



# City of Westminster Cabinet Member

**Meeting or Decision Maker:** Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Skills

**Date:** 25 February 2019

**Classification:** General Release

**Title:** HELP Team Consolidation

**Wards Affected:** All

**City for All Summary** Westminster Employment Service provides employment coaching services that enable long term unemployed people to access all of the benefits of the economic opportunities in the City. This proposal strengthens delivery of HELP, an employment service for people at risk of homelessness.

**Key Decision:** No

**Financial Summary:** The cost of bringing the Vital Regeneration Employees in HELP team into the Council will be £165,766 per year.

This is not an additional cost as Westminster City Council is already funding these posts. Funding has been agreed by GPH from the Flexible Homelessness Grant for the next 18 months.

**Report of:** Head of Coaching, Westminster Employment Service

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## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The HELP project has been delivering a successful integrated housing and employment project which comprises staff from a charity Vital Regeneration and from Westminster City Council. Vital Regeneration, the charity which employs the personal caseworkers that provide the HELP coaching service will end, at the end of the EU funding, on 31 March 2019. The Housing department has agreed to fund the HELP project for a further 18 months to deliver homelessness prevention services.
- 1.2 The current organisational structure means that the Vital Regeneration employees working on HELP have managers in three organisations including a manager from Westminster Employment Service- this is not productive or cost effective.
- 1.3 This paper proposes to bring in house the HELP team employed by Vital Regeneration to be directly managed by Westminster Employment Service, due to the closure of the charity.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To bring in-house the five HELP team members employed by Vital Regeneration into the Westminster Employment Service, and also to continue the maternity cover for one of these roles.

## **3. Reasons for Decision**

- 3.1 Vital Regeneration is due to end, Westminster Employment Service and Westminster Housing Department would like to keep this successful pilot operating in a model that ensures efficient delivery. Due to the closure of Vital Regeneration, the five staff will be brought in house into the Westminster Employment Service to ensure service continuity.

## **4. Background, including Policy Context**

- 4.1 The HELP project has run as an integrated housing and employment pilot for the last two and a half years, delivering an effective holistic solution to the employment needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. Further to the success of the pilot, the Housing Department has agreed to fund the project to provide a homelessness prevention service for another 18 months from the flexible homelessness grant.
- 4.2 Five of the staff working on the pilot were employed by a Charity - Vital Regeneration, and the project was run in a partnership between the Council and the Charity. During the project, Vital Regeneration became a subsidiary of Thamesreach and at the end of the pilot, Vital Regeneration will be cease to operate as a charity.
- 4.3 In order to ensure clear lines of accountability to ensure a productive and motivated workforce, Westminster City Council proposes to take in-house the service undertaken by the five Vital Regeneration staff so that it is carried out by the Westminster Employment Service with the effect that the staff will have one direct reporting line.

The team currently report to a Westminster City Council manager operate from a Council building on Council equipment and are funded.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The financial implications are salary costs for five staff members, which WCC is already funding via a grant from the EU and the cost of employer's National Insurance and pension contributions. This service will continue with new funding from the Flexible Homelessness Grant. This proposal will have no other additional cost to the Council.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 As the Council intends to carry out the same service now carried out by an external provider, there is expected to be a service provision change under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE).
- 6.2 This means that the contracts of employment of the team of staff now carrying out the HELP project work at Vital Regeneration would transfer automatically to the Council when the Council assumes responsibility for the service. TUPE requires that the current terms and conditions are either equalled or improved. The Council is also obliged to offer them membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 6.3 Although it is not a legal obligation, the Council intends to conduct consultation with the employees involved to assist their integration.

## **7. Staffing Implications**

- 7.1 Five staff employed by Vital Regeneration and paid for and managed by Westminster Employment Service will move into the Council. There will be no change in number of roles.

## **8. Consultation**

- 8.1 A joint consultation will be held by human resources departments from both organisations.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact:**

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

*Consultation paper on proposals to bring the HELP team in house*

For completion by the **Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Skills**

**Declaration of Interest**

I have <no interest to declare / to declare an interest> in respect of this report

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State nature of interest if any .....  
.....

*(N.B: If you have an interest you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter)*

For the reasons set out above, I agree the recommendation(s) in the report entitled

**HELP team consolidation** and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed .....

Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Skills

Date .....

If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and this pro-forma is returned to the Secretariat for processing.

Additional comment:  
.....  
.....

If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Chief Operating Officer and, if there are resources implications, the Director of Human Resources (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Cabinet Member: Your decision will now be published and copied to the Members of the relevant Policy & Scrutiny Committee. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from publication to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it wishes to call the matter in.

**Appendix A**

**Other Implications**

- 1. Resources Implications**
- 2. Business Plan Implications**
- 3. Risk Management Implications**
- 4. Health and Wellbeing Impact Assessment including Health and Safety Implications**
- 5. Crime and Disorder Implications**
- 6. Impact on the Environment**
- 7. Equalities Implications**
- 8. Staffing Implications – see paragraph 4.8, 4.9 and 4.10 of guide**
- 9. Human Rights Implications**
- 10. Energy Measure Implications**
- 11. Communications Implications**

Note to report authors: If there are particularly significant implications in any of the above categories these should be moved to the main body of the report.