addressed are identified. Participants are assisted to determine their preferred progression pathways (self-employment, employment and/or further education or training) and the Business Mentor will identify specific activities for each pathway which may include:

Self-Employment

Developing the business idea, market research, pricing and financial projections, marketing, and legal and regulatory requirements.

Employment

Identifying suitable jobs, job searching, developing a CV, completing application forms and interview preparation.

Further Education or Training

Researching relevant courses, completing application forms, and liaising with education providers.

PROGRAMME DELIVERY

We propose to run 7 courses in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council area over the year (1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023). This will allow us to support another 75 people of which 53 will gain a qualification and 34 will have positive immediate outcomes when they complete the programme.

Programme Outputs in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Area

Outputs	Total
Courses Delivered	7
Participants Enrolled	75
Participants receiving OCN Level 1 Understanding Business Enterprise Qualification	53
Participants exiting Into Employment (to include Self-Employment)	28
Participants exiting Into Further Education and Training	6
Participants In Employment 6 months after exit	31

Enterprise Causeway will deliver all 4 courses and Roe Valley Enterprises will deliver all 3 courses in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council area. As society emerges from Covid-19 restrictions we will continue to employ a hybrid approach to learning delivery and participant support. Over the past 18 months we have successfully transitioned programme delivery enabling flexible online, face-to-face and hybrid engagement. Engagement with all participants has been a positive experience and has not negatively affected outcomes.

Programme Budget in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Area

Description	Year 3
Total Funding Requirement	£ 88,862.11
Funding from ESF / DfE (65%)	£ 57,760.37
Match Funding Requirement (35%)	£ 31,101.74

IMPACT OF EXPLORING ENTERPRISE TO DATE

EEP has had a significant impact in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council area. Under the current Letter of Offer 20 courses have been successfully delivered.

200 people have received pre-training mentoring support and 133 went on to complete training and receive the CCEA accredited Level 1 Certificate in Understanding Business Enterprise qualification. Post assessment mentoring was completed with 133 participants with each

participant availing of relevant support to help them on their journey to secure employment or start up in business.

60 participants gained employment of which 17 went into employment and 43 went into self-employment. 49 participants went onto training of which 38 progressed onto the Go for It Programme to receive further practical help and support to start their business.

PROGRAMME LINK WITH COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

We are confident that EEP is an important value-added and complimentary offering in what we refer to as the “continuum of support” for entrepreneurs in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council area and that it plays a vital part in helping us address the entrepreneurial deficit. EEP is often the very first step for someone who believes that self-employment may be their best route back to the labour market, allowing them to understand what it takes to be self-employed and run a business, so they can make an informed decision.

Whilst the primary focus of our programme is geared towards self-employment, we recognise that this is not an appropriate progression pathway for all participants and the flexible nature of the programme allows participants to also develop their employability skills and identify additional education and/or training as a pathway to employment.

The programme is delivered throughout the borough to all people, providing equality of opportunity and particularly for those hardest to reach people and places where disengagement is prevalent:

- Long term unemployed or long term economically inactive.
- Living in areas of deprivation.
- Where the number of workless families is high.
- From underrepresented groups such as lone parents, women, ethnic minority groups; prisoners.
- Individuals with no or low education and skill levels.
- From areas suffering from the economic impact as a result of major employer closures and redundancies including significant Covid-19 related job losses.

EEP exactly meets the key action outlined in the Economic Development Strategy to increase the interest in starting a business by providing enhanced ‘exploring enterprise’ programmes from school age and up. Then programme offers support through 1-1 tailored mentoring and group training to provide participants with the skills, capability, and confidence to start a business.

A significant number of businesses have been negatively affected by COVID so going forward it is vital that businesses are supported which EEP will do. New businesses will form the bedrock of recovery for the economy. EEP will provide participants in the district with the knowledge and support to progress into self-employment.

EEP also feeds into and supports the success of other mainstream offerings such as the Go for It programme which in turn increases the level of entrepreneurial activity in the borough.

As outlined in the strategy in 2018 employment levels in the borough are nearly seven percentage points lower than the Northern Ireland average and council has a key role to play in localising initiatives through training support and job search assistance which EEP provides.

Participants receive tailored mentoring and those who wish to go into employment are assisted in developing a CV, completing application forms, identifying suitable jobs, and preparing for interviews.

EEP also addresses the challenges outlined in the strategy by offering equality to the 20% of those aged 16 or over who have no qualifications through the provision of an OCN endorsed qualification. EEP will engage with and support those who have no formal qualifications and who may face barriers to availing of opportunities to enhance their qualifications. The programme upskills participants in relation to developing an understanding of how businesses start and function which will enhance their employability

The programme continues to fill a gap in the provision of enterprise support by addressing the needs of people who are not yet ready to progress to self-employment. Employability barriers faced by underrepresented groups including low levels of educational confidence and attainment are addressed. EEP equips individuals with the attributes, capabilities, skills, confidence, and a qualification that progresses them into self-employment or employment. This in turn leads to improving wellbeing, tackling disadvantage, and driving inclusive economic growth. It leads to more people working in better jobs which in turn builds a fairer, stronger, more competitive, and balanced economy along with the wider social benefits this brings.

PROGRAMME DELIVERY STAFF

There will be no staffing implications for Council as the programme will be delivered by Causeway Enterprises and Roe Valley Enterprises. Delivery staff are qualified and experienced Business Mentors.

SUMMARY

The Exploring Enterprise Programme will have a significant impact in the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council area. We propose to deliver 7 EEP courses targeting 75 people over the year. 53 people (70%) will achieve a recognised qualification which will enhance their CV. Furthermore 34 participants (47%) will have an enhanced outcome from the programme with the creation of 16 new jobs.