



RHONDDA CYNON TAF



The Employment and Skills Strategy 2019/21

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?
- Outcomes and impacts
- Actions

Where were we?

- The rate of economic inactivity for people aged 16 – 64 years had reduced steadily over the previous 3 years and in July 2019 stood at 35,200.
- Annual unemployment figures based on the previous full financial year showed a slight increase to 6,800. The July figure was 4,385 (2.9%) which was consistent with the average for Wales.
- The rate of unemployment in the age range that was higher than the comparative data for Wales was that for young people aged 18-24.
- 16,100 people of working age in RCT had no qualifications (Dec 2018)

Where do we want to be?

We want to live in a community where:

- all people have access to the support they need to develop their skills and knowledge so that they can achieve their potential and live healthy and rewarding lives;
- everyone who wants to work is supported to gain and stay in employment;
- those who want to progress in work are able to benefit from opportunities to further develop their skills and gain promotion;
- there is access to training and learning throughout a person's life as a commitment to lifelong learning is essential for prosperity.



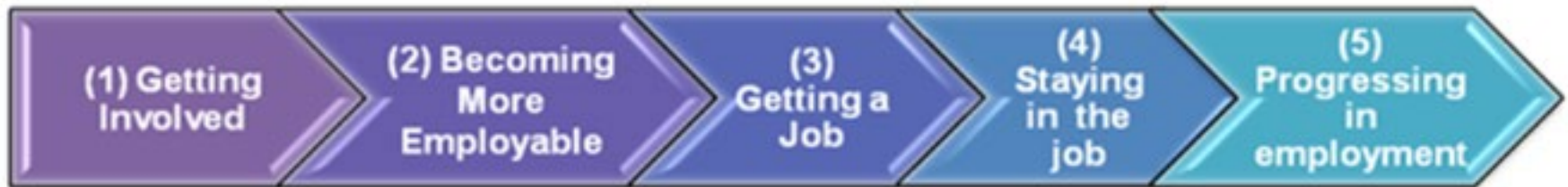
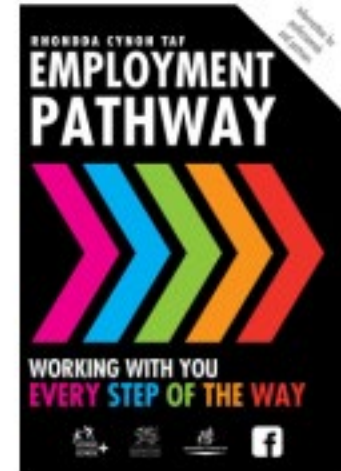
RHONDDA CYNON TAF

How do we get there?

Key priorities:

1. Work with partners to maximise the resources available in Rhondda Cynon Taf for skills development and employment support so that more people are supported to:
 - gain skills for life
 - gain skills for employment
 - secure and stay, and progress in paid employment
2. Work with employers to identify and respond to current and projected skills gaps;
3. Prepare for the impact of Brexit by exploring alternative options for supporting employment programmes in the county e.g. harnessing community benefits to better support the development of employment opportunities for residents.

Delivering on priorities



Provision

- Adult Community Learning Programme
- Communities for Work Plus
- Employment Routes
- Communities for Work (ESF)
- Inspire2Work (16-24 years) (ESF)
- Staying Well@Work (ESF)
- DWP Kickstart Scheme
- Creative and cultural programmes
- Youth programmes to address the needs of young people
- Education, Employment and Training programmes – traineeships, apprenticeships, graduate schemes, support for education



Delivering on priorities – CfW, CfW+, I2W employment support programmes

Outcome	Up to end Dec 2020
Clients engaged	5952
Entering employment	1667
Gaining a qualification	2040

CfW / CfW+ Community Engagement Plan	2019/20
Number of partners referring in	51
Total number of referrals	3780
Number of jobs fairs (including sector-specific e.g. care sector)	9
Number of start and finish engagement activities	1214
Number of regular activities: Work Club, Digital Fridays	1410
Social media followers	3692

Illustration of Covid impact on CfW+ Delivery

Outcome	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Clients engaged	1144	918	478
Clients entering employment	393	434	201
Gaining a vocational qualification	406	303	115

Impact of Covid on Legacy Delivery

Legacy Fund	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
More positive about mental well-being	920	957	0
Increased physical activity	69	82	0
Employment support from Job Club	1385	1491	524
Gaining basic digital skills	267	330	0
Know how to access support	428	398	212
Feel part of the community	364	360	185
Gained one or more qualifications		240	25

Delivery during Lockdown – Support for learners and jobseekers (1)

- Online provision for courses – expanded access to employability provision through a partnership with the Digital College.
- Remote telephone provision or through Teams for job support/mentoring.
- Loan of tablets and computers to customers/ learners to enable them to continue to engage with us.
- Well-being champions and sessions to support tutors and learners
- Mental health support developed with partner organisations.
- The Council's Graduate and apprenticeship schemes continued to offer opportunities.
- Stay Well @ Work – support for employees.

Delivery during Lockdown – Support for vulnerable residents

Staff supported residents through community hubs. Between April and the end of August 2020 3,333 individual residents were supported:

Support required	Individuals requesting support
Friendly phone call	820
Help understanding advice	91
Picking up shopping	1,971
Picking up prescriptions	1,524
Employment/financial advice	85
Dog walking	112
Posting mail	138
Using the internet	39
Other	2,619

Support for employers

- Employment Routes programme – developed in partnership with employers
- Successfully applied to be a Gateway employer (intermediary) on the UK Government's Kickstart scheme
- Appointed additional Employer Liaison Officer roles, one of whom is based with the Regeneration team
- Extension provided by WEFO to the Stay Well@Work project that supports businesses and their employees
- Establishment of an internal Business, Skills and Employment Group

Impact of provision on customers

Employment support – Nicola's journey (video clip)

Feedback from Employers

Looking ahead - Challenges

The strategy and Action plan are due to be reviewed at the end of 2021 and a new plan developed.

There are 4 major challenges currently:

- The loss of European Social Funds which support a number of significant employability programmes and uncertainty of WG CfW+ and Legacy Fund grants continuing beyond March 2022;
- The ending of the furlough scheme in April;
- The longer-term impact of Covid-19 on individuals, businesses, and communities;
- National government programmes potentially affecting local delivery e.g. DWP 'JETs' and 'RESTART' commissioned provision.

The impact of Covid on unemployment

	Total Claimants for out-of-work benefits	18-24	18-21	25-49	50+
December 2018	2,930	705	450	1,505	715
December 2019	4,750	1,170	730	2,540	1,035
December 2020	9,090	2,180	1,270	4,960	1,935

Looking ahead - opportunities

- The positive impact of the development of community hubs on access to learning and employment support
- New developments – Canolfan Calon Taf
- Increased WG investment in adult learning and employment support
- Regionalisation of Adult Community Learning Partnership
- Improvements in IT enables staff to engage remotely with learners/jobseeker
- The UK Government's Community Renewal Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund
- Opportunities through CCR and VRP

Conclusion

- Services adapted their delivery well to meet the new circumstances.
- Services are continuing to work with a wide range of partners to support residents and businesses.
- Blended provision of support is expected to continue going forward and has attracted new learners.
- Outcomes for the main employability programmes have recovered swiftly and the vast majority of targets are likely to be met within the necessary timescale.
- Some areas will take longer to recover – adult community learning.
- There will be further challenges during 2021/22 but working together across the Council and with partners will ensure we can provide the best support possible to those who need it.