

Improvement Objective

IO 3 - Sustain Employment Opportunities

Outcomes:

1. Growth/maintain in opportunities for local residents to improve their skills to enable them to gain and maintain employment (particularly with worklessness and education programmes).
2. Maintain/protect number of jobs through provision of grants and specialist advice to business
3. SME's supported and trained so not disadvantaged by competing for Authority business

A greener place Man gwyrdach



IO 3 - Sustain Employment Opportunities

2012/13 - Progress Summary (April-Sept)

Most of the activities listed in the action plan are continued from 2011-12 and progress is positive in each case. However, the background for this work is an ongoing and perhaps deepening recession. Unemployment remains at a high level – the number of people in the County Borough claiming Jobseekers Allowance is almost 6,000, which is not monitored under the Improvement Objective. The number of Employment Support Allowance claimants can be seen to be dropping (by nearly 5% during the past 18 months). However, this can be attributed to the process of re-assessment being undertaken by Jobcentre Plus and Department for Work and Pensions.

Despite this grim economic climate, there are a number of encouraging activities and programmes, which form the basis of the Council (and partners') response. The EU funded projects – Genesis 2, Bridges into Work, Working Skills for Adults and Essential Skills in the Workplace – have all provided a very important support mechanism to help people gain and sustain employment, although the latter project has only recently commenced. In addition, the Council's Traineeship Scheme continues to provide significant opportunities for local people. This project has led to the development of the Passport Programme, which will commence in April 2013 and will result in a considerable increase in the number of young people supported.

With regard to private sector job creation and safeguarding, the Council's Business Enterprise Support Team continues to provide advice, guidance and grant support for local businesses. This includes encouraging businesses to trade online and this is assisted by the development of the GO2 My Town project, which has already developed an online portal for businesses in Bargoed and Rhymney. The project is on track to have the service in place for five other towns in 2012-13 (all five went live by October 2012) and the Council is also seeking funding to roll out the project in other parts of Wales.

For the future, a significant opportunity to impact on regeneration as a whole has emerged in 2012. As a result of the positive response to the tenants survey (Feb '12), the Council is now developing activities to maximise the impact of Welsh Housing Quality Standard investment to sustain, create and support new employment and training opportunities.

Over the past few years, a significant problem facing the public sector, has been the engagement of Small to Medium Size Enterprises (SME's) with regards to supporting and assisting the delivery of Authority business. To encourage and stimulate SME interest in working with our Authority, we have now established a 'Supplier Relationship Officer' based within the Procurement Department, who is dedicated to the development of local business, particularly SME's. We have also completed some preparatory work in readiness to deliver a number of awareness sessions, workshops, advisory and support events, between October 2012 and June 2013 in the hope to stimulate interest and further engagement in local (supplier) contracts.

Some key achievements recorded between April and Sept 2012 have been:

- 125 supplier contracts awarded to local businesses.
- 347 local businesses invited to tender for contracts.

In conclusion, the local economy remains in a fragile state, but there are a number of important successes and ongoing activities, which are having a positive impact. This will be built on during 2013, when we develop proposals for the next round of EU funding (2014-20).

IO 3 - Sustain Employment Opportunities

Risks /Threats

Title	Original Date	Original RAG	Original Likelihood of occurrence	Original Impact	RAG	Likelihood of occurrence	Impact	Comment
1. Impact of recession. (Job Oportunities - economic climate).	01 Apr 2011	◆	3	5	◆	3	5	As in previous years, activities are focused on securing more job opportunities in the private, public and voluntary sectors. The Business Enterprise Support Team continues to provide advice and grant support for local businesses and the Council's Traineeship Scheme (hopefully enhanced through the new Passport Programme, subject to funding approval) shows how CCBC is striving to minimise the ongoing impact of the recession.
2. Risk of business failure	01 Apr 2011	◆	3	5	◆	3	5	The Business Enterprise Support Team continues to provide timely advice, guidance and financial support to local businesses in an effort to safeguard existing jobs and create new opportunities.
5. CCBC's only opportunity to directly engage in the Work Programme rests with Fast Forward's efforts to glean a subcontract. This may be unsuccessful	01 Apr 2011	◆	3	5	◆	1	1	In 2011-12, re Fast Forward failed to obtain Work Programme subcontracts, but has worked on three small contracts with Jobcentre Plus. These will conclude in 2012-13, with the likely result that the unit will then close. There is no ongoing likelihood of CCBC engaging in Work Programme delivery, but there will be ongoing monitoring of the Programme's delivering organisations, via the Training and Education Forum. With effect from 2012-13, this risk no longer applies.
6. A potential risk has emerged European social funds projects.	01 Apr 2011	◆	3	5	◆	1	1	In 2011-12, re ESF projects have been reprofiled in the light of the Work Programme decision, so this risk is no longer applicable.
7. The effects of the recession have an adverse impact in terms of unemployment, economic inactivity and job creation	01 Apr 2011	◆	4	5	◆	5	5	Unemployment remains at a high level and job creation is currently overshadowed by job losses, hence the need for the Council to offer new opportunities via the Traineeship Scheme / Passport Programme.

IO 3 - Sustain Employment Opportunities

Actions

Title	Comment	Overall Status	% Complete	RAG
01. Promote the local funding opportunities	Local businesses continue to receive support from the Business Enterprise Support Team and this includes the opportunity to access any available grant support.	In Progress	90	⚠
02. Support the development & start up of rural businesses via Rural Development Plan funding	Support for rural businesses continues to be provided, primarily under the RDP Budding Businesses scheme.	In Progress	70	⚠
03. Develop the SEE group, with additional representation from Work Programme contract-holders	The Training and Education Forum is now well established and includes members from most education and training providers active in the County Borough. Therefore, this action has now been successfully completed.	Complete	100	✅
04. Seek new and innovative ways to engage people onto employment support programmes	ESF funded projects are ongoing, the Work Programme providers are reporting improved performance locally and Jobs Growth Wales is proving to be increasingly popular with local businesses, since its commencement in April 2012. If the Passport Programme is successful with funding applications, then this will build on the success of the Council's Traineeship scheme in 2011-12.	In Progress	90	⚠
05. Develop community based work clubs & community education and training classes	16 work clubs are now operational, with two more planned for the current year. Ongoing success is dependent on WG approval for the Council's proposal for the next phase of Communities First.	In Progress	90	⚠
06. Work with Partners across HOV to co-ordinate regional approach to employment	This element has not progressed significantly because funding is not available to develop a regional response at the moment. However, the ESF Project Leads group is meeting regularly to co-ordinate and collaborate on existing ESF funded regional projects, but there is no HOV wide successor to the Jobmatch programme and the Employment Consortium has not met for some time.	In Progress	30	⚠

IO 3 - Sustain Employment Opportunities

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Title	Comment	Overall Status	% Complete	RAG
07. Implement HOV Endure project	Project replaced in 2011-12, re Project Endure has been replaced by the GO2 Project, which has now been established with the successful launch and ongoing operation of the GO2 Rhymney & Bargoed web portal. In 2012-13, this model will be utilised to provide the same facility for five other towns in the County Borough. The work initiated/done against this original action is deemed partially completed and also partially successful. However, ongoing work superceding this action will continue under a replacement and new action for 12/13 (action 13) and this action closed-off wef 2011/12.	Partially Completed	60	⚠
08. Provide independent free IT support and advice to businesses	IT support, advice and financial assistance is provided by the Business Enterprise Support Team, who also lead on the GO2 project, which encourages businesses to trade online. Also, within our Procurement Department, a 'Supplier Relationship Officer' is employed specifically to work with, advise, support and further encourage local businesses, particularly SME's, to better engage and seek opportunities with and in local authority business. E.g. Supplier contracts.	In Progress	70	⚠
09. Introduce Regeneration Champions for each of the Priority Activity areas described in action plan.	This action was completed in 2011-12, re Regeneration Champions now in place for each of the eight priorities set out in the Regeneration Strategy. They have reported periodically to Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on progress and are engaged in reviewing and revising the content of the Regeneration Action Plan in 2012-13.	Complete	100	✅
10. Streamline and improve payment settlement processes.	This action was reported as completed for the year ending 2011/12, with a result of paying our creditor invoices within an average of 13.92 days. Even though this did not quite hit our target of 13 days, it is an improvement on the previous years performance. Our challenge now, is to sustain and possibly improve this further for now and the future.	Complete	100	✅
11. Include clauses on Targeted Recruitment and Training into public sector contracts.	This action was completed in 2011-12. All £1m+ contracts now include TR & T clauses.	Complete	100	✅
12. Establish apprenticeship scheme	We reported that this action was completed at the year end of 2011/12. The apprenticeship scheme was introduced in 2011 and 162 people have already benefited from this, well in excess of the 50 forecasted. However, the Economic Development Division continues to work with the Caerphilly Business Forum to further establish and maintain an effective means of supporting local businesses wishing to take on young people.	Complete	100	✅

IO 3 - Sustain Employment Opportunities

Actions

Title	Comment	Overall Status	% Complete	RAG
13. (12/13) The successful launch of the GO2 Bargoed site in 2011-12 provides a model for future development of similar websites for other towns	<p>A project called GO2 my town (a Digital Busines Network) was successfully launched, promoting businesses in the Rhymney and Bargoed area in 2011/12. This project has created a web portal (accessible to the public) which gives the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to information about 450+ local businesses in the area. - Promotional opportunities of services and products for those businesses. - Enhanced business awareness and engagement of local and wider communities. - Information that may draw in increased footfall to our local town - Increased income generation to the authority (re: hosting the web service). <p>The next phase of this project (2012/13), is to provide the same facility for 5 other towns in the County Borough, namely: Risca, Newbridge, Blackwood, Caerphilly, Ystrad Mynach, of which, preparation works are currently being undertaken.</p>	In Progress	50	⚠
14. (12/13) Maximise the value of work towards achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard	<p>Tenants were balloted in February 2012 and voted overwhelmingly for the Council to retain its housing stock. The Council will invest £220 million between 2012 and 2019/20 to transform Council homes, lives and communities throughout the county borough. During 2012/13, work commenced on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing a contract structure which will include targeted recruitment and training as part of the wider community benefit clauses that will be incorporated as core into all WHQS related contracts; - Developing and promoting the delivery of the Council's Passport Programme; - Delivering 6 Pre Procurement events targeting SMEs - Expanding the internal workforce by 20 FTE's and 5 apprenticeships. 	In Progress	30	⚠

IO 3 - Sustain Employment Opportunities

Evidence							
Period	Title	Actual	Target	Interventio	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago	Comment
Q2 12/13	a) BES - Number of new business start-ups supported by the Authority	47.00	10.00	5.00	■	7	
Q2 12/13	a) BES - Number of offers of financial assistance to local companies	110.00	50.00	30.00	■	61	
Q2 12/13	b) RDP - Number of new business start-ups supported by the Authority	0.00	1.00	0.00	■	N/A	No start ups supported by RDP yet, but the project will continue to work with would be rural entrepreneurs until September 2013.
Q2 12/13	b) RDP - Number of offers of financial assistance to local companies	2.00	2.00	1.00	■	N/A	Two offers of grant during the first half of the year and the project officers are working with a number of other rural businesses to develop new projects.
Q2 12/13	Employment Support Allowance (ESA) Number of Claimants ESA+IB	12680.00	12500.00	12800.00	■	N/A	Our target, is to reduce the number of claimants. The figure for the second quarter is the DWP/JCP produced figure for the number of ESA and IB claimants in the County Borough as at February 2012. As was the case last year, the reduction in numbers seen during the past year can be primarily attributed to JCP re-assessments, which have taken people off this benefit.
Q2 12/13	Number of adults participating in Genesis 2 project	1156.00	893.00	854.00	■	1094	We are working as part of a consortium to deliver this project. The project has been re-profiled due to lack of funding and this has led to lower targets for 12/13 for all partners. Because we have already achieved this target we will provide additional support to existing project participants during 12/13.
Q2 12/13	Number of adults participating in the Bridges into Work project	2876.00	2281.00	2150.00	■	2068	Actual figure as at 16.10.12
Q2 12/13	Number of adults participating in the Essential Skills in the Workplace Project	4.00	12.00	10.00	■	N/A	Programme has been re-designed with lower targets than previous, as take-up of previous scheme between employers was poor. Currently although agreements have been made with 3 employers, no training courses have begun. These will begin in September 2012.
Q2 12/13	Number of adults participating in the Working Skills for adults project	1436.00	1440.00	1246.00	■	765	Accumulative value to date.

IO 3 - Sustain Employment Opportunities

Evidence

Period	Title	Actual	Target	Interventio	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago	Comment
2012/13	Number of Apprenticeship opportunities filled (IP)		90.00	60.00		162	Annual Measure. The 2012-13 target is lower than the result achieved in 2011-12, as the team is preparing to introduce the new Passport Programme in April 2013, which will see a significant increase in the number of people supported. However, the scheme continues to succeed, with 60 new opportunities filled in the first six months of 2012-13. It should also be noted that many of the 162 placements filled in 2011-12 remain in place.
Q2 12/13	Number of jobs created by (LIF) grant schemes	50.50	30.00	15.00	↑	34	
Q2 12/13	Number of jobs safeguarded (by Grant Schemes)	561.00	250.00	150.00	↑	257	
Q2 12/13	Number of town centres engaged in GO2 (Digital Business Network)					0	Rhymney & Bargoed digital networks were completed by the year ending of 2011/12. The target for 2012/13 is to complete networks for an additional 5 towns in our borough.
2012/13	Percentage of business start ups (survival) still trading after 1 year (IP)		85.00	75.00		87	Annual figure
Q2 12/13	Time taken to pay invoices to local small & medium size businesses (accum - Number of days)	13.07	13.00	15.00	↓	14.38	