

Notice of NON KEY Executive Decision containing exempt information

This Executive Decision Report is part exempt and Appendix B *is* not available for public inspection as it contains or relates to exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is exempt because it refers to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

the public interest in disclosing the information

Subject Heading:	Acceptance and implementation of grant funding for Trailblazer project supporting residents into employment
Decision Maker:	Tara Geere Director of Starting Well
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Graham Williamson, Cabinet Member for Development and Regeneration
ELT Lead:	Barbara Nicholls Strategic Director of People
Report Author and contact details:	Amanda Montague 01708433394 Amanda.montague@haverling.gov.uk
Policy context:	Havering Corporate Plan
Financial summary:	The notional total funding that will be allocated to Havering through Trailblazers will be £457,240 for one year only –financial year 2025-2026. It is expected there will be a management fee of @4% levied by

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	<p>Local London for the management and support that will be delivered both prior to contract start and throughout the period of the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA).</p> <p>The funding is allocated for project and staff costs, management and overhead costs and participant support where identified</p> <p>LBH must comply with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement, and meet performance outputs to ensure that the full grant is received.</p>
Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Sub Committee:	<i>People OSSC</i>
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	The decision will be exempt from call in as it is a Non key Decision

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The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

For the reasons detailed in this report and its appendices, the Strategic Director of People is recommended to approve:

Accepting and entering into a grant funding agreement (GFA) with Local London to deliver Trailblazers employment support projects, funded through the GLA and DWP at a maximum cost of £457,240 for the financial year 2025 -2026.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Scheme 3.3.3 Powers common to all Strategic Directors

5.1 To apply for, accept and thereafter spend / allocate any grant funding connected with their directorate provided that any match funding or residual liabilities can be met from the existing budget of the directorate. For the avoidance of doubt this delegation shall allow the acceptance of any grant offered / allocated to the Council without any application.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In the Employment and Skills sector there are significant changes being implemented by Government.

Connect to work (CtW) is a programme that will support people with health issues and those more disadvantaged to enter employment. The programme was due to start in April 2025 but has been subject to delays by DWP and will not now start until June 2025. Acceptance of the grant for the CtW programme was submitted to Theme Board in December 2024 and received approval.

The CtW programme will be used to fund the staffing costs of the team but that because there is a delay in that CtW funding being available, it is proposed that the Trailblazer funding is used to fund the on-going costs of the existing employees and agency worker in the team until the CtW funding becomes available.

Trailblazer funding has been awarded to Local London to allow the sub-region to try the new ways of working being introduced by CtW and also allow some flexibility to fund projects under four themes which compliment employment support.

Local London proposes to work with their local authorities to design and deliver bespoke interventions tailored to local needs.

These would include: approaches to better integrate health and employment support where local authorities would work with NHS ICBs and JCP to design wrap around services to address health and employment barriers; peer mentoring networks to recruit and train individuals as peer mentors and build trust within hard to reach communities; a digital inclusion programme to provide targeted digital skills training in

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areas with high levels of digital exclusion, to enable participants to access online job and training opportunities.

Local authorities would also use the trailblazer resource to identify demand using data, community engagement, designing bespoke programmes to address specific challenges and adapt interventions based on real-time feedback and emerging needs.

Local London will notionally allocate LBH the Trailblazer funding in the table below. While these allocations have not yet received formal approval from the DWP, they are progressing through the approval process, and Local London believe they are likely to be agreed.

Trailblazers Provisional Allocation		
Borough	EI %	Maximum Contract Value
Havering	7.1%	£ 457,240.00

Trailblazer funding will be awarded under 4 themes:-

Economic Inactivity Support Programme

Self-Employment & Transferable Skills Support

AI & Digital Upskilling

Childcare Support Fund

The Economic Inactivity Support programme will be funding for staff delivering employment support to residents and is expected to be wholly in-house. The other three themes will be mixed delivery with the opportunity to procure activity either as a single borough or through a joint procurement exercise with one or more boroughs within Local London. The details of the projects under the themes will be the subject of further discussions with Local London.

Initially all the funding will be allocated to the Economic Activity Support programme with opportunities through the year to revise the allocation to fund other projects. This is to cover the gap in funding for employment support staff left by the late start of Connect to Work.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Contracting out the programme would result in reducing internal capacity and capability as there is a gap in grant funding at present to fund the Havering Works team.

If LBH declined the Trailblazer grant, the team would have to be reduced and then staff recruited to deliver CtW or also decline that grant.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

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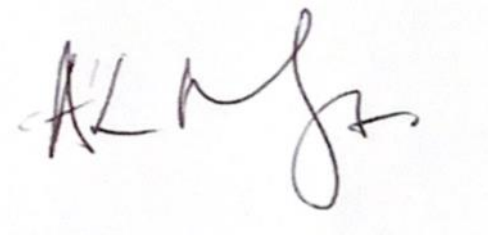
Meetings and workshops with Local London and member boroughs inform local authorities of the delivery plan Local London should submit to the GLA / DWP that would meet governmental outputs as stipulated through the Trailblazer Guidance. The DWP have delegated Trailblazer funding to the sub- regional partnerships to manage, setting out the range of targets and activities the fund must deliver whilst meeting the priorities of the locality and complimenting other programmes of support.

Trailblazer projects have been discussed as part of a series of internal departmental meetings with Education and Adults Disability and SEND teams.

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Amanda Montague

Designation: Employment and Skills Manager

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'AM', is centered within a rectangular box. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Signature:

Date: 26/3/2025

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has the power to accept the grant under s111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which permits the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.

The Council also has a general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual can do, subject to any statutory constraints on the Council's powers. None of the constraints on the Council's s.1 power are engaged by this decision.

The grant agreement will set out certain conditions which officers will ensure to adhere to in order to achieve full utilisation of the funding arrangements and prevent claw back by the grant giver. Subject to the officers having an understanding the terms and conditions of the grant funding, the Council may accept the grant funding and enter into the grant agreement. Legal shall review the terms of the grant funding agreement and apprise the Strategic Director of People of any risks or legal implications relating to the proposed grant funding agreement, prior to entering into it.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

LBH is currently awaiting funding approval from the DWP for the Trailblazer programme. If approved, the programme will run for 1 year only, with an estimated annual value of £457,240.

A 4% charge is expected to be levied by Local London for programme management costs, leaving the remaining grant of £438,950 to cover the costs of delivering employment support to residents.

The grant funding would meet the cost of salaries for full and part time staff (up to an estimated maximum of £282,618) plus participant costs and overheads.

The planned staffing is shown below:

Post	FTE	£
LBH Employees		
Havering Works Team Leader	1.0	67,001
Specialist Employment Advisors	3.5	187,737
Monitoring and Data Officer	1.0	48,610
Agency		
Employment and Skills Manager		54,400
Total Annual Cost		357,748
LBH Budget		75,130
Employee/Agency costs funded from Grant		282,618

The net cost of this team was funded from UKSPF grant, up to the 31st March 2025.

In addition to the Trailblazer grant, the Connect to Work grant will commence in June 2025 and will fund the recruitment of new staff in line with profiled funding on fixed term contracts that expire at the end of the grant funding period.

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The funding will be drawn down quarterly based on evidence of defrayed expenditure by LBH. Project spend will be profiled and split over the life of the grant agreement (1 years).

The programme will be fully funded through the Trailblazer Grant and will not require Council funding, provided that the terms of the funding agreement are adhered to and the required outputs are achieved. If the council does not deliver the required outputs, there is a risk that the funding could be withdrawn or reduced. The grant agreement with Local London will stipulate that Local London would have the authority to suspend payments, claw back funding or reduce the level of funding if the council defaults on the contract. This risk will be mitigated by regular monitoring meetings with Local London, and if necessary, the implementation of a performance improvement plan.

If the Trailblazer grant is not awarded to Havering, there will be a 2 month period prior to the commencement of the Connect to Work grant in June 25, where the staffing costs will not be covered by external funding. The cost for this period would be £60,000, and suitable funding would need to be identified.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

If approval to accept the Trailblazer funding is not agreed, the costs of the team will have to be met by the General Fund until the CtW programme funding becomes available.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex/gender, and sexual orientation.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

- An EHIA was produced for the ESF project in 2022 and being kept under review and maintained with respect to the delivery of the Connect to Work programme. The new programme is aimed at a similar client group and subject to the eligibility criteria is open to residents who are disadvantaged and some distance from the workplace needing additional support to secure employment.

The project will have a positive impact on participants lives in that moving toward employment through upskilling and support to find work can improve:-

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- Mental health and wellbeing
- Access to and quality of education or other training opportunities
- Employment, income, opportunities for economic development
- Opportunity to interact socially with other people, social isolation, community support networks and being able to live independently
- In turn once people are working they are able to participate in other aspects of society

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The project has no additional impact on carbon emissions.

It does not offer the opportunity for Offsetting carbon emissions.

It could provide opportunities to support residents to secure roles in the green skills sector and in this way, would support preparation for the impacts of climate change

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

Appendix A

EQHIA

Appendix B

EXEMPT Feb 2025 DWP Request for EI TB Further Information

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Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Details of decision maker



Signed

Name: Tara Geere – Director of Starting Well

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date:

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____

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