

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Able &amp; Willing Future Delivery Model</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup> January 2019</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director for Families, Children &amp; Learning</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>			<b>Tel: 01273 294921, Tel: 01273 290718, Tel: 01273 293514, Tel: 29- 4354</b>
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>(All Wards);</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE/****1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Children Young People and Skills Committee with information that will inform their decision on the future delivery model of Able & Willing.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the Committee agrees to the future delivery model of Able & Willing changing to a rolling work placement programme matching suitable placements within council services for candidates who are disabled.
- 2.2 That the Committee agree that the work placement programme is called 'Able & Willing.'

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Able & Willing is a council supported service providing digital and screen printing, embroidery and assembly of goods, predominantly in the promotions market. Following a number of organisational and structural changes over the last 5 years, the service now sits within the Skills and Employment strand of the Families, Children & Learning Directorate, as of September 2017.
- 3.2 The council's aim for Able & Willing was for it to operate on a financially sustainable basis, being less reliant on council funding whilst still supporting disabled staff in gaining opportunities to grow their skills and confidence in the workplace. This is consistent with the council's approach to managing the very substantial financial challenges in recent years whereby many services that are able to generate revenues have been expected to explore moving toward greater self-financing in order to protect critical, statutory services such as Children's and Adults social care provision.

3.3 The print industry and specifically the promotions sector have both been declining over a number of years and have faced increasing competition, and whilst Able & Willing has tried to adapt to the changing climate, it has struggled to improve its income and become more self-sustaining. For 2018/19, there is a projected overspend of £155k compared to the net council budget of £138k. In 2017/18 this figure was £163k overspent and 2016/17 was £215k overspent. Based on current income and business trends, overspending in future years is expected to increase.

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

4.1 In order to create a long term sustainable model for Able & Willing, a cross party working group was formed in April 2018. The working group included councillors from the three political groups, union representatives and council officers

4.2 Over the course of a number of meetings, detailed financial information was provided and alternative models were considered, informed by practice elsewhere. A total of five options were explored and four were rejected as not being viable. The alternative options that were discounted were as follows:

- Do nothing/leave as is – discounted as the business would become an increasing financial burden on the council at a time of growing financial pressures, and there would be no opportunities for additional disabled staff to be employed and currently employed staff are dissatisfied with the lack of work and uncertainty about the future;
- Additional investment in the print business – discounted as nationally this area of business is reducing and an exploration of the council's print needs was unable to identify sufficient future work for Able & Willing;
- Additional investment in an alternative product, informed by the business model for Newcastle's supported business which makes beds – discounted because both managers and staff do not have the skills or experience of working in a different field and given this lack of experience a move to a different area of work would require financial investment but would also include significant financial risk;
- Discontinuing the Able & Willing service with current Able & Willing production staff being redeployed into employment elsewhere within the council – discounted as a standalone solution as this would provide no opportunities for the future employment of additional disabled staff (but see proposed Agreed Option below which includes the employment of current production staff).

#### **Option for presentation to Children Young People and Skills Committee**

4.3 This model is a work placement programme that matches suitable candidates with roles within the council. The candidates for this programme will have a disability and will be matched with a role that can accommodate their individual needs.

- 4.4 The in-house rolling programme would aim to create funded places for disabled people, in suitable departments across the council. The individual, whilst on the placement, will be funded from the existing budget assigned to Able & Willing and not the department managing them. The intention is that this will support teams to consider placement opportunities within their services.
- 4.5 In addition to the work placement programme under this option, the current Able & Willing production staff would be guaranteed employment elsewhere within the Council'.
- 4.6 The proposal is to continue the Able & Willing brand as recognition of the work the supported business has done over a number of years.
- 4.7 The Supported Employment Team would work with teams on an ongoing basis to find suitable roles across the council and within the city as part of the new programme.
- 4.8 The budget for the Able & Willing programme would be predictable, with minimal risk of overspends and would remove the financial burden of rent, income targets, utilities, stock management and software support. This would remove the financial risk whilst maintaining the core operation of supporting disabled people into employment.
- 4.9 In order to succeed, this model would need to secure senior council support at Director level, in order to identify suitable placements. The support will be addressed following the consultation with staff and committee approval.
- 4.10 Initially, the budget for Able & Willing (£138k) may need to be used to support existing production staff posts. The work placement programme could only launch when sufficient funding is available.

#### **Example of the cost of 6/12 week placements**

<u>Cost of Staff (inc on-costs)</u>		Per	6 week	12 week
		week	placement	placement
Scale 1/2	22,000	£423.08	£2,538.46	£5,076.92
Scale 3	23,000	£442.31	£2,653.85	£5,307.69
Scale 4	25,000	£480.77	£2,884.62	£5,769.23

NB: This table provides examples of the types of post grades and placement lengths that could be considered. The Able & Willing programme would develop bespoke placements for staff based on their needs.

The aim would be to find permanent opportunities for staff once they complete their placement, either within the council or in the city.

## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Formal staff consultation with Able & Willing staff began on 16<sup>th</sup> November and ran for 30 days until 16<sup>th</sup> December 2018. A consultation paper was issued with individual meetings provided to all members of staff with support of HR and unions and the Supported Employment Team. The consultation paper detailed

the individual implications for existing Able & Willing staff members and their options.

- 5.2 The consultation paper was clear that the implications of the changes to individuals will only happen following Children Young People and Skills Committee's decision. Management response can only be written following this decision and issued to staff week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> January.
- 5.3 Following meetings with staff involving members and unions, the Able & Willing Working Group recognised that the continued uncertainty for existing Able & Willing staff should be resolved as a priority. The working group agreed that the consultation should commence prior to CYPs Committee decision but any outcome was conditional on the approval for the future model.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed option creates a sustainable rolling work placement programme that maximises the opportunities for disabled people within Brighton and Hove. This option removes all budgets other than staffing, removing a significant financial risk to the council.

## 7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 If approved, it is important that the financial position of the new delivery model is reviewed regularly next financial year in line with the Targeted Budget Management (TBM) timetable. This will ensure there are no additional costs to the council other than continuation of the current council budget of £138k in 2019/20 to meet staffing costs. It is anticipated costs will not exceed the funding available.

In the current financial year the forecast overspend of £155k relates mainly due to lower than expected sales and associated income. Details as follows:

Details	Budget	Latest Forecast	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Gross Expenditure	594	521	-73
Income	-457	-229	228
Net Budget	137	292	155

Based on current business trends, reducing sales and income are expected to be achieved in 2019/20, which will increase the level of future overspending.

*Finance Officer consulted: David Ellis*

*Date 29th November 2018*

### Legal Implications:

- 7.2 Implementation of the proposals set out in the report, if approved, will need to follow the Council's Organisation Change Management Framework and the

Council's relevant Employment Policies in respect of all staff affected by the proposals.

*Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert  
2018*

*Date: 6<sup>th</sup> December*

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 There are benefits in the opportunity for disabled people to gain skills in a wider range of services and therefore for a wider range of disabled people to engage with this programme, not just those interested in the current service areas of print, embroidery etc. The initiative also supports the council priority of diversifying the workforce. Flexibility, imagination and support will be crucial in ensuring and supporting effective and meaningful job roles and experiences. Additional support to managers to 'job carve' or otherwise modify roles will be needed, provided through the Supported Employment Team.
- 7.4 Placement length and complexity needs to be appropriate to the individual, to minimise potential anxiety about change, and the host service. The flexibility of placement length will help support this and the options need to be appropriate to the individual. Planning as far in advance and providing appropriate support, involving carers and others, will help to identify where this will be a particular issue and provide ways to mitigate impacts. As the report says, this initiative will need to be supported and prioritised by senior managers to ensure that maximum benefit is gained: these placements will require a greater investment of time by staff and managers to ensure that the experience is positive and the greatest rewards are felt by the individual and the placement service.

*Equalities Manager Consulted: Sarah Tighe-Ford      Date: 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018*

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. **Appendix 1** - Questions and Answers on future model

## **Appendix 1 – Questions and Answers**

### **Able & Willing – Work Placement Programme**

#### **1. What is it?**

The Able & Willing Work Placement Programme will be managed by a Supported Employment officer within the Supported Employment Team, matching suitable placements within council services for candidates who are disabled.

#### **2. How long will new placements last?**

Placements will last a minimum of six-weeks and maximum of one year. Each placement will be tailored to the individual member of staff and the team they will be joining, ensuring all needs are taken into account.

#### **3. What happens after the placement ends?**

There are a few scenarios at the end of the placement for this programme:

- If the individual is suitable for an alternative placement as part of the scheme, they will be considered for that
- The individual could be offered a permanent role within the team they have been placed in
- The individual could apply for another role available within the council
- The individual could apply for another role outside of the council

If the placement ends and no role has been found for the individual then, where appropriate, the Supported Employment Team will work with the individual to find a more permanent opportunity including options outside of the council.

#### **4. How will it be funded?**

The placements will be funded from the existing Able & Willing Supported Business budget. This budget will fund these placements, meaning hosting teams will not be contributing to these posts financially. The services within which individuals are placed will not be required to fund the placement from their budget. If an opportunity to join the team on a permanent or fixed term basis becomes available, the team will be required to fund this from their budget.

#### **5. How will it work?**

Individuals will apply to the Programme, indicating the type of council roles they believe they can do. At the same time, a list of placements within the council will be made by Supported Employment. Once a suitable match is established, the new member of staff will be inducted into the team and start the role. Criteria and eligibility for the programme will need to be agreed.

#### **6. What has prompted this change?**

The print industry and specifically the promotions sector, has both been declining over a number of years and faced increasing competition, and whilst Able & Willing has tried to adapt to the changing climate, it has struggled to achieve the income targets and consequently not met the budget. For 2018/19, there is a projected overspend of £155k,

which is in addition to the council budget of £138k. In 2017/18 this figure was £163k overspent and 2016/17 was £215k overspent.

### **7. Is this a closure of Able & Willing site?**

Historically the supported business has provided two functions which were to support people who are disabled with training and work opportunities while providing a fulfilment service for printed items and sub assembly products. The future model will focus on supporting people who are disabled in training and work opportunities, the supported business delivering Print will close as there has not been sufficient work.

### **8. What will happen to existing customers of Able & Willing?**

Customers for Able & Willing will be offered the opportunity of transferring their print business to Print & Sign.

### **9. What type of work will they be doing?**

The work will be anything suitable within a council team. The ambition is to find suitable placements in a range of services, such as City parks, City Clean and Print & Sign that leads to sustainable permanent roles that enable development opportunities for people who are disabled.

### **10. How will the person on the placement be supported?**

There are a number of ways individuals will be supported when in placement. Firstly, they will have contact with the Supported Employment Team (SET) during the placement. They will also have support from their new line manager for the length of the placement.

SET will support both the individual and the host team;

- Support to a level that matches the learning need for the person and task being learnt. i.e. 1-1 support over a number of days/ weeks till the task is learnt.
- Appropriate disability awareness training for the hosting team.

Each individual will have a structured plan that supports the individual and hosting team which would include risk assessments, corporate training and contingency plans if the placement doesn't work out.

### **11. What is the difference between this and the Supported Employment Team?**

The Supported Employment Team support people who are disabled in roles and placements within the council and within other employers. The Able & Willing Work Placement Programme enables learning opportunities for jobs that may arise in the future as well as developing transferable skills, providing short term placements only within the council. The benefits to having a separate programme are that it can be marketed locally and managed under separate funding.

### **12. What will it be called?**

The current suggestion is to continue the Able & Willing name as recognition of the work that has been completed by the supported business over a number of years. This will be explored through consultation with current stakeholders.

### **13. Why will it work?**

This Programme will expand the opportunities available to people who are disabled and get more people into employment either within the council or elsewhere within the city.

The aim will be to reach more people as a rolling programme and will offer a more integrated, visible and meaningful work experience.

As outlined above, there is support for managers, as well as people who are disabled, to get the most from the placements.