



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Match funding extension request for Causeway Learn to Earn Programme (Year 4).</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Leisure &amp; Development Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>15 February 2022</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Decision</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Accelerating our Economy and Contributing to Prosperity
Outcome	Enhancement of skills and job creation opportunities
Lead Officer	Interim Head of Prosperity & Place

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	£20,000
Included in Current Year Estimates	<b>Yes</b>
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	Tbc
Staffing Costs	Included in staff time

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	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 seek approval from members to match-fund the Causeway Learn to Earn Programme for an additional year i.e. Year 4.

In November 2019 Council agreed to match fund this employability programme £20,000 per year over three years i.e. 2019-2022. The project has successfully secured additional funding from the DfE's European Social Fund for an additional final year. The project promoters are seeking approval from Council to extend their match funding for another year in line with DfE's European Social Fund extension.

## **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 (RVCEF). 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 Causeway 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.

Over the last four years (2018-2022) the consortium have been delivering programmes of training and development to groups of economically-inactive, unemployed and underemployed across the area of interest. 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; and
- To reduce economic inactivity, increase skills base and offer a working future for participants.

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

## **3.0 Current Position**

Action 29 of the Causeway Community Plan aims to:

‘Support in developing of the Causeway Workforce Development Forum supporting educational and skills initiatives within the Causeway Coast and Glens Area’.

Since 2019 The Causeway Learn to Earn Programme has overachieved in all its targets to date. This is highlighted in Table 1.0 below.

Results Area - Cumulatively	Target Participants 04/18 – 06/21	Actual Participants 04/18 – 06/21	Outcome
Participants Enrolled	288	298	Target Exceeded
Participants Into Employment (including sheltered employment) Upon leaving	43	69	Target Exceeded
Participants Into Training / Education Upon Leaving	29	36	Target Exceeded

**Table 1.0: Causeway Learn to Earn Performance - 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2021**

The Causeway Learn to Earn Programme has been extended for one final year after the project promoters successfully applied for an extension of European Social Funds to the Department for Economy. The project promoters have made a request to Council to extend their match funding for one additional final year in line with the Department’s extension.

The targets for the additional Year 4 funding by the Department are as follows:

- 17% of unemployed participants entering employment on leaving (as stipulated in guidance by DfE);
- 15% of economically inactive participants entering into employment on leaving; and
- 15% of participants entering into further training on leaving.

#### **4.0 Funding**

The total cost of extending the Causeway Learn to Earn Programme in Year 4 is £310,959. The breakdown of funding is as follows:

- ESF/DfE - £230,355 – confirmed.
- RVCEF, BCW, Ballycastle; and West Bann, Coleraine - £60,624 (own reserves and staff costs).
- Request to Council £20,000 (2022/23).

#### **5.0 Recommendation**

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to consider matching funding - £20k, allocated in the 2022/23 period for the Causeway Learn to Earn Programme and that the reporting for this scheme will be captured and monitored by Prosperity and Place staff within its usual evaluation framework.