

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 15 MAY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

SUBJECT: **APPRENTICESHIPS, TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update the Lifelong Learning and Overview and Scrutiny Committee with progress in relation to creation of Apprenticeships and Training Opportunities.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 In 2013/14, the County Council and partners committed to:

- working with the public, private and voluntary sectors to increase the number of apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience opportunities;
- launching the Employers' Promise in the public sector to promote and enhancing our roles as employers.
- setting a marketing strategy to communicate the range of apprenticeship and training programmes available;
- identifying apprenticeship opportunities to meet local employer skills needs, alternative programmes and investment in training;
- supporting the development of the Young Entrepreneur Programme with the Flintshire Business Entrepreneurship Network;
- continuing to develop and increase the number and range of Communities First Job Club programmes; and
- implementing skills development programmes in partnership with local employers.

The County Council and Local Service Board (LSB) partners have set the creation of additional apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities as a priority area for development work. This is because we need to:

- extend and improve the education, employment and training opportunities available for young people;
- improve the employment and life prospects of local people;

- meet the skills needs of local employers;
- help young people to successfully transition from education to employment; and
- place and retain more young people in work.

The commissioned work is organised around three themes. They are:

- protecting and promoting the well-being of our employees, volunteers & the community;
- supporting lifelong learning and employability of our employees and volunteers; and
- improving the education, training & employment prospects for young people up to 25 years of age.

Achievement will be measured through:

- reducing the percentage of 16 to 24 year olds claiming job seekers allowance;
- continuing to secure high levels of 16 year olds in education, employment and training;
- improving the local skills base to improve employability and earning prospects;
- increasing the number of people who successfully establish and grow businesses;
- increasing the number of apprenticeships in the public and voluntary sector; and
- increasing the number of new work experience and apprenticeship opportunities

Risks to manage include:

- Ensuring that employer places match current and future aspirations and needs
- Ensuring capacity to support paid work placements and other programmes
- Strengthening the links between Schools, Colleges and employers
- Ensuring that there are resilient arrangements to promote successful outcomes following apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities (including planning ahead with participants)
- Transport including timing, access and cost

Key definitions include:

- *Employers' Promise* – employers committed to working together to create additional training, apprenticeships and work opportunities
- *Communities First Job Club programmes* – work to support adults into employment
- *Young Entrepreneur Programme* – an opportunity for young people to work with mentors on their business ideas

- *Flintshire Business Entrepreneurship Network* – employers working together to support Entrepreneurship Programmes.
- National Youth Engagement and Progression Framework – national framework to prevent exclusion.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Summary of main progress/achievements for the previous six months are:

Key progress following the last LSB is in the following areas:

- National Youth Engagement and Progression Framework
- Information Sharing Protocol
- Apprenticeships
- Self-Employment
- Communities First Activity
- North Wales Advanced Manufacturing Skills and Technology Centre

National Youth Engagement and Progression Framework

- The new National Youth Engagement and Progression Framework has enabled new standardised performance information and analysis to become available to all Authorities from Careers Wales.
- The local implementation plan for this framework is now in place and was submitted to Welsh Government on 14th Feb 2014 and has subsequently been approved. This implementation plan highlights a number of consistent themes, particularly about labour market information, harmonised information systems across the county and ensuring the mapping of provision in order to improve understanding.

Information Sharing Protocol

- To enhance the sharing of information to support this priority, a small Task & Finish group has been set up to look at developing an Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) on behalf of the AEWB Board. A project plan is in place which will lead to the agreement, sign-up to and monitoring of the ISP, named Flintshire NEET.

Apprenticeships

- Flintshire has provided Board level leadership with the development of the Construction Industry Training Apprenticeship Scheme this will create at least 50 additional apprenticeships per year. A business plan has been submitted to Welsh Government and the Construction Industry Training Board.

- Regionally, we are working with Welsh Government to promote the range of apprenticeships and training programmes available to young people. You will recall in January we were considering developing a local model however the fast-paced nature of the decision making in relation to this area of work has resulted in this development. This is now a national priority.

Engagement with Businesses

- Work has been undertaken with the Deeside Enterprise Zone to engage businesses to work closely with schools around the STEM subjects including workshops to identify business needs. There was a presentation to businesses on DEZ and Welsh Government for a shared apprentice scheme for the DEZ.
- Argoed High School's head has started working with local employers, Coleg Cambria and HEIs to analyse employer expectation and how key skills can be embedded across the curriculum.

Communities First Activity

- Communities First are continuing to work in partnership with Business Supporting Communities and Groundwork to take forward the Jobs Growth Wales & Young Recruits Programme and further opportunities are being explored.
- Communities First working in partnership with Coleg Cambria and Jobs Growth Wales have implemented an initiative to support community-based job opportunities for young people in Flintshire who require more intensive support in the work place and will be helping many young people who require more intensive support to reap the benefits from work experience opportunities at the Artisans Shop on Holywell High Street, this is also providing vital experience and opportunities for young people to develop entrepreneurial skills as a route of progression that they may have not considered before.

North Wales Advanced Manufacturing Skills and Technology Centre

- Further progress has been made with the North Wales Advanced Manufacturing Skills and Technology Centre (NWAMSTC) project. Phase one of the feasibility study (to develop a skills pipeline in partnership with Welsh Government, HE, FE and private industry) has been assessed by Welsh Government and we are awaiting formal feedback. We understand that the assessment states that the centre is needed and that there should be one and that it should be North Wales based.

- Key developments include the desire to link the project into “catapult centres” (expanding the project beyond North Wales) and deciding who the lead partner is.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 The next key “milestone” steps include:

- Develop terms of reference and outcomes for the HR Group.
- Liaise with Welsh Government re. the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Action Plan – Implementation Plan monitoring requirements. This is ongoing work with deadlines to be agreed with Welsh Government. The first of the deadlines is delivering a gap analysis or provision.
- Develop an interim website, with Welsh Government, to communicate and promote opportunities – this is an ongoing and long term piece of work.
- Project to aid understanding within the partnership and work specifically with partners to ensure that the targets are achieved ensuring results-based accountability.
- Audit would take place of training provision and allied funding streams available to support delivery in the area. This audit would result in a comprehensive assessment of on-the-job and vocational training. The LSB would then match the supply of training with employer demands in order to support long-term work-force planning in Flintshire.

Scrutiny is invited to commission a further progress report in six months time.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There are no new financial implications arising from this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 There are no anti-poverty implications arising directly from this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no environmental impact implications arising directly from this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no equalities impact implications arising directly from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 The Employee Promise sets out reasonable expectations for progressive and positive employer practice.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None at this stage.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Stakeholder consultation (including with Employer and Provider representatives has been undertaken in developing priority plans).

12.00 APPENDICES

None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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