



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 5TH AUGUST 2014

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

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the six month update of the Improvement Objectives relating to the Caerphilly Passport Programme to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and a give a wider Passport update in line with reporting requirements.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report relating to Passport has been delivered later than the feedback on other Improvement Objectives for 2013-14 because the last report to P&R Scrutiny was as recent as January 2014. The Passport Programme has met the objectives set. 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 We have self-evaluated this programme as part of the Council's Improvement Objectives and for all the reasons listed in the report we class this IO as successful.
- 2.3 The report sets out performance against targets until 31st March 2014 and touches on some of the key elements of the Programme.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 Up until 31st March, 533 referrals have been received to 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 and 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) for 2013-14 to improve job opportunities and is an Improvement Objective (IO2) for 2014-15 to improve job opportunities by implementing the Council's Passport scheme.

4. THE REPORT

Outcomes to date

- 4.1 As at 31st March 2014, 533 young people have been referred into the Passport Programme. The breakdown of referrals is as follows:

- Work Club – 126
- Job Centre – 335
- Educ8 – 1
- Innovate – 1
- Careers Wales – 55
- Direct referral – 11
- Youth Offending – 4

- 4.2 The current Passport statistics as at the 17th June are:

Numbers referred in: 559

- Job Centre - 356
- Work clubs - 129
- Careers Wales - 55
- Innovate - 1
- Educ8 - 1
- Youth Offending - 3
- Direct Referral - 14

- 4.3 In terms of the targets set as a part of the Improvement Objectives, the following has been achieved as at 31.03.2014:

- 176 work placement opportunities delivered (target of 150)
- 25 apprenticeship opportunities created (target of 25)
- 68 employment opportunities created (target of 40)

- 4.4 At their final review, participants are asked if they feel they are more work ready. The feedback is 100% feel that they are.

- 4.5 To date, 133 young people have completed their Passport programme. The remainder of the young people are still going through their placement. The success rate in terms of securing positive outcomes from those completing the programme is 77%. Of the 102 successful outcomes 35 are working with external organisations, 65 are with CCBC and 2 have returned to full time education.

- 4.6 The number of young people (18-24 years) claiming JSA within the County Borough has reduced from 2040 in October 2012 to 1470. This is a 28% reduction. With 69 young people going into employment or further training and education this is a percentage reduction of 3.38% on a total of 2040 young people, or a 4.7% reduction on the 1470 figure.

Independent Evaluation Feedback to date

- 4.7 Wavehill are undertaking an independent evaluation of the Programme. They have spoken with 157 individuals who were referred to Passport - 72 of these have received further support following referral and 85 had not pursued anything with Passport.

- 4.8 For those who have not progressed any further with Passport there have been a range of reasons often related to a change in circumstances, however, 53% indicated that they have found employment with most of this employment being full time roles.
- 4.9 For those that have taken up the support offered by Passport 89% have found the initial assessment work useful or very useful; 85% found the employability training useful or very useful.
- 4.10 80% of those who have worked with the programme say they have been changed by their Passport experiences, these changes include 44% specifically saying they feel more confident, 29% happier and 22% feel more experienced.
- 4.11 85% say they gained job specific skills; 68% improved social skills for work (self confidence, turning up on time etc); 60% improved their sense of what they want to do; 53% report improved job search skills; 33% improved low basic skills.
- 4.12 85% say they feel more enthusiastic about work; 90% are more confident about their own abilities.
- 4.13 91% say they were helped by the coaching/mentoring they received.
- 4.14 71% say that without Passport they would still be unemployed.
- 4.15 Initial feedback from Wavehill from the employer experience perspective is that all employers contacted by them (30) who were hosting Passport trainees found it easy (2) or very easy (30) to work with the programme. All have said it has been beneficial (3) / very beneficial (27). 29 of the 30 would recommend the programme, 29 of the 30 want the work to continue, 29 of the 30 would work with similar programmes 1 of the 30 didn't know, paperwork was the main issue for the non-committer.
- 4.16 The majority of employers note particular positive impacts from Passport on:
- Improved working practices
 - Improved productivity
 - Improved customer service
 - Helping address skills gaps and skills shortages
 - Improved recruitment practice
 - Improved training and developing practices
- 4.17 The evaluation is continuing with Wavehill re-interviewing some of the participants and employers to follow them through the Programme as case studies for further qualitative feedback.
- 4.18 The Final report is due in September 2014.

Evaluation and Audit

- 4.19 As well as the Wavehill Evaluation, the Passport Programme has also been selected for an ESF National Team Evaluation. The inception meeting has very recently been held and the team at Cardiff Business School will be undertaking that piece of work and will use the work that Wavehill have already done to date.
- 4.20 All audits undertaken to date in terms of paperwork, record keeping etc have been completed successfully to date with just two minor issues being picked up. Support and advice has been provided by the Council's SET officer on audit requirements.

Future Challenges

- 4.21 The most significant future challenge will be to seek to secure future funding for Passport. There is a short term interim need from Jan 15 for possibly 12 months due to delays with the next round of ESF funding with a view that Passport could be a part of the bigger regional activity for the 2015-20 ESF funding round. It would be a considerable shame if funding could not be secured for future of the project bearing in mind the impact and successes achieved.
- 4.22 The team had an original allocation for 50 placements for 14-15 which have been filled. A further 50 placements were requested from Welsh Government and confirmation has been received that those placements have been secured. These placements are needed to be used by the end of September. Additionally, the team are supporting the Communities First pilot whereby 52 Job Growth Wales placements have been awarded to support young people living in Community First clusters. There are some challenges as this allocation is needing to be managed differently to Passport and concerns have been raised WG that that there was a risk of treating young people within the County Borough differently. Officers are making decisions on the best route for young people to take.
- 4.23 Meetings with Cardiff City Council, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen have been held as well as with the SEWDR (South East Wales Directors of Regeneration) to explore the regional opportunities for Passport. A draft paper for Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent have been produced to consider support for a Passport pilot. If this does commence, additional Jobs Growth Wales placements will be requested for these projects.
- 4.24 The model has been cited as the case study for a section in the Welsh Government document on the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework. This section is on Employability and Employment Opportunities.

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. This is a discretionary budget that could be impacted by the MTFP challenges.
- 6.2 The additional money is via grant funding. There are two levels of risk. The immediate risk is no available funding post December 14 to maintain the project, the second risk is the funding round for 2015-20 and the need to secure an opportunity to continue to run Passport as a local or regional project.

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 completed to give trainees prior consideration for entry level internal vacancies in the Council if there are no suitable candidates from the redeployment pool.
- 7.3 A further report is going through consultation regarding making Passport the conduit for apprenticeship opportunities in the Council in a more formal way.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The Head of Workforce & OD, Community Regeneration Manager, Passport Programme Manager, Strategic Co-Ordination Manager, WHQS, Performance Manager and the 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 To note the progress made to date.
- 9.2 Agreement is sought from members to confirm that the self-assessment of the success against the Improvement Objective is accurate.

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.

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