

Report for: Cabinet – 17 June 2025

Item number: 10

Title: Acceptance of Connect to Work grant

Report authorised by : Abigail Stratford, Director of Placemaking and Community Development

Lead Officer: Helen McDonough, Head of Inclusive Economy

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

This report seeks the Cabinet's approval to accept £3,834,041 in revenue funding from Central London Forward (CLF) over five years (July 2025- March 2030) to deliver the Governments Connect to Work employment support (CtW) programme in Haringey. Connect to Work is a voluntary non mandated employment support initiative aimed at reducing economic inactivity in the Labour Market by assisting residents with long-term health conditions, disabilities, and complex barriers into sustainable employment.

Haringey Works, the Council's employment support service, will deliver 50% of the programme, with the remaining 50% being delivered through an externally commissioned provider as part of a sub-regional procurement process led by CLF. The grant funding agreement will be between CLF and Haringey Council for the delivery of 50% of the Haringey programme.

The programme aligns with Opportunity Haringey Theme 3, focusing on Good Work and Skills.

The Connect to Work programme will be launched in Haringey in July 2025.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

For those not currently in employment but want to work, accessing the labour market and securing good work can be a challenge for a number of reasons not least the systemic barriers in place to finding and keeping sustainable well-paid employment. Haringey Council has pledged to support people into good jobs where they are paid a regular fair wage and have opportunities to progress. People with illnesses – physical and mental – and living with disabilities face additional barriers to find employment and could benefit from tailored support.

I am pleased to recommend that we accept the £3.8million Connect to Work grant to fund the work of Haringey Works over the next five years to support almost

1000 people into good jobs. This is a voluntary scheme for people who want tailored support from the Council. Haringey Works has a proven track record, using a person-centred holistic approach to ensure wider barriers to employment are addressed. In 2024/25, 450 of the residents they supported moved into employment within the year across a variety of sectors.

We will build on our innovative approach by integrating employment, health and community services to provide individual support to people with disabilities, health conditions and complex barriers to finding sustainable employment. It will not only address individual barriers but systemic ones in various employment sectors, bringing diverse perspectives and experiences into our labour market.

Haringey has the 6th highest unemployment rate in London; this figure represents people without jobs who are actively seeking work. There is a role for the Council to play to support this group. Good employment can bring economic, social and psychological benefits to people. It is a key part of our commitment to make Haringey a place where people can thrive.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 3.1 Approve acceptance of a grant from Central London Forward of £3,834,041 for the delivery of 50% of the Connect to Work programme in Haringey between April 2025 and March 2030. This will create a targeted Employment Support programme providing resource and capacity for Haringey Works to deliver voluntary employment support for Haringey residents who are economically inactive and experiencing health conditions or disabilities or face complex barriers which impact their ability to work. This is in accordance with Contract Standing Order 21.01 Where the Council receives a grant from an external body, the process for approving or varying the agreement for the grant shall be the same as that set out in CSO 2 (i.e. the Director may approve receipt of a grant valued at less than £500,000. For approval of receipt of grants valued at £500,000 or more, a Cabinet decision is required).
- 3.2 To approve the hybrid model of delivery, with Haringey Works delivering 50% of the programme, and working in partnership with a commissioned provider who will deliver the remaining 50% of the programme. Commissioning of the external provider will be managed by CLF.

4. Reasons for decision

Although the number of unemployed residents has significantly decreased since the pandemic Haringey continues to experience relatively high levels of unemployment. As of March 2025, around 6% of our population were claiming out of work benefits compared to a London average of 5.1%.

In line with national and London trends we have also seen a growing number of residents who are inactive in the Labour Market and in particular for reasons of ill health including mental health. Currently around 24% of our population is inactive in the Labour Market this compares to a London average of 20%. However, these figures need to be treated with caution as this number will include those who are inactive for reasons including caring responsibilities, studying, retirement. Whilst there will be those within that figure who will not be actively seeking work there will also be those who are keen to secure employment but need additional support to achieve that goal.

Haringey Works has an established track record of supporting residents into employment, using a person-centred holistic approach to ensure wider barriers are addressed. The service is a key member of Haringey's Employment and Health providers network which convenes and integrates employment support work for those with health barriers across all providers in borough. In addition the team is part of the new work and health place based governance arrangements being set up by the Integrated Care Board to join up the health and employment landscape locally.

During 2024-25, the service supported over 1000 residents, with 450 of those moving into sustainable employment and our focus for this programme will be support into sustainable jobs. Haringey Works currently delivers an IPS (Individual Placement and Support) programme to support people with substance misuse issues, the programme funded by the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities is currently second in the country for job start achievements. Haringey Works offers a trusted brand, providing specialist support and is ideally placed to build on this experience and expand its offer of employment support through the IPS model.

Approving the funding and implementation of the Connect to Work programme will:

- Provide access to funding over a 5-year period which will enable Haringey Works to continue supporting residents into employment following the end of UKSPF funding in March 2026. Haringey Works is ideally placed to deliver the Connect to Work programme, with a good understanding of resident's needs, and established partnerships across community and health organisations.
- Contribute to the integration of employment and health services to provide holistic support to residents experiencing health conditions or disabilities which impact their ability to work.
- Ensure a structured and sustainable employment support model is available through Haringey Works over the next five years.
- Maintain Haringey's position as a leading provider of employment support using the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model.

5. Alternative options considered

Not Accepting the Grant: This option was rejected as it would result in a significant reduction in employment support provision through Haringey Works for Haringey residents.

- **Delivering the Programme Solely Through External Commissioning:** This was deemed unsuitable, as it would not leverage the expertise and infrastructure of Haringey Works, which has an established track record in delivering employment support services.

6. Background information

Connect to Work is a key initiative to be delivered as part of the Government's Get Britain Working Strategy. The Connect to Work programme aims to integrate employment, health, and skills support to help residents find and sustain employment. The delivery model follows the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) approach to employment support, focusing on work first - rapid job placement and in-work support.

The programme delivered by Haringey Works will support up to 939 residents over five years, with an annual breakdown as follows:

Year	Residents Supported	Funding Allocation
2025/26	113	£449,999.71
2026/27	245	£794,441.48
2027/28	315	£977,462.41
2028/29	246	£928,740.09
2029/30	40	£683,396.94
Total	939	£3,834,041

Haringey Works has experience in delivering IPS for residents with substance misuse issues, ranking second nationally for job starts in 2024 under IPS Grow, the Department of Health funded programme. The Connect to Work initiative will allow Haringey Works to expand this approach to a broader client base.

Good Work and Skills

The Council have pledged to support residents into 'good work.' The Connect to Work programme requires participants to be supported into Good Work where possible.

A 'Good Work' job outcome for the Connect to Work programme is defined as a job, apprenticeship or paid work placement for a learner who is not in employment upon enrolment, which

- offers a minimum of 16 hours/week and is expected to last at least four consecutive weeks; and
- pays a basic salary of the London Living Wage or above and does not involve the use of zero-hours contracts.

The Connect to Work programme also offers support to residents who are employed but at risk of losing their job due to long term health issues.

It should be noted that Haringey Works Good Work focus is on supporting residents into sustainable long term jobs paying London Living Wage and above and this will be the continued focus including working with those not eligible for Connect to Work.

The Connect to Work programme is a voluntary non mandated employment support programme. It is recognised that there may be some resident distrust of DWP programmes and concerns of any links to the Government's wider welfare benefits agenda. We will reduce these concerns by using all Haringey Works communication channels to make clear this is a voluntary programme with no links to benefits. If the basis or criteria for residents' participation in the programme were to change at any time due to a change in government policy, the Council would be able to review or cease its role in delivery of the programme.

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes

This grant will support activity to deliver Theme 8 –Place and Economy of the **Corporate Delivery Plan** and directly supports the action - Employment & Skills - Haringey residents can easily access education and skills training. Support will be targeted at those furthest from the labour market, helping residents into growth sectors, with a focus on obtaining Good Work.

The programme will directly support the delivery of **Opportunity Haringey**, Our Inclusive Economy Framework – Theme 3 – Good Work and Skills:

- Enhancing employment support for residents with long-term health conditions and disabilities.
- Strengthening partnerships between employment, health, and community services.
- Promoting economic inclusion through sustainable job placements.
- Supporting employers to meet their recruitment and skill needs.

8. Carbon and Climate Change

The Climate Change Action Plan set out how the borough will become net zero carbon by 2041. The proposed Connect to Work programme supports that objective with direct activities for local people including:

- Signposting and supporting individuals to access Haringey Learns Environmental sustainability online courses and encourage residents to attend workshops on green and environmental themes. Embedding carbon literacy principles in all courses delivered by Haringey Learns.
- Providing career guidance linked to training and employment within green sector, with a particular focus on opportunities within construction/retrofit – in line with growth sector priorities identified in 'Opportunity Haringey'

- Haringey Works' hub and spoke delivery model, enables delivery of employment support within communities and co-location at local community sites, reducing the impact of travel for local residents.

9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

10. Finance

This report is for Cabinet to approve the recommendations as set out in Para 2 of this report. The acceptance of a grant from CLF for £3,834,041 for the delivery of the Connect to Work programme and does not require any additional funding from the Council.

11. Strategic Procurement

Strategic Procurement have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Strategic Procurement note that the recommendation in section 3 of this report concerns the receipt of a grant. CSO 21.01 permits that the Cabinet may approve the receipt of a grant valued at £500,000 or more.

Strategic Procurement have no objections to the recommendations of this report.

12. Legal

- 12.1. The Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) has been consulted in the preparation of this report.
- 12.2 Pursuant to the Council's Contract Standing Order (CSO) 21.01 Cabinet has authority to approve the receipt of a grant where the value of the grant is £500,000 or more and as such the recommendation in paragraph 3.1 is in line with the provisions of the Council's CSO.
- 12.3 Cabinet also has power to approve the recommendation in paragraph 3.2 of the report so long as the provider that is commissioned is selected in line with the provisions of CSO 4.01 that is in accordance with the Council's CSO, relevant Regulations and the Procurement Act 2023.
- 12.4 The Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) sees no legal reasons preventing the approval of the recommendations in the report.

13. Equality

- 13.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
 - 13.1.1 Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
 - 13.1.2 Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not.

13.1.3 Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

13.2 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

13.3 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

13.4 The decision in question is regarding Cabinet approval for Haringey Council to accept £3,834,041 revenue funding from Central London Forward for the period spanning April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2030.

13.5 The programme will support delivery of Opportunity Haringey, the Inclusive Economy Framework. There are not anticipated to be any negative impacts arising from this programme of support to local individuals. Indeed, positive impacts are anticipated to come from:

- The spillover benefits to all protected groups from a growing inclusive economy that brings more opportunities for business growth and employment.
- Targeted employment and skills interventions seeking to reduce barriers for those experiencing labour market disadvantage, with particular focus on those with health conditions and disabilities.
- Promoting Good Work to reduce the negative impacts of low pay.

13.6 Each of the above are likely to have multiple positive impacts on those who share the protected characteristics, including from an intersectional perspective.

14. Use of Appendices

None

15. Background papers

- a. CLF Connect to Work Delivery Model Guidance [Connect to Work: Grant Guidance for England - GOV.UK](#)
- b. [DRAFT - Supported employment programme - Grant Guidance - Appendix D - Draft Grant Funding Agreement \(England\) 2024.10.21.pdf](#)