
Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Employment

20th July 2015

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Employment – Councillor K Maton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director of Place

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title: Save the Employment Support Service E-Petition

Is this a key decision?

No.

Executive Summary:

An e-petition has been presented to the Council asking for the Council to reconsider its proposal to close The Employment Support Service (TESS). In accordance with the City Council's procedure for dealing with petitions, those relating to employment issues are heard by the Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Employment.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Employment:-

- 1) Notes the petition and requests that Officers write to the petition organisers to advise them of the Council's current position and that the petition organisers will be notified before any proposals are made to members on its future.

List of Appendices included:

None

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Save the Employment Support Service E-Petition

1. Background

- 1.1 An e-petition "Save the Employment Service" has been hosted on the Council's web site and closes on 12th July 2015. The final number of signatures will be reported on the day of the Cabinet Member meeting. Currently the number of signatures is 365. The e-petition states:

"We, the undersigned, urge Coventry City Council to reconsider its proposal to close The Employment Support Service (TESS). Whilst we recognise the financial challenges the City Council continues to face, we strongly feel that the specialist support provided by TESS to some of the most vulnerable adults and young people in Coventry is an essential service that needs to be maintained. TESS does not just support people to gain jobs, it provides essential on-going support to a significant number of people and their employers to enable them to continue their employment. Many people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health difficulties can and want to work. The cost to the tax payer of supporting someone into work is far less than the long-term costs of keeping people on benefits and reliant on other services. At a time when we are all being told to do more for ourselves to reduce the burden on social care, health and other services, surely there is no better way to help people to become more independent, improve their health and other life outcomes than by being employed."

- 1.2 The Council run TESS service assists people to prepare for, access and retain paid employment. It is targeted at people who have learning disabilities, autism, severe and enduring mental health difficulties and people who have a physical or sensory impairment. The service is for people who would not be able to access or retain employment through other local employment provision. Currently in order to access the service individuals must meet Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) criteria and be in receipt of or eligible to receive support from Adult Social Care or Secondary Mental Health Services in Coventry. The service is available to people who live in Coventry.
- 1.3 Given the significant financial pressures the Council is under as a result of Government funding reductions, the future of the TESS service is currently being considered. The Council is exploring whether alternative models of delivery and funding for supported employment provision are viable options for the future.
- 1.4 No decisions have been taken regarding the closure of the TESS service. Any proposals to make changes to this service will be brought before members to consider at a future meeting.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 There is no current proposal to close TESS, therefore, there is no further action that Officers are recommending to take in terms of this request.
- 2.2 The Cabinet Member is recommended to request that Officers write to the petition spokespersons to advise them of the Council's current position and to advise them that they will be notified before any proposals are made to members on its future.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 No consultation has been undertaken at this stage as there are no proposals on which to consult.

4. Comments from Executive Director of Resources

4.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications as a result of this report. The cost of TESS in previous years has been at around £300k.

4.2 Legal implications

In line with the Council's procedure for dealing and responding to petitions, the Council is required to inform the public on how it plans to deal with the petition. The report meets this requirement by recommending that the Cabinet Member instructs officers to advise the organisers of the current position with regard to the service and to advise them when proposals are made to members in future.

5. Other implications

5.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

Not applicable.

5.2 How is risk being managed?

None

5.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

5.4 Equalities / EIA

None

5.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None.

5.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

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Place

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

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Councillor K Maton	Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Employment	-	2015	2015

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