

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**ACTION STATION – ONE YEAR ON**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the work of the Action Station following its first year of operation.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Council remains committed to reducing dependency for all, ensuring that everyone achieves the following outcomes:

- Feels safe and are safe.
- Recognises their potential and that plans are in place to reach their full potential.
- Enjoys good health and emotional well-being.

- 2.2 The Action Station opened around 12 months and in the subsequent period have worked with individuals to achieve the outcomes outlined in 2.1. The performance figures are testament to its success with a reduction in those claiming out of work benefits through JSA falling by 49.8% during the period between January 2013 and August 2016 with youth unemployment reducing by 55% over the same period.

- 2.3 The proportion of the population with no qualifications has dropped from 9.4% in 2011 to 8.1% in 2015. We have also seen a rise in the number of residents in North Lincolnshire who have achieved NVQ level 4 qualifications, with a rise of 27.3% which equates to 6,000 individuals.

- 2.4 We have also seen an increase in the number of people securing a trade through an apprenticeship from 4.4% in 2011 to 6.3% in 2015.

- 2.5 The Action Station goes from strength to strength with the following comments from partners:

*“I have been providing CV sessions at the Action Station since they opened the doors last year. With the competitive labour market in North Lincolnshire, I appreciate this valuable service being offered free of charge. The clients are welcomed into a non-threatening environment, which seems pretty casual in the main, but what I have observed, is an absolute caring*

*atmosphere for all who call in and a genuine enthusiasm to finding each and every person a job or support to find a job.”*

- 2.6 Appendix 1 contains a number of case studies that demonstrate the positive impacts achieved by clients of the Action Station.
- 2.7 The Action Station has had a successful year and has made its mark as a respected and a well-attended client based access point, for those in the community looking to find employment, to up-skill or to begin their working journey. We have now out grown our current location and are looking to move into bigger premises in the near future to begin an exciting new chapter.
- 2.8 Together with partners we will work to provide an easy access route to a number of services to help clients find employment, develop their current skill set, reduce debts and become healthier. We will continue to work to achieve the positive outcomes for customers outlined above.
- 2.9 Together with our partners we will aim to offer a multiple coordinated service to the local community. A key vision for the new building will be to facilitate a collaborative working environment with effective information sharing between ourselves and partners agencies in order to improve access to services by the local community. This will see a co-located and fully integrated service, going significantly beyond partners simply sharing a building in a face to face run establishment for both clients and partners. It should make a real difference to the support we can offer people.
- 2.10 Our first year has brought us to the conclusion that it is important to work in a new and innovative way. We hope to improve the chances for the future population of our local area through prevention, partnership and integrated working, looking at turning people’s life around and reducing dependency on public services. This joined up working will help us build a full picture of clients’ needs through various interventions aimed at tackling issues from their root cause and put an end to the ‘revolving door of dependency’.
- 2.11 As part of our journey staff will attend the North Lincolnshire Business Networking monthly events to establish links with local business’ to encourage them to take on work experience placements to give the opportunity for our clients to experience the ‘world of work.’ We would also hope to offer the Action Station to businesses to assist them in meeting their recruitment needs.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to note and welcome the latest reduction in the numbers claiming Job Seekers Allowance in North Lincolnshire and the increase in those achieving skills qualifications.
- 3.2 Cabinet is also asked to endorse the future strategic direction for the Action Station set out in this paper.

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The Council approved the North Lincolnshire Strategy 2016-20 in February 2016, based upon a vision of “**Aspiring People, Inspiring Places**” and five associated priorities. Key to the priority to “**SHAPE the area into a prosperous place to live, work and play**” is the aspiration to “**increase economic growth and prosperity through higher employment and increased home ownership**”. The information set out in this report contributes directly to the achievement of these aims.

#### 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 There are no resource implications to highlight.

#### 6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6.1 Not applicable.

#### 7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 Extensive consultation on the various initiatives to support those seeking work back into employment has taken place with relevant partners and funding bodies. Their views inform the programmes that are taken forward.

#### 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That Cabinet welcomes the latest reduction in the numbers claiming Job Seekers Allowance and the increase in those achieving skills qualifications in North Lincolnshire

8.2 That Cabinet continues to support the work of the Action Station one year on from opening of the facility and endorses the future strategic direction for the Action Station as set out in this paper.

### DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Author: Lesley Potts

Date: 30 September 2016

**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:** None

## ***Case Studies and Comments from our Clients***

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The following case is from Lee, a resident of North Lincolnshire who accessed the Action Station to receive support with up skilling and gaining employment.

### ***Lee's journey to gaining a council job:***

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Lee accessed the Action Station in November 2015. He was unemployed and claiming Job Seekers Allowance and had dropped in to find out what services were offered at the Action Station. As a starting point, Lee was booked in for a CV session and was advised about the Military drop-in times as he was interested in applying for the Reserves.

Lee began attending the Action Station almost daily to use the public laptops for extensive job search. During one of the Army drop-in sessions, he started his application for the REME Reserves. He also accessed our training provider drop-in sessions, which led to him being accepted onto an office skills course with McArthur Dean Training and applying for an IT course at North Lindsey College.

During his job search, Lee came across two Council jobs, which the Action Station Manager assisted him in applying for – one for a Refuse Loader and one for a Seasonal Operative. He secured interviews for both of these posts and was successful in securing the post of Refuse Loader. Lee accepted the job offer to join the Refuse team.

Lee has now been in employment with the council for the last six months. Here is what Lee had to say about the Action Station and its staff:



“Thank you to all the staff at the Action Station for the excellent help, the use of your facilities and the friendly welcome.”

### **Case Study 2:**

A young adult who accessed the Springboard Programme for support and guidance to help with housing issues, anxiety issues and to gain employment.

### ***Here is Natalie's journey to employment and to secure suitable housing:***

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Natalie was referred by the jobcentre as she had housing issues. She was in a caravan with no electric, heating or water, while it was snowing. She had very low confidence in herself and suffered with anxiety issues.

**Barriers:**

Lack of internet access, electric, housing issues, anxiety and confidence

**Springboard's intervention:**

- Supported at Housing Advice Team and helped to register with homechoicelincs and bid on weekly basis
- Helped to apply for Kitchen Assistant Jobs
- Supported at food bank
- Provided with appropriate PPE

**Progress:**

Since working with Springboard, Natalie has secured employment as a Kitchen Assistant with Toby-Leeds, impressed with her progression as a Kitchen Assistant; Natalie soon climbed the ranked and became a team leader.

Here is what Natalie had to say about Springboard:



"The job is going fantastically at Toby-Leeds. I've been praised on my work and they're looking to move me up to Team Leader! I wouldn't be here without the help from you and everyone else that believed in me, thank you! I really appreciate everyone's help. I've now got a hell of a lot to be thankful for, so glad I finally made up."

**Case Study 3:**

A client of the Moving On programme which supports residents over 40 year old move on in their career and in life. The case study documents the support and guidance Paul accessed to help gain employment within the council's Neighbourhood team.

***How the Moving On programme helped Paul:***

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Paul is 45 and has lots of experience with working outdoors and caretaker type work. Unfortunately he never got any qualifications however, that doesn't take away from the practical skills he has. He completed a 3 month fulltime work experience programme with ONGO but sadly he did not get a job from this placement. He then went on to do a 2 week placement with North Lincolnshire Council in the Neighbourhood team. He successfully secured a fulltime position.

**Barriers to Employment:**

- qualifications

No formal

- skills
- Confidence completing applications and attending interviews

IT Job search

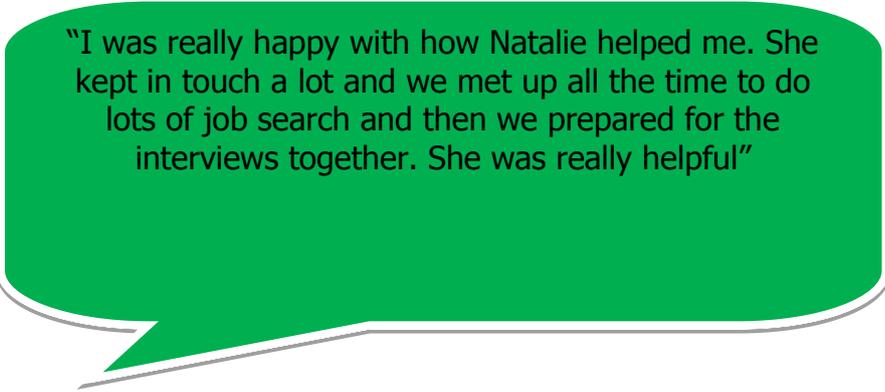
Lack of

**Moving On has helped Paul by:**

- On-going 1 to 1 support
- Assisted Job search
- Transport to interviews
- Advice with suitable jobs
- Interview Prep
- Work Experience placements

**Progress:**

Paul has now secured employment within North Lincolnshire council; he had this to say about the Moving On programme:



"I was really happy with how Natalie helped me. She kept in touch a lot and we met up all the time to do lots of job search and then we prepared for the interviews together. She was really helpful"