

SUMMARY

This document represents the London Councils Tower Hamlets Community Employment ESF Programme 2014-2020 (round 2). A total of seven projects were funded. The projects signed their funding agreements between April and June. London Councils ensured that projects funded under round 1 (Tower Hamlets Community Employment Programme) were only able to have their round 2 funding agreements issued for signature after their round 1 projects were completed. The completion date for round 1 projects was 31 March 2019. Enrolment begun shortly after this, with (95 participants currently enrolled, against a target enrolment figure of 125.

Range of Funded Projects:

There are six projects funded to support a majority of Bangladeshi participants. There is one project that has a target group for Somali women. Project support includes focussed level 2 training; online computer literacy skills, face to face employability support, outreach work and employability workshops.

Current Delivery

The training of participants in level 2 qualifications begun in earnest after the Holy month of Ramadan. Projects felt that this was appropriate to accommodate cultural requirements of fasting, where participants would be better placed to attend and engage in training after the Holy month. London Councils are fully aware and committed to the need to provide services which are culturally sensitive.

Projects are continuing to deliver outputs, with 45 participants gaining a level 2 or below qualification. These qualifications have enabled participants to gain level 2 qualifications in First Aid at Work, Customer Service, and Food Hygiene. Level 2 qualifications have also been gained by participants in Early Years Care Education, SIA Door Supervision (for security work) and Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Examination. These qualifications will enable participants, including the most vulnerable with no formal skills and training, to gain employment opportunities, with formal qualifications. These qualifications will bring tremendous benefits for Tower Hamlets residents enrolled on the programme. A large majority of participants have no qualifications, may never had entered salaried or unpaid employment, are long term unemployed and economically inactive with multiple and complex social, personal and health needs.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 of this Report provide detail of the targets currently achieved. London Councils will continue to provide support to projects and will begin the process of supporting projects to achieve further education and training, employment, and job search results for participants.

Payment of Funding

All successful organisations are paid 50% of their grant on signing their funding agreement (subject to due diligence requirement being met), then 30% of the grant on evidencing 50%

of total grant defrayed. The final 20% is paid on submission of evidence of defrayal of 100% of grant expenditure.

At each stage, payment is released once organisations have submitted copies of expenditure, participant enrolment forms and evidence templates to demonstrate that delivery, and expenditure, has taken place.

1. PROGRAMME OUTPUTS AND RESULTS

The programme aimed to support people from a range of key equality and priority groups. Round two's package of provision is due to end February 2020

Table 1 shows the participants the projects will be supporting through their projects.

Table 1 Programme targets groups (numbers achieved to August 2019)

Target group	Profiled Target	Achieved To Date (against original target)
Enrolments (starts)	125	95
Long term unemployed	40	31
Economically inactive	85	29
Over 50	25	8
Women	89	49
Lone parents	34	7
Ethnic minorities	125	61
Disabled (self-declared)	16	2

The London Councils priority manager will be meeting projects over the next two weeks to establish indicative delivery figures for completion of project enrolments, outputs and results.

Target Groups

The Community Employment programme contains targets for the numbers within each equality group that the funded projects need to engage with. **Table 2** below shows the profiled equality group figures, against the actual equality group figures returned by five projects (for the second monthly submission date 2 August 2019).

With a profile of 125 enrolments across all seven projects (and a current enrolment figure of 95 across all seven projects) there is currently a shortfall in enrolments of 30 participants. The London Councils priority manager is working with projects to try to ensure that the indicative shortfall of 30 participant enrolments is bridged. The priority manager will be

discussing any challenges projects may be experiencing with meeting enrolment targets. And what remedies and support may be able to be put in place to address these challenges.

The actual figures and percentages in **Table 2** (at August 2019) currently show that Bangladeshi participants will be well representation in regard to engagement on the projects; current engagement on the project for Bangladeshi participants being 55.7 per cent (against an agreed percentage figure of 66.4 per cent). There is an underrepresentation of Somali participants; with engagement on the project currently only being 3.1 per cent (against an agreed percentage figure of 24 per cent). This is a marked underrepresentation, which needs to be addressed. The London Councils priority manager will meet with projects to ascertain why there is an underrepresentation of Somali participants. During pre-agreement meetings the importance of engaging all target groups on the project, especially Somali participants, was reiterated. Projects will need to review their engagement and publicity strategies to ensure that particular equalities groups are included within the programme of support. This is particularly in view of the round 1 programme underrepresentation of participants from the Somali community.

Table 2: Ethnicity (based on figures submitted up to August 2019)

		Profiled	Achieved to date
Asian/Asian British	Indian	2	0
	Pakistani		1
	Bangladeshi	83	53
	Chinese		
	Other		
Black/Black British	African	2	0
	Caribbean		1
	Somali	30	3
	Other		
White	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	6	2
	Irish		
	Gypsy or Irish traveller		
	Other		
Mixed	White and Black Caribbean		1
	White and Black African		
	White and Asian		
	Other		
Other	Arab		
	Other	2	0

Results

The Tower Hamlets Community Employment Programme expects funded projects to deliver a range of outputs and results. **Table 3** sets out the expected and achieved results delivered to August 2019.

Table 3

Result	Profiled Results (%)	Achieved To Date (against original target)
Enrolments (starts)	125	95
6+ hours of support (IAG, job-search, mentoring, training, 1-2-1)	112	18
Level 2 (or below) qualification	84	45
Further education or training provider or specified accredited support service within 4 weeks of leaving the project	44	0
Long-term unemployed participants in employment within 4 weeks of leaving the project	10	0
Economically inactive participants in employment/ job search within 4 weeks of leaving the project	29	0
Participants in sustained employment for 26 weeks	7	0

Projects are yet to submit comprehensive enrolment and output information and accompanying evidence. Projects are in the process of providing skills training and ongoing employment support to participants.

Challenges

The Tower Hamlets projects were struggling to understand and manage the reporting requirements of ESF, but with the ongoing support provided by London Councils Officers we have seen a vast improvement in the quality of the paperwork in this round. We are providing extra support to projects, where needed to help with this. Projects have been

assigned a London Councils Officer to visit them on a fortnightly or monthly basis, to check all financial and enrolment data.

More direct links have also been made with Job Centres, who are able to provide referrals and confirmation of employment status. This includes one of the projects that have established sessions in the Job Centre to engage participants directly.

Successes

- Links with Jobcentre Plus have proved invaluable for Wise Youth Trust. The organisation put links in place with Job Centre Plus before their project commenced. They regularly do presentations at the Job Centre to recruit participants. This has resulted in the Jobcentre referring participants to their project and also promptly signing the job centre referral form to confirm employment status.
- CEN has already enrolled 20 participants and has provided a steady stream of skills training. 16 participants have been able to secure level 2 training, including in Food Hygiene and Customer Service.
- Wise Youth has enabled participants to gain level 2 training in Early Years and in security and construction work.