

**Request consideration be given to engaging with those people who are not in employment or claiming Job Seekers Allowance to ensure they have opportunities to reach their potential - part of review of Council Plan report to PFSC in January.**

The Cabinet Member acknowledges the value of engaging with people who are not in employment to support them to reach their potential (Job Seekers Allowance claims are being phased out and replaced by Universal Credit. It is not possible to make a new job seekers allowance claim). The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through Jobcentre Plus helps people of working age across the county to find employment, with a focus on those who are receiving benefits. The County Council supports the District and Borough Councils' Journey to Work programme supporting people to get in to work. The programme complements DWP provision and is open to all. The County Council also has an important role to play, particularly in supporting priority adult groups into education, training, and employment. The Council Plan will continue to reflect the Council's main commitments to engaging people who are not in employment to ensure they have opportunities to reach their potential, as set out in the 22/23 Plan.

Further information on the main support for people who are not in employment to reach their potential is provided below, along with a summary of how it features in the Council Plan.

**Department for Work and Pensions role**

Jobcentre Plus helps people of working age to find employment and to access unemployment benefits. Offices are located across the country and can support job seekers with 1-1 advice through the Jobcentre Plus Advisor service and with access to touch screen computer terminals to search for jobs and make job applications. The offer includes a Jobseeker Direct telephone service and the Find a Job website, which lists a wide range of vacancies. They work proactively with businesses through Employer Advisors to support recruitment campaigns, including listing jobs for free on the Find a Job website. There is also support for employers with the interview process, recommending relevant candidates and facilitating career tasters.

**District and Borough Councils' Journey to Work programme**

The main support programme engaging people who are not in employment to support them in to work and to reach their potential is `Journey to Work` which is coordinated by the District and Borough Councils. The programme receives funding from all the local authorities, including the County Council through the business rates pool and it was agreed that delivery is most appropriately led at the District and Borough level. The programme is linked to the work of local jobcentres and the Department for Work and Pensions, although it is open to all and not just those on benefits. The main objectives of the programme are to:

- provide West Sussex residents with employment / employability support
- help West Susses residents find paid work
- support local recruiting employers and provide ready to work candidates for vacancies

- provide West Sussex residents with opportunities to upskill and use their transferable skills to find available work.

From January 2022 to July 2022 140 people moved into employment (42% of the annual target). Over the same period there were 1,971 interventions (49% of the yearly target).

### **County Council role**

The County Council has a particular role to play in supporting priority adult groups into education, training, and employment:

- The Council is progressing work to increase the number of adults with a learning disability in employment or engaged in 'meaningful activities' including in skills development. People are signposted in the first instance to the Job Centre Plus offer which provides help with employment and training. People who need additional help receive support from County Council funded Supported Employment West Sussex (SEWS). SEWS supports people with a learning disability, autism, physical and sensory disabilities, and family carers to find employment. In Autumn 2022 SEWS was working with 57 people with learning disabilities.
- Future arrangements for adult learning provision will include a consideration of how provision could be more responsive to the socio-economic needs of the county, including to people who need support to develop skills to help them prepare for work (as far as the Education and Skills Funding Agency criteria allow).
- The Council works in schools with targeted year 11s at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training) to provide them with high quality careers guidance which will include advice, information and guidance on apprenticeships and other academic and vocational routes to employment. The Council also works in the community with NEET young people to support them into work, training, academic or vocational routes to employment.
- The Council provides support for care leavers to help them achieve their aspirations through employment, education, or training.

In addition, the Library Service offers general support for those seeking work through MyWorkSearch, an online toolkit that helps jobseekers find job opportunities. It also has a job finder and a CV builder. Volunteer and staff-led digital support sessions help residents with essential digital skills, which for some is likely to enhance employability.

### **The Council Plan**

The Council Plan will continue to reflect the Council's headline commitments to engaging people who are not in employment to ensure they have opportunities to reach their potential, as set out in the 22/23 Plan as follows:

## **Keeping People Safe from Vulnerable Situations**

We will focus our activity in the following areas: West Sussex Local Offer will continue to deliver information, advice and guidance for children, families, and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities up to 25 years old.

### **Outcome: -**

Support to people when they need it.

### **Key Performance Indicator: -**

Support for care leavers to achieve their aspirations – percentage of care-leavers aged 17- 21 who are in Employment, Education or Training.

## **Helping People and Communities to Fulfil their Potential**

We will focus our activity in the following areas: Careers advice – we will continue to support the 500 young people not in education, employment or training and provide apprenticeships with WSCC and, where possible, encourage others to do the same; Lifelong learning – we will work with education providers to support them in running accessible learning and development opportunities; Libraries – we will continue to deliver activities to support literacy and learning for children, families and older people, preventing isolation; We will work with the local community and community networks to improve individual's digital inclusion, health & wellbeing through enhanced digital skills.

### **Outcome: -**

Access to excellent education and learning

### **Key Performance Indicator: -**

Combined percentage of 16- to 17-year-olds that are Not in Education, Employment and Training or whose activity is not known (3-month average December to February annually).

### **Outcome: -**

Promoting and enabling independence.

### **Key Performance Indicator: -**

The percentage of adults with a learning disability in paid employment.