

Chairman's Announcements

Subject:

Project IMPRESS Initiative

Summary of announcement:

Project IMPRESS is an initiative that supports individuals who are new (or returning after a spell of unemployment) to the workforce, through the following:

- Support of a mentor/support worker who can offer assistance with the transition into work (i.e. help with budgeting, identifying childcare, negotiating with employers, confidence, etc.).
- Financial assistance with transport and childcare costs for the first month, as well as accessing other support such as counselling.
- Working with the employer to access funding to assist with training
- Access to various tools and support documents to help people feel confident in their job, and balancing home and work.

In terms of criteria, support is available to individuals who are:

- 16 or above
- full resident of the UK
- live in Wiltshire
- newly employed (i.e. up to six months, or in exceptional circumstances up to 12 months in work), following six months or more of being out of work (i.e. due to unemployment, education, etc.) Or newly self employed, following six months or more of being out of work (i.e. due to unemployment, education, etc.)

IMPRESS also works with businesses across the county offering a free service to help Wiltshire's employers develop their HR capabilities, improve staff retention, attract quality recruits and develop and up-skill their workforce in line with their business goals. In light of this the council is hosting free HR seminars targeting the needs of Wiltshire businesses at the **Neeld Hall in Chippenham on 15 October 2014 between 9.30am and 3.30pm.**

The project has been in operation since early 2013 and the project, which is European funded, will come to a close in March 2015. However, it is likely that the initiative will be continued, utilising funds that will be available to the Council in Spring next year.