



## **EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 12TH JANUARY 2016**

**SUBJECT: EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF) PROJECTS 2014-2020**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide information to members on four projects, Bridges into Work 2, Working Skills for Adults 2, Inspire 2 Work and Inspire 2 Achieve. The first two projects have received approval for European Social Fund support, whilst the two Inspire projects are at advanced business planning stage.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Despite the recent upturn in the economy, unemployment and economic inactivity is still an issue for concern in the county borough. Since 2013, Caerphilly officers have participated in the development of regional proposals seeking to build on the success of employment support operations delivered under the 2007-13 ESF Programme, including Bridges into Work, Pre-Vent and Working Skills for Adults.
- 2.2 A number of operations have now been approved by the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) and others are at an advanced stage of development, nearing approval. Those approved include the WG led Communities4Work operation, that matches some of their investment in the Communities First programme, with CF teams now supported to deliver employment support in the most deprived areas of Wales.
- 2.3 The successors to Bridges into Work and Working Skills for Adults were approved by WEFO in August 2015, the CCBC match funding for these operations was endorsed by CMT in July. Bridges into Work 2 will provide essential employment support for adults in non-CF areas, whilst Working Skills for Adults 2 will provide upskilling opportunities for those who are low skilled and low paid in work, to address the in work poverty agenda. Both projects will provide direct delivery until January 2018, with project closure by the end of April 2018. Torfaen County Borough Council is the Lead Sponsor on these 2 projects.
- 2.4 Inspire 2 Work and Inspire 2 Achieve are two projects, in advanced business plan stage, that are focused on the clearly identified need to address the issue of young people who are either NEET (not in employment, education or training) or at risk of becoming NEET. These have not yet been formally approved by WEFO. The Lead Sponsor on these 2 projects is Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The report directly links to the 'Prosperous' section of the Single Integrated Plan for Caerphilly. Linking into P1 - Improve local employment opportunities including access to opportunities across a wider geographical area and P3 - Provide support to enable local people to compete for all employment opportunities.
- 3.2 The report also links to the 'Learning' section of the Single Integrated Plan, linking into L1 - Improve the level of basic skills and the number of achieved qualifications (formal and non-formal) to improve the life opportunities for families, L2 - Develop a multi-agency approach to address the impact of poverty on pupil attainment, and L3 - Children, young people and families have the skills and resources to access job opportunities.
- 3.3 The projects support the Welsh Government Delivering Community Learning for Wales (Published November 2010). This provides a policy statement that sets the direction of travel for Adult Community Learning to 2015.
- 3.4 Supports the delivery of the vision statement of the 5 County Gwent Adult Community Learning Partnership, which links to the Welsh Government document above.
- 3.5 Welsh language training provision under the Council's Welsh Language Scheme 2012, the Youth Service Strategy and the Welsh Government Health, Social Care and Social Services strategy "More Than Just Words" (Published 2012).
- 3.6 The projects integrate with the Welsh Government Engagement and Progression Framework.

### **4. THE REPORT**

#### **4.1 Bridges into Work 2**

##### **4.1.1 Bridges into Work 2 is designed to help address unemployment issues, specifically by:**

- Reducing unemployment amongst those most at risk of poverty and discrimination
- Reducing economic inactivity, worklessness and number of workless households
- Increasing social inclusion through sustainable employment
- Reducing barriers to sustaining employment and full time working.

##### **4.1.2 The target groups to be engaged; (All residents of non C First areas) include the:**

- Economically inactive or long term unemployed (aged 25 and over) not in education or training
- Economically inactive or long term unemployed (aged 25 and over) with low or no skills
- Economically inactive or long term unemployed aged 54+
- Economically inactive or long term unemployed (aged 25 and over) from a jobless household
- Economically inactive or long term unemployed (aged 25 and over) with a work limiting health condition or disability
- Economically inactive (aged 25 and over) with care or childcare responsibilities as a secondary barrier
- Long term unemployed (aged 25 and over) from a BME group

4.1.3 The Caerphilly targets to April 2018, are as follows:

- Engaging with 525 economically inactive and long term unemployed participants
- 108 into employment or self-employment upon leaving
- 118 engaged in job search upon leaving
- 262 gaining a qualification or work relevant certification upon leaving
- 282 completing work experience or volunteering

4.1.4 The Caerphilly CBC financial profile has been approved at a value of £1,636,710, with an intervention rate of 76.7659%. This will draw down grant funding of up to £1,256,436 and the Authority will fund the balance of up to £380,274 from Education & Lifelong Learning service reserves.

4.2 Working Skills for Adults 2

4.2.1 Working Skills for Adults 2 is designed to:

- Increase the ownership of generic transferable skills at all levels from entry to level 2 across the workforce.
- Use community based provision to raise skills levels, encouraging reluctant learners to engage with flexible opportunities
- Offer a range of provision including literacy, numeracy, ICT and other generic transferable skills
- Deliver eligible qualifications entry to Level 2
- Improve the opportunities for currently low skilled workers to sustain employment and increase earnings potential

4.2.2 The target groups to be engaged are:

- Employed, including self-employed participants with no formal qualifications
- Employed, including self-employed participants with up to and including a lower secondary education. (ISCED 2)

4.2.3 Whilst the Caerphilly targets to April 2018 are:

- Engaging with 240 participants
- 172 gaining an essential skill, technical, or job specific qualification upon leaving.

4.2.4

The Caerphilly CBC financial profile has been approved at a value of £497,622, with an intervention rate of 69.1721%. This will draw down grant funding of up to £344,215 and the Authority will fund the balance of up to £153,407 from Education & Lifelong Learning service reserves.

4.3 Inspire 2 Work

4.3.1 Inspire 2 Work is designed to

Identify and address the needs of NEET 16-24 year olds in bringing about their sustainable integration in to the labour market and thereby contribute to a reduction in youth unemployment. The operation will target unemployed and economically inactive young people from across the region and offer a person centred approach to determine barriers to sustained engagement in the labour market. Support will be offered in overcoming these barriers and will encompass a range of interventions all with a clear focus on the highest priority of sustainable employment outcomes.

#### 4.3.2 Target groups to be engaged:

- 16-18 year olds who are NEET as identified by Careers Wales 5 tier model (Tiers 1(unknowns),2 (unable or have complex barriers) and 3 (???)
- 19-24 year olds who are NEET- JSA claimants (non work programme / work programme returners)
- 16-24 Vulnerable groups (e.g. BME, ESOL, young carers, young parents, homeless, pregnant, care leavers, young offenders) and those young people experiencing the most disadvantage and furthest from the labour market.

#### 4.3.3 Caerphilly targets over 3 years to August 2018:

- Engaging with 305 participants
- 61 gaining a qualification or work relevant certification upon leaving
- 52 in education or training upon leaving
- 86 entering employment or self-employment upon leaving

#### 4.3.4 Caerphilly operation value:

The Caerphilly CBC financial profile, as per the current business plan, is a value of £1,186,644, with an intervention rate of 68.3611%. This would draw down grant funding of up to £811,200 and the Authority would need to fund the balance of up to £375,444. It is currently proposed that the Authority utilises accumulated service reserves in respect of Apprenticeship & Training balances. A Report is being prepared for Cabinet on this matter.

CCBC is in principle committed to being part of the I2W Project and is currently working to provide an update to the Lead Sponsor (Blaenau Gwent) on the finances for the delivery model and business plan. Subject to a formal decision to support the match funding requirement, the Authority is committed to progressing as a Partner in this Project.

#### 4.4 Inspire to Achieve

4.4.1 Inspire 2 Achieve is designed to identify and address the needs of those most at risk of disengagement and support them to reintegrate into mainstream education provision or alternative curriculum models. The operation will target early intervention for those most at risk across the 11-24 age range. The operation has a clear focus on retention of the targeted at risk within education. It will provide early interventions aimed at identifying individual barriers and supportive actions as detailed in the delivery section of the business case, to reduce the risk of them dropping out.

#### 4.4.2 Target groups to be engaged:

11-16 year olds at most risk of NEET as identified through the YEPF Local Authority Early Identification process

16-18 year olds at most risk of NEET as identified through the Careers Wales 5 tier model  
19-24 Vulnerable groups (e.g. BME, ESOL, ALN, young carers, young parents, pregnant, homeless, care leavers, young offenders) identified through partnership forums across the Local Authorities made up of statutory, voluntary and third sector organisations

#### 4.4.3 Caerphilly targets over 2 years to August 2018:

Engaging with 599 participants

42 gaining a qualification upon leaving

114 in education or training upon leaving

A figure for at reduced risk of becoming NEET upon leaving tbc by WEFO.

Caerphilly is in principle committed to being part of the I2A Project, subject to the outcome of a review and discussions (internally & externally) over the next 6 to 8 months. Discussion is required to develop a model fit for purpose, identify suitable match funding and explore options of support with Blaenau Gwent. Whilst Blaenau Gwent are hoping for the business case to be approved shortly and delivery commence soon after, the profile for Caerphilly has been amended with a September 2016 target for commencing delivery.

#### 4.4.4 Caerphilly operation value:

The Caerphilly CBC financial profile, as per the current business plan, is a value of £1,368,784, with an intervention rate of 68.822 %. This would draw down grant funding of up to £942,035 and the Authority would need to fund the balance of up to £426,749. Consequently we will be looking at staff match funding options.

## 5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Equalities is a cross cutting theme for EU funding and each project must address this according to each theme. The planned investments inherent in the EU Funding programmes will however benefit many different groups in the community.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The match funding commitment for both Bridges into Work 2 and Working Skills for Adults 2, of up to £533k, over 3 years, will be met from Education and Lifelong Learning service reserves. This funding commitment was approved in the Outturn Report to cabinet 29th July 2015
- 6.2 The details of how to meet the match funding for the 2 Inspire Projects, which are both currently at Business Case stage, has not yet been finalised.

## 7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Personnel implications are inherent in the development of new operations. These should be addressed via reports and project plans on a project by project basis, led by the respective CCBC leads for each

## 8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Relevant officers of the authority have been consulted throughout the process of applying for these ESF operations.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Members note the content of this report.

## 10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 In response to Members' request.

## 11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000. This is a Cabinet function.

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