



Subject:	Feedback on visit by delegation from London Borough of Newham
Date:	11 October 2017
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to feedback on a recent visit to Belfast by a delegation from the London Borough of Newham and to identify some learning points for Belfast in the context of a number of key Belfast Agenda priorities.
2.0	Recommendations
	Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Note the overview of the information presented by the Newham delegation, including the learning points for Belfast City Council and partners, in the context of Belfast Agenda priorities.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Members will be aware that a delegation from Newham visited Belfast in late September 2017. The purpose of the visit was to provide an overview of the learning from the successful Newham Workplace project and to consider how this learning could help shape Council and partner support and investment, particularly in the context of commitments to the Growing the Economy and Working and Learning themes of the Belfast Agenda.</p>
3.2	<p>Newham is located in east London. Its catchment area includes a number of major regeneration and redevelopment schemes such as the Olympics site, London City Airport and the docklands. The Borough is the most diverse in the UK with more than 45% of the resident population considered to be Asian/Asian British, 29% white and almost 20% Black/Black British.</p>
3.3	<p>The Borough has a very young population: more than 70% of residents are aged 40 or under. In 2010, Newham was the second most deprived of the 33 London Boroughs with deprivation prevalent in specific geographic locations within the Borough.</p>
3.4	<p>Newham has experienced significant regeneration over recent decades. It is estimated that, by 2025, there will have been more than £22 billion invested, including 35,000 additional new homes. With a target of 3,800 new homes each year, the Borough is set to grow and change significantly in the coming years.</p>
3.5	<p>Given the pending development opportunities, Newham Council decided, in 2007, that it needed to provide additional focus to and investment in employment support services in order to ensure that local people were given the opportunity to avail of new employment opportunities as they arose, as part of the redevelopment schemes.</p>
3.6	<p>The Council established 'Newham Workplace' as a small project team within the Regeneration and Planning Directorate. The team has gone through a number of structural changes. It currently comprises in excess of 120 staff and has an annual budget of around £6 million. These resources are used to help an average of 3,500 people into work each year across a range of job areas at all skills levels.</p>
3.7	<p>The delegation that visited Belfast comprised the Deputy Mayor Councillor Ken Clark as well as Deirdra Armsby, Director of Regeneration and Planning and Jane Sherwood, Head of</p>

Economic Regeneration. They engaged with elected members, Council officers and partner organisations as part of a day and a half programme. Some of the key learning elements included:

- The value of Developer Agreements in securing resources to support employability programmes in the area, to obtain these agreements Planning has a key enabling and proactive role to play as part of this process. Newham's current budget for employability is roughly made up of 50% contribution from the Council, 50% from developers (secured through Developer Agreement contributions)
- The recognition that there is a need to take an incremental approach to developing local employability solutions – working within existing provision and delivery initiatives but keeping focused on job outcomes
- The importance of building credibility with employers and developers and the need to have solutions in place to meet their needs as opportunities arise
- The value of long-term planning and early engagement to provide effective solutions. In Newham, staff from the Workplace take part in Pre Application Discussion (PAD) meetings alongside officers from the Planning Team
- The need to embed key priorities into all elements of the Council's engagement with partners. If jobs are the main priority, make developers and investors aware of this and ask them how they can help deliver on this. In parallel, ensure that there are support mechanisms in place to make it easy for them to deliver these objectives
- The transition to the current Workplace structure was a challenging one and required some bold political decisions along the way. The officials were clear that this was, at points, a difficult transition, but they feel that the decision to run with the current scale and structure was taken based on employer feedback (desire to deal with one dedicated point of contact) and based on success rates in helping large volumes of residents into employment
- Newham took the decision that they had to focus not only on economically inactive residents but also on those at risk of unemployment or in precarious jobs. Participants engage on a voluntary basis – and this is considered to be an important element of the project's success
- Newham is also clear about target groups that they don't engage with. For example, they are clear that Work Programme candidates are supported through Job Centre Plus so they do not engage them
- Workplace officials accept that the job that they place an individual into may not be a role for life. They accept that they may move on to other employment but consider that their focus should be on getting people into a job and helping them stay in employment

(they provide some aftercare support once a client finds a job – the level of support provided is commensurate with the requirements of the individual).

3.8 In the ten years since it has been operational, Workplace has filled over 35,000 jobs with Newham residents. More than 80% of people starting jobs are still in work after 6 months and around 65% are still working after a year. Workplace participants have found employment across a range of sectors including construction, retail, security, administration and customer service.

3.9 The overall employment rate in Newham has shown the greatest increase across the whole of London, rising 11.8% between 2011 and 2015 and closing the gap on the London average from around 14 percentage points to only 3.

3.10 In the context of the Council's investment in Employability and Skills support – as well as its partnerships with other organisations – there is much to learn from the Newham model. However, it is reassuring to note that they have had to make a transition from small-scale interventions to a more mainstream service offer. It is also clear that this project is successful as the commitment to job creation is embedded across all elements of Council activity. The current work ongoing in relation to section 76 Developer Agreements could in future provide Belfast City Council with a similar opportunity to embed employability and skills support as a key consideration for developers, during the planning process.

3.11 At the September meeting of the Committee, Officers advised that they would bring forward a report to a future meeting to set out the range of current employability support provided by or resourced by the Council as well as an outline of the proposed way forward to move towards a more significant and mainstream investment which will contribute to much larger job creation targets, in line with Belfast Agenda commitments. This report will be brought to the November meeting of this Committee. However alignment will also be required with the City Deal proposals.

3.12 Equality and Good Relations Implications

No specific equality and good relations issues associated with this report.

3.13 Financial Resource Implications

No specific financial or resource implications associated with this report.

4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None