

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills

Introduction

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 23 July 2020:

By Councillor Atkinson as follows:

As a member of the European Union, the UK received structural funding worth about £2.1 billion per year. This funding has been used for boosting several aspects of economic development, including support for businesses, employment and agriculture, and Devon has received such funding.

Can the member report on how Devon is expected to be affected by the end of EU funding and how it is expected to fare under the new Shared Prosperity Fund? Specifically what funds is Devon expected to receive, capital and revenue and how will need be assessed and the funds targeted to promote inclusive sustainable economic growth enterprise and good jobs and earnings - the economic measures that matter for people's living standards? How will these funds be combined with programmes to ensure that people on a low income are connected to new opportunities?

By Councillor Atkinson as follows:

The Fawcett Society has united with more than 65 organisations to call on the UK Government not to leave women and girls behind as we exit lockdown. Together as a coalition, it's made recommendations for the UK Government on the following areas (see attached briefing :

- *Prioritising care*
- *Safeguarding women's incomes*
- *Public health and protecting women from a second wave*
- *Addressing the disproportionate impact on Black, Asian and ethnic minority women*
- *Making women safe from violence and abuse*
- *Disabled women and older women, and self-isolating and shielding households*
- *Women in prison*
- *Women's representation in crisis decision*

Please will you report on the gendered impact of Covid 19 in Devon.

1. EU funding under the new Shared Prosperity Fund

The current EU funds have been underwritten by Government and all Devon EU supported programmes are therefore unaffected. Currently we do not have details on the application, use, allocation and requirements for the UKSPF. We have contributed to consultations on the use of the fund and have engaged with a range of partners including the NFU, LGA and the CCN to influence the design of the fund, to ensure that Devon is no worse off as a minimum, that resources are allocated based on evidence of need and are applied to address inequalities.

2. Gendered impact of Covid 19 in Devon

We do not have a full picture of the gender impact from COVID-19. What we do know is that generally the impact is greater on our male workforce.

South West Councils has commissioned through Devon County Council economic impact assessments from COVID-19. The results are still in draft form, however the draft assessment indicates that across the county's workforce there will be a greater impact on male workers, than female. This is driven by the types of sectors being most impacted from the pandemic including manufacturing and construction, agriculture, food and drink. Tourism and retail are also impacted and employ significant levels of women, however the health and care sector is a resilient sector, and employs more female staff and is a factor behind the gender impact.

Economic recovery will not be even across the county and some sector such as tourism are likely to take longer to recover, and some places such as rural districts such as Torridge and Mid Devon have been identified as particularly vulnerable. Families who are 'just about managing' will be disproportionately impacted and young people. Current levels of youth unemployment are already higher than was experienced in 2008 and the recession.

The latest information from HMRC on the take up and use of the national Job Retention Scheme and Self Employed Income Support Scheme shows nationally that there is a stronger reliance from men than women. The data is only available currently at the national level. 32% of male employees have been furloughed against 27% of female employees. For the Self-employment Income Support Scheme, the number of claims is split 68.5% male and 31.5% female due to the high number of male self-employed workers in construction. The male take-up rate is also 78% against the female take-up rate of 70%.

Councillor Rufus Gilbert

Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills