

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER, EDUCATION AND YOUTH**

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).

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 A summary of main progress/achievements for the previous six months includes:

- The National Youth Engagement and Progression Framework was developed and is now being delivered;
- Information Sharing Protocol finalised to ensure the smooth flow of information between organisations;
- Apprenticeships and the latest figures;
- Self-Employment as a part of transition between school and working;
- Communities First Activity; and the
- Deeside Enterprise Zone Shared Apprenticeship Scheme

National Youth Engagement and Progression Framework

- The National Youth Engagement and Progression Framework is being delivered by all relevant authorities, including Flintshire County Council (FCC) and Careers Wales.
- A local delivery group is in place to ensure delivery of the plan and this group consists of organisations delivering support to ensure a transition to employment for all young people in Flintshire. The delivery of high quality labour market information and harmonised information systems across the county are currently ongoing. A major task for the past three months is the delivery of a mapping exercise to determine delivery and providers in the area in order to improve understanding.

Information Sharing Protocol

- An information sharing protocol is agreed with all local partners and this will lead to sign-up to the sharing of information to ensure we provide young people with the best transition to working life, named Flintshire NEET (Not in Education, Employment & Training).

Apprenticeships

- Flintshire County Council is continuing to provide Board level leadership with the development of the Construction Industry Training Apprenticeship Scheme.

- The latest figures for apprenticeships show that more than 2,500 people on apprenticeships with nearly 10% of those in an engineering apprenticeship. Amazingly, this is more than 6 times the average for Wales. By way of contrast we have just over 50% of the average for apprentices in business administration. This probably reflects the manufacturing strength of the economy but we are assessing whether there is more to this

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. The reason that this is important is that the target for DEZ was 7,000 new / safeguarded jobs within DEZ over 5 years (2012-2017) and it is a target employment area for FCC and its partners.
- In the first quarter of the year 255 jobs were created and more than 200 local jobs have been safeguarded.

Communities First Activity

- Flintshire Enterprise Club celebrated eighteen months of business entrepreneurship success on Friday 6th June at Coleg Cambria. Over seventy delegates attended the event including the eight new businesses which have started trading with support from the programme.
- Communities First is continuing to work in partnership with other agencies and is embarking upon an ambitious tackling workless households programme, specifically targeted at households where no single person has worked for more than 6 months. This is a step forward from programmes in England where the minimum time threshold has been a workless household for at least two years.
- Communities First in the East is targeted with getting 24 people into employment by Christmas. A series of Jobs Growth Wales clinics have been set up and are assessing potential and attitude to work and matching the young person with potential vacancies.

Deeside Enterprise Zone Shared Apprenticeship Scheme

During a three year cycle, the scheme will support 60 apprentices in gaining a gold standard apprenticeship in areas of advanced manufacturing. The scheme will raise awareness of opportunities available in an effort to recruit the brightest local talent to the zone and ensure that we can provide the skills needed by local business. The apprentices will be employed by Coleg Cambria to reduce the burden on local companies.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 The next key “milestone” steps include:

- Develop a project plan for the HR Group to ensure the delivery of the Employers’ Promise.
- 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 second stage will review progress so far in the autumn of this year.
- Boost the profile of the joint apprenticeship scheme with young people and employers to increase numbers and broaden the scope of the programme.
- Deliver the review of the Employment, Skills and Jobs Partnership in order to balance the need for setting priorities with effective delivery on the ground.
- Monitor the impact of the work with the households where no one has worked for at least 6 months.
- Work with Careers Wales and other agencies to ensure that the audit of on-the-job and vocational training is widely used and understood with schools, employers and across the training provider sector. The LSB would then match the supply of training with employer demands in order to support long-term work-force planning in Flintshire. This is also part of the long-term aim with the Employers’ Promise.

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 organisational expectations with our commitment to young people.

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

12.01 None

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

None.

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