



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Education, Skills and Culture Committee

October 2019

## **Report of the Head of Participation Mr Chris Millis**

For Information

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

### **Employability Programmes within the Education Leisure and Life Long Learning Directorate**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

To give Members an update 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 and the Legacy Fund. The Employability Manager is currently working with Workways + and other employability programmes outside the local authority to develop a local Employability Plan linking into the Welsh Government Employability Plan to ensure consistent delivery and enhance support for individuals. This also includes developing a brand to encompass one Employability Programme for NPT, sharing of resources and staff time for the two directorates (Education and Environment).

Communities for Work and Communities for Work plus staff are now part of the Work Station in Port Talbot and the Work Bank in Neath to ensure that all programmes within NPT are represented and that a customer can have the appropriate help and assistance to look for employment, while remaining at our key outreach locations at Sandfields, Cwmafan, Victoria Gardens, Croeserw and Ystradgynlais.

We have also included quarterly Members Briefing sessions where members were able to meet the teams and discuss the programmes in greater detail.

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

## **Background**

### Communities for Work

Communities for Work (CFW), an ESF programme has been working well within Neath Port Talbot. The programme works in partnership with Department of Working Pensions (DWP) locally and both teams work simultaneously together to ensure a seamless transition from those working with those furthest away from the labour market with individuals either being long term unemployed, economically inactive or NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) to achieving employment. April 2019 saw the introduction of team targets working

alongside our partners in DWP, this has brought the teams closer together and able to focus to share responsibilities on overall targets.

The programme offers the support of Triage Officers who provide a clear pathway referral system for Communities For Work Plus, Pace, DWP and Workways + as well as other agencies to suit the need of the customer.

We have just received a new re-profile on the project which will take the project up to 2023. Since April 2019, we have engaged with 82 customers, and 57 job entries.

### Communities for Work Plus

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 European Social Fund 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+ has engaged with 846 engagements and 273 job entries.

This programme is now part of the new Children's and Community Grant, and is funded on an annual basis via Welsh Government.

## Legacy Fund

Legacy Fund was created last year to keep the 'best bits' of the old Communities First programme. This fund has allowed us to keep Legacy Welfare Rights Team, Legacy Youth Workers, a Digital Inclusion Ambassador and a Legacy Community Counsellor.

The Legacy Welfare Rights Team have supported over 600 people to access their benefits/advice and raised over £2 million in Welfare benefit within NPT.

The Legacy Youth Workers Delivery Plan indicated that the project will:

- Work with pupils in Years 9-11 inside and outside of the classroom.
- Provide interventions to Year 11s to prepare young people for moving onto their Post 16 destination.
- Provide targeted school holiday interventions for Year 11 leavers uncertain of their destination or those who are at risk of disengaging;
- Provide Keeping in Touch (KIT) support for young people following their entry into a post 16 destination until the destination snapshot.

The Legacy Team have been able to support pupils in years 9-11 both inside and outside of the classroom environment. The interventions have varied depending on the needs of the young person and the schools. A combination of group work and one to one support has proved to be successful within schools, and projects in the local community have given young people a range of exciting opportunities.

Regular Year 11 Caseload Meetings have been established between the Legacy Youth Worker, Careers Worker and the School to identify the young people who need support, and information is exchanged to ensure the Legacy Youth Worker understands the needs of each young person. A unique package of support has then been offered depending on their career aspirations and any barriers they face. The work has been based upon what the young person wants and needs in order to successfully transition into education, employment or

training. This has included classroom support, home visits, work experience, taking them to college taster days and work based learning visits.

Of particular note has been a work experience gardening project for young people in Year 11 studying at Ysgol Hendrefelin. The young people were supported to undertake six sessions, one day per week at the Tir Morfa Community Garden. The pupils interacted well and thoroughly enjoyed the project, where they learnt about different plants, herbs and how to grow them. The project provided the young people with the opportunity to gain knowledge, skills and experience of the world of work, helped build confidence, self-esteem and teamwork. The food grown within the garden was donated to the local food bank. All of the young people involved in this project have achieved a positive post 16 destination of college.

All of the Legacy Team have now attended the Trauma Recovery Model (TRM) training and 4 out of the 5 staff have completed the Youth Mental Health 1<sup>st</sup> Aid training with the remaining member of staff booked on a Mental Health 1<sup>st</sup> Aid course in November.

The Legacy team have undertaken ELSA (Emotional Literacy) training and practice under the supervision of the Educational Psychology team. ELSA is an emotional literacy programme, and supports young people on topics such as emotions, social skills, communication, anger management and social stories. Young people have had the opportunity to meet regularly with their Legacy Youth Worker to look at any issues they may be facing and to set themselves personal goals and targets. The programme has enabled young people to develop their confidence, skills and competencies in the areas they want to improve.

The Legacy Team are currently supporting young people transition from school into a post 16 destination and will return to supporting the schools from the 1<sup>st</sup> November.

Numbers of young people support so far are:

608 young people support of which 343 were male and 265 were female.

1,113 contacts from 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> September.

### Digital Inclusion Ambassador

After consultation with the third sector organisations the Digital Inclusion Ambassador (DIA) organised the appropriate training via Digital Communities Wales (DCW) for staff and volunteers to deliver a safe effective service to the residence within their communities. DIA have prepared and delivered to many community groups a presentation on the benefits of accessing digital services and organising support for communities to access online services. DIA have been involved in identifying and participating in many community events to promote digital services, such as Neath Food and Drink Festival, Neath Port Talbot Stroke association event and Briton Ferry promotional event. DIA have worked closely with partners to deliver a joined up approach for digital services, ensuring residence are aware of cybercrime and scams and how to keep themselves safe when using digital services.

The DIA will continue to identify opportunities to promote digital services to the parts of the community who are excluded from the benefits that they offer and continue working with partner organisation to identify gaps in provision.

### Legacy Community Counsellor

Legacy Community Counselling is becoming firmly established within Neath Port Talbot. School and organisations are more aware of the service with referrals coming in from a variety of settings such as Social Services, Team around the Family, schools, Cam Nesa, Youth Service, parents and the Junior Apprentice scheme which is running in Neath and Afan College. Young people have also been self-referring.

Counselling is being carried out at community centres, libraries, schools, colleges, Tir Morfa Centre, the young person's home also third sector organisations.

From April to September there has been 135 counselling sessions delivered, considering this is a hard to reach client group the numbers indicate that young people are engaging with the service.

There are currently 22 young people waiting for counselling

In total there has been 69 referrals to date, ages range from 10 – 23yrs.

Currently there are 13 young people receiving counselling on a weekly basis. Links have been made with Third Sector organisation Caer Las which is based in Port Talbot. Caer Las provides a room free of charge for young people to access counselling.

Connections have been made with the Swansea Bay University Health Board and a meeting was attended recently to look at the possibility of the adult mental health service referring into Legacy Community Counselling. The Legacy Community Counsellor has been invited to the next mental health team meeting to talk more about the service.

This service is also highlighting young people that are feeling suicidal and self-harming with four recent cases. The counsellor has been able to liaise with appropriate services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to help the young people access the appropriate support. Three of these young people are currently not attending school; if they had not engaged with the Community Counsellor then their feelings may not have been identified.

The Legacy Community counsellor has worked collaboratively with the Youth Service to help this young person achieve her goal of attending school.

### Skills and Training

Skills and Training (S & T) undertook a restructure at the beginning of the year, making the department efficient and streamlined in its

approach to deliver Work Based Learning (WBL). Skills and Training are still partners of the Skills Academy Wales (SAW), where the WBL contract was awarded. S&T continue to deliver high quality programme and activities for the learners.

S&T continue to develop new initiatives to increase their commercial training contract, this also involves working with Ysgol Bae Baglan pupils in their chosen career pathway of Hairdressing as part of their options. This is due to expand into Ysgol Hendrefelin.

S&T are also part of the Priority 2 bid for Job Support Wales. Neath Port Talbot Group of Colleges have named S&T as a partner, news of this tender will be due out in November, for commencement in April 2020.

The Tir Morfa refurbishment is currently ongoing, ensuring that public hallways and training rooms are updated. This will continue until the end of this financial year, and moving forward onto the next financial year where we plan to refurbish the staff and training rooms on the first floor.

### **Financial Impacts:**

Budgets are being monitored at present.

### **Intergrated Impact Assessment:**

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for information only.

### **Valleys Communities Impacts:**

No implications.

### **Workforce Impacts:**

No implications.



**Legal Impacts:**

No implications.

**Risk Management Impacts:**

There are no risks management issues associated with this report.

**Consultation:**

There is no requirement for external constitution on this item.

**Recommendations:**

This report is for information only.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

N/A

**Appendices:**

N/A

**List of Background Papers:**

N/A

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