

Report



Cabinet Member Education and Skills

Part 1

Date: 20 January 2020

Item: 01

Subject **Newport Commitment**

Purpose To seek approval to adopt the Newport Commitment. This initiative would bring together the public, private and third sectors in partnership to connect children, young people and long term unemployed to a wide range of employment and skills development opportunities in Newport and further afield.

Author Community Regeneration Manager and the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Coordinator

Ward Newport Wide

Summary The objective of the Newport Commitment is to ensure that the long term unemployed and young people in the city of Newport secure a job, post education and training, that allows them to be the best that they can be; a job that unleashes and grows their own talents and skills and enables them to contribute fully to the prosperity of the city. At the same time, the Newport Commitment seeks to drive skills development and educational attainment in the city, by connecting young people, schools and wider educational institutions with business and employers.

The Commitment is already in place in Cardiff and Bristol and uses a web-based platform to link young people and the unemployed with training and employment opportunities

Proposal That the Council adopts the Newport Commitment in partnership with local employers, primary and secondary schools to enable individuals to access work and training opportunities.

Action by Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Strategic Director - Place
- Head of Finance – Chief Finance Officer
- Head of Law and Regulations – Monitoring Officer
- Head of People and Business Change
- Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing
- Cabinet Member approval – April 2019
- Senior Leadership Team – April 2019

- Cabinet approval – August 2019
- Scoping exercise to begin with local businesses – July 2019
- Launch of Newport Commitment – September 2019
- Meet with Primary and Secondary Head teachers – September 2019
- PSB Right Skills Intervention Board
- Youth Support Services Board
- Senior Leadership Team

Signed

Background

The Newport Commitment would assist in ensuring that young people in Newport make a successful transition from compulsory schooling to ongoing education, training and the world of work, and are enabled to reach their full potential

The Council is committed to increasing the engagement and progression of young people not in education, training and employment and those individuals who are long termed unemployed. This is a key part of the work of our schools, colleges, and Work & Skills team as well as the Council's Public Services Board partners engaged in delivering the Right Skills intervention in Newport's Well-being Plan.

There has been a steady improvement year on year in the proportion of young people who are engaged in education, employment or training at age 16 but there remains scope to increase the numbers who secure a positive destination after leaving school. The Newport Commitment would support this.

The Council also seeks to build on good practice already embedded, learn from other areas, create opportunities and improve the participation rates for young people in the city and in particular for our most vulnerable groups. The Newport commitment would build on this and on work already underway through Cardiff and Bristol Commitments.

The Newport Commitment

Ultimately, the focus of The Newport Commitment would be to ensure that all young people and long term unemployed individuals in the city eventually secure a career pathway that enables them to reach their full potential whilst contributing to the economic growth of the city. The Newport Commitment aims to create sustainable employment opportunities for a variety of recruitment needs, from entry level positions through to skilled opportunities. It could be used to support recruitment from the pool of Newport residents that are involved in Community Regeneration programmes.

There is already a Cardiff Commitment and a Bristol Commitment in place. The Newport Commitment would therefore be part of a partnership offer along the "Great Western Corridor" to employers, young people and the long term unemployed enabling individuals from Newport to access employment and career opportunities in Cardiff and Bristol as well as Newport.

The Commitment would support local economic development for the city with a focus on identifying skills gaps and recruitment demands by liaising with local employers. The delivery of work based qualifications, with appropriate underpinning support will improve the opportunities for employee progression, improving productivity and stability for employers. It would also support new and emerging industries who are seeking to develop a workforce for the future.

Potential benefits for young people, children, long-term unemployed and schools:

- Curriculum enrichment opportunities.
- Career exploration through events, career talks, work experience placements and workplace visits.
- Apprenticeships, traineeships, volunteering, jobs.
- Preparation for seeking work, e.g. CV writing and interview techniques
- Mentoring and support
- In-work support to ensure job sustainability and career progression for employees.

Potential benefits for businesses

- An opportunity to make a real difference to young people's lives.
- Demonstrates corporate social responsibility
- Co- constructing the future workforce.
- Brand awareness and business exposure to a younger generation and long term unemployed
- Staff development opportunities

The success of this partnership will be measured through the number of individuals accessing career, skills and employment opportunities. The desired outcomes would be:

- Young people with the right skills to support the economic growth sectors in Newport
- Integrated education and employment pathways for young people and long term unemployed.
- Easy access for young people to information and advice on career opportunities.
- An increased number of school leavers securing a positive, sustainable destination in education, employment or training.
- A more robust working relationship with businesses to support the needs of a growing city.
- More young people in vulnerable groups, at risk of becoming NEET, making a successful transition from school to future education, employment or training.
- A higher overall number of young people aged 16 – 25 economically active.
- Young people directly influence service planning and delivery and ensure ownership and relevance.
- Long term unemployed, with no formal qualifications gaining an essential skill, technical or job specific qualification.
- Long-term unemployed gaining unemployed.

The Commitment would be a joint initiative working with various departments across Newport City Council and external partners including:

- Economic Development
- Work and Skills
- Education
- Youth Service
- Flying Start
- Families First
- Resilient Communities
- University of South Wales
- Careers Wales
- Job Centre
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- Coleg Gwent
- Training Providers
- Local Business
- Digital Profile

If approved by Cabinet, the intention would be to launch as early as possible in the academic year. The Commitment uses an online platform to link young people and the long term unemployed with training and employment opportunities. Launch would be possible this autumn although the platform which is already in use in Cardiff and Bristol will not be fully bilingual until March 2020. This means that initially the platform will not comply to the Council's Welsh Language standards.

Financial Summary

The creation of the digital tool will reduce the resource required to deliver the Newport Commitment. There will be no additional costs, as resources will be absorbed through current delivery within RIH.

The digital tool will be created by a third party who will not be charging NCC for this service. This third party will charge services for enhanced requirement of employers. There will be no costs to schools.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Schools not engaging in the Newport Commitment	H	L	NCC has close links with all schools in Newport and good working relationships. The relationship between schools and businesses has been highlighted as an area of development and the process is ad hoc currently.	Education
Businesses not engaging in the Newport Commitment	H	L	NCC will be meeting an identified need highlighted by business at various events and through surveys.	Regeneration, Investment and Housing
Capacity to deal with demand	L	L	Currently we are not anticipating unmanageable demands. If this occurs we will seek alternative sources of support.	Regeneration, Investment and Housing
Digital Platform not complying with all applicable Welsh Language Standards	H	H	A Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment was not carried out against this proposal, however there is an FEIA that covers the Work & Skills portfolio for Authority which will identify a number of issues relating to non-compliance with standards in the initial stages of implementation. At the proposed point of launch in the autumn the platform will not comply to WL standards, however the provider is developing a fully bilingual platform to comply with the standards and this will be completed by March 2020. The council will need to ensure that future iterations of the platform adhere to all applicable Welsh Language Standards standards.	RIH / PBC
Newport Commitment and associated digital platform has not been subject to an Equalities	H	L	A Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment was not carried out against this proposal, however there is an FEIA that covers the Work & Skills portfolio for the Authority.	RIH / PBC

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Impact Assessment			<p>In future, the authority will need to monitor customer satisfaction in regards to accessibility and work with the content provider to improve the service.</p> <p>Digital Platform does collect equalities monitoring information that will help ensure target interventions against protected characteristics.</p>	

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

This proposal links with the following corporate plan priorities:

Resilient Communities
A Thriving City
Aspirational People
A Modernised Council

The Newport Commitment will aim to provide interventions that address the Well-being objectives adopted by Newport City Council and the objectives of One Newport Public Services Board contained within the Well-being Plan for the city.

The Commitment is aligned to the following Well-being Plan interventions:

Right Skills – People can access skills and education programmes that align with current and future local employment opportunities, enabling individuals and the city’s economy to achieve their potential.

The Newport “Offer” – The Newport “Offer” should attract and retain people and businesses to the city, recognising that desirability to work and live in the city is the result of the “complete package” including employment, housing solutions, infrastructure, environment, cultural opportunities and public services

Strong Resilient Communities – Working with the community and a range of organisations to identify assets and needs, developing a targeted, preventative place-based approach with local communities that considers the long term and empowering local people to lead and develop their local community.

Options Available and considered

Option 1 – Do nothing, this option will maintain the current status, however the current status does not support the authority’s aspiration to provide employment and career opportunities to its residents “improve people’s lives”. There will be the requirement at some point to implement a similar programme.

Option 2 - Newport only offer, this option would deliver a similar programme for Newport residents but would not provide information or opportunities with employers based outside of Newport.

Option 3 – Implement the Newport Commitment, this option supports the strategic pledge to “improve people’s lives”. It provides opportunity for educational organisations, students and the unemployed to

gain information, guidance and opportunities in the world of work. This current opportunity will provide our residents with a regional exposure to employers.

Preferred Option and Why

Option 3 – Implement the Newport Commitment, this option supports the strategic pledge to “improve people’s lives”. It provides opportunity for educational organisations, students and the unemployed to gain information, guidance and opportunities in the world of work. This current opportunity will provide our residents with a regional exposure to employers.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The report confirms there are no financial impact as a result of implementing this proposal. The Newport Commitment will utilise current staffing through existing budgets and the digital tool that will be used to support the service will be managed, licensed and delivered by another organisation on behalf of Newport City Council at no extra cost.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Newport Commitment itself, as this is simply a restatement of the Council’s existing corporate and well-being objectives relating to the development of work and skills and the provision of support for young people and long-term unemployed. The proposed collaborative arrangement with the schools and employers is also consistent with the sustainable development principle and the 5 ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations Act. However, the contractual arrangements for the provision and maintenance of the digital on-line platform by the external provider will need to be considered and, in particular, any data base rights and GDPR, data protection implications. There will also need to be a commitment to develop a bilingual on-line platform in due course to meet the requirements of the Council’s Welsh Language Standards.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

The report notes that the Newport Commitment is in line with the Council’s corporate plan priorities and the Right Skills and Newport Offer intervention in One Newport Public Services Board’s Well-being Plan for the city. It will also help deliver against the Council’s Well-being Objective “To improve skills, education and employment opportunities” and, in particular, the step “Support young people into education, employment and training”.

The initiative is also in line with the sustainable development principle in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Newport Commitment is a collaborative initiative between schools, the Council and business but will also report through the PSB’s Right Skills Intervention Board facilitating the involvement of other partners and the integration of partner objectives. It supports longer term skills development for the city and the prevention of young people from becoming NEET.

The risks table in the report notes that there is an FEIA that covers the Work & Skills portfolio for the Authority but a Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment has not been carried out for this specific proposal to date; going forward, the Council will need to monitor customer satisfaction in regards to accessibility and work with the content provider to improve the service if required. The report notes that the Digital Platform collects equalities monitoring information that will help ensure targeted interventions for protected characteristics if required.

Currently the Digital Platform used for the Cardiff Commitment and proposed for launch in Newport does not comply with all applicable Council Welsh Language Standards; the Council is working with the provider to develop a fully bilingual platform to comply with the standards.

There are no HR related issues arising directly from this report.

Comments of Cabinet Member

Cabinet Member has been briefed on the report.

Local issues

N/A

Scrutiny Committees

N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

The Newport Commitment is a proposal that makes up part of the Work & Skills portfolio offered by the Authority to residents. The Work & Skills portfolio of work has an FEIA that is updated on a bi annual basis. The next update is due in 2020.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Although no formal consultation has taken place specifically aimed at children and young people, consultation on the Newport Commitment will take place if approved by Cabinet.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- Long term: Raising awareness of opportunities for work and training in the city so that young people can explore potential careers and achieve their potential longer term; co-constructing the future workforce with business, thereby supporting long term economic development.
- Prevention: Helping to prevent young people from becoming NEET; helping to prevent unemployment and skills shortages in the city
- Integration: This initiative seeks to respond to the objectives of the Council, schools and other partners on the PSB's Right Skills Intervention Board in terms of supporting young people into training and employment and supporting economic growth.
- Collaboration: The initiative relies on close collaboration with local employers, schools, colleges and other members of the PSB's Right Skills Intervention Board
- Involvement: Young people and businesses will be involved in the development of the Newport Commitment and the web-based platform going forward to ensure its ongoing relevance

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

Consultation

Although no formal consultation has taken place at the moment consultation on the Newport Commitment will take place if approved by Cabinet.

Dated: 10 January 2020