



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 11TH NOVEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: 6-MONTH PROGRESS UPDATE OF IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES -
CAERPHILLY PASSPORT PROGRAMME UPDATE**

REPORT BY: HEAD OF WORKFORCE AND ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the six-month update of the Improvement Objectives relating to the Caerphilly Passport Programme to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 For Members to note the outcomes and to confirm the view that satisfactory progress is being made against the Improvement Objectives set.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Passport Programme progress continues to be strong. Three of the Improvement Objectives are in line with the ESF objectives set for the programme, two are additional measures looking at the impact of the programme on those participating and the percentage of positive outcomes achieved.
- 2.2 Progress so far is on schedule to meet the Improvement Objectives set. The report sets out performance against targets to date. Prior to the launch on 5th April 2013 and since there has been a significant amount of activity and the report also touches on some of the key elements of the Programme.
- 2.3 There has been a rolling programme of team meetings, working group meetings and project board meetings since the Programme began. This is the governance structure for the Programme.
- 2.4 To date 673 referrals have been received to the programme.
- 2.5 The biggest challenge going forward is the ability to secure additional Jobs Growth Wales placements and further ESF funding for the programme.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Passport Programme supports the Council's People Strategy, Learning and Development Strategy, Education for Life and Corporate Strategies, Corporate Plan.
- 3.2 Supports the Regeneration Agenda, and links in with our strategy for achieving the WHQS standard.
- 3.3 The Passport Programme links to Strategic Equality Objective 6, Diversity in the Workplace.

3.4 The Passport Programme is a Council Improvement Objective (IO2) to improve job opportunities.

4. THE REPORT

Outcomes to date

4.1 So far 673 young people have been referred into the Passport Programme. The breakdown of referrals is as follows:

- Work Club – 152
- Job Centre – 421
- Educ8 – 1
- Innovate – 1
- Careers Wales – 62
- Direct referral – 31
- Youth Offending – 5

4.2 Members will note the high volumes of referrals into the programme which reflects the levels of youth unemployment within the County Borough.

4.3 In terms of the numbers of young people currently being supported, the statistics are as follows:

- There are no young people currently in Tier 1 but a total of 233 have previously gone through Tier 1 (14 participants went straight onto a Tier 2 due to the deadline of Tier 2 start dates in Sept 14)
- There are 81 people currently in Tier 2

4.4 Since April 2014, 84 placements have been delivered across the tiers against the annual target of 150.

4.5 Since April 14 there have been 12 apprenticeship opportunities created against an annual target of 25 and 38 employment opportunities against an annual target of 40. To date the percentage of positive outcomes from the programme is 78%, i.e. young people going into employment or back to full time education.

Working Group and Project Board

4.6 The working group has continued to meet on a six weekly basis. The group has representatives from the partners engaged in the project on a daily basis and this group continues to be successful in dealing with operational challenges and agreed changes to the model to improve delivery.

4.7 The Project Board meets on a quarterly basis chaired by the Head of Workforce and OD. The partners attending have already confirmed their support to seek further funding opportunities to sustain the programme.

Celebration Event

4.8 On Friday 10th October there was a Passport Celebration Event held. The event was attended by a number of our Cabinet Members and 3 Assembly Members with Mr Huw Lewis acting in his capacity of Minister for Education and Skills. Both the Leader and the Minister presented at the event and very positive press coverage was received. A number of awards were presented to young people who had completed the programme or who are still participating in the programme and had been nominated by their managers and employers over 9 different categories. Again, this was good, positive publicity for both the Programme and the Council.

Audit and Programme Evaluation

- 4.9 The team successfully went through the ESF team audit run between April and July. The result was very successful and all aspects of the programme met the requirements set. (Appendix 1)
- 4.10 An evaluation of the Programme undertaken by Wavehill Ltd is nearing completion. Feedback to date is very complementary. The completed evaluation is expected in November.
- 4.11 The Passport Programme was selected for an ESF National Team Audit. This has been undertaken by Dr James Downe of Cardiff Business School. A draft report has recently been received and again the feedback on the programme is very positive. The report will be circulated to the steering group for the research and to Welsh Government before a final draft is received.

Future Developments

- 4.12 The European Social Fund grant ends on 31st December 2014. At this time there will still be young people working their way through the model. In order to fund the programme until the end of March 2105, additional Flexible Support Fund grant funding of approx £42,500 has been secured to cover staffing costs and training costs.
- 4.13 The next round of ESF funding is in process with logic tables being submitted and discussed with the Wales European Funding Office (WEFO). The view of WEFO is that all bids coming forward need to be supported by the Regional Learning Skills and Innovation Board.
- 4.14 For Passport to continue then both ESF funding and a further allocation of Jobs Growth Wales placements will need to be secured.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Passport Programme is a positive action programme, designed to support a specific group of young people who have been identified as having particular barriers in terms of career opportunities, work experience, training and development and so supports the Council's Strategic Equality Objective 6 - Diversity in the Workplace.
- 5.2 The young people on the Passport Programme also have access to the full range of Equalities and Welsh Language training opportunities that are offered to all other staff members.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Project was allocated £372,000 of ESF funding and originally £121,000 of Flexible Support Fund money.
- 6.2 Additional Flexible Support fund money has been secured to fund the project until the end of March 2015.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There is a positive benefit to the Programme both in terms of dealing with the Council's workforce planning challenge and by supporting young people into employment.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Head of Workforce & OD, HR Service Manager, Strategy and Operations, Community Regeneration Manager, Passport Programme Manager, Strategic Co-Ordination Manager and Council's Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language) have all been consulted and their views are reflected in the report.
- 8.2 There is ongoing consultation with Corporate Management Team. The report has also been shared with the Council's Trade Unions representatives.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members note the content of the report
- 9.2 Members support the view that satisfactory progress is being made against the Improvement Objectives.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The progress to date is on schedule.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 ESF Audit Report April 2014

Appendix 2 Improvement Objective 2 6 month report