

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**CABINET EXECUTIVE
20 December 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 30'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
(Match funding) | £321,994 |
- 2.8** Over a 3 year period it anticipated that the following outputs and results will be achieved. Appendix 1 details the project overview.
- A minimum of 750 people who are either economically inactive or long-term unemployed, and who are not contributing to the economy of Powys or its potential growth, will be engaged with and moved closer to economic activity.
 - A minimum of 154 economically inactive or long-term unemployed will either join the workforce by gaining employment or will develop a business and become self-employed. From our experience we envisage around 50% of this group will become self-employed and provide employment opportunities for others an in particular younger people. This element is expected to provide a social return on investment in the area of over £800,000 to the economy of Powys over the 3 years of the project alone.

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

- A minimum of 169 of the people engaged with this project will, on leaving the project, continue to seek employment through job search.
- A minimum of 167 of those engaged with will complete a work relevant qualification on leaving.
- A minimum of 250 of those engaged with will undertake volunteering opportunities within Powys contributing to the economy of the county and the £1.8 billion contribution that volunteers make to the economy of Wales as a whole.
- A legacy would be provided via a team of at least 50 trained volunteer mentors who would continue to provide support to those seeking employment or support with developing a business idea after the project has ended.

3. One Powys Plan

3.1 Priorities from the Plan that complement this project are:

- *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' 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

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Jenni Thomas	01597 827672		jennit@powys.gov.uk

Background Papers used to prepare Report:

Workways+ Powys

The Project will be delivered in partnership with Prime Cymru. The Prince's Initiative for Mature Enterprise in Wales is a registered charity and the only organisation in Wales dedicated to providing practical support to people, the organisation has a proven track record of delivery over the last 15 years.

Project Plan

To engage with economically inactive members of the under-represented 30 plus age group with the aim of moving them closer to the world of work and ultimately economic activity.

Project Overview

- Having locally based outreach workers, and mentors, working with participants on a one-to-one basis enables a relationship to be built and trust developed, this helps individuals open up and address any issues/barriers they may have, it also helps the outreach worker/mentor gain a better understanding of the participants needs and requirements, and they keep in regular contact so that if any issues arise they can be dealt with in a timely manner.
- Many of our participants have multiple barriers to economic activity, and there is a need to address these before they can even think about undertaking volunteering and employment opportunities, in some cases this can take quite some time.
- The 10 Steps to Employment courses will be run in Job Centre's, and have been well received with very positive feedback and outcomes.
- Drop in sessions at Ystradgynlais Social Club, along with the one-to-one sessions in Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells libraries amongst others will be arranged. We have received a number of referrals in the Ystradgynlais area.
- WEFO have highlighted that this project represents good value for money in comparison to other projects with Wales.

Outcomes

- A minimum of 750 people who are either economically inactive or long-term unemployed, and who are not contributing to the economy of Powys or its potential growth, will be engaged with and moved closer to economic activity.
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business and become self-employed. From our experience we envisage around 50% of this group will become self-employed and provide employment opportunities for others and in particular younger people. This element is expected to provide a social return on investment in the area of over £800,000 to the economy of Powys over the 3 years of the project alone.

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