



CABINET – 5TH FEBRUARY 2013

SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY PASSPORT PROGRAMME UPDATE

REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with an update on the Caerphilly Passport Programme.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Passport Programme progress is continuing and having secured the funding required to develop the project then significant work can now be undertaken.
- 2.2 There is a total of £977,000 and 150 Jobs Growth Wales funded placements to deliver the programme.
- 2.3 The delivery targets are outlined in the report as well as the operational progress and outcomes achieved to date. Progress so far is on schedule.
- 2.4 The Project Board of LSB members, chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive, will support the Programme. The Project Board, CMT, Cabinet and JCC will receive regular progress reports.

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.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 There are a number of reasons why the Passport Programme has been developed.
- To contribute to supporting NEET young people within the County Borough
 - To provide valuable training placements for young people to gain experience in the workplace and present the opportunity to apply of vacancies.
 - To address the Council's future demographic challenge.

Funding

- 4.2 In order to fund the project and enhance the Council's financial commitment to apprentices and trainees, bids were made to the European Social Fund (ESF) via the LSB, to Job Centre Plus for Flexible Support Fund (FSF) monies and Jobs Growth Wales placements were negotiated with Welsh Government ministers.

- 4.3 This value of the funding bids is as follows:
- ESF - £372,000
 - FSF - £120,000
 - CCBC Apprenticeship budget £485000
 - Jobs Growth Wales 150 funded 6 month placements at National Minimum Wage.
- 4.4 The bids were successfully made with the final confirmation for the FSF money from Job Centre Plus coming in December 2012. This is the maximum claimable under deminimus rules. The ESF money is matched at source.
- 4.5 The ESF and FSF funding was requested primarily for structure costs, i.e. to fund the salaries of the team, IT, marketing and events etc. The breakdown of which can be seen in Appendix 1 (ESF) and Appendix 2 (FSF).
- 4.6 Special dispensation was gained from Welsh Government for the Jobs Growth Wales placements. Under normal circumstances the money is attached to the post that will become permanent. In the case of the Passport Programme the funding does not have this specification. Dispensation has been given to move a trainee into an alternative vacancy at the end of their placement as appropriate. This could be within or outside of the Council or LSB.
- 4.7 50 of the 150 Jobs Growth Wales funded posts will need to be in place by 31st March. So far 35 opportunities have been sourced across the Council and the Job Centre, Communities First and Educ8 will be supplying the trainees.

Team Appointments

- 4.8 The team is made up of a Passport Programme Manager, 3 Passport Support Officers, 1 Administrative Assistant and an Administrative Apprentice. There is funding for one further post, which will sit in the Communities First team with two other specialist Employment Support Officers who will support young people and engage them in the programme. These three posts can provide support to those who need a little more coaching and mentoring in the Community to engage in the programme.
- 4.9 A Passport Programme Manager has been appointed after a recruitment process where all posts have been advertised across the LSB for secondment opportunities. Offers have been made to the successful candidates for the Passport Support Officer posts and accepted. They will officially start in post in the next few weeks.
- 4.10 The Administrative posts will be appointed by the second week of February.
- 4.11 The HR Service Manager is the Project Manager for the programme and the cost of the salary for the proportion of their time is being met from within the existing HR budget.

Management and Collaborative Working

- 4.12 The working group for the project is currently being set up. This group will consist of the partners who are engaged in the project on a daily basis, e.g. Job Centre Plus, Communities First and Educ8 and the group will deal with operational issues. The Head of Workforce & OD who is the Project Sponsor for the Programme will chair the working group.
- 4.13 The Passport Team actively engages with the Council's Training & Education forum which includes the Genesis team, Prevent team, Community Education Team, Innov8 and our Community First and economic development teams.
- 4.14 Close working is underway with the Head of Programme for the WHQS, Procurement Officers and Communities First to maximise opportunities for placements and apprenticeships that can be achieved through targeted recruitment and training clauses in future procurement contracts. This will also extend to seeking to maximise wider community benefits as a joint approach through the WHQS and Passport programmes.

- 4.15 The Deputy Chief Executive will chair the Project Board at LSB level and the Working Group and Passport team will regularly report on progress to this group.

Targets

- 4.16 The targets for the ESF bid are as follows:
- Create a minimum of 150 work experience opportunities per annum
 - Create a minimum of 25 apprenticeship opportunities per annum
 - Create a minimum of 40 employment opportunities per annum
 - Reduce the number of people aged 16-24 claiming JSA by 3% over the lifetime of the project.
 - Reduce the number of people aged 16-24 unemployed for more than 26 weeks by 3% over the lifetime of the project.
 - Incorporate Targeted Recruitment and Training as a core requirement into at least 10 new public sector contracts (per annum).

Operational Progress to date

- 4.17 To date the following has been achieved:
- Initial meetings with Communications and Communications strategy drafted.
 - Review of potential IT solutions undertaken and on-site demo of Performance Module in iTrent booked for 23rd January.
 - Passport Programme Manager appointed and Passport Support Officer appointments by end of w/c 21st January.
 - Ongoing meetings with Educ8, JCP and Communities First to continue with supply and placement of trainees and apprentices.
 - Various presentations to interested parties undertaken and continuing.
 - Visit by Deputy Minister for Skills scheduled for 28th January 2013.
 - Programme paperwork developed and in place.
 - Contact made with external evaluators.
 - Secondment from JCP organised to begin second week of February for 6 weeks.
 - First Working Group meeting scheduled.

Outcomes to date

- 4.18 Appendix 3 shows the volumes of placements undertaken to date. So far a total of 270 placements have been delivered.
- 4.19 Of those placements we have been able to track, 70 have gone on to further education or training (including tier 2 traineeships (13), 11 into vacancies, 6 with the Council and 5 else where. All the tier 4 trainees (graduates), 13 in total are still in post.
- 4.20 As noted above 50 Jobs Growth Wales placements need to be filled by the end of March 2013. 35 placements have been sourced by the Passport Programme Manager and a HR Officer in the Strategy and Development Team and JCP, Educ8 and Communities First are now sourcing candidates to fill those placements.
- 4.21 There is very positive discussion with a number of private sector companies who wish to engage in the programme at an early stage. This has been facilitated in conjunction with Economic Development and the Caerphilly Business Forum. It is possible that a few of the Jobs Growth Wales funded employees will be placed with these organisation.

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.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Council allocated an annual budget of £485,000 per annum for the direct funding of apprenticeships and trainees.
- 6.2 The additional money is via grant funding. Depending on the success of the programme, the intention would be to reapply for funding to maintain the project, which could be regionalised in the future. Advice has been sought from the Finance Officer and European Funding Officer in relation to these claims.

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.
- 7.2 Negotiations with the Trade Unions have been underway to give trainees prior consideration for internal vacancies in the Council. This hopefully will be signed off at the next Chief Executive's JCC in January.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Head of Workforce & OD, Communities First Manager, Deputy Chief Executive, Head Of Corporate Finance and the Council's Equalities Officer have all been consulted and their views are reflected in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To note the progress made to date.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The progress to date is as per the planned schedule

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000.

Author: HR Service Manager, Strategy and Operations
Consultees: Passport Programme Manager
Head of Workforce & OD
Deputy Chief Executive
Head of Corporate Finance
Deputy Monitoring Officer
Equalities Officer

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 ESF bid breakdown
- Appendix 2 FSF bid breakdown
- Appendix 3 Outcomes breakdown
- Appendix 4 Passport Model