



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Policy Development Committee

At: Remotely via Microsoft Teams

On: Thursday, 21 October 2021

Time: 2.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Cyril Anderson

Membership:

Councillors: J E Burtonshaw, P Downing, P R Hood-Williams, P K Jones, M A Langstone, W G Lewis, P Lloyd, P M Matthews and T M White

Watch Online: [//bit.ly/3hSVSAA](https://bit.ly/3hSVSAA)

Agenda

	Page No.
1 Apologies for Absence.	
2 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests. www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosureofinterests	
3 Minutes. To approve and sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 2
4 Employability Programmes Update.	3 - 10
5 Work Plan 2020 - 2022.	11 - 12

Next Meeting: Thursday, 18 November 2021 at 2.00 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Huw Evans'.

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Friday, 15 October 2021

Contact: Democratic Services - Tel: (01792) 636923

Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Policy Development Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Thursday, 16 September 2021 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor C Anderson (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

J E Burtonshaw
P Lloyd

Councillor(s)

P K Jones
P M Matthews

Councillor(s)

W G Lewis
T M White

Officer(s)

Scott Dummett
Martin Nicholls
Samantha Woon

Lead Lawyer
Director of Place
Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P Downing and P R Hood-Williams

12 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

13 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Policy Development Committee held on 15 July 2021, be approved as a correct record.

Queries were raised in relation to the Bio-diversity on-line survey and traffic calming. The Director of Place suggested that the matter be raised as part of the work plan 2020 – 2022.

14 Swansea Bay City Deal - Skills & Talent Programme Business Case.

The Director of Place presented an update of the Swansea Bay City Deal Skills and Talent business case (attached as Appendix 1 of the report) recently approved by Cabinet and to explore how this may fit in with a future PDC agenda item of developing local skills.

Members' noted the background and context, the business plan for the skills and talent programme, funding, delivery of the phases (including the gap analysis and whether the Council is required to make further interventions), challenges faced in respect of skills gaps, the aim of the programme and the financial impact.

Members' discussed:

- 1) Developing local skills and recruitment and how the Council can develop its policies to assist in that regard.
- 2) The role of schools in aligning the school aged curriculum to what is required post 16 years in order to address the massive skills shortages.
- 3) Costs of consultants fees and the need to ensure the majority of funding is channelled into training opportunities.

The Chair thanked the Director of Place for the informative report.

Resolved that:

- 1) The Director of Place present further, detailed reports, addressing local skills and recruitment, including areas of Council intervention and the role of education developing a curriculum which addresses the issues with skills shortages post 16 years. These reports are to be considered at the meeting of the Committee on 21 October, 2021.

15 Work Plan 2020 - 2022.

The Democratic Services Officer presented the work plan 2020 – 2022.

Queries were raised regarding the timetabling of further reports in respect of the Swansea Bay City Deal (Skills & Business Case); an update in respect of the Bio-diversity online survey and traffic calming. It was suggested that a separate meeting be scheduled to re-priorities work plan items.

Resolved that:

- 1) The Democratic Services Officer organise a work plan meeting involving the Chair, Vice Chair, and Director of Place.

The meeting ended at 2.33 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 4



Report of the Director of Place

Economy, Environment & Infrastructure PDC
21 October 2021

Employability Programmes Update

Purpose:	To provide the Economy, Environment & Infrastructure PDC with an update of the Employability Programmes
Policy Framework:	Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy.
Report Author:	Elliott Williams
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith, Aimee Dyer
Legal Officer:	Pamela Milford
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For information	

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the key employability, skills and training programmes being delivered by Swansea Council, to provide a summary of the achievements to date and to highlight opportunities and challenges going forward that should be taken into consideration in the development and securing of funding for successor projects, post-EU funding.

2 Background and Context

- 2.1 Since Wales began receiving EU structural funds in the year 2000, the opportunity to extend employability support has been taken by a range of organisations. Welsh Government has been able to 'double-up' national schemes in education and skills, and regional and local projects covering a range of issues have been implemented over this time. Some projects such as Workways have evolved during this time and developed with each successive funding round, adding features based on experience and need. A variety of

smaller more specific engagement and skills projects take place via WCVA through the 'Active Inclusion' fund and its predecessors.

2.2 Currently Swansea Council operates five employability projects within the County, namely:

- Workways+ (WW+)
- Communities for Work (CfW)
- Communities for Work+ (CfW+)
- Workways+ STU
- Kickstart (commenced Dec'20 in response to Covid-19)

Until very recently (July'21), the Council also delivered the Cam Nesa (CN) project which operated for a 3-year period. See Appendix 1 for a summary of this provision. It is also worth noting that the Council's Beyond Bricks and Mortar initiative works closely with all projects to set up placements and training weeks with a range of Council contracts.

2.3 Aside from the aforementioned employability projects the Council also delivers the Cynnydd project in conjunction with the Education Department. The project operates within secondary schools and provides support for pupils that are at risk of becoming NEET.

2.4 All projects, with the exception of CfW+ and Kickstart are funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). CfW+ is funded by WG, whilst Kickstart is funded by UK Government via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Each of these projects target and supports different cohorts of individuals or participants from age 11 up to retirement, in line with national funding programme priorities and objectives, with service delivery tailored to address local needs, within the constraints of regional and national policies.

2.5 The EU funded projects were developed as part of the new 2014-2020 EU funding programme. A number of European Social Fund (ESF) employability projects were developed on a national and regional basis with the aim of delivering services within Local Authority areas to tackle poverty through sustainable employment. In terms of larger projects, at a national level Welsh Government developed the Communities for Work project whilst regionally the Workways+ and Cam Nesa projects were developed by a consortium of Councils including Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, and Ceredigion.

2.6 In February 2017 Welsh Government announced that the Communities First Programme would end and that there would be an increasing focus on 'employment, early years and empowerment' – the Communities for Work Plus project shortly followed in 2018.

2.7 Whilst each project targets a very specific cohort of participant, the typical offer of support across the projects includes:

- Community outreach and engagement
- Dedicated intensive employment mentoring

- Initial triage and assessment of needs
- Action plan development
- Support to overcome barriers, e.g. confidence building or work limiting health conditions
- Training and qualifications
- Volunteering placements
- Paid Work Opportunities
- Job search support and mapping skills to jobs
- Work trials
- Welfare support and advice

2.8 During late 2020, and in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Kickstart scheme was established as part of the UK Government's Plan for Jobs with the aim of creating hundreds and thousands of new, fully funded jobs across England, Scotland and Wales. Swansea Council applied for funding to become an Employer and Gateway:

- As an Employer the Council has set up fully paid 6-month work placements for NEETs (16-24 year olds) across a number of departments internally.
- As a Gateway, officers in the Economic Development Team have established fully paid 6-month work placements with SMEs in Swansea.
- As part of both functions the young people on placement are provided with wrap around support from an Employment Mentor during their contract of employment with the Council or SME.

There is also extra funding to support young people to build their experience and help them move into sustained employment after they have completed their Kickstart Scheme funded job.

2.9 More recently, in July 2021, the business plan for the delivery of the City Deal supported Skills and Talent Programme was approved by Cabinet on 15th July 2021.

2.10 The City Deal funding will fund a programme team that will develop a Skills Barometer for the region, the Barometer will identify the skills gaps that exist in the region and identify the new skills required to meet the existing and future needs of the 8 City Deal projects across the five key themes of Construction, Digital, Energy, Health and Wellbeing and Smart Manufacturing.

2.11 The Skills and Talent programme is required because the region suffers from a series of overarching economic issues including low GVA, lack of well-paid job opportunities, skills shortage, high levels of economic inactivity and outward youth migration. The region is characterised by a higher proportion of individuals with no qualifications when compared with national averages. A high number of individuals in the region are currently in low skilled, low paid and unstable employment and subsequently a lower-than-average level of individuals are in higher paid, meaningful employment. The programme will help address the skills gaps by working with the City Deal projects and regional stakeholders to develop and deliver the skills needs for the future in

the region. The programme provides an opportunity to build on the work of existing employability programmes.

3 Current economic and employability issues and outputs

3.1 Swansea Council has recently developed its Covid Economic Recovery Plan which seeks to provide employability support to those in need now who have been impacted by the pandemic, but also to support businesses to bounce back and crucially support employment and our local economy. During **2020 UK Output fell by 9.8%**, however the Bank of England does expect growth of 7.25% during 2021 to bring the economy back to 2019 levels.

4 Since the start of the pandemic the Council has provided over **£160m of WG Covid-19 financial support to businesses** and has now launched the new Business Swansea service. As part of this service a business start-up grant has been established, and the very first start-up grant was awarded to a participant of one of our employability projects.

4.1 Through the combined effort of these projects we have supported **over 4500 people over the past 5 years, of which over 1700 people have been supported into employment**. These projects are backed by and work closely with other Council services such as welfare rights, lifelong learning and business support, as part of our collaborative working approach.

4.2 Since the start of the pandemic **Swansea Council has supported 1,233 people** through its employability programmes, of which **500 have been helped back into employment**, despite the current economic picture in Swansea where we witnessed a steep increase in unemployment levels in April 2020.

4.3 As of June 2021 the **unemployment rate in Swansea** stood at **5.0%** (5.0% Welsh average, 5.6% GB). The Bank of England unemployment projections for 2021 have been reduced recently, and the trend in Swansea is gradually following that projection. Unemployment in Swansea was at 5.3% in May 2021, which reduced to 5.0% in June 2021 but is still higher than the rate of 3.4% in June 2019.

4.4 During 2020 as a **Kickstart Gateway and Employer** working with existing relationships with SMEs and businesses the Council was able to **setup 260 placements with 32 employers**, and also setup **over 60 internal placements within our Place** department. Of the total placements established over **50 participants** are on placement at present, with 10 more pending. Internal placements are in Building Services, Parks and Waste Management, whilst external placements are with a range of employers in the care sector and construction. All young people in building services or construction placements are being upskilled and supported to achieve CSCS cards.

4.5 As part of Kickstart the Workways+ employability team have attended the Job Centres twice a week to support 16-24 year olds and the Work Coaches in

providing wrap around mentoring support for those on placement. The team has also attended 2 jobs fairs to promote placements and support.

- 4.6 Through Swansea Council contracts and its social benefits team (**Beyond Bricks and Mortar**) in 20/21 a total of **6,380 training weeks were created**, with many of these filled by participants of our employability projects. Participants have benefited from being offered **placements and jobs with contractor Buckingham Plc** who are currently building our **£135m Copr Bay Phase 1** scheme which includes a 3,500 seat arena.
- 4.7 Currently, 18-months into the Covid-19 pandemic it is clear the employability landscape has changed. Whilst furlough has recently ended on 30th September 2021, we are facing a situation where there is an abundance of job vacancies across a range of sectors, yet there is a shortage of people to fill those vacancies. This is an issue faced by many employability support providers, including EU funded schemes, Job Centre/DWP provision.
- 4.8 At present, the reason for the shortages of those looking to enter the job market is unknown, and it may take some time for the reasons to transpire following the end of furlough. It is possible that following the end of furlough there will be an increase in redundancies and a need for people to re-enter the labour market. However, currently those claimants known to DWP aren't engaging with work coaches or employability support providers and it is unclear if this trend will change – more will be known in the coming months. In the event that this happens, there will continue to be a labour shortage in areas such as HGV, construction, hospitality, etc. All employability programmes internal and external remain geared up to support those seeking employability mentoring, training and career advice.
- 4.9 As noted above, there are some labour shortages in specific areas, Health and Social care, retail & hospitality, construction and HGV driving. To respond to this the RLSP is working with projects such as Workways+ to set up events in Carmarthenshire and Swansea to promote opportunities and develop pathways to work. Links have been made for example with a local transport company who need to fill 150+ jobs, our Workways+ ELOs are facilitating training and will pay for the HGV licence providing applicants sign a 2-year contract with Owens. A Recruitment Fair is being planned once ATG take possession of the Arena. They have started their recruitment for positions that can/need to start before the handover happens.

5 Opportunities and Challenges

- 5.1 Whilst the Council currently delivers five employability projects, they were all developed in a variety of ways, from top-down nationally conceived projects to bottom-up locally designed and delivered regional partnerships. As a result of this there exists a number of differences in the operational delivery of each project, yet synergies do also exist. By way of example, each project operates different outreach and engagement strategies, marketing and social media approaches, along with different paperwork and monitoring systems.

- 5.2 Unfortunately these complexities not only cause some level of inefficiency in the delivery of projects but as there are three separate 'brands' of provision this also complicates the landscape for the individual looking for support. Thankfully this was recognised by Welsh Government in early 2018 with the launch of their Employability Plan which sets a strategy to simplify the landscape, in part by developing the Working Wales programme that provides support to all cohorts in need of employment support.
- 5.3 Funding for the EU funded employability projects (CfW+ and WW+) is due to end in 2022, at which point there will be a significant gap in provision to support those in need. As outlined above the Council led employability projects were developed since 2016, many of which were in response to the commencement of a new EU funding round. Workways+ and other employability projects also existed under the previous EU funding programme, but ended abruptly at the end of the funding cycle. This led to the loss of staff, knowledge, systems and trusted brands of support. The project restarted two years later along with others, all of which took time to re-establish in the community and gain momentum. An opportunity exists to secure funding via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to help develop a new employability programme that will work alongside the Skills and Talent programme but utilising Local Government tried and tested structures in order to maintain employability service provision and prevent knowledge loss.
- 5.4 Whilst the end of EU funding poses a major risk to employability provision in Swansea, the UK Government launched a call to develop bids for the Community Renewal Fund in Spring 2021, which will serve as the precursor to the Shared Prosperity Fund. A collaborative employability project proposal was developed and submitted to UK Government, which sought to build on the gap in provision caused by the end of Cam Nesa and to pilot a new joined up approach to provision. The proposed Pathways to Work project would see the Council delivering a single project that targets a range of cohorts in conjunction with the third sector and Gower College Swansea to create career pathways. Partners included the teams within Place, Social Service, Education, YMCA, SCVS, Gower College and Swansea University. This proposal could serve as a pilot approach to test new ways of working, to address skills gaps and develop pathways to employment and volunteering.
- 5.5 Currently work is also underway with colleagues in Education to identify future employability service provision for not only 16+ but those in secondary schools. This is in the context of a new curriculum being adopted, along with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. Work is also commencing to evaluate the delivery of the Cynnydd project and the needs of those at risk of becoming NEET – again to look at what provision is needed and how this can be funded. Given the above opportunities to reshape employability provision post EU funding, this is also an opportune time to review post-16 education and skills needs in order to align with any new integrated employability programmes and the City Deal Skills and Talent programme.
- 5.6 The Committee will note that this report is for information since the current employability programme is dependent on grant funded programmes in that

they are fixed in shape and design to work with certain cohorts/demographic. This is intended by the grant awarding body to provide specific support to individuals in-line with grant objectives, terms and conditions etc. and as such there is little opportunity for the Council to set a policy around this area at this time.

- 5.7 However, there is a question about the provision going forward, when EU funds and our current programmes end in Dec'22. What would the Council like to see in the future and how should any new programmes look, subject to funding?. It is hoped that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will have fewer constraints and requirements than EU funding (although perhaps it is too early to say for sure), so we may have more freedom to shape and develop more localised solutions, building on the work we've undertaken for the past 5-10 years and the Skills and Talent programme going forward. A precursor to this is the recent Community Renewal Fund employability bid. As mentioned previously in the report, this is an example of how we could design a new collaborative programme with partners, linked to BBM, Regen schemes and Business support.
- 5.8 It is therefore suggested that whilst this report is for information, a further report could be brought back to the PDC towards the end of 2022 to link in with this future policy agenda. Any initial thoughts from the committee on how this might look would be welcomed.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 As this report is for information there are no additional financial implications falling on the authority,

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 As this report is for information there are no additional legal implications falling on the authority.

8 Integrated Assessment Implications

- 8.1 **As this report is for information** there is no requirement to undertake an IIA.

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 – Employability Provision Chart

Swansea Council Employability Provision Chart

	Communities for Work (Youth & Adult)	Cam Nesa [ended Jul'21]	Workways+	Workways+ STU	Communities for Work+	Kickstart
Target Group & Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ages 16-24 NEETs Age 25+ Long term unemployed (12months+) or economically inactive Residing within C1st areas Complex barriers: low or no skills, work limiting health condition, care or childcare responsibilities, aged 54+, or from a jobless household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ages 16-24 NEETs Focussed primarily at Tier 2 NEETs, but not restricted to T2. Residing anywhere in Swansea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 25+ Residing outside C1st areas Long term unemployed (12months+) or Economically Inactive Complex barriers: low or no skills, work limiting health condition, care or childcare responsibilities, aged 54+, or from a jobless household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 25+ Residing anywhere in Swansea Short term unemployed (under 12months UE), closest to labour market Barriers: low or no skills, work limiting health condition, care or childcare responsibilities, aged 54+, or from a jobless household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ages 16+ Residing anywhere in Swansea Individuals living in or at risk of poverty No eligibility restrictions, provision of last resort if a client is ineligible for other projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 16-24 NEETs In receipt of Universal Credit Residing anywhere in Swansea
Support on offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community outreach and engagement via hubs Intensive mentoring support Initial triage & assessment Develop personal action plan Support to overcome barriers e.g. confidence building Welfare support and advice Training and qualifications Opportunities via Employability Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community outreach and engagement via hubs Lead worker support Initial triage & assessment Social, emotional and well-being support Develop personal action plan Support to overcome barriers e.g. confidence building Welfare support and advice Training and qualifications Transition support Paid work opportunities Work trials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community outreach and engagement via hubs Intensive mentoring support Initial triage & assessment Develop personal action plan Support to overcome barriers e.g. confidence building Welfare support and advice Training and qualifications Volunteering placements Paid work opportunities Job search support Work trials Opportunities via Employability Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community outreach and engagement via hubs Intensive mentoring support Initial triage & assessment Develop personal action plan Support to overcome barriers e.g. confidence building Welfare support and advice Training and qualifications Paid work opportunities Job search support Work trials Opportunities via Employability Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community outreach and engagement via hubs Intensive mentoring support Develop personal action plan Support to overcome barriers e.g. confidence building Welfare support and advice Training and qualifications Job search support Employment advice Opportunities via Employability Network In work support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully paid 6-month work placement with the Council or an SME business via Gateway Wrap around mentoring support In work support & training Action planning & CV development for post-placement opportunities.
Delivery team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triage Officers Youth Employment Mentors Adult Employment Mentors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead workers Transition officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Mentors Employer Liaison Officers Volunteer Development Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Mentors Employer Liaison Officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant Engagement Officers Employability Mentors Employer Engagement Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer Liaison Officer Employment Mentor
Key outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualification / work certification Employment on leaving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualification / work certification In education / training on leaving Employment on leaving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualification / work certification Work experience / volunteering Employment on leaving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic skills & vocational training Qualification / work certification Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paid placements established
Funding Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welsh Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UK Government/DWP

Page 10

Client Pathway



Economy, Environment & Infrastructure PDC
Work Plan - 2020 – 2022

Date of Meeting	Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author
21 Oct 2021	Employability Programmes Update.	<p>To provide the Economy, Environment & Infrastructure PDC with an update of the Swansea Bay City Deal Skills and Talent business case:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) addressing local skills and recruitment, including areas of Council intervention; and 2) the role of education developing a curriculum which addresses the issues with skills shortages post 16 years. 	Phil Holmes / Paul Relf / Elliott Williams/ Helen Morgan Rees/ David Bawden
18 Nov 2021	Grey Fleet Policy.		Stuart Davies
18 Nov 2021	Green Fleet Policy.	Development of an EV Farm. Charging Networks. Investment in Home Charging Kits.	Stuart Davies
16 Dec 2021	Questions for online survey (Management and Maintenance of Open Spaces).		Chris Howell/Paul Mellor
16 Dec 2021	Tree Policy.		Phil Holmes/Paul Mellor

Economy, Environment & Infrastructure PDC
Work Plan - 2020 – 2022

Date of Meeting	Report Title	Report Summary	Report Author
16 Dec 2021	Climate Change Strategy (including Biodiversity).		Rachel Lewis
20 Jan 2022	Street Lighting Policy.		Stuart Davies
20 Jan 2022	Speed Control Measures in Residential Areas.		Stuart Davies
17 Feb 2022	High Street Regeneration.		Phil Holmes
17 Feb 2022	Empty Premises.		Phil Holmes
17 Mar 2022	More Homes Housing and De-carbonisation Strategy.	How is the council providing more affordable and energy efficient homes as part of its Housing Revenue Account.	Mark Wade
17 Mar 2022	Annual Report.		Martin Nicholls
	Llwybr-Newydd (the new Wales Transport Strategy).		Stuart Davies