

Report on	Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership - Draft Action Plan 2023-2024
Reporting Officer	Assistant Director of Economy, Tourism & Strategic Programmes
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Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update Members on the development of Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership - Draft Action Plan 2023-2024.
2.0	Background
2.1	The Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) is focused on improving Mid Ulster's employability outcomes and labour market conditions by working with a wide range of partners, being flexible to meet local needs and helping to connect employers with employees. It is the Council's intention that the Mid Ulster LMP will be industry-led; developing and delivering activities relating to skills development, training and employability programmes in the local area.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>In December 2022, Council appointed Locus Management to assist the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) to develop an Action Plan for 2023-24. It is important to note that the Action Plan must be developed in accordance with the planning methodology and strategic priorities set out by the Department for Communities (DfC).</p> <p>A robust strategic assessment, employer skills/labour survey and stakeholder consultation process were completed to ensure that the Action Plan developed by the LMP is locally focussed and reflects the specific needs and challenges particular to Mid Ulster.</p> <p>The Action Plan identifies a number of Themes, Aims and Key Activities, which are evidence based and focussed on outcomes which improve employability and labour market conditions across the Mid Ulster region.</p>

	<p>An indicative budget has been provided by DfC based on a maximum budget allocation of £7m across all 11 Councils. However, it is likely that the final budget will remain the same as 2022-23 at £5.5m (across 11 Councils) and LMPs have been asked to plan accordingly by identifying priority projects that can achieve maximum impact on the labour market.</p> <p>Mid Ulster's budget allocation to deliver its Action Plan for 2023-24 is therefore likely to be £369,005.21. There is a potential additional contribution of £100,638 depending on DfC's final budget allocation.</p> <p>Please note that projects contained in Section 5 of the Action Plan 2023-24 on Appendix 1, in 'black font' are the priority projects proposed for delivery during the year, however, in the event DfC provide further funding (as mentioned above), then an additional 4 projects, highlighted in blue font, will also be included.</p> <p>At the most recent meeting of the Mid Ulster LMP on 10th March 2023, LMP members agreed the draft Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan for 2023-24 and budget based on what is considered deliverable within the timeframe.</p> <p>A full copy of the Draft Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24 is included at Appendix 1.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council approve the Draft Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24 for submission to the Department for Communities. It should be noted the Action Plan will be evaluated under staged assessment process by DfC and the Regional LMP for Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Subject to the Plan's approval, a letter of offer should be forthcoming to enable the Mid Ulster LMP to commence delivery of the Action Plan.</p> <p>Members of the Development Committee will be kept updated on the rollout of Mid Ulster LMP's Action Plan for 2023-2024.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
4.1	<p>Financial:</p> <p>LMP activity is 100% funded by the Department for Communities (DfC). Council is likely to receive a minimum offer of £369,005.21, which encompasses £275,076.61 of operational costs and £93,928.60 of administration costs for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.</p> <p>In the event the higher level of funding becomes available, Council would receive a maximum offer of £469,643.00, encompassing £375,714 of operational costs and £93,929 of administration costs.</p> <p>No financial support is available from Department for the Economy to support the work of the LMP in 2023/24.</p>

	<p>Human:</p> <p>Officers' time.</p>
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>The risk level is mitigated as LMP activity is 100% externally funded. LMP staff will manage delivery of the Action Plan in line with current governance arrangements.</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>One of the key advantages of the LMP approach to improving employability is that it targets resources on specific groups, including those with particular access issues and barriers, which currently prevent them from accessing training and employment opportunities.</p>
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>It is not anticipated the Action Plan will have an adverse impact upon equality or good relations.</p>
4.3	<p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>To be considered.</p>
5.0	<p>Recommendation(s)</p>
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <p>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership - Draft Action Plan 2023-2024</p> <p>5.1.1 Approve the Draft Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-2024 subject to any final adjustments required by the Department for Communities (DfC) following assessment. A copy of the final Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-2024 will be brought back to the Development Committee for Members information once DfC has approved the Plan.</p> <p>5.1.2 Subject to DfC approving the Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-2024, approval is sought for delegated authority to be granted to the Chief Executive to;</p> <p>(a) Sign and return the letter of offer from the Department for Communities;</p> <p>(b) Make appointments to the successful organisations following the completion of all relevant procurement exercises. This will allow work on the Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-24 to commence as soon as possible.</p>
6.0	<p>Documents Attached & References</p>

	Appendix 1 - Draft Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan 2023-2024
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