

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Culture Committee

October 2018

Report of the Head of Participation Mr Chris Millis

For Information

Wards Affected: All

Employability Programmes within the Education Leisure and Life Long Learning Directorate

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members regarding the Employability programmes.

Executive Summary

In July 2018 the Participation element in the Education Leisure and Life Long Learning Directorate was re-structured in order to ensure all the Employability themed projects were brought together under one Manager, namely, Communities for Work, Communities for Work Plus, Skills and Training, NPT Works, and the Legacy Fund. The Employability Manager is currently considering all the projects in the theme and researching a need for a local Employability Plan linking

into the Welsh Government Employability Plan to ensure consistent delivery and enhanced support for individuals.

With all these programmes now working within Tir Morfa Centre, our vision to create an Employability Hwb is paramount to ensuring that those individuals seeking work, training, advice and support are supported while being under one building, providing an individualised approach to employability support which is one of WG main targets within the Employability Plan.

An update on each of the programmes can be seen below.

Background

2. Communities for Work

Communities for Work (CFW), an ESF programme has been working well within Neath Port Talbot. The programme works in partnership with DWP locally.

We are currently the 4th highest achieving Lead Delivery Body in Wales, working with those furthest away from the labour market with individuals either being long term unemployed, economically inactive or NEET.

From the beginning of the programme (July 2016), to date, we have had 1,432 engagements and 462 job entries over the 4 clusters.

The programme works closely with Communities For Work Plus, Pace, DWP and Workways Plus in order to ensure there is a clear pathway of employability support for individuals.

The life of the current programme is 2020 with a verbal indication of an extension to 2022.

Communities for Work Plus

In April 2018 NPT saw the introduction of the new Welsh Government Employability programme, Communities for Work Plus (CfW+), an employability initiative which focused on bridging the gaps of the current ESF Communities for Work programme. The CfW+ programme enabled those who were unemployed, not eligible for

ESF CfW, or other existing ESF programmes within NPT, to provide one to one support, advice and guidance, taking away restrictions of postcodes and being able to work with anyone. This includes those who are in employment, looking to seek career progression, to have extra hours to increase their monthly earnings. Welsh Government recognise that In Work Poverty is increasing and this programme will help to provide new support for those who are barely surviving on their monthly earnings.

To date, both programmes are running seamlessly, with a one team approach ethos. CfW+, now in its second quarter, is already seeing high levels of referrals and outcomes which is set to become higher than expected with 253 engagements and 62 job entries for the 4 delivery areas.

Legacy Fund

The Legacy Fund was created to allow LDB's to keep the 'best bits' of the old Communities First programme. It was approved that NPT continue with the provision of a Welfare Rights Team now called Legacy Welfare Rights Team, and also keeping the Post 16 Transition Team, now called Legacy Youth Workers, within our Youth Service. Already the Legacy Youth Workers have made 1,343 engagements during the first 6 months. Legacy Welfare Rights Team have supported over 1000 people to access their benefits/advice and raised over £1.7 million in Welfare benefit within NPT.

New provisions such as employing a Digital Inclusion Ambassador and a Legacy Community Counsellor have recently been finalised and have already started to make impacts within our communities. A brief summary can be seen below:

- Digital Inclusion Ambassador

The Digital Inclusion Ambassador (DIA) role commenced on the 9th July. Since then, there has been extensive work with Third Sector Organisations to streamline the delivery on digital inclusion within NPT. NPT Third Sector Organisations that deliver IT have either signed up or are in the process of signing up to the Learn my Way Programme, which will allow the same programme to be used across the County Borough. The DIA has also been expanding further on the

digital inclusion survey that was completed in October 2017, by looking at the status of IT equipment in the organisations as well as how best to support the organisations.

There are a number of areas that the DIA is working with at present. There is a digital Inclusion steering group which has been set up in order to create a digital delivery plan. The DIA is also working towards creating an event to showcase what third sector organisations have to offer and also the support that is available to them to become more sustainable. To date 8 Third Sector Organisations and 3 community libraries have engaged.

- Legacy Community Counsellor

The Legacy Community Counsellor started in post on 20th August 2018. Based within the Youth Service Team this has helped establish effective liaison with other professionals and provides immediate access for referrals.

Counselling documentation for the Legacy Community Counselling has been developed which includes a referral form to access the service and a referral pathway. It was agreed that referrals will be accepted from young people who are disengaged from school but still on the school role. The aim of this being to develop a plan which will help engage them back into education.

Referral pathways have been developed with the Persistent Absence Project, Communities for Work Plus and NPT Youth Service.

Safeguarding procedures have been established by meeting and liaising with the NPT Education Safeguarding Officer Sam Jones. The project has already received two referrals, home visits have been arranged and counselling will commence shortly.

NPT Works

NPT Works service has been running for 9 years, supporting the long term unemployed and those on sickness benefits into employment. Since The Work Programmes inception in 2011, NPT Works have secured employment opportunities for approximately 2900 people. NPT Works were not successful in the Tender process for the new Health & Work Programme and the service is scheduled to close on

31/03/2019. An exit strategy is currently in place and the team have been working hard to ensure all staff have new posts after March 2019.

Skills and Training

Skills & Training (S&T) took a different approach to recruitment and marketing last year and this has now had the expected impact e.g. a new communication and marketing plan, careers roadshows in all comprehensive schools throughout the borough, social media and electronic advertising etc.

In July 2018 there were 100 people that started on programmes of learning, this is over double the amount of starts for the same period last year.

A successful Summer School programme was delivered consisting of lots of activities organised for learners. S&T also worked alongside the Army to deliver 2 taster days on the 10/07/18 & 18/07/18. There was also participation and activities with the Fire service and WCADA.

27 school leavers started on the Summer School Programme (a programme designed to support young people /school leavers to maintain engagement in education during the summer months, before starting places in college). Outcomes - of the 27, 18 started their college place in September as planned. The remaining 9 participants no longer wanted to pursue their original plans and have progressed onto further learning at S&T.

WG have now revoked a number of the restrictions that had been placed upon providers in the 17/18 contract e.g. restrictions in eligibility for programmes/ age/previous level of achievements etc. They have also recognised, revised and increased the CEU value attached to delivery (following lobbying from the network). This has supported the ability to recruit and alleviates previous budget pressures, providing targets are achieved.

S&T developed a delivery model to work with 22 year 11 Ysgol Bae Baglan pupils, to deliver a two year Hairdressing course chosen as part of their options. The first group completed the two year course in

2018 with excellent results. 82% achieved full accreditation and 18% achieved unit accreditation. All of the pupils completed the course early, subsequently allowing more time to concentrate on their other GCSE examinations.

In July 2018 S&T have achieved the Green Flag Award for the Tir Morfa Community Garden.

Local Councillors were successful in putting together a bid to use their allocated funding for the Tir Morfa Community Garden.

Financial Impact

3. There are financial implications within NPT Works with the programme ending on the 31st March 2019. This has been reported internally. All other budgets are being monitored at present.

Equality Impact Assessment

4. There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts

5. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

6. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Risk Management

7. There are no risks management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

8. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

9. This report is for information only.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

10. N/A

Appendices

11. N/A

List of Background Papers

12. N/A

Officer Contact

13. Chris Millis Head of Participation, Telephone 01639 763226 e-mail c.d.millis@npt.gov.uk

Mrs Angeline Spooner-Cleverly, Participation Co-ordinator, 01639 686044, a.spooner-cleverly@npt.gov.uk