



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

19TH MARCH 2019

ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR J. ROSSER

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet Members with information about adult community learning in Rhondda Cynon Taf; the range of provision offered, the contribution it makes to the wider Council agenda, the impact it has on learners and the changes that are proposed by Welsh Government for the future.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider the contents of the report; and
- 2.2 Provide comment as appropriate on the current provision of adult community learning in Rhondda Cynon Taf and the potential changes to future funding arrangements.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Adult community learning is defined by Welsh Government as '*flexible learning opportunities for adults, delivered in community venues to meet local needs.*' It has a particular focus on improving essential skills and employability and improving well-being. Accordingly it plays a significant role in supporting other Council services and programmes to meet their targets and makes a contribution to the achievement of Council priorities that is far higher than the financial resources invested in it. This report provides an opportunity for Cabinet Members to consider the work undertaken, potential changes to funding arrangements and to request further details on current provision and the future opportunities for adult community learning if required.

- 3.2 Adult community learning programmes are subject to inspections by Estyn and it is anticipated that there will be an inspection in 2019/20.
- 3.3 There are major changes to be introduced to the grant funding provided by Welsh Government from September 2020 onwards that will have an impact on the provision offered and it is important that the Cabinet is aware of this as approval may be required at a later date for any proposed changes to future governance and delivery of adult community learning in the County.

4. BACKGROUND – CURRENT PERFORMANCE AND FUNDING

- 4.1 The Council's Adult Education Service delivers adult community learning programmes in Rhondda Cynon Taf and is the Lead Body for the Adult Community Learning Partnership in the County. The service provides support, in the main to people over the age of 25. However the Inspire 2 Work programme is specifically for people aged 16-24 years old. The service currently has 35 staff and tutors, the majority of whom work on a part-time basis. The service has one lifelong learning centre at Garth Olwg that facilitates a wide range of provision delivered by Council services and other partners including courses, workshops, events and theatre performances. The majority of courses and programmes are delivered at libraries, community centres and other venues across the county. In 2017/18 learning was delivered at 96 venues.
- 4.2 Provision is targeted at those who are most disadvantaged and would benefit from gaining skills and qualifications although there is also a programme of activities designed to enhance the well-being of participants and to support the social integration and independence of older residents or those who have a life-limiting health condition.
- 4.3 The majority of **funding** for adult community learning is external:
- Welsh Government Community Learning Grant - £200,846;
 - Franchise funding from Coleg y Cymoedd for delivery of essential skills and independent living skills - £142,050;
 - Communities for Work + funding - £183,000;
 - ESF funding for Inspire 2 Work - £2,113,970 (of which £549,632 is match-funding). This funding is for 3 years and includes staffing related to HR's Education, Employment and Training team;
 - Grant funding for specific projects e.g. funding from the Health Board for delivery of social prescribing provision. (This varies depending on which project applications are successful).

Council core funding of £223,927 is provided towards management costs, and the running costs of Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre.

Commercial income is generated through room hire and course fees are charged for courses that cannot be funded under the funding agreements indicated above. The target for commercial income generation for Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre is £72,861 while course fee income for the wider service is around £20,000 annually. The course fees are amongst the lowest in Wales – currently £2.50 per hour where charged.

- 4.4 In 2017/18, the number of learners enrolled on courses that were accredited and captured on the service's EBS data system came to 2,860. Enrolments from EBS are uploaded to Welsh Government's LLWR system and reflect the learners whose courses are funded through Welsh Government's Community Learning Grant. Learners whose learning is funded by other sources are recorded on differently. Data submitted to LLWR is verified by Welsh Government and a Learner Outcome report on the performance of the Adult Community Learning Partnership in Rhondda Cynon Taf is produced annually. The most recent verified data available relates to the 2017/18 academic year and this indicates that 96% of learners completed their courses while 93% attained a qualification. These both exceed the national comparators. These results are especially notable when it is realised that 41.7% of these learners come from the most deprived areas of the county while only 7.6% come from the least deprived areas.

In addition to the learners enrolled on accredited courses directly delivered by the Adult Education Service, 2,197 learners accessed their learning at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre – learning that was delivered by partner organisations and through self-directed learning groups supported by the centre, which is the only learning centre that is directly run by the Adult Education Service.

Furthermore, 4,476 people participated in events during the same 2017/18 period at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre.

- 4.5 The service is required by Welsh Government to produce an **Annual Service Delivery Plan** for adult community learning for the County indicating what provision is planned for the year ahead, how this is delivered, how this links with partner provision and especially how we ensure that there is progression for learners to continue with their studies or to gain employment. Each plan is assessed by Welsh Government Officers. The plan for the 2018/19 can be seen at **Appendix 1**. It was assessed by Welsh Government as follows:

'The funding in RCT that is provided through the CLG, CfW+ and franchise is used holistically to deliver a wide range of courses that are specifically designed to target the local needs of the population...It is clear from the plan that a great deal of provision is taking place in RCT...'

The Service Delivery Plan for 2019/20 academic year will be submitted to Welsh Government in May 2019.

- 4.6 The service also leads on the development of a **Self-Assessment Report** that is required annually by Estyn on the performance of the Adult Community Learning Partnership in the County.
- 4.7 A key aim of the service is to provide equitable access to learning opportunities and employability support that aligns to local labour market needs. This has resulted in the development of the Rhondda Cynon Taf **Employment Pathway model** - a strategic approach that ensures that services and organisations work together to ensure that people have the opportunity to access the learning and skills required to improve their employability, alongside the mentoring and employment support to gain and sustain paid employment. An outline of the Employment Pathway can be seen at **Appendix 2**. In practice, this has meant that Adult Education funding and funding for employment programmes (such as Communities for Work+ and ESF-funded programmes) have been allocated in such a way that the offer to residents across all parts of the County has been improved and resources maximised. In addition, there is no post code lottery and where there is a need and lack of other suitable provision younger people can access all of the provision.

5. CURRENT PROVISION

- 5.1 The service's **pre- employment programme** is funded by Communities for Work+ and runs as either a 2 or 4 week programme delivering a number of accredited courses through either Agored Cymru or Quallsafe. The programme is built around the specific needs of the learners on each course and individuals can choose from a suite of qualifications including resilience skills, creating the right image, telephone skills, job interview skills, team working to name a few. If successful, learners can then progress onto the more sector specific Employment Routes provision or may decide to focus on developing a particular skill further. Employability courses have also been delivered for Adult Services' Platform 1 and Ignite ESF projects.
- 5.2 The service provides a range of **digital skills** courses, from basic Introduction to Computing to ECDL courses. A 4 week programme delivered for Communities for Work+ to further develop the skills of people who have engaged with Digital Fridays provision has been particularly successful and a clear progression pathway has been developed in partnership with Communities for Work+ and Adult Learning Wales for learners who wish to enhance their digital skills further.
- 5.3 The focus on ensuring that learning meets local needs has also ensured that services work closely with local employers. The **Employment Routes** programme developed by the service has been successful in developing

training programmes with employers who have vacancies and ensuring that learners who successfully complete the training and gain the relevant qualifications are assured of an interview. Over the past 2 years this has resulted in:

Financial year	Participants engaged on programme	Gained employment over 16 hours	Participants who gained sector specific qualifications	Total of qualifications gained
2016/17	510	149	381	991
2017 /18	474	238	391	693
2018/19 to date	350	160	208	416

46 businesses have engaged with the service and contributed to the development of the programme. These include both local and national companies.

5.4 **Essential skills** courses are set up for the year but learners can join at any time. They are open to anyone over the age of 16 who has a literacy and/or numeracy skills need. Learners are able to attend more than one class a week. All learners are assessed using the Welsh Government's Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST) or a paper-based assessment. Their needs are identified from the assessment and a relevant Agored Cymru qualification is selected for them to work towards. Individual support is provided by the tutor. Classes have learners of varying levels of need and, consequently a maximum of 10 learners are enrolled on each course. The majority of classes are held at libraries, job centres and community venues. Specific provision is provided for:

- Carers;
- People who need to achieve a Level 2 qualification so that they can enrol on Employment Routes provision (some employers, for example the NHS require employees to have this as a minimum qualification);
- People who work in Vision Products;
- People with mental health conditions.

5.5 The **Independent Learning Skills** programme provides opportunities for people with moderate or severe learning disabilities to achieve a 3 - credit qualification. The courses are held at a variety of venues over two terms and 122 learners are currently engaged on a varied curriculum. The majority of learners arrive at the centres by buses provided by the Adult Services team and carers attend with them. This provision is valued highly by the learners themselves, their families and the Day Centre staff who support the provision. It provides an opportunity for learners to gain confidence, raise their self-esteem and meet new people as well as learn new skills.

At the end of each academic year these learners are presented with certificates by the Mayor in a special awards ceremony.

One of the tutors who delivers this provision has recently (January 2019) received a special recognition award for her inspiring work with these learners, at a ceremony sponsored by the Learning and Work Institute and Welsh Government.

- 5.6 **Inspire 2 Work** is an ESF Priority 3 programme that offers a supported Employment Pathway to young people living in Rhondda Cynon Taf, providing guidance and training to strengthen the position of young people seeking employment in line with Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework guidelines, and Supporting Engagement in Education, Employment and Training Strategy. The project is focussed on young people with low aspirations, no or low qualifications, those who have difficulty in engaging or participating and who lack awareness of the services that are available to meet their support needs.

To date the project has engaged with 413 young people, 71 of whom have entered employment, 202 have gained qualifications (with some currently going through the accreditation process) and 28 have gone on to further training and education. The funding for this project ends in December 2020.

- 5.7 The service works closely with a wide range of organisations to develop provision that supports the Council's **well-being** agenda. Examples of this work include:

- Provision of workshops for the Carer's project such as social media, sugar-craft and sign language;
- Collaboration with the Hapi project on 'All about me' – provision for people diagnosed with the early stages of dementia and their family members;
- Provision of courses prescribed by Cwm Taf Health Board and the Parc Canol surgery for patients with low level depression and anxiety;
- Leisure/hobby-based courses designed to enable people to pursue their interests – of particular relevance to people who are no longer working whether that is due to retirement, ill-health or other reasons;
- Chatty café, Knit and Knatter and Age-friendly dancing cater for people of all ages who have common interests

- 5.8 **Welsh-medium provision** is facilitated and contributes to the achievement of the Council's Strategy and Action Plan for the Promotion and Facilitation of the Welsh Language including a weekly Ti a Fi provision for parents and carers of babies and toddlers and Cymraeg i Blant at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. Welsh-medium courses and pathways for learners from Welsh language classes on to other courses delivered in the medium of Welsh are facilitated and jointly planned with key partners.

Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre has a theatre that facilitates Welsh-medium theatre productions provided by the Arts Service as well as productions by Welsh-medium national theatre companies. It is notable that since September 2018, over 1,000 people have attended 11 theatre performances in the medium of Welsh at the small (130-seater) theatre at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre.

Collaboration with organisations including the Urdd, Menter Iaith, the University of South Wales's Welsh for Adults team and a wide range of schools is evident in the events programme.

- 5.9 Of particular note in respect of **Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre** is that it hosts the activities of 63 community groups and organisations and provides access to a wide range of advice, information and guidance not just learning opportunities to residents.
- 5.10 All learners who engage with the service are provided with an opportunity to feed back their views on the quality of the provision and encouraged to make suggestions for any improvements as well as being offered an opportunity to identify other provision they would like to access and where they would like the provision to be located. This ensures that, to a large extent, the curriculum is co-produced with the community. It is expected that this co-production will be further enhanced as the Council's community hubs strategy is implemented across the county.
- 5.11 The service is a registered centre for accrediting the courses of Agored Cymru and Qualsafe Awarding Bodies.

6. THE IMPACT OF PROVISION ON INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

- 6.1 At 4.4 above reference is made to the data relating to enrolments and attainments of learners. However, the data does not tell the whole story and the impact of provision is of vital importance in assessing its value for money. Accordingly, **Appendix 3** includes a series of case studies that highlight the impact of adult community learning on individuals and their families. They are drawn from a number of different programmes and are just a small selection of the feedback received from learners.

These case studies highlight the importance of ensuring that individuals have easy access to learning opportunities and illustrate the crucial role played both by tutors and also other staff who work across a range of services and organisations that support them on their learning journey.

7. THE ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

- 7.1 The Welsh Government required each Local Authority area in Wales to have an Adult Community Learning Partnership. The purpose of these partnerships is to ensure that training provider partners work

collaboratively with other organisations to agree an adult community learning curriculum that will meet the needs of communities across their partnership area and exclude any duplication of provision, thereby maximising the use of scarce resources. In some areas partnerships have been combined over several local authority areas.

7.2 Significant funding reductions in recent years have resulted in partnerships being weakened in some parts of Wales. Despite the challenges, the Adult Community Learning Partnership in Rhondda Cynon Taf remains active and includes the following partners on its Steering Group:

- Rhondda Cynon Taf Adult Education Service;
- Communities for Work+;
- Coleg y Cymoedd;
- Adult Learning Wales;
- University of South Wales/Welsh for Adults Centre.

In addition, a wide variety of additional organisations are represented on its operational group including the Department of Work and Pensions and Dare Valley training.

7.3 Partners jointly plan projects and initiatives and contribute to the delivery of Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment Pathway. The sharing of resources and joint-funding of provision has ensured that residents in Rhondda Cynon Taf have good access to learning opportunities and clear pathways for progression. Peer monitoring of provision as well as the lesson observations undertaken by each organisation internally ensures that standards are maintained while inspections of quality and accreditation processes and the range and quality of provision are undertaken by the relevant Awarding Bodies and periodically by Estyn, as appropriate.

Despite maintaining a varied curriculum and achieving good standards, reductions in external funding since 2014 means that there are gaps in provision that need some consideration:

- Provision of in-work support for people who have newly entered the workplace and who might need some on-going support after a long period of unemployment or economic inactivity;
- Access to Level 3 and above courses on a part-time basis for people in work who want to further develop their skills so that they can move out of in-work poverty through promotion to higher level jobs.

7.4 In addition, the many changes introduced across the partnership in recent years means that a review of its structure, its relationship to other partnerships and its reporting procedures is now required. However, it is not intended to make any significant changes in the short term as the sector is currently awaiting confirmation from Welsh Government

regarding the outcome of their recent review of the structure of adult community learning in Wales and the funding model to be applied from September 2020.

- 7.5 From a Council perspective it is intended to ensure accountability of all Employment and Skills programmes by ensuring that they will report to a Council Scrutiny Committee from June 2019. This level of scrutiny is important especially in view of a potential Estyn inspection of adult community learning some time during the coming financial year.

8. THE FUTURE OF ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING

- 8.1 In June 2018 the Welsh Government initiated a consultation on the delivery of adult community learning in Wales. With a view to ensuring that:

- Provision is consistent across Wales in terms of offer and quality for learners;
- Provision that delivers the Welsh Government's priorities must be available to all learners in Wales regardless of location or circumstance;
- The funding methodology must enable funding to be focussed on those in greatest need of our help and support providers to deliver a curriculum that helps people back into learning and targets the eradication of poverty;
- The system must facilitate more strategic and sustainable planning of provision to ensure that long-term positive impacts can be achieved from Welsh Government investment.

- 8.2 The consultation was completed by September 2019 and responses have been analysed with the final decision currently awaiting sign-off by the new Minister responsible for adult education.

- 8.3 The options under consideration in respect of delivery models are:

- Model 1 – Local Authorities and/or Further Education colleges to deliver adult learning (effectively what is currently in place in Rhondda Cynon Taf);
- Model 2 – Adult Learning Partnerships to lead on the delivery of adult learning;
- Model 3 – a National Community College to coordinate and plan adult learning across Wales.

- 8.4 The funding options under consideration are:

- Option 1 - Allocate the grant according to population (19+);
- Option 2 - Allocate the grant to include funding to reflect income deprivation;

- Option 3 - Allocate the grant to include funding to reflect educational deprivation (Adults 25+ with no qualifications);
- Option 4 - Transfer the funding for community learning to the Revenue Support Grant.

8.5 Under funding option 1 the grant allocated to Rhondda Cynon Taf would increase from £200,846 to £326,504. Funding option 2 would see the grant increase to £356,600, while funding option 3 would see an increase to £379,806. Funding option 4 relates to how the grant would be paid as opposed to how the level of funding would be assessed.

8.6 As can be seen from the above, Rhondda Cynon Taf will benefit by an increase in the community learning grant under each of the funding options that are being proposed.

8.7 The risk to Rhondda Cynon Taf lies in the decision regarding model of delivery. Delivery option 3 could undermine current arrangements which are working well to support learners into work and onto further learning in the county. Consequently, the Welsh Government's decision on the preferred model will be crucial for the Council and the Adult Community Learning Partnership in the County and is expected imminently.

8.8 The current funding arrangements will be maintained up to September 2020 with no changes expected to reporting arrangements to Welsh Government. In September 2020 the new model of delivery and new funding option will be introduced.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equality and diversity implications to this report. The provision delivered by the service is accessible to all, delivered at venues that have been checked for adherence to required disability standards, and provision is assessed to ensure that it meets the needs of local communities. Courses and programmes developed are designed for the benefit of people with a range of protected characteristics.

10. CONSULTATION

10.1 Consultation is an on-going process within adult community learning as every learner is provided with an evaluation form after the completion of each course and the completed forms are used to identify any changes that are required to the provision and/or to develop new programmes. Learners are also able to contribute to classroom discussions that take place during the internal inspections/observations of the learning environment.

10.2 In addition, feedback is provided by partner organisations and internal Council services on the needs of local areas.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There is no funding implication to this report – it is for information purposes only.

12. LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 12.1 There is no statutory requirement as such for Local Authorities to deliver adult community learning. However, section 22 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires Local Authorities to ensure that there are sufficient facilities within their area for part-time adult learning provision.

13. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 13.1 This report is for information purposes only, so that Cabinet Members are aware of the range of provision offered to local residents and have an understanding of the funding sources and partnerships that support delivery.

- 13.2 Adult community learning supports the Council's corporate priorities – helping to make individuals more independent and supporting the local economy through up-skilling individuals and supporting them into work while working with local employers to tailor the training to business needs.

- 13.3 Adult community learning's Service Delivery Plan is planned annually but with an eye on the **longer-term** achievement of goals. It has had to change and adapt to meet different funding criteria and reduced resources but has succeeded in developing clear pathways for progression of learners through developing **integrated** programmes with other partners and Council services, in particular Communities for Work+ and the ESF projects. The **collaborative** approach adopted by the Adult Community Learning Partnership, led by the Council, to curriculum planning and sharing of resources has succeeded in maintaining an extensive programme of courses and support for residents in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The **involvement** of learners in providing feedback on course quality and their contribution to identifying new areas of interest is an important element in the success of the service. A key feature of the service and its partnerships has been the ability to address barriers to learning and thereby **prevent** socially isolation and loss of self-esteem.

- 13.4 This service contributes to the following well-being goals:

- **A prosperous Wales** – learners are supported to develop their skills and gain qualifications so that they can gain employment or make other contributions to their community;

- **A resilient Wales** – adult community learning provides programmes that supports people to develop their resilience so that they are better able to adapt to change and to flourish in a changing environment;.
- **A healthier Wales** – there is extensive research to support the fact that engagement with learning supports health and well-being and there are ample case studies collected by the service to support this view. Courses and taster sessions that provide information that supports people to look after their health and well-being are included in the delivery plan;
- **A more equal Wales** – the service provides provision for people from the age of 16 + of all levels of ability. Courses are provided to people of all educational backgrounds and access is available to all. The development of collaborative funding has ensured that people can access provision regardless of where they live in the county or their level of disability;
- **A Wales of cohesive communities** – delivery at community venues (96 in 2017/18) ensures that the service makes a contribution to community cohesion by paying for the use of some community centres for delivery of programmes, while emphasis on tolerance and understanding is a core aspect of the tutorial process.
- **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language** – provision is available through the medium of Welsh as well as English in respect of courses, activities and performances. There is also an emphasis on Welsh culture as well as the arts and heritage in programmes;
- **A globally responsible Wales** – the service works with other partners to ensure that resources are used efficiently with respect to the environment. The delivery of digital skills provision ensures that learners are able to use digital platforms for a range of activities, thereby reducing the impact on the global environment.

14. **CONCLUSION**

- 14.1 The Adult Education Service believes that high-quality learning, in whatever form it takes, makes a difference to the individual who participates in it, the community that supports it and the country that funds it.
- 14.2 This report has provided Cabinet Members with information about the Council's Adult Education Service and the work it undertakes with partners for the benefit of residents. It has outlined the current funding and organisational arrangements, and illustrated the impact of the learning through case studies of individuals who have engaged with the service.

- 14.3 There will be changes from September 2020 to the model of delivery of adult community learning and to the funding package for the county. It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the Community Learning Grant for Rhondda Cynon Taf whatever option is approved by the Minister for Education. However, whether this funding will come directly to the Council's Adult Education Service as is currently the case is, as yet unclear.
- 14.4 There is a risk to overall funding levels as a result of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union due to the withdrawal of ESF funding for employment programmes that are currently delivered.
- 14.5 Cabinet will be provided with an update on the future delivery and funding model of the service when the information becomes available.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee – to be confirmed

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Background papers:

None.

Officer to contact: Wendy Edwards. Tel. No. 01443 425512

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**Adult Learning
Service Delivery Plan
2018/2019**

Name of Adult Learning Partnership this plan supports	RCT Adult Learning Partnership
Contact Name within Local Authority	Wendy Edwards
Telephone	01443 425512
Email	Wendy.Edwards@rctcbc.gov.uk
Plan Approved By*	Paul Mee
Position with the Local Authority	Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Date	25/7/18

* To be approved by the Director of Education or Local Authority Director with the responsibility for Community Learning activity.

The *Adult Learning in Wales* policy statement (2017) asks that you focus primarily on the provision of:

- Essential Communication skills (including ESOL)
- Essential Application of Number Skills,
- Digital Literacy;
- Essential Employability Skills

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Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
Essential skills	Essential Communication skills (including ESOL) up to Level 2	<p><u>Communication Skills</u></p> <p>Communication skills (not including ESOL) will be offered to all participants on essential skills roll on / roll off courses which are delivered throughout RCT. The majority of these courses will be delivered in conjunction with Communities for Work Plus (CfW+) who will provide the venue and recruit learners. Learners will be assessed and given contextualised work at an appropriate level to improve confidence and aid progression.</p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u></p> <p>A full list of qualifications is attached.</p>	RCT Adult Education Service	<p>150 for literacy/numeracy programmes (difficult at this stage to identify whether the referrals would be for literacy or numeracy or both).</p> <p>Also 121 enrolled with additional learning needs</p> <p>Total: 271 learners</p>	<p>CLG funding £7,000</p> <p>Franchise funding; CfW+ funding towards the cost of 1 tutor</p>	<p><u>Literacy/numeracy</u></p> <p>Achievement of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum of one Agored Cymru unit. <p>Progression on to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher level essential skills qualifications • Further learning • Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Learning Plans; • Feedback on evaluation from learners • Feedback from CfW+ Work Club Coordinators and Senior Mentors on post course progression; • Focus groups with Learners; • Quality meetings and standardisation meetings with Merthyr CBC who accredit the provision; • EBS will be updated to monitor

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		<p><u>Communication skills for learners with moderate or severe learning difficulties</u></p> <p>Independent living skills will be delivered to learners with moderate to severe learning difficulties in community venues (mainly day centres) in RCT. Courses will be contextualised to meet the learners' needs and will concentrate on their speaking, listening and writing skills.</p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u> The following are all pre-entry level:</p> <p>HD2PECY001 - Choosing to communicate HD2PECY014 - Reading and Writing Words, Signs and Symbols HD2PECY019 - Reading and writing sentences and words - M7</p>					completion and achievement.

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		<p>HD2PECY020 - Reading and Writing Text Focus - Milestone 4</p> <p>HD3PECY002 - Preparation for writing</p> <p><u>ESOL provision</u></p> <p>The college is currently reviewing the whole of its direct delivery of community learning so that definitive information is not currently available.</p> <p>The college will continue to lead on ESOL but other arrangements are currently being reviewed.</p>	<p>Coleg y Cymoedd with some provision from Adult Learning Wales</p>	<p>Potential numbers yet to be confirmed</p>	<p>No CLG funding allocated to ESOL.</p>		
	<p>Essential Application of Number Skills – up to Level 2</p>	<p>Application of number will be offered to all participants on essential skills roll on / roll off courses which are delivered throughout RCT. The take-up of numeracy courses is much less than on literacy courses.</p>	<p>RCT Adult Education Service</p>	<p>Please see note relating to literacy/numeracy above.</p>		<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		<p><u>Numeracy skills for learners with moderate or severe learning difficulties</u></p> <p>Independent living skills will be delivered to learners with moderate to severe learning difficulties in community venues (mainly day centres) in RCT. Courses will be contextualised to meet the learners' needs and will concentrate on basic money management.</p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u></p> <p>The following are all pre-entry level courses:</p> <p>HD4PECY037 - Handling Data HD4PECY040 - Measure, Shape and Space (M5) HD4PECY042 - Number (milestone 5)</p>					

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
Digital Literacy	Digital Literacy up to Level 2	<p>The Partnership addresses digital literacy in a variety of ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic support through libraries and work clubs • Digital Fridays provision in partnership with CfW+, Housing Associations and a range of volunteers. These now operate at all 13 libraries and 1 additional community venues • Non-accredited courses • Specialist workshops • Embedding digital skills in a wide range of courses e.g. family and local history, photography, Languages etc • Accredited IT/Digital technology courses up to level 2 	<p>RCT Adult Education leads on all courses.</p> <p>CfW+ and Housing Associations lead on Digital Fridays and Work Club provision.</p>	<p>Anticipated numbers on formal IT courses: 80 (on 8 x 4 week programme with 64 (80%) showing improvement in their skills.</p> <p>Anticipated numbers ECDL: 20</p> <p>Anticipated numbers for Digital Fridays: 340 people attending, 170 (50%) achieving improved Digital Skills.</p> <p>Anticipated numbers for Work Clubs: 800 people</p>	<p>CLG funding of £3,200</p> <p>This provision is delivered through several funding streams including CfW+, Housing Associations, private tutors/self—directed groups.</p>	<p>Outcomes expected are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people who are able to get online in RCT • More people being able to use digital media confidently • Enrolments on IT courses to be maintained at current levels • Gain basic IT skills and • Gain qualifications if appropriate <p>Progression routes will depend on the level of skills at entry as there is a continuum of provision:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored as indicated above with elements monitored in accordance with the requirements of Welsh Government's Communities for Work Plus programme. • Reports on outcomes are also provided to the Council's Digital Leadership Group in accordance with the Council's Digital Inclusion Strategy and the targets included in the associated Action Plan,. • Employment outcomes are monitored monthly and form a key part

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECDL provision <p><u>Non-accredited courses</u></p> <p>Computers for Beginners Entry level and Level 1 Internet and Email Entry level and Level 1 iPads for Beginners</p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u></p> <p><u>Agored Cymru courses</u> CN1E3CY004 Controlling a Pointing Device AZ5E3CY011 Keyboard Skills CQ1E3CY014 Introduction to Basic Word Processing AZ5E3CY008 Intro to Keyboard skills - use of the keyboard BCS Level 3 Certificate (ECDL Advanced)</p>		attending and getting support to job search on line.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation onto higher levels of accredited courses within the community or at the college • Enrolment onto online courses for learners for those who are able to engage in self-directed learning • Self-supporting groups or clubs • Volunteering opportunities to use their new-found skills e.g. digitising historical resources at local libraries 	of the Council's Performance indicators in the wider Council Corporate Plan.

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		BCS Level 2 ECDL Certificate in IT User Skills (QCF)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and museums. • Employment 	
Employability skills	Essential Employability Skills up to Level 2	<p>An employability pathway has been developed and the delivery of employability skills is focused on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-employability courses; • Employment Routes provision delivered in partnership with local employers who have vacancies; • Employability programme for people with additional learning needs/disabilities <p><u>Pre-employability</u></p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u></p>		<p>Pre-employability 25+ : 160</p> <p>Employment Routes: 25+ : 244</p> <p>18-24: 49</p>	<p>CLG Funding for</p> <p><u>Pre-employability</u> £66,468</p> <p><u>Employment Routes</u> £61,156</p> <p>Funding also provided through CfW+ to these programmes</p> <p><u>Active Inclusion</u></p> <p>No CLG contribution</p>	<p>Outcomes for this provision includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in general employability skills • Improvement in sector – specific skills • Better understanding of the sector they are interested in working in • Improved qualification levels • Work experience • Employment (266) 	<p>The accredited courses offered under the programme are monitored in line with the other accredited courses (as outlined above).</p> <p>These courses are also monitored through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from employers • Feedback from mentors on the CfW+ programme who support learners • DWP monitors outcomes and progress through their own systems for people they have referred

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		<p><u>Agored Cymru Entry 2</u> Looking for Work HC6E2CY002</p> <p><u>Agored Cymru Entry 3</u> Understanding and Managing the Interview Process HC6E3CY006 Creating the Right Image for a job Interview HC6E3CY003 Resilience Skills HB1E3CY031 Completing and using a CV HC6E3CY002 Controlling a Pointing Device CN1E3CY004 Handling Telephone Calls from Customers AF3E3CY002 Overcoming Barriers to Work HC4E3CY021 Working in Business Administration AY8E3CY003</p> <p><u>Agored Cymru Level 1</u> Team Working AF41CY002 Customer Service Skills BA31CY005 Confidence Building HB61CY009</p>			to this ESF programme.	<p>learners from Employment Routes gained employment last year)</p> <p>Progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience • Employment • Further learning • Volunteering • Mentoring support 	onto the programme

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		<p>Assertiveness Skills HB61CY011 Exploring Job Opportunities HC61CY014</p> <p><u>Qualsafe Qualifications</u> Level 3 Emergency First Aid at Work Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering Level 2 Award in Health and Safety in the Workplace Level 2 Award in Principles of Manual Handling Level 2 Award in Paediatric First Aid</p> <p><u>Employment Routes</u></p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u> The range of qualifications will differ in level and content depending on the sector-specific vocational training required by the employer. It is anticipated that the following will be delivered in the coming year:</p>					

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		Railways - PTS sentinel Card, Small tools CIVILS - NPORS Level 4 Forward Tipping Dumper, Ride On Roller Street Works Ride On Roller SECURITY - Level 3 Certificate for Working as a Close Protection Operative within the Private Security Industry Level 3 Emergency First Aid at Work Level 2 Award for Working as a Door Supervisor within the Private Security Industry Level 2 Award in Understanding Stewarding at Spectator Events Level 2 Award for Working as a Security Officer within the Private Security Industry Level 2 Award in Conflict Management and Personal Safety Level 2 Award for Working as a CCTV Operator (Public Space)					

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		<p>Surveillance) within the Private Security Industry NHS/Dom Care - RARPA SOVA, Dementia Awareness, Consent, Level 1 Role of a HCA, Confidentiality, Level 1 Creating the right image, Level 2 AI Wales Manual Handling Construction BSC Level 1 Award in Health & Safety in a Construction Environment, CSCS Training & Card to be included, BSC Level 2 Awareness in Principles of COSHH, BSC Level 2 in Principles of Fire Safety BSC Level 3 in Risk Assessing In House Asbestos Awareness In House Working at Height Hospitality & Catering Level 2 Award for Personal Licence Holders, Level 2 Food Safety, Level 2 Manual Handling, Level 1 Customer Service skills.</p>					

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		Warehouse/Retail Forklift Counterbalance and Reach, Clerical/Admin RARPA Data Protection, Level 1 Interview techniques, Level 1 Confidence Building.					
Older learners and Social engagement	Informal learning which has health and wellbeing benefits	<p>This can be three-fold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct delivery of informal courses • Delivery of courses as part of a social prescribing model • facilitation of self-directed learning and leisure activities at our venues 	RCT Adult Education Service	<p>100 learners social prescribing provision.</p> <p>210 learners on health and well-being cost recovery courses.</p> <p>Anticipated that 63 groups will continue to meet at our learning centre.</p>	<p>CLG funding: £10,000</p> <p>The CLG is matched to learner fees in relation to directly delivered cost recovery courses so that the fee for learners is kept to a minimum (£2.50 per hour).</p> <p>Some CLG funding is allocated to enable informal</p>	<p>Outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduction in social isolation • improvement in health and well-being • reduction in need for GP appointment unrelated to medical conditions <p>Progression onto:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other informal courses • formal courses 	RARPA for informal courses and as above for accredited learning.

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
					groups to be facilitated at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-directed learning groups • engagement with specific community interest groups • specialist health and well-being programmes supported by CfW+ and facilitated through leisure centres • volunteering <p>Older learners who, once engaged, indicate a desire to get paid employment can progress onto the employability courses in the same way as other learners.</p>	

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
<p>Engagement Activity and 'hook' courses</p>	<p>Softer engagement type provision</p>	<p>A number of partners provide engagement activities and 'hook' courses to broaden the horizons of participants and to engage them in learning.</p> <p>Examples of activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • craft workshops • music workshops (ukulele etc) • Work with residents to produce an anthology of poems and prose • classes aimed at developing the bank of Welsh language articles on Wikipedia. • Staffing of festivals to promote learning e.g. Parti Ponty, Armed Forces Day etc • Work with groups to develop exhibitions linked to national events e.g. First World War 	<p>Dependent on activity.</p>	<p>250 learners enrolled.</p> <p>Numbers engaged with will run into thousands as part of the promotion and marketing campaign and awareness raising at events.</p>	<p>CLG funding £40,000 here would be as a contribution to staff costs room hire costs if required, teaching resources, marketing of courses, brochures etc). (The marketing costs includes those for other provision delivered by RCT Adult education, including updating website and managing the social media).</p>	<p>Outcomes from this type of provision includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved confidence to engage with other activities or provision • reduction in social isolation • increased awareness of the opportunities available <p>Progression can be in several ways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engagement onto other learning programmes • access to mentoring and life coaching as appropriate 	<p>Monitoring of these activities differ from the monitoring of informal and formal courses with numbers of people engaged being monitored and feedback on each event gathered. Wherever possible progression onto other activity is tracked but this is not always possible across the partnership due to limited resources. However the ACL Operational Group works well together to ensure no duplication of provision in this area as in others.</p>

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taster days e.g. during Adult Learning Week • local history • family history • Aromatherapy • Indian Head Massage • Sugarcraft • Mindfulness 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referral to specialist organisations for support • volunteering opportunities 	
Welsh Medium Provision		<p>The delivery of non-accredited full-cost recovery courses will be continued in the following subject sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT • Humanities • Arts and crafts <p>However, a focus will be made on meeting the need for skills-based qualifications in a range of areas that are commonly available in the medium of English including:</p> <p>Safeguarding Food safety Fist Aid</p>	RCT Adult Education	176 approx	<p>CLG contribution to subsidise the costs of courses and develop new pathways</p> <p>£13,000 approx</p>	<p>Outcomes for the cost recovery courses are anticipated to be in line with the outcomes identified for engagement on other informal learning provision as identified above.</p> <p>The outcomes for the Employability Skills courses are anticipated to be in line with those highlighted above under Employability Skills provision.</p>	<p>These are monitored in a number of ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh-medium courses follow the same system as other courses in respect of ILPs and feedback from learners, monitoring of attainment etc. • Targets for community learning are included in the Council's Strategy for the Promotion and Facilitation of

Priority Area	What the Policy stated that WG CLG will fund	Provision delivered (course titles and levels)	Delivery lead	Expected learner numbers	Amount of CLG allocated for this provision	Outcomes and progression	Monitoring
						<p>Progression is also anticipated to be similar. However, it should be noted that progression onto higher level courses is more challenging in the medium of Welsh as there are so few providers in the area that can deliver in the Welsh language.</p>	<p>the Welsh Language. This strategy is monitored by the Council's Cabinet Steering Committee on the Welsh Language and also by the county's Fforwm Iaith, facilitated by Menter Iaith.</p>

Funding Information

	Amount	Comments
Funding provided by the Welsh Government through the Community Learning Grant	£200,846	<p>RCT has implemented over the last two years a learning pathway which has integrated learning provision across a number of programmes including presently Communities for Work Plus, ESF programmes as well as adult community learning provision. The ACL Partnership has also developed to include Housing Associations and the wider third sector and providers have worked together to develop a joint curriculum with several partners contributing to the delivery of programmes for learners. Therefore it can be difficult to identify how much funding is contributed either directly or through in-kind staff contributions to specific provision.</p> <p>The advantage of this approach is that, the partnership has been able to target learning more effectively on those who are furthest from learning, and can provide mentoring support to ensure that learners are more likely to complete their learning. Working so closely with others, including employers, has enabled us to develop programmes that result in significant job outcomes as well as allowing</p>

		<p>learners to gain qualifications and progress in their learning.</p> <p>The challenge is in evidencing how much the CLG contributes to each element of the learning pathway. What can be said with certainty for RCT is that if the CLG was removed or reduced then it would have a direct negative impact on job outcomes for the wider employability programme under CfW+ and a huge negative impact on engagement with learning and maintenance of learning options through facilitation of self-directed groups and the support provided to them by CLG funded staff. Funding from the CLG for marketing supports the marketing of courses for a range of providers including self-help groups. It would also have a detrimental impact on the ability of the Council's Adult Education Service to lead on provision and provide the relevant reports required for Estyn and Welsh Government.</p> <p>The numbers included in the plan are estimates based on previous delivery so may change as the year progresses. Similarly the courses identified are liable to change as courses are chosen to reflect the needs of the specific learners on groups once their needs are identified on enrolment, or the needs of employers who engage with the Employment Routes provision..</p>
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Other funding provided by the Welsh Government that supports the delivery of Adult learning	£180,000	Provided from the CfW+ Single Employment Pathway for adults
Funding provided by the Welsh Government through a Franchise Agreement (if applicable)	£97,500 sub-contracted to RCT Adult Education for the past 2 years	Currently Coleg y Cymoedd is reviewing its commitment to the direct delivery of adult community learning and has indicated it is considering sub-contracting the majority of its funding only retaining its responsibility for delivery of ESOL courses in the community.
Funding provided by the Welsh Government through FEI direct delivery as part of the adult learning partnership	Tbc	
Additional direct funding invested by the Local Authority		Funding for some of the management costs of adult community learning and a contribution to the running costs of Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. Funding for library provision which is essential to the facilitation of the ACL programme in the county.
Existing and/or planned European Funded activity which funds ACL Provision.	It is not possible to identify the actual amount spent supporting individuals/learners through mentoring to access or stay in community learning. However the support provided can be crucial for continued engagement with community learning.	We have a number of ESF programmes which deliver some employability support including Inspire to Work (I2W) for 16-24 years old learners; Ignite which supports people with additional learning needs; Communities for Work for youth and adults, the latter of which access the majority of training through ACT.

Other funding which contributes to the delivery of adult learning in the area e.g. (lottery funding)	N/A	
Any non financial contributions made by the LA e.g. staffing, venues etc.? If it is possible to determine a numerical value for this please do so.	Not possible to provide a numerical value for this.	Free use of 13 RCT Libraries for the delivery of ACL provision by all training providers and partners. Free use of CfW+ venues for delivery of learning programmes across the county.
Total		

Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment Pathway

Rhondda, Cynon Taf Council's Employment Pathway seeks to provide equitable access to employment support and opportunities that align to emerging local labour market needs and employers.

We facilitate wide-ranging and well established partnerships that have worked together to develop a streamlined, strategic approach that ensures services and organisations work with understanding to provide sufficient and appropriate support, training and guidance, to enable people to gain and sustain paid employment of their choosing.

The Employment Pathway has recently been updated to reflect Welsh Government's modelling.

There are five phases to the WG and RCT Employment Pathway for adults and young people.

Entry can be at any Stage/Tier determined by the needs of the person.



Stage/Tier One – Getting Involved

Those who are furthest from the labour market e.g.

- Not yet ready to work
- Not interested in working
- Need support to engage with employability and skills provision.

Stage/Tier Two – Becoming More Employable

Those who need support to increase personal, technical and transferable skills and experience relevant to work e.g.

- Those with no or low skills
- Those with little relevant and/or current quotable experience

Stage/Tier Three – Getting a Job

Those who need limited support to take the final steps to secure fair work e.g.

- People who have only recently become workless
- Those with single or simple barriers

Stage/Tier Four – Staying in the Job

Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment Pathway

Those who are at risk of disengaging from work and those more sensitive to labour force changes; those more likely to be in or at risk of in-work poverty e.g:

- those recently employed following support.
- low or unskilled and low paid
- underemployed, zero hour contracts holders, those working in the gig economy and those affected by welfare reform e.g. UC
- employed people with significant dependent care needs or work limiting health conditions etc

Stage/Tier Five – Progressing in Employment

Those who are relatively secure in work but who are unlikely to progress e.g.

- low skilled workers unable to access training opportunities without additional support
- workers, however highly skilled, whose skills do not match with their current job or industry
- those working in a declining industry or occupational sector.

APPENDIX 3 – CASE STUDIES

Case study 1

Name of the project: Independent Learning Skills (Learning Steps)

Aim of the project: To give learners with Learning Disabilities the opportunity to enhance their skills and to improve their quality of life.

Background information:

D is 40 year old gentleman who has mild learning disabilities. D lives alone and is supported by social services. His previous Social Worker contacted RCT council to see what support there was for D and was directed to Adult Education services. D enjoys coming to a Learning Steps class where he has made many friends, this has been a positive experience for D as he does not have a wide social network. D is really passionate about learning and our intention is to encourage him to attend some literacy mainstream classes which will hopefully build his self-esteem up even more.

Participation (*what they did on the project*)

With a mild learning disability D has struggled with reading and writing throughout his life. D lived with his mother until 2010 when she unfortunately died. D now has to live alone and has had to very quickly acquire new life skills. Volunteering three days a week for a local charitable organisation has helped him develop his confidence and social skills.

As a naturally shy person D still struggles with new situations such as meeting new people, despite this shyness his desire to improve his reading and writing encouraged him to enrol on to a class last September.

The course that D attends is part of a busy day centre. On his first day attending the group, he had to come into the class alone and introduce himself to staff and fellow students that he had not met before. He was extremely nervous and scared but his determination to progress helped him overcome his fears. He has stayed motivated and committed to meeting with the group each week and his reading, writing, confidence and social skills have improved immensely.

D's joy of learning has been inspirational and now he regularly contributes to discussions and shares his opinions. D continues to face his barriers with support from his social worker and tutor and has become a very popular member of the group. D does not allow his learning disability to limit his progression or passion for learning.

Outcome and impact:

D has recently gained a qualification with Agored Cymru – Know your Colours and Shapes, Using Written Communication and Handling Data. This term D is working towards and Agored Qualification “Working with Letters of the Alphabet “

As a tutor it is a joy to watch him on his journey continuing to advance and gain valuable skills that enhance his life skills.

Case study 2

Name of the project: Pre-employment

Aim of the project: To increase improve confidence and skills to become more employable.

Background information:

This young lady moved to Wales in 2016 after divorcing her partner. Her background was in the beauty industry where she had previously owned her own beauty parlour.

Since the divorce she had become socially isolated, withdrawn and very felt very insecure.

Participation (*what they did on the project*)

In September 2018 she attended a four week Employability course accredited by Agored Cymru and successfully completed a range of level one/two qualifications at the highest of standards.

Outcome and impact:

After carrying out regular progression reviews it become apparent that she was becoming far more confident and assertive. She seemed far happier in herself and had become very passionate and enthusiastic about life and learning in general.

After the successful completion of the course she expressed that the employability programme had provided her with the opportunities to develop her knowledge, skills, experiences and new achievements in order for her to make a successful transition into Higher Education.

Her future aim is to become a successful solicitor in order to benefit herself, the economy and her community where she wishes to practise. She is very grateful to the Employability Programme for helping her to regain her confidence and enabling her future social and working mobility.

Case study 3

Name of the project: Essential Skills in the Community

Aim of the project: To support adults to improve their literacy and/or numeracy skills

Background information:

C has attended Essential Skills classes for two years. He was referred by his job centre coach after disclosing that he struggled with mathematics.

From the outset, C attended classes regularly but despite appearing committed, was easily distracted in sessions, lacked vision in terms of his career or employment prospects and seemed to find learning a challenge even though he had successfully completed college courses. At this time C did not look as healthy, would often state he was tired and sometimes was shaking.

Participation (*what they did on the project*)

Initially C was assessed to see what his numerical weaknesses were. He was then supported, by a tutor in a small group, to complete work that was tailored to address his needs.

Although he attended class regularly, initially C left early on many occasions either blaming a pain from an arm injury or saying he couldn't concentrate any longer. However, as time passed, C began to gain more confidence in class and also in his peers and disclosed how much he had been drinking on the evenings prior to class. C was referred to different support agencies who were better placed to help him.

This was a period of huge transition for C, including quite intensive counselling by professionals, life coaching by Communities for Work Plus and also being told that if he didn't stop drinking he was unlikely to reach thirty. However, C continued to attend Essential Skills class each week and completed work towards his Agored Cymru qualifications. The work he completed was individually tailored to his needs. Additionally, he observed others completing literacy work which gave him the confidence to complete a literacy assessment and he began working on improving those skills too.

Outcome and impact:

The class was small, held in C's local job centre and the work was relevant to him which meant it was convenient and less intimidating; making him feel supported, included and secure. This has enabled him to achieve several Agored Cymru qualifications in both literacy and numeracy. His engagement in learning helped transform many aspects of his health and lifestyle. C looks healthier; no longer shakes in class; has grown in confidence considerably and is a bright and integral member of class who is often last to leave.

C's confidence improved so much that he attended other courses where he passed a health and safety in the workplace qualification and gained his Construction Skills Certification Scheme card for working on a building site. While he has not gained employment, yet, he is still attending essential skills classes each week and remains sober.

Case study 4

Name of the project: Still Me Dementia Support

Aim of the project: To provide weekly activities for individuals with dementia and their carers.

Funding organisation: This group has been supported by Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre and gained grants from DEEP (Dementia engagement and empowerment project).

Background information:

The Still Me dementia support group have been meeting at Garth Olwg for a number of years. Originally funded by Alzheimer's UK, the group take part in different arts and crafts sessions on a weekly basis. When funding for this group came to an end, Adult Education agreed to fund a tutor for the group and Garth Olwg provided the room free of charge.

Over the past year Garth Olwg have supported the group by advertising and marketing their group within the local community. They have also helped the group apply for grant from DEEP (dementia engagement and empowerment project), WRVS and Interlink, all of which were successful, securing £7,250 in order for the group to move forward. They are now part of the DEEP network and a member of the group attends regular meetings with a member of staff from Garth Olwg to report back about the network and share good practice across the Wales.

They are in the process of setting up a South East Wales DEEP hub with other organisations (University of South Wales, Memoria, Cardiff and Vale UHB, Me Myself and I, Kymin, Research Occupational Therapist, Cwm Taf UHB are some of the partners involved). By being part of this hub it will enable them to grow the group at Garth Olwg and ensure that those diagnosed with dementia in their local area can continue living a positive, fulfilling life and continue enjoying activities they used to love before their diagnosis.

Garth Olwg also contribute to the dementia steering committee in Pontypridd, where they share good practice and stay up to date about what is going on in the local area.

Participation (*what they did on the project*)

The group have been involved in planning the programme of activities this year and they have taken part in a number of different workshops and also led some of them, teaching their skills to others. Some of these sessions have included, acrylic painting, crochet, knitting, pottery, sewing, jewellery craft and more. The group is an opportunity for members who have dementia and their carers to come together for respite and to spend an afternoon making, doing and enjoying. They have made various crafts and sold them at the Spring/Christmas Fayres at the centre in order to raise funds for the group. They also helped to organise activities for the Well-being week at the centre.

With Garth Olwg's help they have drawn up a plan to run a multigenerational arts project and involve children from the primary and secondary school. This will be funded by the grant money secured recently. Along with the help of Garth Olwg they are looking to set up a community choir during the day. Some of the members in the group have expressed an interest in being part of a singing group.

Garth Olwg will be offering support and providing advertising and marketing opportunities in order to spread the word about this exciting new opportunity. It will be open to all and will hopefully be an activity that we can encourage those who are socially isolated to attend and be part of. At the end of March the centre have organised a fundraising concert with local performers too. Money raised will go towards buying materials and providing workshops for the members in the group.

Outcome and impact:

The creation of this group has led to many new developments:

- All staff at Garth Olwg attended a dementia friend's session in order to gain more understanding about how best to support those living with dementia;
- The group has been added to the offer made to our local GP practice regarding local provision for individuals with dementia;
- It has enhanced the provision to tackle social isolation;
- The Still Me group gives people living with dementia a voice and an opportunity to build on past skills and develop new ones. It also gives members a purpose and a place to come to have fun, laugh and make new friends who can offer help and support;
- It empowers members to continue to strive to make an impact in their community and develop a real sense of ownership too.

Below is a quote from Jennifer* who has been a member of the Still Me group for 3 years. Jennifer was diagnosed at the age of 37.

"The group are really welcoming and I find myself going into a world of my own when I'm here. I love the sessions and feel I can rest my brain and it's a really calm environment. It's therapeutic and stimulating. Weather you have had a good or bad day you can come along for a chat and we all support each other. Not matter what emotions members are going through we are there to listen to each other and the sessions help take my mind off day to day stresses. It's a support network and it's an opportunity to socialize, chat and feel reassured too."

* pseudonym

Case Study 5

Name of Operation

Priority 3: West Wales and Valleys c80830



Summary: The participant is 23 years old female living in the Llantrisant area of RCT, upon enrolment she declared that her main barrier to employment was her mental health problems.

Background / what is ...?

The Participant first started suffering from anxiety and depression during her adolescence, she has received support from her GP in the way of counselling and medication, but unfortunately these have not helped and as she has entered adulthood, she is still suffering and felt, if anything that she had become worse. There was no apparent reason for the onset of these issues, nothing tragic had happened in her life, she described herself as *“a normal girl who woke up one day feeling differently about herself and the world”*.

The participant has a supportive family, including two siblings; they all live together on a non-working farm and have a variety of pets including cats, dogs and chickens.

The participant did not enjoy school as she felt her mental health issues were not addressed and were swept under the carpet, she was constantly told what she was experiencing was all part of growing up and she would grow out of it. Despite producing medical notes and medication from her GP, the school still did not put in place any support for her needs, her time in school was subsequently filled with bad experiences.

The participant enrolled onto the I2W programme in September 2018, after being referred by The Prince's Trust, who after her engagement with them considered that further training would be beneficial. She had previous work history but only on a casual basis, due to her complex mental health issues, she felt gaining employment was not an issue, it was keeping the role, as her high anxiety levels and depression made her unable to maintain good attendance. She welcomed the opportunity to gain further skills to support her to progress into permanent employment and hoped the varied activities available would assist her to discover techniques that would help her to deal with her anxiety and depression.

The engagement.

The participants attendance was good, however she frequently came in late as she found it hard to get up. However when there, she was excellent at participating in all tasks and activities, showing enthusiasm throughout and showing confidence on the outside but admitted she did not feel confident on the inside.

She was encouraged to use techniques to help with her anxiety and she found the Mindfulness and Steps to Excellence sessions valuable in that she was able to discuss and write about the issues she had experienced and then in her words "*lay them to rest*" and move on to being in the present. As the programme progressed a difference could be seen in her, she was much more relaxed, comfortable in her surroundings and attended regularly, she felt able to get out of bed, she had motivation and felt inspired to gain employment.

Whilst on the Pre-employment programme, the Participant attended one of our Contact Centre courses which was a massive step for her as it involved using appropriate communication skills with a variety of service users, which caused her anxiety, but she worked her way through this by using the recently acquired techniques. She had a telephone interview and did very well, she progressed on to the next stage and is currently awaiting an invitation to attend a formal interview. Towards the end of the programme the Participant secured an interview with Royal Mail as a Sorting Office Assistant, she was successful and left the programme to commence this employment. However, before she left she had another interview arranged with HMRC as an adviser in their contact centre, this was a competency based interview which she had little knowledge or experience of, she stayed longer at the end of one day so the tutor could explain the process and help her to think through examples she could use during the interview process.

The participant has said the interview went really well, she is still waiting to hear the outcome but in the meantime has started her job with The Royal Mail.

Good Practice Shared / Lessons Learned / Outcomes

As part of the 13 week employability programme, sessions are timetabled so that participants dealing with stress, anxiety and depression have the opportunity to engage in "All about Me" this includes Mindfulness, Art and craft sessions which support and guide individuals to develop techniques to help them deal with the variety of issues. These sessions were a big help to this participant, she found them very beneficial and used the techniques she had developed to aid her attendance at the programme and also to support her whilst attending interviews. The participant has attended a range of courses, but found the I2W programmes the most beneficial as this is where Mental Health issues were tackled, discussed and supported instead of it being a taboo subject.