

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**CABINET EXECUTIVE
22 November 2016**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Avril York
Portfolio Holder for Regeneration

SUBJECT: Workways+ Powys project

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Summary

- 1.1** The Regeneration service has been developing a European project, namely Workways+ Powys. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the bid's progress and to seek authority to spend it successfully.
- 1.2** The Workways+ Powys project will align with the targeting principles and objectives of the East Wales (2014 - 2020) Programme. It will focus on a specific objective: *To increase the employability of Economically Inactive and Long Term Unemployed people aged 25 and over, who have complex barriers to employment.* This will be achieved by utilising the expertise and experience of stakeholders (such as Prime Cymru) who can best deliver such a service.
- 1.3** The project is designed to address economic inactivity across Powys aligned to Welsh Government policies and local strategies. The project is supported by Powys County Council and the South West & Central Wales Regional Learning & Skills Partnership (RLP SW&CW).

2. Proposal

- 2.1** To inform Cabinet of the developing Workways+ Powys project and the allocation of match funding from the Regeneration Strategy Fund in support of this project. The project will be delivered in partnership with PRIME Cymru, a Prince's Trust charitable organisation, supporting over 50's to return to work.
- 2.2** The Cabinet is asked to note the progress made to date and to support the continuing development of this project, Delegated Approval to spend £321,994 over 3 years as match funding from the Regeneration Strategy budget is also sought.
- 2.3** The first stage of the application process is a document called an Operation Logic Table (OLT). This was submitted to the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) on 1st December 2015 and was

approved. The completed business case was submitted on 6th February 2016 and we are now awaiting a decision from WEFO. Indications have been positive and subject to WEFO approval, it is anticipated that the project will commence in early 2017, though consideration must be given to the impact of the Chancellors Autumn Statement and Brexit.

2.4 The aims and objectives of Workways+ Powys align with, complement, and add value to UK mainstream labour market programmes through delivering a single co-ordinated approach to improving employment and employability for individuals as a route out of poverty.

2.5 The project will specifically look to increase the employment rate in Powys for the long term unemployed and long term economically inactive. Although Powys has a relatively high percentage of people in employment (77.3% compared to the Wales figure of 71.1%), 15,000 people in Powys aged 16-64 are economically inactive¹.

2.6 Within the 50-64 age group in Powys, 7,200 individuals are currently classed as economically inactive, which indicates that almost half of Powys' economically inactive population are over the age of 50. As a result, the main focus for this project will be on those for which age is the principal barrier to employment, namely the over 54 age group. Jointly working with PRIME Cymru will be key to this intervention. The project will however not preclude other participants over the age of 25 who experience complex barriers to employment.

2.7 The Workways+ Powys current ***draft*** finances are as follows:

Total project costs:	£643,988
European Funding	£321,994
Regeneration Strategy Funding	£321,994
(Match funding)	

2.8 Over a 3 year period it anticipated that the following outputs and results will be achieved.

- *Economically Inactive (aged 25 and over) with complex barriers to employment:* 675 people to be supported of which 135 are expected to enter employment and 225 to undertake a work experience placement or volunteering opportunity.
- *Long-term unemployed (aged 25 and over) who have complex barriers to employment:* a further 75 individuals will be supported to find employment, gain a qualification or undertake work experience or volunteering opportunities.

3. One Powys Plan

3.1 Priorities from the Plan that complement this project are:

¹ Nomis – www.nomisweb.co.uk April 2015-March 2016

- *Healthy lives*: Leading a healthy lifestyle is key to physical and mental wellbeing. We need to make sure that all citizens have access to services that will help them to lead healthier lives.
- *Stronger communities*: Bring people together in Powys so they feel that they matter, belong and can contribute to their community.
- *Older people*: Older people will be supported to lead fulfilled lives within their communities.

4. Options Considered/Available

- 4.1 The original proposal developed since February 2016 included the Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO) as a joint beneficiary. However, we were informed in August 2016 by PAVO that they were not able to continue their involvement due to resource and financial capacity.
- 4.2 Discussions have also been held with the County Council's Independent Living Team and Skills Academy regarding involvement. The Independent Living Team were not able to proceed due to changes with the delivery of their service. Powys Skills Academy could potentially tender to deliver some aspects of the training.
- 4.3 To develop the Workways+ project in partnership with Prime Cymru (a Prince's Trust initiative) as a joint beneficiary, this will enable a grass roots return to work programme in Powys.

5. Preferred Choice and Reasons

- 5.1 Regeneration Service to continue to progress with the Workways+ Powys in order to maximise the drawdown of European funding before the UK withdrawal from the EU. The preferred option is 4.3 because Prime Cymru has successfully been supporting the over 50's age group to remain economically active for the last 12 years.

6. Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and disorder,/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

- 6.1 The structure of the business plan has required us to address and fully consider the Cross Cutting themes including Equal Opportunities, Welsh Language, Environmental Sustainability and Tackling Poverty.

7. Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing

This is a European initiative targeting people aged over 25 years.

8. Local Member(s)

This will operate on a county-wide basis.

9. Other Front Line Services

This will not have an impact, as the project will be administered by Prime Cymru.

10. Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

The Professional Lead - Legal confirms that the legal service will support and assist where required regarding this project

Finance – The Finance Business Partner notes the contents of the report, this grant requires 50% match funding which will be funded from the Regeneration Strategy monies.

11. Public Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

The PSB should be made aware of the project for promotional purposes

12. Corporate Communications

No proactive communication action required.

13. Statutory Officers

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report."

The Strategic Director Resources (S151 officer) notes the comments made by finance and has received assurance that the match funding is in the base budget.

14. Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
The Workways + Project be approved.	This project will meet the Council's objectives of "supporting the local economy."
Expenditure of up to £321,994 over 3 years be approved from the Regeneration Strategy Fund.	This will enable match funding to be drawn down from EU sources on a 50% basis supporting 750 local residents to become more economically active.

Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	January 2017

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Background Papers used to prepare Report: