

Antrim and Newtownabbey Labour Market Partnership

Summary Action Plan: 2023-24



The aim of the Labour Market Partnership (LMP) is to improve labour market conditions 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 play a key collaborative and supporting role in 'Employability NI', Department for Communities (DfC) 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 Local Council area to offer direct and unique interventions.

The LMP Action Plan is designed to deliver a comprehensive plan that helps promote labour market outcomes as well as provide accountability and tracking of users. The following actions are proposed over the period 2023-2024. These actions are consistent with the aims/objectives of the Borough's Community Plan, Economic Strategy and the Programme for Government NI (PfG). Similarly, they 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 been adversely impacted by the pandemic compared to other Councils. The Borough also faces more longstanding issues such as higher levels of youth unemployment, varying levels of economic opportunity across wards, business recruitment challenges/skills shortages, etc.

The Strategic Priorities as provided by DfC are;

- **SP1:** To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area;
- **SP2:** To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally, and
- **SP3:** To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision available either regionally or locally.

Through data analysis and consultation which culminated in a turning the curve exercise, the following themes have been 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.
- Economic Shock – Temporary but significant disruption to supply chains.
- Skilled Labour Supply: resident working age population with no qualifications (NISRA Labour Force Survey Local Area Database).

The following tables provide information on the strategic intent, targets, key actions and milestones of the Action Plan.

| Strategic Intent | Targets | Key Actions | Milestones |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally for the following target groups:</p> <p>Youth unemployed (aged 18-24)</p> <p>Economically Inactive</p> <p>Economic Shock (Current Claimants)</p> <p>Skilled Labour Supply</p> | <p>By 2025 we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the percentage of claimants aged 18 – 24. • Reduce the working age economic inactivity rate in the Borough to 20%. • Reduce the number of residents who are unemployed, yet actively seeking work (so on the claimant count) to 2%. • Continue the current trend of reducing the level of those without any qualifications, whilst promoting and continuing the upward trend for those with above NVQ Level 4 | <p>Partnership Develop a strong Antrim and Newtownabbey Labour Market Partnership to provide a co-ordinated response to jobs and skills challenges in the Borough.</p> | <p>Bi-monthly meetings of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Labour Market Partnership and sub groups.</p> |
| | | <p>Employability Grant Fund * Employability grant funding programme open to local organisations who can engage and provide skills and employability programmes tailored to local need for those hard-to-reach residents to support them with activities and initiatives to bring them closer to the labour market.</p> | <p>60 economically inactive residents accessing dedicated support and training for their employability and skills journey.</p> |
| | | <p>Pathway Programme Deliver a Pathway Programme offering participants one to one support to help them move towards employment. This will include a caseworker assessment to develop a personal action plan and pastoral care. This approach recognises that moving people towards employment is not a “one size fits all” and requires a broad range of options</p> | <p>42 youth unemployed accessing dedicated support for their employability and skills journey.</p> |

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|------------------|--|---|--|
| | educational attainment and increasing the Boroughs median pay. | and levels of support tailored to individual needs. | |
| | | <p>Inspo Programme A prevention programme to inspire school age residents to want to achieve more and prevent those at risk of leaving education with no destination or becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).</p> | <p>140 students being more aware of local careers opportunities and routes to employment.</p> <p>Additional employers offering work placement opportunities.</p> |
| | | <p>Employment Academies Deliver a wide range of employment academy programmes to connect residents with new or better employment opportunities. This will include industry-specific training and qualifications with involvement from local employers.</p> | <p>121 claimants participating in academies to gain new skills and qualifications to help them secure new employment or self-employment.</p> |
| | | <p>Entrepreneurship Programme * Tailored 'entrepreneurship' programme aimed at increasing business creation and self-employment.</p> | <p>60 participants enrolled with and 18 businesses created.</p> |
| | | <p>Upskilling Academies Provide opportunities for residents to achieve skills and therefore improve their employment opportunities by delivering a project targeted at the underemployed (job level or hours worked) to support them into</p> | <p>55 residents participating in the programme and 40 gaining new employment.</p> |

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|------------------|--|---|---|
| | | appropriate level employment – in turn, creating entry level positions. | |
| | Raise awareness of the work of the Labour Market Partnership and the regional programmes and initiatives/opportunities open to our residents | <p>Awareness Develop an online and physical marketing campaign to promote the support available from the Partnership and opportunities for residents to access apprenticeship programmes etc.</p> <p>Events including job fairs to allow residents to meet employers and support organisations.</p> <p>Engagement and Outreach Officer * Dedicated resource to support the objective of the LMP with the overall aim to support those seeking work to move into education, employment or training through direct engagement with local employers training providers and support organisations increase awareness of, and make referrals to employability and skills programmes within the local area.</p> | <p>Residents of Antrim and Newtownabbey gaining support through employability programmes.</p> <p>Employers engaged in events and provided with suitable events to help them fill vacancies.</p> |

* Due to a shortfall in funding for the 2023/24 financial year, the Community Animation Fund, Entrepreneurship Programme and Engagement and Outreach Officer projects within the action plan have been put on hold. If further funding becomes available throughout the year this will be reconsidered.

For further information on the Antrim and Newtownabbey Labour Market Partnership, contact us:

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To find local employment, visit our Facebook page www.facebook.com/ANBoroughjobs/

