

Labour Market Partnerships  
Working Together



# **ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP**

**Annual Report**

**April 2022- March 2023**

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## Chairperson Foreword

I am immensely proud and honoured as the Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council during 2022-23 to have served as the Chairperson of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Labour Market Partnership (LMP).

On behalf of the Antrim and Newtownabbey LMP I would like express our thanks to the Department for Communities (DfC) for designing and providing funding for the LMP initiative during 2022-23 and for the funding support offered by the Department for the Economy. As finances become ever more difficult to secure, we are delighted to have been given the opportunity to submit an Action Plan (AP) and secure funding and resources for our area. This funding enabled us to deliver a range of programmes from Job Fairs to Employability Academies and Industrial Introductory Events that supported 94 residents from the Borough move into paid employment and engaged 339 school children in LMP initiatives. This initiative has provided the opportunity to build and sustain relationships between Council, enterprise partners, local businesses, training and education providers and community groups and formed a partnership that, will continue to deliver for the residents of Antrim and Newtownabbey.

I am aware of the obstacles that our local business and residents are facing and for that reason, I wish to extend my thanks and gratitude to the members of the partnership who work tirelessly to have a positive impact on the residents of the Borough and that it is their local knowledge, expertise and collaboration that helps drive the partnership forward while avoiding duplication of other provisions.

We established a Schools Sub-Group, a platform that enables collaboration with local post-primary schools to guide the next generation of students within the education system. Our aim is to ensure they have access to appropriate guidance, inspiration, and opportunities for their future careers whether that be further education, apprenticeships or employment. We want to install ambition into our youths and influence them positively.

Our Borough already has extensive offerings and there are currently plans in place to enhance these, therefore it is important to ensure the skills in the prominent sectors in the Borough are readily available when the opportunities become available. Being involved in the development of this Partnership and witnessing its evolution this year has been truly fulfilling. I eagerly anticipate building upon this success and witnessing the implementation of projects and initiatives in the 2023/2024 financial year. I am excited for the positive impact these activities will have on our residents, businesses, and Borough as a whole.



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**Alderman Stephen Ross,**

## **ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY LMP**

### **Introduction**

Labour Market Partnerships (LMPs) are a province wide approach developed and funded by the DfC. LMPs have been established in each NI Council to help improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally by working through coordinated, collaborative, multi-agency partnerships, achieving regional objectives whilst being flexible to meet the needs presented by localised conditions and helping to connect employers with employees.

LMPs will play a key collaborative and supporting role in 'Employability NI', DfC's approach to supporting those who are unemployed to get back to work. Employability NI is designed to provide a range of interventions that can evolve over time. These interventions will aim to:

- Deliver a reduction in economic inactivity and long-term unemployment;
- Provide increased support for those with physical/mental health conditions and disabilities; and
- Implement an intervention that provides a collaborative nature between Central Government Departments and the Local Council area to offer direct and unique interventions.

The Employability NI programme will act as a cross-governmental approach with co-designing and co-commissioning that will provide a sustainable future strategic employment offer which provides a tailored level of support to address need. Within the Employability NI framework, LMPs intend to:

- Provide leadership and lead on the integration of services;
- Develop local action plans including setting targets for performance;
- Manage devolved funding and its delivery; and
- Manage arrangements for the evaluation of local interventions.

The LMP approach has been introduced to ensure employability delivery is reflective of local area needs and participant and employer needs in particular. The partnerships will focus on improving labour market conditions and addressing issues with employers, training providers and community and voluntary organisations.

### **Antrim and Newtownabbey LMP**

The first meeting of Antrim and Newtownabbey LMP took place on 24 November 2021, the Partnership has continued to meet on a regular basis with meetings taking place at least 6 times per year. The LMP has grown during this financial year by welcoming a representative from Invest NI and creating a Schools Sub-Group.

### Outcome Based Accountability

Newtownabbey LMP used the Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) model in the development and measurement of the success of the Action Plan (AP).

OBA is a way of structuring planning to improve outcomes for whole populations and for improving services. The structure provided by OBA provides individuals, teams and groups of stakeholders with a common language and a framework for considering

and planning actions, to improve outcomes at a population level or for beneficiaries/participants of programmes or projects.

The OBA approach focuses on outcomes that are desired and monitored, and evidence progress towards those desired outcomes. Key features of OBA include:

Population Accountability – this is about the well-being of whole populations (e.g. all people living in a local LMP area or all people living in Northern Ireland). This level of accountability is not the sole responsibility of any one agency or programme. It is about agencies across a number of sectors collaborating to improve outcomes. Outcomes are the conditions of wellbeing that are desired for a defined population.

At a population level, turning-the-curve is the main planning process within OBA which is structured under the following seven population accountability questions:

1. What are the quality of life conditions that we want for the children, adults and families that live in our community?
2. What would these conditions look like if we could see them?
3. How can we measure these conditions?
4. How are we doing on the most important of these measures?
5. Who are the partners that have a role to play in doing better?
6. What works to do better including no-cost and low-cost ideas?
7. What do we propose to do?

Performance Accountability – this is about the well-being of client populations who receive a service from an agency or service provider. Accountability for the success, or otherwise, of a programme, service or project rests with those who provide it. This looks at the actions we want to implement in order to effect change. In terms of the LMP these will be the projects and initiatives that have been agreed in the AP and delivered. Following the OBA methodology, prior to the commencement of each project and initiative, performance measures were established to enable progress to be tracked and reported under the following categories:

- How much did we do? (the quantity of effort, i.e. the number of beneficiaries of a project and the number of core activities carried out);
- How well did we do it? (the quality of effort, i.e. Timeliness of activities, attendance levels, satisfaction of beneficiaries, cost per unit, adherence to standards)
- Is anyone better off? (the impact on project beneficiaries. i.e. Behaviours change, attitudes shift, circumstances change, knowledge increases & skills improve).

Using these indicators and performance measure information; project card templates are used for each initiative and completed quarterly to ensure the impact is measured and that the right projects are being delivered to meet identified needs and thematic report cards are completed alongside quarterly claims to help paint a picture of how the initiatives delivered have impacted on the local areas labour market conditions.

### **Action Plan 2022/23**

The Partnership developed an AP for the 2022/23 period during the previous financial year which was submitted for approval to DfC in February 2022.

A strategic assessment and statistical audit was an essential element in the preparation of and development of the 2022-23 AP. The assessment aided

understanding of the Borough's labour market conditions and the employability supports that are in place. Additionally, it ensured the AP would complement current employability initiatives rather than duplicate.

A key element in preparing the LMP Plan was the consultation process which was undertaken with a broad selection of key informants from across the Borough, including employer groups and education providers. The results from the consultation/survey and statistical audit were used to undertake the Turning the Curve Exercise and drove the selection of the themes and actions for the LMP Plan under Strategic Priority 2 for the 2022-23 year. The Partnership agreed the AP for 2022/23 would focus on support to address youth unemployment, those who are economically inactive and in reducing the Borough's Claimant Count. The Plan was submitted to DfC for approval in February 2022. A Letter of Offer was then received on 4 Nov 2022 to the value of £393,040.22 for the delivery of the 2022/23 AP. This was accepted by Council.

The following actions were proposed over the period 2022-2023. The actions were consistent with the aims/objectives of the Borough's Community Plan and Economic Strategy and reflect the findings from the preceding statistical and consultative process, namely that, while the Borough shows high levels of employment rates and low levels of Claimant Count rates, the Borough has seen relatively low growth levels of workplace employment compared to other Councils. The Borough has also been adversely affected by the pandemic and experiences a broad range of economic inactivity differences within the Borough's wards.

Through the data analysis and consultation phases which culminated in a turning the curve exercise, the following themes were selected as local priority:

- Youth unemployment: people aged 18 – 24 in receipt of an unemployment benefit;
- Economic inactivity: those not in employment and who have not been seeking work within the last 4 weeks and/or not able to work within the next 2 weeks;
- Claimant Count: those who are in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance or Universal Credit for the purpose of being unemployed.

As a result of the short period of time between receipt of the Letter of Offer and the end of the financial year (LOO received in November 2022), full delivery of the operational budget was not possible within the timeframe. DfC therefore allowed c£200,000 of the allocation to be accrued for delivery through to December 2023.

### **Action Plan 2023/24**


During this financial year the Partnership have also developed an AP for the 2023/24 period. The Partnership agreed that, the existing AP remained valid and that initiatives and target groups should remain the same. The 2023/24 AP projects were updated and submitted to DfC on 15 March 2023 and later presented to Regional LMP on 5 April 2023. The 2023/24 AP was approved in July 2023.

## Antrim and Newtownabbey LMP Membership

Name		
<p>The Mayor/ Cllr Stephen Ross</p> <p>LMP Chairman</p> <p>Democratic Unionist Party</p>		
<p>Emma Garrett</p> <p>LMP Vice Chair</p> <p>Mallusk Enterprise Park</p>		
<p>Mark Buick</p> <p>DfC - JBO Newtownabbey</p>		
<p>Maryna Chambers</p> <p>Northern Health Trust</p>		
<p>Cllr Michael Goodman</p> <p>Sinn Fein</p>		

<p>Deirdre Hasson</p> <p>Education Authority</p>		
<p>Cheryl Lane</p> <p>Northern Regional College</p>		<p><b>NORTHERN</b> Regional College</p>
<p>Cllr Roisin Lynch</p> <p>SDLP</p>		
<p>Jennifer McWilliams</p> <p>Antrim Enterprise Park</p>		
<p>Cllr Jim Montgomery</p> <p>Ulster Unionist Party</p>		



<p>Ken Nelson LEDCOM</p>		
<p>Alison O'Mullan DFC - JBO Antrim</p>		
<p>Lindsay Taylor Northern Health Trust</p>		
<p>Clr Billy Webb Alliance Party</p>		
<p>Anna Wylie NI Careers Service</p>		

## Action Plan 2022/23 Delivery

The following provides information on the Strategic Priorities as determined by DfC and the associated targets within the AP.

This report refers to delivery of projects from the 2022/23 AP but it must be noted that delivery of some projects has been extended through to 31 December 2023 therefore outputs will be lower than expected and will continue to be measured through to this date.

### Strategic Priority 1 - To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local LMP for the area

Brief Description	<p>Establishment of the LMP with an established membership and respective sub-groups that meet regularly.</p> <p>Support the development of the LMP AP for 2022-2023.</p>
Cost	£14,354.35
Start & End Date	1/04/22-31/03/23
Partners who are currently involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Political Parties</li> <li>- NI Careers Service</li> <li>- DfE</li> <li>- DfC</li> <li>- Northern Regional College</li> <li>- Education Authority</li> <li>- Local Enterprise Agencies</li> <li>- Northern Health Trust</li> <li>- Jobs and Benefits Offices Antrim and Newtownabbey</li> <li>- Invest NI</li> <li>- Post Primary Schools</li> </ul> <p>Invest Northern Ireland were welcomed onto the LMP during 2022/23 delivery.</p> <p>The LMP is currently considering its membership and could involve further partners in future on the Board or on dedicated sub-groups or task and finish groups e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ANBC Businesses (e.g. logistics, health &amp; social care, Manufacturing representatives)</li> <li>- European Social Fund Partners/ Representatives</li> <li>- Community Representatives</li> <li>- Youth Representatives</li> <li>- Disability Representatives</li> <li>- Moving Forward Together in Schools Partnership Representatives</li> </ul>
What is happening to improve performance?	<p>The LMP feel it may be beneficial to develop business sub-group to provide insights into current and future industry skills and employment requirements and shortages which would allow the LMP to develop suitable targeted interventions.</p>

	This idea will be developed further during 2023/24.
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**Table of Key Outcomes**

How much did we do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 LMP established and launched</li> <li>• 7 meetings held</li> <li>• 1 LMP AP developed</li> <li>• 1 Schools Sub Group established</li> </ul>
How well did we do it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 LMP AP submitted on time</li> <li>• 72% attendance rate of members at LMP meetings</li> </ul>
Is anyone better off?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of LMP members with increased awareness of local employability and labour market issues</li> <li>• 92% of LMP members feel supported in their role</li> <li>• 85% of LMP members feel the LMP is having a positive impact</li> <li>• 1 AP for 2022/23 approved by the Regional LMP</li> <li>• 1 AP for 2023/24 submitted to Regional LMP</li> </ul>

**Strategic Priority 2: to improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally through delivery of a support pathway.**

Brief Description	To support delivery of Employability NI and promote the work and initiatives of ENI and other relevant government departments by developing programmes of support for young unemployed people and claimants to move closer to the labour market
Cost	£252,148.71
Start & End Date	1/04/22-31/12/23
Project update	<p>A number of initiatives have been delivered under SP2 of the 2022/23 AP.</p> <p>Due to the reduced budget and receiving the letter of offer in November the Pathway Project within the action could not be delivered. Delivery was targeted instead at the Academy Programme projects.</p> <p><u>Employability Academies:</u></p> <p>A number of Employability Academies have been delivered throughout the delivery of the AP including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 x warehousing,</li> <li>• 2 x construction,</li> <li>• 3 x logistics and</li> <li>• 1 x classroom assistant.</li> </ul> <p>Recruitment is currently ongoing for further warehousing and construction academies. SIA and customer service academies will also be delivered from July – September 2023.</p> <p>Delivery agents continue to support participants and aim to assist them into employment for up to 6 months after completing each academy therefore it is anticipated that employment rates will increase.</p> <p><u>Community Employability Animation Fund:</u></p> <p>The Fund enabled local groups to deliver programmes within their areas to engage with hard to reach people in the LMP target groups to encourage them onto the pathway into, or back into, the labour market.</p> <p>The following organisations availed of the grant fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapt NI</li> <li>• GEMS NI</li> <li>• Impact Networking NI</li> <li>• Bridge Association</li> <li>• Rathfern Community Group</li> <li>• Monkstown Boxing Club</li> </ul>

	<p>Although conversion rate from applicants was not as high as LMP would have liked, the participants that benefited from the projects were mainly from hard to reach target groups that the employability academies struggled to recruit.</p> <p><u>Entrepreneurship Programme:</u></p> <p>The entrepreneurship programme is a programme of pre &amp; post Go for It entrepreneurial support as well as the delivery of workshops. The programme was delivered by Antrim Enterprise Park on behalf of Antrim Enterprise Agency, Mallusk Enterprise Park and LEDCOM.</p> <p>Five entrepreneurial workshops were delivered covering topics such as idea generation, book keeping &amp; sales and marketing.</p> <p>Delivery for this programme has been extended to December 2023.</p>
What is happening to improve performance?	The secretariat continually analyse project delivery, monitoring information, discuss provisions with delivery agents, participants and the partnership and other key stakeholders to make improvements to the programmes.

### **Table of Key Outcomes**

How much did we do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90 participants enrolled in Academy Programmes.</li> <li>• 168 participants enrolled in the Entrepreneurship Programme</li> <li>• 102 participants enrolled in the Community Animation Fund Programmes</li> </ul>
How well did we do it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 74 or 82% of participants completed the Academy Programmes</li> <li>• 142 or 84% of participants completed the Entrepreneurship Programme</li> <li>• 101 or 99% of participants completed the Community Animation Fund Programmes</li> </ul>
Is anyone better off?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 or 40% of completers of the Academy Programmes have moved into employment</li> <li>• 41 or 29% of completers of the Entrepreneurship Programmes have commenced self-employment</li> <li>• 42 or 41% of completers of Community Animation Fund Programmes feel more confident regarding their employment, 82 gained a qualification and 29 moved into employment</li> </ul>

### Strategic Priority 3 - To support delivery of Employability NI

Brief Description	To support delivery of Employability NI and promote the work and initiatives of ENI and other relevant government departments.
Cost	£25,896.79
Start & End Date	1/04/22-31/03/23
Project update	<p>A wide variety of promotion has been undertaken through various social media channels including job vacancies, training opportunities, skills/training events, and apprenticeship opportunities.</p> <p>Throughout the year the LMP have delivered a number of Job Fairs and attended a number of events in partnership with local Jobs and Benefits Offices &amp; DfC Employability Branch.</p> <p>LMP in partnership with Council and Young Enterprise, delivered a three-day industry introduction event for schools across the borough. The purpose of which was to introduce the transport and logistics industry and potential career paths to primary and post-primary pupils.</p> <p>The LMP undertook a number of initiatives to increase awareness of apprenticeship opportunities in the Borough including event sponsorship and ad-shell campaigns.</p> <p>The LMP developed three ambassador profiles each included; 2 videos, one short, one longer, a written introduction on the ambassador and several photographs.</p> <p>The aim of the profiles is to introduce different sectors and career paths to the public. Profiles were shared with the cooperating businesses to use for their recruitment purposes or for internal inductions and to schools to show their pupils as career options.</p> <p>A dedicated webpage (within the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council website) for skills enquiries is continuously updated with the latest LMP initiatives and other relevant projects &amp; programmes.</p> <p><a href="https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/jobs/get-into-work/">https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/jobs/get-into-work/</a></p> <p>A dedicated email address has been created for skills enquires skills@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk to allow the public to enquire about support.</p>
What is happening to improve performance?	By forming the LMP awareness of Employability NI is being raised among members.

Continuous marketing & promotion through different channels is enhancing the reputation & awareness of the LMP.

### Table of Key Outcomes

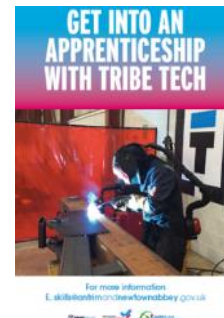
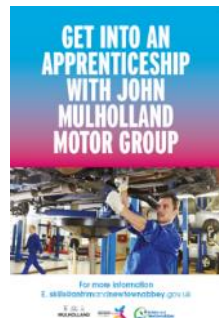
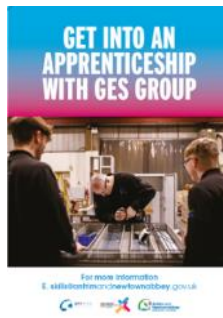
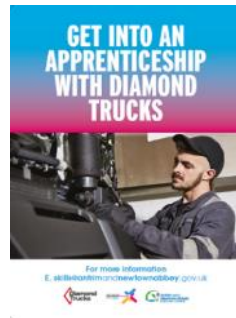
How much did we do?

- 1 large job fair took place on 29/09/2022 in cooperation with DfC Employability Branch. The job fair had over 60 exhibitors with 1,200 jobs on offer, both employers and support services were in attendance. There was a total of 376 attendees.



- LMP staff attended the following events throughout the year
  - 2 x Jobs and Benefits Office Job fairs 24/09/22 & 27/10/22
  - 2 x Jobs and Benefits Office Employability and Wellbeing fairs 26/01/23 & 28/01/23
  - 1 x job fair in Ballyclare 14/06/22
  - Family Fun day in Randalstown 22/06/22
  - Grange Family fun Day 11/08/22
  - Antrim Live 2/09/22
- Apprenticeship week 2023 took place in February. The LMP sponsored Transport Training Board's Apprenticeship Open Week where attendees had the opportunity to meet the employers, get live demonstrations of activities and tour the facilities. 48 young people attended the event.
- LMP also ran an ad-shell campaign in strategic positions close to both the business and nearby schools to advertise apprenticeship vacancies for local industry. 8 businesses with live, or upcoming apprenticeship opportunities availed of this campaign.





- 3 ambassador profiles were created as industry introduction and career pathway tools. The businesses involved were:
  - Woodside, representing the Transport & logistics sector,
  - NHSCT, representing the health and social care sector
  - GES, representing the manufacturing sector.





- Transport and Logistics Event was held on Thursday 30 March, introducing year 10 and 11 pupils to the industry. The event was a huge success. There were 95 attendees from 7 schools, 81 completed a survey, of which 66 (81.48%) of respondents reported to be either satisfied or very satisfied with the event. At the event there was a wide variety of career options and routes to employment showcased, including apprenticeships.



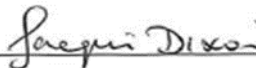
How well did we do it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4088 followers through social media posts on @ANBorough Jobs Facebook page an increase of 588 from the previous year</li> </ul>
Is anyone better off?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of enquiries referred to ENI and other relevant programmes and interventions (55 people)</li> <li>• 92% satisfaction rate of attendees at the large job fair (of 132 surveyed)</li> </ul>

## Financial Statement

An audit of LMP activity in 2022-23 was completed in May 2023. The objective of the audit was to understand and assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls, providing assurance on the probity and proper use of funds.

The report concluded that overall, there is a 'Satisfactory' level of assurance. Based on the work completed Internal Audit are satisfied that the processes and controls in place in respect to the LMP are in place and operating appropriately.

### Signed Financial Statement for 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Statement of Income & Expenditure				
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Antrim and Newtownabbey Labour Market Partnership Statement of Income & Expenditure Year to 31 March 2023				
	Total Funding	Expenditure Charged	Expenditure Accrued	Total Expenditure
	£	£	£	£
<b>Funding</b>				
Funding from DfC (Administration)	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00	100,000.00
Funding from DfC (Operational)	293,040.22	58,959.00	233,440.85	292,399.85
Funding from Department DfE	49,000.00	49,000.00	0.00	49,000.00
Contribution from Council	312.98	312.98	0.00	312.98
Contributions from (Other Please state)				
Contributions from (Other Please state)				
	<b>442,353.20</b>	<b>208,271.98</b>	<b>233,440.85</b>	<b>441,712.83</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
Salaries	90,000.00	96,419.11	0.00	96,419.11
Staff Costs				
Running Costs	8,500.00	2,080.89	0.00	2,080.89
Training				
Audit Fees	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00
Insurance				
<b>Total DfC Administration</b>	<b>100,000.00</b>	<b>100,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>100,000.00</b>
Strategic Priority 1 (Operational)	14,540.22	5,727.15	8,627.20	14,354.35
Strategic Priority 2 (Operational)	246,600.00	38,083.08	214,065.63	252,148.71
Strategic Priority 3 (Operational)	31,900.00	15,148.77	10,748.02	25,896.79
<b>Total DfC Operational</b>	<b>293,040.22</b>	<b>58,959.00</b>	<b>233,440.85</b>	<b>292,399.85</b>
Payments - Department DfC (Admin)				
Payments - Council Contribution (Admin)	312.98	312.98	0.00	312.98
Payments - (Other Please state) (Admin)				
Payments - (Other Please state) (Admin)				
<b>Total Other (Admin)</b>	<b>312.98</b>	<b>312.98</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>312.98</b>
Payments - Department DfE (Operational)	49,000.00	49,000.00	0.00	49,000.00
Payments - Council Contribution (Operational)				
Payments - (DfC) (Operational)				
Payments - (Other Please state) (Operational)				
<b>Total Other (Operational)</b>	<b>49,000.00</b>	<b>49,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>49,000.00</b>
	<b>442,353.20</b>	<b>208,271.98</b>	<b>233,440.85</b>	<b>441,712.83</b>
Certificate of Chief Executive				
Subject to the central charges shown above properly reflecting actual costs incurred by the Council on 'behalf of' the Labour Market Partnership. I am satisfied that the expenditure shown has been wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred by the Council on the Labour Market Partnership and that the grant receivable is in accordance with the regulations and conditions applicable.				
Chief Executive				18 August 2023
			Date	