

Report To:	Policy and Resources Committee	Date: 25 March 2014
Report By:	Corporate Director, Environment, Regeneration and Resources	Report No: P+R/14/03/01/SJ
Contact Officer:	Head of Regeneration and Planning	Contact No: 01475 71240
Subject:	Job Centre Plus Wage Incentive	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to highlight to Committee the Job Centre Plus (JCP) Wage Incentive Programme and to seek support from the Council for engagement with the Programme.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The JCP Wage Incentive is an employability intervention, which is part of the Employer Engagement Plus model, offers employers a wage incentive to employ a young person who has been on benefits or the Work Programme.
- 2.2 The incentive, open to all of Inverclyde's employers, is worth up to £2,275 for the employer when they employ an 18 to 24 year old either through Jobcentre Plus or from the Work Programme for at least 26 weeks. Partners within the Job Centre Plus have identified that the Council is eligible for this type of intervention.
- 2.3 This wage incentive is available for employment from 16 hours or more per week. There is a part-time rate (£1,137.50) for work between 16 and 29 hours and a full-time rate (£2,275) for 30 hours or more. Any young person who has been claiming Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support or Incapacity Benefit for at least 6 months is eligible. Employment Support Allowance claimants are eligible when the outcome of their Work Capability Assessment is known.
- 2.4 Whilst significant reductions have been made in respect of the number of 18-24 year olds in the eligible categories within Inverclyde, it is felt that by supporting this initiative within the Council, the employment offer to Inverclyde residents will be further enhanced.
- 2.5 If Committee is minded to support the principle of the incentive, it is necessary to name a single point of contact within the Council who will administer the scheme on the Council's behalf. Discussions have taken place between the relevant Services and the HR Service Manager (Organisational Development) is considered to be the appropriate individual, albeit supported by the Employability Team Leader within Regeneration and Planning.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the Job Centre Plus Incentive Programme, support the Council's participation in the scheme, agree that the relevant Services liaise with JCP management to provide a single point of contact

and if monies are received from DWP they are treated as found income which is allocated to existing employability budgets within the Regeneration and Planning Service.

Stuart W Jamieson
Head of Service – Regeneration and Planning

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Employer Engagement Plus (EEP) model is a JCP vehicle for engagement with employers in the Inverclyde area which actively promotes all the wage incentives that are available. These programmes help support local employers with the recruitment costs which in turn support the local community by increasing employment within the Inverclyde Council area and are an important part of the toolbox available to address employment issues within Inverclyde.
- 4.2 Partners within the Strategic Employability Group, which coordinates employability interventions within Inverclyde, have identified that the Council is eligible to participate in the JCP Wage Incentive.
- 4.3 The Incentive, open to all of Inverclyde's employers, is worth up to £2,275 for the employer when they employ an 18 to 24 year old either through Jobcentre Plus or from the Work Programme for at least 26 weeks in a job which is considered sustainable.
- 4.4 The Council would be able to claim the Wage Incentive for any eligible young person after 26 weeks from the Department of Work and Pensions. This Incentive would also be available to eligible young people who are employed as a Modern Apprentice (MA) within the Council.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 5.1 It is difficult to estimate the numbers of employees who will be participating in this programme, any monies received will be treated as found monies and allocated to the existing employability programmes.
- 5.2 Financial Implications – One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Financial Implications – Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From	Other Comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Legal

- 5.3 No implications.

Human Resources

- 5.4 No implications.

Equalities

- 5.5 No implications.

Repopulation

5.5 The initiative supports the repopulation agenda.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Acting Head of Human Resources, Organisational Development and Performance has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.