

Committee: **Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **26th February 2020**

Report Subject: **Inspire 2 Achieve and Work Performance Report January – December 2019**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanne Collins, Executive Member for Education**

Report Submitted by: **Joanne Sims, Youth Service Manager**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	11.02.20	14.02.20			26/02/20	11.03.20		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an opportunity to scrutinise the local Inspire 2 Achieve and Inspire 2 Work projects funded by the European Social Fund (ESF).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 In 2013, Blaenau Gwent Youth Service led on the development of two ESF operations across West Wales and the Valleys (6 Local Authorities and 4 FE Colleges) called Inspire 2 Achieve (11-24 at risk of NEET young people) and Inspire 2 Work (16-24 NEET young people). In July 2015, the lead was transitioned to Environment and Regeneration, whilst the local delivery projects still remained with the Youth Service within the Education Directorate.
- 2.2 The regional lead team in Environment and Regeneration co-ordinate the operations for all joint beneficiaries across West Wales and the Valleys. Blaenau Gwent's Youth Service line manages the two local delivery projects; Inspire to Achieve and Inspire to Work. The Inspire projects are underpinned by the Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF).

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members scrutinise the current performance of the two projects and considers the following options;

Option 1 – Members are asked to scrutinise the information detailed within the report, contribute by making appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee and accept the report.

Option 2 – Members do not accept the report.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 The Inspire programmes contribute to all 5 areas of the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan through supporting young people to overcome barriers in their life enabling them to become positive members of the community.

4.2 The programmes also contribute to key objectives within the Corporate Plan, in particular those within Education and also Regeneration. This work also ensures that the Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework 6 key areas are fully met.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 Impact on Budget:

The two programmes are externally funded by ESF and so have no impact on core budget. The financial profiles for the two Inspire programmes for 2016 - 2022 are below:

I2W

Total Project Costs - £2,440,445
ESF Grant receivable - £2,148,723
Match Funding identified - £310,874

I2A

Total Project Costs - £3,787,353
ESF Grant Receivable - £3,325,260
Match Funding Identified - £470,026

Redundancy costs are built into the lifetime of the programme.

5.2 Risk:

The funding is secure until 2022. However, plans need to be put in place prior to this end date as if the needs of young people identified are not met, this may lead to more young people not being appropriately supported, impacting upon their wellbeing and becoming or remaining NEET.

5.3 Legal:

There are no legal implications for this report.

5.4 Human Resources:

The report will have a positive impact on staff as existing staff employed through this funding will have extensions in their contract until 2022.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 Performance Information and Data:

Since 2010, Blaenau Gwent has seen a steady reduction in the numbers of young people becoming NEET from 8.7% (74 young people) in 2009/10 to 1.9% (11 young people) in 2017/18. Unverified figures for 2018/19 are 1.7% (9 young people), which is in line with our lowest (best) number yet. The Raising Aspirations Group, the strategic NEET multi-agency partnership, has overseen the implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework and holds the Inspire programmes to account.

6.1.2 Inspire 2 Achieve (11-16)

There are 11 members of staff in the Inspire 2 Achieve (I2A) team. A Youth Service Team Manager oversees both the Inspire programmes but the I2A team includes 1 x team leader to manage the 5 x school based youth workers. 2 x Year 6/7 Transition youth workers, 2 x Year 11 Transition youth workers (including year 11 Electively Home Educated young people) and 1 x Emotional and Mental Health youth worker work across all school settings, and also meet young people outside of school.

All I2A youth workers and Careers Wales staff meet individually in their associated schools and as whole teams to discuss partnership working and how best to support identified young people. Direct work with young people consists of 1:1 support and group programmes depending on the needs of the individual. The overall aim of these sessions is to promote inclusion and increase young people's confidence and self-esteem.

Support is offered to young people during school holidays. This can include 1:1 support for engagement and group activities and trips for continuous engagement over these periods.

6.1.3 The projected outcomes (targets) for the lifetime of the project and progress for Inspire 2 Achieve (11-16) are set out below:

- Total number of young people supported: 1196 (699 males, 497 females)
- 7% to gain qualifications (84 young people),
- 20% to enter into further learning when leaving school (239 young people)
- 50% to be at reduced risk of becoming NEET (598 young people)

Since 2016 (when team was established):

- 695 young people (out of 1196) have been supported, 115 above target at this stage (349 male, 345 female), with one young person identifying as Non-Binary.

Of the 431 closed, the following outcomes are recorded:

- 15% have gained qualifications,
- 28% have entered further learning

- 54% have reduced their risk of becoming NEET.
- 85% have improved their soft skills.

- 6.1.4 For the period of January to December 2019, 264 new young people were supported (123 male, 141 female). Of the 264, 50 were supported by 2 Year 6/7 transition workers, 50 supported by 2 Year 11 transition workers, 146 supported by 4 school based workers, 18 were supported by 1.5 Emotional and Mental Health workers. 49 young people out of the 50 successfully transitioned into year 7, with only 9 needing ongoing support. This success was partly due to peer support established with older Inspire young people in the schools. 13 of the school based (146) young people have been closed, with 9 already recorded having reduced their risk of becoming NEET.
- 6.1.5 Equality focussed projects delivered through the year included Empire Fighting Chance (non-contact boxing programme) delivered across all 4 mainstream settings and 1 alternative education settings. 60 young people, a mix of male and female, take part weekly. Additionally, one female who moved in to post 16 ETE provision, is now working toward a Level 1 in Construction.
- 6.1.6 'Healthy Living' is a dominant theme running across all elements of the project. This includes the delivery of registered PSE (Personal and Social Education) units around sexual health, substance misuse, healthy relationships and welsh culture. Also included is physical activity programmes ranging from regular walks, gym sessions and procured in programmes and activities that enable young people to explore nature and sustainability, including the Christmas Arts and Crafts programme.
- 6.1.7 I2A were part of the ESTYN visit at EFLC on 7th March 2019. Feedback received was very positive, particularly in terms of partnership working between the school and I2A project.
- 6.1.8 In May 2019, the Youth Service's work, with a focus on Inspire 2 Achieve's work linked to EFLC, were finalists in the Professional Teaching Awards, Youth Work Category.

Inspire 2 Work (16-24)

- 6.1.9 There are currently 6.5 Inspire 2 Work (I2W) youth workers in the team, managed by the Youth Service Team Manager, which includes 5 x core I2W youth workers (Education, Employment and Training), and 1 x Health and Fitness youth worker and 0.5 emotional and mental health youth worker was appointed at the latter end of this year.

Inspire support for young people aged 16-24 is based upon bespoke support packages via Inspire 2 Work (I2W). I2W plays a pivotal role in supporting young people on Tiers 1,2 and 3 of the Careers Wales 5 Tier Model. Support is also offered to young people linked to the DWP, Housing associations, Social Services and various other agencies.

Although I2W can support any young person who is NEET, and not living in a Communities First area, the reality is that the majority of young people coming through to the team often need long term intensive support, addressing issues such as mental health, low self-esteem and housing. Therefore, the team work closely with other Youth Service colleagues and other partners, and small steps are seen as a big success.

Support is provided to young people both on a one to one and group basis, delivering projects such as gym, fitness, training, enterprise and wellbeing.

6.1.10 The Communities For Work (C4W) Triage partnership work is pivotal. All I2W Youth Workers have continued with their Single Point of Contact (SPOC) roles to improve the projects efficiency and partnership working. There is a SPOC for each C4W cluster area in Blaenau Gwent (Ebbw Fawr, Ebbw Fach North, Ebbw Fach South and Tredegar) and their roles include forwarding post code eligible referrals with consent to Triage, providing and gathering information on support and opportunities for young people to and from C4W clusters. There is also a Referral SPOC within the I2W team. This role includes coordination of referrals to and from project, maintenance and development of a referral database, and planning ways to expand referral opportunities through partners.

6.1.11 The projected outcomes (targets) for the lifetime of the project and progress for Inspire 2 Work (16-24) are set out below:

- Total number of young people supported: 780 (438 males, 342 females)
- 50% to gain qualifications (390 young people),
- 20% to enter into further learning when leaving school (156 young people)
- 20% to gain employment NEET (156 young people)

6.1.12 Since 2017 (when team was established):

- 207 young people (out of 780) have been supported (125 male, 82 female).

Of the 179 closed, the following outcomes are recorded:

- 47 achieved a qualification (26%)
- 49 supported into further learning (27%)
- 53 supported into employment (30%)
- 64 still NEET but improved soft skills (36%)

Of the 179 closed, 169 (94%), improved their wellbeing support scores, meaning that their overall awareness and understanding of themselves and the wider world has significantly improved.

6.1.13 For the period of January to December 2019, 204 new young people were referred, with 77 eligible and enrolled (51 male, 26 female). Out of the 77, 54 young people have now completed (with 23 continuing into 2020) with the following outcomes:

- 12 gained a qualification
- 13 supported into further learning
- 21 supported into employment
- 19 still NEET but with improved soft skills
- 52 young people's wellbeing assessment score improved.

The sharing of participants between the Inspire 2 Work programme and C4W programme (C4W is an all Wales programme, run by Welsh Government, funded by ESF) has made meeting and/or exceeding targets difficult.

6.2 Expected outcome for the public:

Through the delivery of these programmes, young people will be supported at the times when they most need it and are more likely to achieve better outcomes in school, training and employment.

6.2.1 The by-product of this enhanced support should lead to more economically active young people, more young people reaching their potential in secondary education and further learning/training and less mental health barriers hindering the development of young people.

6.3 Involvement (Consultation, engagement, participation):

From the outset, young people and partner organisations influenced the design of the programmes.

6.3.1 When WEFO invited the programmes to submit an extension and identify any areas of development in line with the criteria, existing data and project knowledge was initially used to help inform the next steps.

6.3.2 Key gaps identified included the need for additional mental health support, physical health and wellbeing, transition support for year 6 to year 7 pupils, including mentoring and social networking for those young people in mainstream but with Additional learning Needs and Autism Spectrum Disorder. The mental health element has been developed in consultation with Public Health, Primary Mental Health and the lead for the Welsh Government 'In Reach' Mental Health School pilot. The Year 6/7 transition support has been developed in consultation with the then Principal Educational Psychologist and Schools. All posts are now recruited to and have been in post for the most of this year.

6.4 Thinking for the long term:

Funding for these programmes until 2022 gives some stability to the provision and support available for young people. However, the support provided is expected to better prepare young people for their future and beyond the lifetime of the programmes.

- 6.5 Preventative Focus:
Both Inspire programmes are preventative in their approach. Inspire 2 Achieve exist to help 'prevent' young people from becoming NEET. Inspire 2 Work exists to 'prevent' young people from developing ingrained negative behaviours and lifestyles into their future.
- 6.6 Collaboration/Partnership Working:
The programmes are collaborative in their nature as they are a regionally planned programme, locally delivered. The local Raising Aspirations Group holds the Youth Service to account for achieving the outcomes in both Inspire programmes.
- 6.7 Integration:
These programmes impact upon key objectives for both Education and Environment and Regeneration Directorates, including educational attainment, attendance and behaviour and addressing skills and employment for 11-24 year olds.
- 6.8 EgIA:
N/A as this programme will not have any negative impact on protected characteristics, only positive.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The Raising Aspirations Group monitors the progress of the local delivery of the two Inspire programmes. A performance monitoring report is presented annually to Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the local delivery. Annual reports and evaluation reports are also provided to Education Directorate Management Team (DMT).

Background Documents / Electronic Links

N/A