

# **Seizing the Opportunity: Raising the Employment Rate in Newport**



**Newport Unlimited**

**A Report for Newport Learning and Skills Partnership by  
Martin Yarnit Associates**

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Version 1.4



## **Introduction**

MYA have been commissioned by Newport City Council to identify how the local infrastructure can be best aligned to support economically inactive or workless groups into employment pathways. It has been asked to

1. Map local provision and identify good practice
2. Assess the contribution that local centres, community based provision and adult and community learning might make to an improved infrastructure for supporting the economically inactive onto sustainable employment pathways
3. Take a view of the role to be played by community organisations in delivering employability training taking account of the changing policy context
4. Consider the role that employers and service users might best play
5. Examine the implications for local skills and employment planning and funding frameworks.

## **Our Approach**

Our overall approach has been to look at what is currently being done in Newport to increase the employment rate amongst disadvantaged groups, then to propose realisable objectives, and to consider what needs to be done to bridge the gap between the vision and the reality.

## **Acid Questions**

Key questions that arise from this approach that will be consider later in the report are

1. Can local residents draw on a comprehensive, integrated service in any area of Newport? Do they know it exists?
2. If not, what needs doing?
3. Is there clear accountability for local delivery or a multiplicity of coordinating and planning bodies?

## **Structure of the Report**

The report is in three parts: findings, good practice and recommendations. It was funded through a research grant from Welsh Assembly Government.

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the many people and local agencies who have facilitated this piece of work. Those who provided direct assistance are listed in the Appendix.

## Summary

The economic prospects for Newport are rosy but with 16,000 workless benefits claimants, many of them concentrated in disadvantaged areas of the city and lacking formal qualifications, there is a risk that new opportunities will pass them by. This report looks at ways of making better use of existing networks and facilities such as local learning centres to help move people into employment or other useful activities such as volunteering.

The report (Part 1) notes some challenges

1. The 80% employment target is not a clear priority for Newport and there's a risk that the thousands of anticipated new jobs will do little or nothing to reduce worklessness, benefits dependency and child poverty in the city.
2. There is no shared view of the scale of the resources required to tackle the problem. The constant use of percentages blurs the issue.
3. Neither the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) or the City Council has a clear focus on this issue and action is being led at too junior a level in all the key agencies.
4. There is currently no forum for systematic planning and no systematic engagement with employers.
5. There is no plan for delivery of integrated and comprehensive employment services even though there are some useful initiatives and an unrivalled set of local centres.
6. There is a confusing and probably time consuming array of partnership and planning bodies lacking clear rationale.
7. The city needs to take Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) discrimination more seriously.

It also notes Newport's assets from an employment point of view:

- Creation of Newport Learning and Skills Partnership (NLSP) with brief for integrated resource planning for 2008 onwards
- Energetic Jobcentre Plus (JCP) managers keen to get involved in joint planning and action with the City Council
- Recognition of scale of the worklessness problem by Regeneration Sub-Committee
- Committed local centre managers offering a growing range of employment and skills opportunities
- JCP Pathways to Work delivered by Action for Employment (A4e) - starts December - with 5 employer placement officers aimed at Incapacity Benefits (IB) claimants
- Changing Lives, Creating Futures – 4 Deprived Areas Funding (DAF) community advisers employed by Newport City Council
- Want to Work in Pill and Maindee targeting BME people
- Construction Initiative and Employer Pledge work with local firms.

Following a review of the evidence about good practice (Part 2), the report makes a number of recommendations (Part 3), most notably

- Newport Learning and Skills Partnership should be established as the city's Employment and Skills Board, accountable to the Local Strategic Partnership.
- An ambitious target for moving inactive people into jobs should be agreed by the City along with a 5 year action plan
- The City should set out a plan for creating comprehensive, integrated employment routeways in 8 key localities plus city centre linked to the Pathways to Work programme and the New Deals
- Create an additional 25 personal adviser posts to deliver local employment services.

## PART I: FINDINGS

Part I falls into several sections

- Social context
- Wales policy context
- Local policy
- Structures
- Employer engagement
- Service delivery
- Main findings

### Social Context

The prospects for Newport are rosy, with more than £1b of development expected over the next few years, likely to create 15,000 or more jobs. But there are constraints. Although the employment rate is on a par with the UK average, the number of people on the main out of work benefits has fallen slowly over the last five years as the figures show, with the reduction being particularly small in priority areas like Pill and Gaer. There is also evidence of a rise in claimants in the 16-24 age group, up 8% over the period, a worrying trend since younger people might be expected to have less trouble gaining employment than older people who might be expected to have fewer qualifications and more likelihood of having been long-term unemployed.

#### **Newport: Claimants 2002-07 (Jobseekers, Incapacity Benefits, Lone Parents)**

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	change
15345	14845	14110	14110	13945	13720	- 10.6%

Source: Nomis | October 2007

Moreover, as the Council's Economic Development Strategy notes

*Concentrated pockets of deprivation exist in Newport near areas of relative affluence. There are concentrations of disadvantaged households in Pillgwenlly, Tredegar Park, Bettws and Ringland wards. Each of these fall within the 100 most deprived wards in Wales (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000). (para.38)*

Benefits dependency and child poverty remain high with eight wards accounting for 68.7% of all children – 5490 - living in benefits dependent households. Together these 8 wards contribute some 57% of Newport's unemployed, as the table shows

Tredegar Park	480
Pillgwenlly	750
Ringland	805
Bettws	790
Alway	835
Liswerry	790
Gaer	550
Victoria	490
Total	5490

Source: JRF report on child poverty.

According to the 2001 Census, 33.6% of the working age population lacks a qualification. This must place a limit on any policy for 'high value employment growth'.<sup>1</sup>

Altogether, there are around 16,000 benefits claimants of working age in Newport with a majority of these in the eight wards.<sup>2</sup> The good news is that there are fewer long term unemployed than five years ago. The bad news is that there are more repeaters – people who drift in and out of short term employment. This means that more support is needed to ensure that employment is sustainable. BME people form a disproportionate percentage of these, accounting for around 25% of claimants of working age in Pillgwenlly. People with mental illness and people with learning difficulties and visual and hearing impairments are also disproportionately represented amongst the workless. Newport, finally, has a growing number of young people who are not in employment, education or training.

### **Worklessness in Newport - in a Nutshell**

- 16235 benefit claimants in Newport (NOMIS July 2007)
- Of these 8370 on IB
- City's employment rate 70.7%
- Lowest employment rate (claimants in brackets): Gaer (1085), Stow Hill (720), Alway (1160), Victoria (1075), Ringland (1265), Bettws (1485), Tredegar Park (645), Pillgwenlly (1300) – total 8735 (C.1st in italics)
- 8 wards account for 68.7% of all children – 5490 - living in benefits dependent households
- Fewer long-term unemployed; more repeaters

It goes without saying that it makes no sense for thousands of residents to be living on the edge of society, dependent in many cases on benefits, when Newport is going through a period of sustained employment growth. Moving people off benefits into employment is worth an estimated £9000 a year to the Treasury in benefits saved and taxes paid, not counting the reduced cost to other public services of the knock-on effects of worklessness and child poverty.<sup>3</sup>

### **Economic Context**

New employment areas are identified in the approved Unitary Development Plan. The main growth areas over the next 5 years are expected to be:

- City Centre (which includes the northern part of Pillgwenlly) – retail, offices, hotels and leisure
- West Newport – offices and manufacturing
- SE Newport (including 100 acres at Llanwern) – manufacturing and distribution

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<sup>1</sup> Wales Assembly Government, Building Sustainable Communities at <http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/southeastwales/southeastinterim/suscommunities/?lang=en>

<sup>2</sup> This includes JSA, IB, Lone Parents plus carers, disabled, others.

<sup>3</sup> Freud, David (2007) Reducing dependency, increasing opportunity: options for the future of welfare to work. An independent report to the Department for Work and Pensions, DWP, p.7

Research undertaken for the Council by Price Waterhouse Coopers in 2005 identified the following target sectors for Newport:

- Office Services (including Government Offices)
- IT/Media
- Logistics
- Food and Drink
- Electronics

Apart from these target sectors for inward investment, the regeneration and growth strategy for Newport will create significant employment opportunities in the following sectors

- Construction/Built Environment – latest CITB Skills Forecast predicts an annual requirement of 5,000-6,000 fully qualified construction workers per annum across Wales with the main growth spots being Cardiff, Newport and Swansea.
- Retail – the 3 major redevelopment projects in Newport will create over 2,000 new jobs (excluding construction) in retail, hotel/leisure and office occupations.
- Leisure/tourism/hospitality – Ryder Cup Ireland in 2006 by way of example used 830 volunteers and employed 1400 security people, 1000 catering staff, 1,000 media staff and 90 First Aiders.
- Care – already a sector with major recruitment issues
- Self employment

Some of these sectors are traditionally attractive to unskilled/low skilled people but are themselves upskilling in order to drive up quality. This will make it even harder for some of those in our most disadvantaged communities to access employment unless they can gain the necessary basic employability skills.<sup>4</sup>

## **Wales Policy Context**

The British Government's commitment to achieving an 80% employment rate poses a big challenge to Wales where there are some of the highest concentrations of worklessness in the UK. The Welsh Assembly Government and the DWP 'both acknowledge the challenge of ensuring that effective employability services are delivered in Wales. There is currently no shortage of providers but more must be done to ensure that they are co-ordinated, joined-up and share a focus on outcomes for clients'.<sup>5</sup>

In their joint report, WAG and DWP go on to note that one to one key worker support has emerged as one of the most effective ways of moving people into employment, a conclusion confirmed by a recent comprehensive review of good practice in the UK and further afield.<sup>6</sup>

Their conclusions are supported by DELLS (now DCELLS):

*The number of people economically inactive remains a pressing issue facing the South East Wales economy. To address the needs of the economically inactive, additional provision should be directed into basic skills and soft skills training. It is also crucial that learning providers align their vocational*

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<sup>4</sup> See DTZ Report Newport Labour Market International Business Wales March 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Full Employment for Wales (2007), para. 87

<sup>6</sup> Tackling Worklessness and Social Exclusion in the East Midlands (2007), Martin Yarnit Associates for the regional Employment, Skills and Productivity Partnership.

provision to respond to the skills needs of those sectors experiencing growth and offering employment opportunities.<sup>7</sup>

The Department makes a number of recommendations relating to ESOL, basic skills, employer-related training programmes and the development of the RISE sustainability strategy and the capital investment programme. In relation to ESOL it proposes:

*Increase provision and support for ESOL, including work based ESOL, to meet the learning needs of established communities and new arrivals and fill the skills gaps that a wide cross-section of sectors are experiencing. (p.35)*

On basic skills:

*Provide strategic direction and guidance for basic skills provision in the region and consider the establishment of a strategic regional partnership.*

On employer-related training programmes

*Provide appropriate training programmes to support the economically inactive to take up employment opportunities and respond to sectors experiencing growth i.e. Built Environment/Construction, Social Care, Leisure and Tourism, Catering and Hospitality, Media and Retail Distribution. (p.7)*

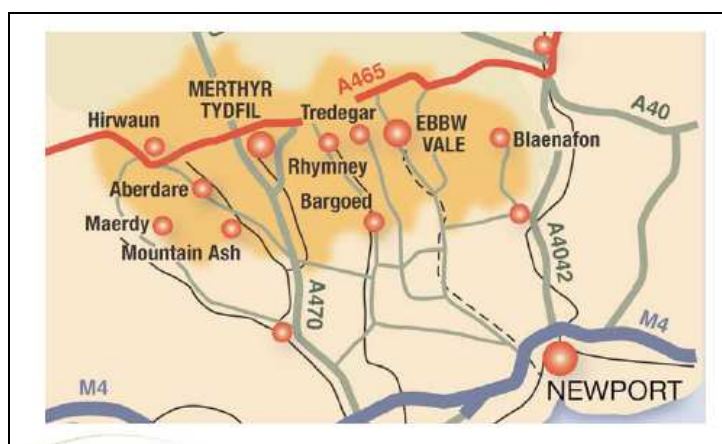
On RISE, it comments

*Having upgraded the network infrastructure, serious consideration now needs to be given to the sustainability of the new network and to the possibility of 'rolling-out' the principles of the initiative to other boroughs within the region.*

And proposes the need for

*a strategic forum to oversee the implementation of the RISE sustainability strategy and build upon the earlier capital investment programme. (p.8)*

These recommendations ought to have a bearing on the development of local policy on employment and skills in Newport.



### **Newport and Heads of the Valleys Area**

<sup>7</sup> Regional Statement of Needs and Priorities (2006), p.6

## Regional Developments

There is a growing recognition in south east Wales strongly supported by WAG that effective planning requires a regional focus. The South East Wales Spatial Planning Group has begun to think through some of the practical implications especially for physical development. EU funding frameworks are likely to extend this realisation into labour market planning as well. It is clear that local authorities and their partners will need to think in broader terms about who they engage with and how they bid for funds. It is in Newport's interest, with its restricted access to EU funds, to work more closely with its counterparts. As the current chair of the Wales SOLACE (local authority chief executives) Group, Newport is well placed to carry forward a collaborative approach to social and economic development.

### Overlapping Boundaries

	RISE	SEWSPG <sup>8</sup>	Competitiveness <sup>9</sup>	Convergence <sup>10</sup>
Blaenau Gwent	●	●		●
Bridgend		●		●
Caerphilly	●	●		●
Cardiff		●	●	
Merthyr Tydfil		●		●
Monmouthshire	●	●	●	
Newport	●	●	●	
Rhondda Cynon Taff		●		●
Torfaen	●	●		●
Vale of Glamorgan		●	●	

## Local Policy

Employment and skills as a policy issue figure in all the key Newport planning documents, suggesting a commitment on the part of the city's leading agencies to raising the employment level, tackling disadvantage and providing the skills needed by an overheating local economy. The Community Strategy (see below) is clear what the end result should look like.

### Newport's Community Strategy 2005-15: *What Success Will Look Like*

- Reduce the difference in educational attainment between communities and racial groups
- Reduce unemployment in most disadvantaged wards
- Increased rate of business start-ups for ethnic minorities
- More people from poor neighbourhoods getting apprenticeships and going on to vocational education, further education and higher education
- Families and households most at risk receive focussed help and attention

(p.29)

<sup>8</sup> South East Wales Spatial Planning Group

<sup>9</sup> Local authority areas eligible for EU Competitiveness Funding

<sup>10</sup> Local authority areas eligible for EU Convergence Funding

The vision of Newport as an Enterprise City (see below) proposes the building blocks upon which sustainable growth will take place including the objective that all should share in Newport's prosperity.

#### Newport an Enterprise City: the Building Blocks

- Create a more diversified economic base;
- Re-enforce Newport as the Economic Engine for the 5 Counties;
- Establish the City Centre as an attractive retail and business location: an urban renaissance;
- Establish Newport as a City of lifelong learning;
- Secure Newport as a centre for logistics;
- Ensure that all share Newport's prosperity.

Creating the systems and relationships, winning the trust of employers and local residents that will ensure that Newport's good fortune is enjoyed by all is a considerable challenge. It is unfortunate, therefore, that Newport's bid to become a City Strategy pathfinder was unsuccessful because this status might well have been the catalyst for moving up a gear in terms of policy and delivery. The experience of City Strategy elsewhere is that it can help to create a single high-level focus for employment and skills for all the local partners and a move towards a more coherent use of resources which are both indispensable to, although not sufficient to achieve effective local delivery.

A key element of the City Strategy approach is that it promotes the involvement of a variety of providers in employability programmes, including local authorities and the voluntary and community sector. The evidence from the East Midlands and other areas is that alliances between JCP, the voluntary and community sector and other agencies including councils can be very effective at moving inactive people into employment.<sup>11</sup> Newport is well placed from this point of view in two respects:

- a wide range of organisations are involved in managing local learning centres which deliver employment-related services
- the new Deprived Areas Funded Community Advisers(Changing Lives, Creating Futures Project) based in Communities First areas are piloting a multi-agency approach.

These developments are designed to pave the way to a delivery model based on sub-contracting rather than grant-aiding, so that local organisations are able to build their capacity and their income streams more securely.

#### Structures

Newport has several bodies which share a responsibility for employment and skills: three partnerships and three agencies. These are

- Local Strategic Partnership
- Newport Learning and Skills Partnership (NLSP)

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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, the work of local projects in North Notts and Derbyshire profiled in our good practice review at <http://www.martinyarnitassociates.co.uk/downloads/complete%20report%201.5.pdf>

- Communities First Over-Archiving Partnership
- Newport City Council
- Newport Unlimited
- Jobcentre Plus

It is not clear where ultimate responsibility for delivering on key targets on employment and skills rests, or how these relate to the headline targets for the city.

### **Skills Planning**

In the skills arena, NLSP provides a forum for exchange of information but the real challenge will be to establish legitimacy and buy in as a planning body.<sup>12</sup> Adult skills provision is made relatively independently by JCP through its providers, by Communities First-funded bodies, by the Council's Community Learning Service and by RISE through its Learning Development Officer. The latter manage planning and consultation systems that run in parallel, which does not seem to be the best use of resources. Discussions are underway to link or merge the Communities First Education and Training Sub-Committee with the RISE Learning Development Committees. This would mean a broadening of the remit of the RISE Learning Advocates, local residents who play a useful role in signposting their peers to employment and skills opportunities, and a strengthening of the voice of the learner in the design of provision.

Although the Children and Young People's Partnership has a responsibility for developing childcare and pre-school provision, it does not seem that it works with NLSP directly on planning provision to enable parents to return to work.

### **Learning Centres**

Newport benefits from a large number of local learning centres including several that have been built or refurbished through the RISE programme. These operate under a wide range of separate managements including local community organisations and the Community Learning Service. Three of the main RISE Centres are directly managed by the Council through the Community Learning and Libraries service and are located in Charles Street, Brynglas House, and St Julians. Whilst the Charles Street and Brynglas House Centre delivered learning provision prior to RISE, the St Julians Centre has developed significantly as a result of direct RISE funding. The Centres deliver courses under the Coleg Gwent franchise and all courses are currently accredited.

Although many of the centres are badged as RISE centres it is unclear whether or how these differ from those which are not. There is no city-wide scheme for coordinating the work of all the centres, or for establishing a quality standard or for marketing their services to the public. The Council's Community Learning Service delivers courses through 13 out of the 51 RISE LACs and satellite centres as well as 44 other centres. The Council's Community Development Department, with the support of Economic Development, is working on a plan for community regeneration centres in Community First areas, making use of existing

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<sup>12</sup> The local consortium comprises:

Newport City Council, Job Centre Plus South East Wales District, DCELLS, Newport Chamber of Commerce, GENus Housing Consortia, Newport Construction Initiative, Newport Gwent Enterprise, Communities First Overarching Partnership Board, RISE Learning Network, Scarman Trust, Compass Project, Coleg Gwent, Ethic Business Support Service, A4E, GAVO, University of Wales Newport, GENESIS, SEWREC, Careers Wales Gwent, NCYPP.

centres, a direction that is being taken in other parts of the UK.<sup>13</sup> It would be better if these two initiatives were linked for priority area resource planning purposes.

## **Marketing**

There is no city-wide marketing programme for employment and skills opportunities, with each provider issuing their own prospectuses. However, for those who find their way to the Careers Wales Learning Choices website, there are lists of courses run by the separate providers.

Within the City Council itself the lead on employment and *adult* skills seems to be divided between three main services: Community Learning, Community Development and Economic Development. The lead for 14-19 skills lies with the Education Department. The manager of NLSP is funded by the City Council and based in the Education Department<sup>14</sup> but the main focus of his work is directed towards the Economic and Community Development Services and to outside agencies and voluntary bodies. The City Council should expect to play a key role in leading the way towards a more collaborative culture than currently exists.

## **Service Delivery**

Despite the somewhat confused arrangements outlined above, a number of useful developments have been taking place in Newport, mainly led by the Council and JCP through NLSP. The Partnership has decided target activity on three claimant groups within the designated priority wards:

- Incapacity benefits [IB]
- Lone parent Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance [JSA]

The plan being developed by the Partnership also addressed the specific barriers to employment faced by

- BME
- Over 50's
- People with no qualifications
- Ex offenders.

## **Newport City Council**

A cross-departmental group, the Employment and Skills Group, has been formed and is working on an Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan. The Group forms part of NLSP. A key element of its work has been the development of a plan for a network of regeneration centres in the priority areas that can provide a broad education and employment offer. Discussions are underway with other local authorities, including Cardiff, to make a joint bid for EU funds to build the capacity of local consortia to deliver the Welfare to Work agenda by adding value, filling gaps and improving co-ordination, and with Coleg Gwent and learndirect to offer learndirect services in the centres.

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<sup>13</sup> See the chapter on good practice in Tackling Worklessness and Social Exclusion in the East Midlands, MYA (2007).

<sup>14</sup> The Department has decided to delete his post. It is not clear at the time of writing whether any other Department will take it on.

## Economic and Community Development

A key objective of the Economic Development Strategy is *to work with partners to help ensure that local citizens are equipped with the skills needed to access local employment opportunities..* The Economic Development Service has been working more closely with the Community Development Team on employment and training, and helping to support viable community businesses and social enterprises (see para: 5.4.5). Reflecting the Council's corporate drive to tackle disadvantage and exclusion, percentage targets have been set for reducing unemployment in the Communities First Wards. Current plans are to establish a specialist Community Economic Development Officer within the Economic Regeneration Service who will work alongside the network of local regeneration centres planned by the Community Development Service.

This initiative is designed to make better use of local facilities and to provide a base for community regeneration, employment and enterprise. It could provide the basis for a Newport network of local centres offering a comprehensive menu of employment and learning opportunities as part of a concerted city-wide strategy to reduce worklessness. But to achieve this it will need buy-in at the highest level by all the key agencies and corporately by the City Council. This will have resource planning implications that will have a bearing on a number of budgets and funding streams. A welcome first step is the decision to audit the Council's corporate potential for supporting the worklessness agenda.<sup>15</sup>

The Economic Development Service's contribution to the Government's Welfare to Work Strategy had originally been through the Bridge Training Centre. This had focussed on hardest to help groups with 87% and 94% respectively of clients attending the Centre in 2002 having literacy and numeracy levels at or below NVQ Level I. However, funding difficulties forced the closure of the Centre in 2004. The Council managed Environmental Task Force has been particularly successful, achieving the top employment outcomes for the option across Wales (13<sup>th</sup> in the UK) in 2001/02. More recently, the Economic Development Service has created a local labour in construction initiative with key partners, including Newport Unlimited.

A further objective for the Economic Development Service is *to develop and to promote local purchasing and recruitment policies within the Council in line with best practice.* Whilst the Council is involved with New Deal, it still has some way to go in developing a procurement and recruitment strategy that could impact on local labour market inequalities.

The service's objectives are underpinned by a set of targets

- To reduce unemployment levels to a rate which is consistently less than 0.5 percentage points above the national UK rate.
- To reduce unemployment levels overall in the 8 Wards identified in para 6.2.1 by 15% (April 2003-March 2008).
- To achieve a target job creation of 7500 full time equivalent jobs in Newport (April 2003-March 2008).
- To increase the number of community and social enterprises and the number of jobs they support in Newport.
- To raise the proportion of adults with literacy and numeracy skills at or above Level I and the proportion with higher level skills above Level 3 or equivalent.

It is fair to say that

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<sup>15</sup> Meeting of senior officers led by the Managing Director on 18 September 2007.

- it remains to be defined how these objectives will be implemented
- the underlying rationale for these numbers is unclear.

As the Economic Development Strategy report concedes, some of the targets 'require further work and refinement'.

The problem in part is the use of percentages in a number of the targets when it would be more helpful to specify the numbers of people affected. Otherwise it is impossible to relate the job creation target to the target for reducing unemployment and thus to specify how many people need to have their skill levels raised. It is worth noting that there are no targets for reducing child poverty or for tackling the disproportionate levels of worklessness amongst Newport's BME communities, nor is there any reference to two fundamental barriers to moving into work, the lack of availability of ESOL and childcare provision.

### **Community Learning**

Newport's Community Learning Service has been moving towards a re-definition of its traditional role, reaching out to employers through the Employer Pledge, and providing more services to priority area residents, although not always in the priority areas themselves. 30% of new learners enrolled in 2006-7 came from seven Communities First wards. But officers emphasise the difficulties of changing course in the face of funding constraints that deter risk taking, discouraging experiments with new approaches and penalising small classes. WAG is conscious of these problems and considering ways of changing the balance of provision towards new learners and regeneration programmes, promoting working in collaboration with other agencies.

### **RISE**

RISE is not a learning provider but rather a broker between learners and providers with the mission of helping to shape learning opportunities across south east Wales that meet learners' needs and contribute to social and economic regeneration. Through it, £9m. of WAG funding has been invested in learning centres plus a further £40m. from the EU. RISE, with the close support of WAG, is now entering a new phase of development that will entail the re-shaping of it as a partnership, with buy in from all key stakeholders including local authorities. In return for aligning their business and resourcing plans, partners will be able to shape provision across the sub-region and influence government.

The mechanisms through which RISE works locally are learning development committees that bring learners together in a given area to consider their experience and to provide feedback to providers. This is done through learning development plans (LDPs) which provide detailed feedback and suggestions for improvement. Local learning development officers support and manage the process of drawing up LDPs, engaging providers on behalf of learners. They are assisted by learning advocates, local residents who act as signposters and represent their peers on the learning development committees.

Some but not all local centres in Newport are happy to collaborate with RISE and its local learning development officer. The relationship between RISE and the Communities First centres and staff is mainly cordial but there is distance between RISE and the Council's Community Learning Service which believes that it offers effective mechanisms for engaging learners and listening to their views.

### **JCP – programmes**

In addition to the various New Deals, Jobcentre Plus is setting up a £2m. Pathways to Work programme aimed at hard to place people on Incapacity and other benefits. It will be

delivered by A4e (Action for Employment) through a team of Employer Placement Officers. It is expected that these will work closely with the community advisers or ambassadors, locally-based advisers funded through the DWP's Deprived Areas Fund who will staff the Creating Futures, Changing Lives project set up jointly by JCP and the City Council. The ambassadors, who are based in four Communities First priority areas - Bettws, Pillgwenlly, Tredegar Park (Duffryn), Ringland – will be able to refer clients to the Employer Placement Officers.

The Pathways Programme will be able to draw on a wide range of JCP services including the Condition Management Programme, a face to-face support service for people in work with problems such as mental health and drug addictions. In addition to training and in-work support, A4e and its partners, who include Newport City Council as a sub-contractor, will be offering advice on self-employment and business start-up services as well as other issues such as housing and personal finance. There will be specialised support for specific customer groups, such as the visually impaired and deaf people, individuals with learning difficulties and people on the autism spectrum.

### **Offender Gateway Pilot**

The Offender Gateway Pilot is designed to fast track ex-offenders onto education, training and employment (ETE) pathways by aligning the services and funding of Gwent Probation Service, JCP+ and A4e. To be launched autumn 2007, this is the first Offender Gateway to be set up in Wales. The successful engagement and support of offenders into education, training and employment is one of the single most important factors in breaking the cycle of offending.

### **Local Delivery**

Can local residents draw on a comprehensive, integrated service in any area of Newport? Do they know it exists? These are acid tests for a job placement service. In an attempt to answer these questions we visited a number of centres and talked to centre managers about the services they provided. There was neither the time nor the resources to interview a sample of customers *although we suggest that regular surveys of this kind should form part of the developing approach to job placement in Newport.* In part this role is performed by RISE Learning Develop Plans. The Newport LDP makes some significant points about service delivery eg

*Few learners had access to impartial advice and guidance at any stage of their learning. There was a lack of support for learners to progress to courses at a higher level. This was particularly true in Centres where the programme of courses was offered by a single provider.*<sup>16</sup>

Below we list the main facilities, programmes and hosted services in a selection of local centres across the city. This does not pretend to be a comprehensive mapping but to give an impression of the state of affairs in some of the most disadvantaged areas.

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<sup>16</sup> 'Learning Reviews were conducted with approximately 200 learners at 15 RISE Centres in the Bettws, Brynglas, Central, Duffryn Gaer / Maesglas and St Julian's clusters. All Learning Reviews were conducted by RISE volunteer Learning Advocates. Non Learners' questionnaires were also conducted with around 60 adults not engaged in learning.'

### Pathways to Work

Timescales	7 December 2007 launch
Providers	JCP through A4E and other agencies
Areas	City wide
Target Groups	IB and similar – all will be referred to A4E
Delivery	5 Employer Placement Officers

### Creating Futures, Changing Lives

Timescales	Starts October 2007
Providers	Newport City Council through Communities First and local community organisations
Areas	Bettws, Pillgwenlly, Tredgar Park (Duffryn), Ringland
Target Groups	No wrong door – where appropriate referred to A4E
Delivery	4 Community Advisers or Ambassadors (£100,000 Deprived Areas Funding)

### Want to Work

Timescales	Two years to March 2008 – ESF re-funding applied for
Providers	JCP
Areas	Pill Library, Pill Millennium Centre, Maindee Library, the Bangladeshi Community Centre and Community Development Offices in Essex Street.
Target Groups	No wrong door but targets BME – where appropriate referred to A4E
Delivery	3 Personal Advisers plus mental health specialist, job coach (sustain/progress in work) and secondments from private and 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector

### BEST

Timescales	DAF funding currently ends March 2008
Providers	Duffryn Community Link and Communities First
Areas	Duffryn
Target Groups	Employability for 16-25 year olds
Delivery	Works through local team: youth and community development workers; Careers Wales (sessional); sports development officer; sexual health (sessional) Links with employers: Lloyds TSB, Picture IT Financial, International Rectifier, National Statistics Officer

## Conclusions

Newport begins with a number of positives:

- Creation of NLSP with brief for integrated resource planning for 2008 onwards
- Energetic JCP managers keen to get involved in joint planning and action with the City Council
- Recognition of problem of concentrations of inactivity by Regeneration Sub-Committee
- Committed local centre managers offering a growing range of employment and skills opportunities
- JCP Pathways to Work delivered by A4E (starts December) with 5 employer placement officers aimed at IB claimants
- Changing Lives, Creating Futures – 4 DAF-funded community advisers employed by NCC
- Want to Work in Pill and Maindee targeting BME people
- Construction Initiative and Employer Pledge work with local firms.

## The Challenges

It is also clear that there are a number of key issues to address which we have set out below but we believe that it is essential that a local agencies form their own view of the problem. A good starting point for doing this would be for the chief executives of the city's key agencies, the leading group for Newport, to convene a meeting with their senior managers and the on the ground practitioners involved in job placement, skills and community economic development to make a joint assessment of how well Newport is doing and where the major gaps are that need to be addressed. We will say more about this in our recommendations.

There are several challenges that need to be addressed:

8. The 80% employment target is not a clear priority for Newport and there's a risk that the thousands of anticipated new jobs will do little or nothing to reduce worklessness, benefits dependency and child poverty in the city.
9. There is no shared view of the scale of the resources required to tackle the problem. The constant use of percentage blurs the issue.
10. Neither the LSP or the City Council has a clear focus on this issue and action is being led at too junior a level in all the key agencies.
11. There is currently no forum for systematic planning and no systematic engagement with employers.
12. There is no plan for delivery of integrated and comprehensive employment services even though there are some useful initiatives and an unrivalled set of local centres.
13. There is, however, a confusing and probably time consuming array of partnership and planning bodies lacking clear rationale eg for community based learning there is the Community Learning Service Delivery Plan, the RISE Learning Development Plan and the Communities First Education and Training Sub Group
14. The city needs to take BME discrimination more seriously.

## **PART 2 GOOD PRACTICE**

Our recommendations are based on a framework derived from studies of good practice including our own for the East Midlands.<sup>17</sup> City-wide the key elements are (1) joined up government, (2) target setting, (3) resource planning, (4) employer engagement, (5) procurement, and (6) linking city-wide and local. The local elements are (1) cross-service delivery and referrals teams (2) Comprehensive employer-linked menu for employment and skills (3) local centres (4) Personal advisers .

### **The Main Findings**

There is no room here to explore these elements in depth but the main findings from studies of good practice are set out below.

#### **Joined up government**

Laying on effective services requires close collaboration between key agencies, especially JCP, voluntary organisations, specialist services and the relevant departments of the local authority. Effective local delivery depends on effective back office planning.

Mobilising the resources and services required to make a success of job placement demands a concerted approach at the highest level, such that skills and job placement are seen by the leaders of the key agencies as central to the tasks of economic and social development, and built in business and budget planning cycles and priority setting. It is for these reasons that DWP and the Leitch Report have concluded that Employment and Skills Board are essential.

#### **Target setting**

Without clear numerical targets it is difficult to plan and monitor effective action. But a single target for reducing inactivity is necessary but not sufficient. It needs to be backed by secondary targets for reducing inactivity in key claimant and social groups. At the same time it is vital to recognise that whilst there are commonalities in the best approaches to specific groups such as lone parents, not all lone parents will respond to the same approaches. Employment services must be tailor-made to suit individual cases.

#### **Resource planning**

Effective employment strategies require the collaboration of many agencies. This means finding ways of aligning business plans and focusing resources. NLSP has recognised the need to do this. Experience shows that sharing resources is hard to achieve but the City Strategy

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<sup>17</sup> See the full report at

<http://www.martinyarnitassociates.co.uk/downloads/complete%20report%201.5.pdf> . See also

- Mansour, Jane (2005) *Skills and Sustainable Welfare to Work*, Work Directions UK;
- Benchmarking of the use of personal advisers in JCP, Christian van Stalk, Jennifer Rubin and Jonathan Grant. The report for the National Audit Office by the Rand Corporation (October 2006) aimed to benchmark the role of personal advisers in Work Directions, Tomorrow's People and CWI (Netherlands) against those employed by JCP;
- Delivering Effective Services Through Personal Advisers, National Audit Office, November 2006, Summary, page 5 at [http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao\\_reports/06-07/060724es.pdf](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/06-07/060724es.pdf)

framework offers the incentive of additional resources as a lever to promote resource planning and alignment. EU funding bids can support this approach by being made on behalf of NLSF rather than single agencies and requiring an element of co-funding of activities.

### **Employer engagement**

There are two main ways of engaging employers to help with job placements: (1) on a one to one basis and (2) through sector networks such as retail centres or the construction industry. In both cases, those who are carrying out brokerage services on behalf of workless clients will be most effective if they develop a thorough understanding of the employers' business and skill needs. They must be able to provide people with the capacity to develop the specialist hard and soft skills or knowledge that are peculiar to every business, and they must be able to meet the employers' time constraints, especially in micro-businesses.

### **Procurement**

Major projects offer two opportunities for local labour recruitment – during the construction stage and on completion. There have been some successes in this approach, notably with the Bullring development in Birmingham and with the Tesco superstore in East Leeds. Experience suggests that a success factor is helping employers and developers with recruitment and upskilling and in enabling supply chains to bid for business in the first case, as with the Build Up North Staffordshire project.<sup>18</sup>

### **Examples of Successful Procurement**

1. Construction Job Match, Sheffield, is a partnership between the City Council and construction firms involved in refurbishment programmes. 200 local residents have been trained and employed, 33% BME.

2. The Stansted Airport project seeks to offer a career pathway for residents with real opportunities for development, training and career progression. Candidates enrol on a four-week training course, which covers issues such as interview techniques and job applications. At the end of the course participants are guaranteed an interview for a position at Stansted Airport.

3. Bullring Jobs Team and the development of employment hubs: In February 2003 the Bullring Jobs Team was established to engage employers in the new Bullring shopping centre in order to “capture” jobs opportunities. As a result of the Team's work, over 2,000 unemployed people were placed in jobs with Bullring employers. The Bullring experience demonstrated the value of engagement with employers for major recruitment projects. A number of new employment hubs are now being established on a similar basis to the Bullring Jobs Team for major developments at IMI in north-west Birmingham, Eastside, and the new hospital to be built by University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust.

### **Linking city-wide and local**

Local employment strategies have found that one of the most difficult feats is to ensure that locally based activities link with city-wide strategies, and that employment growth opportunities can be effectively accessed at a local level.

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<sup>18</sup> Regeneration and Renewal, 5 October 2007, p. 21.

## **Cross-service delivery and referral**

The humdrum and routine way of making connections between services is vital to the impact of local employment and regeneration strategies. Where it works well, there are strong professional links between JCP and the staff of local initiatives, plus good connections with employers and specialist agencies. At root, this involves a clearly defined protocol for referrals between agencies and systems for ensuring that cases are quickly and reliably pursued to minimise drop outs, an avoidable expense for employment programmes. Volunteer workers – learning advocates or champions – can play an invaluable role in making contact with residents and signposting them to effective and sympathetic agencies.

## **Comprehensive employer-linked menu for employment and skills**

At best, local regeneration and employment centres are able to offer a comprehensive range of introductory or hook courses leading to a set of pathways, including routes into employment. It is vital that employment routes are designed with specific employers rather than invented by well-meaning practitioners.

### ***What do we mean by routeways or pathways?***

Routeways are sets of learning programmes and qualifications leading to defined outcomes that enable individuals to move forward at their own speed and in the direction they determine. Introductory courses and routeways should be backed by a consistent core menu of support offered in local learning regeneration centres comprising

- Information, advice and guidance and careers advice
- Employability skills and job search
- Basic skills – ICT, literacy and numeracy; basic skills assessment
- ESOL and ESOL assessment
- Childcare
- Counselling (drugs, alcohol, health, debt, parenting)

Where possible the following should also be offered

- Financial aid with transport, interview costs, etc
- Coaching and mentoring
- Business and social enterprise
- Improved/appropriate support for learners with disabilities.
- Training support for centre staff, volunteers and professional practitioners
- Learner and tutor support information

## **Menu of specialist services**

Personal advisers to be effective must be able to draw on a comprehensive menu of specialist services including childcare, advice and guidance, family and child support, parenting, debt and drug counselling and medical support for mental health and other conditions. Advisers need to be able to draw on the support of a local delivery team offering these services. It is not essential that they are co-located but it helps.

The menu should be based on an awareness of the primacy of work first. The evidence suggests that proximity to the workplace is crucial in preparing people for employment, supported by well designed preparation programmes. Clearly, much depends on the distance between individuals and employment, but it is possible in a well meaning way to extend the distance through training programmes when direct experience of work even for short periods may be more effective.

### **Local centres, Local Delivery**

Most observers are agreed that services should operate on the policy of no wrong door ie inclusively, offering help to all those who seek it, regardless of benefits or employment status or age.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, where possible, services should be provided on a flexible basis rather than offering separate provision as the New Deals have done in the past. The move towards a single benefit is a sign that the government has understood this point.

Most workless people prefer to visit a local centre that is informal, welcoming and where they feel at home. Some, a minority, will be willing to visit city-centre premises but transport and the cost of travel are always factors, and many will be put off by official-looking offices. This is why accessible local centres offering a wide variety of services, including childcare, a café, advice and guidance, introductory learning opportunities and perhaps leisure activities are key to effective job placement.

Moreover, there is evidence that well-coordinated multi-agency delivery can be very effective in moving inactive people into employment. The new, more open approach to contracting recently referred to by the Secretary of State could presage the development of a more secure financial basis for local delivery.<sup>20</sup> Newport City Council's role as a sub-contractor to Action for Employment for Pathways to Work shows how this might work.

### **Personal advisers**

Effective services are client-focused ie they take people as they find them rather than imposing stereotypes or conditions. Provision must be voluntary and be offered on an inclusive no-wrong door basis.

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<sup>19</sup> See for example Adams, J. (2005) *Towards Full Employment*, IPPR; Sanderson, Ian (2006), *Workless in Deprived Neighbourhoods: A Review of Evidence*, Policy Research Institute, Leeds University, for the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and posted at <http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Research/Worklessnessdeprivedneighbourhoods.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> See the announcement of Pathways to Work contracts (12 September 2007) at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/mediacentre/pressreleases/2007/sep/drc041-120907.asp> "It is a fact that Government does not have all the answers to meet every challenge. And so the private – and voluntary – sector must and in my plans will have an enhanced role to give individualised attention and support and to lever in new finance. I met with David Freud last week and from that discussion it was clear we are in the same place. The old sterile battle for territory between public and private sectors is redundant. I am interested in one thing and one thing only: What Works...We will work with large providers. They can bring scale and integration. Smaller providers already have great records in delivering very specialised, innovative and targeted help that is essential to overcome deep seated problems. And we will continue to work with the voluntary sector which has produced extraordinary results with some of the hardest to reach people."

Experienced, supportive personal advisers who have time to offer high quality personal support with good links to employers and key agencies are the crucial ingredient in successful job placements. Often, they have experience in JCP programmes such as Action Teams or voluntary sector organisations like the Shaw Trust or in private sector agencies such as Reed. The evidence suggests that critical factors in performance are (1) being able to devote large amounts of time – perhaps 80% - to clients, and (2) having flexibility in the programmes and specialist support they can draw on. To achieve the first, it is vital that they have manageable caseloads, probably 50-70. Achieving 50 sustainable placements – from first contact through to week 13 of employment - a year is good going. If the total cost of a personal adviser with 50% on-costs is £36,000, then this works out at less than £1400 per placement. The number of personal advisers should bear an arithmetical relationship to the number of placements set as an annual target for a given area bearing in mind (1) personal advisers may well take a year to achieve optimum performance (2) targets should be calculated taking account of stock and flow.

## **PART 3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **3.1 Why do it?**

- Reducing worklessness, benefits dependency and child poverty make sense for everyone, for
- employers – by providing more people locally with the skills and attitudes that employers seek
- local residents – by offering them a foot on the employment and opportunity ladder, improving their sense of self-worth, improving family incomes and raising the aspirations of adults and young people alike
- local communities – by tipping the balance towards communities that people want to live in, and that investors want to commit to
- Newport – by reducing the call on remedial educational and social services and on criminal justice services, by cutting costs of housing benefit
- the Treasury – by reducing the cost of benefits and increasing the tax take.<sup>21</sup>

At a time when public agencies are under pressure to cut costs and make better use of resources, increasing the employment rate makes perfect sense. It is also in line with the trend of government policy on

- Sustainable communities – to support the development of lasting community structures, to reduce dependency on benefits and grant aid
- Engaging service users – to ensure that services meet the needs of service users, one of the main aims of Communities First
- Improving coordination between service providers, as recommended by Beecham and the Making the Connections report – to improve service delivery especially for the hardest to reach and to make better use of resources.

### **Aims**

What should be the aims of a city-wide regeneration and employment strategy? It's worth considering, as a starting point, the aims adopted by the Heads of the Valleys and Manchester Employment Plan. It makes sense for Newport to take account of developments in these two City Strategy areas. The Heads of the Valleys Strategy has four strategic aims:

1. Engaging employers as a key customer in programmes that are designed to move people from welfare into sustained quality employment
2. Providing jobless people with the skills they need to meet business demand and to succeed and progress in a competitive labour market.
3. Increasing the employability and life chances of disadvantaged people facing serious barriers to work.
- 4.

Manchester's aims are

1. Reducing the number of workless people in Manchester and ensuring residents obtain sustainable employment opportunities.

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<sup>21</sup> Freud, David (2007) Reducing dependency, increasing opportunity: options for the future of welfare to work. An independent report to the Department for Work and Pensions, DWP, p.7

2. Ensuring the best preparation for and transition to working life for young people.
3. Improving the skills of the City's residents to enhance their employment prospects.
4. Engaging and supporting employers to enable them to employ workless residents.<sup>22</sup>

Our recommendations are based on a synthesis of the two. That's to say,

- Engaging employers as a key customer in programmes that are designed to move people from welfare into sustained quality employment
- Providing jobless people with the skills they need to meet business demand and to succeed and progress in a competitive labour market.
- Offering a menu of education and employment services in accessible learning centres designed to open up a broad range of learning and employment pathways for disadvantaged groups.
- Working with at risk families to promote employment, raise aspirations and tackle child poverty.

## City-Wide

Set out below are our main recommendations for city-wide action

### 3.2 Joined up government

#### 3.3.1 **Newport Learning and Skills Partnership should be established as the city's Employment and Skills Board, accountable to the Local Strategic Partnership.**

To focus planning and action on worklessness and to indicate its importance for the city as a whole, we recommend that the City establishes the Newport Learning and Skills Partnership as an Employment and Skills Board in line with the Leitch Report. The Board should be clearly located as one of the family of high level partnerships linked to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) or Public Service Board for Newport. Its work should be underpinned by two key messages that cannot be taken for granted:

- It is vital to work closely with employers to define and meet their skill needs – employers provide jobs, not committees
- It is vital to work with local employment and skills teams and centres to ensure that they have the equipment to do the job.

In our view it is essential that local agencies form their own view of the problem. A good starting point for doing this would be for the chief executives of the city's key agencies to convene a meeting through Newport LSP with their senior managers and the on the ground practitioners involved in job placement, skills and community economic development to make a joint assessment of how well Newport is doing and where the major gaps are that need to be addressed.

#### 3.3.2 **The Council's Employment and Skills Group should provide a corporate focus for planning investment and action, reporting to the Cabinet Regeneration Sub-Committee.**

The Council's Employment and Skills Group should support the work of the Employment and Skills Board, providing a corporate focus for planning, investment and action.

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<sup>22</sup> [http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/report03\\_26\\_.pdf](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/report03_26_.pdf)

### **3.3.3 JCP should be invited to become a member of Local Strategic Partnership**

Given the key role of Jobcentre Plus in tackling worklessness and raising the employment level, it should be invited to join the Local Strategic Partnership.

### **3.3.4 City-wide action should be underpinned by regional infrastructure planning**

Just as no one agency can tackle worklessness in isolation, Newport as a city lacks the resources to make an impact on the problem alone. A regional approach is needed for labour market planning, especially in relation to employer engagement, public procurement for major projects, skills delivery and the development of routeways to work.

NCC, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan are currently considering a joint approach to developing infrastructure including routeways. This should link with

- the Heads of the Valleys Strategy
- planning for a new phase of RISE led by a task force of partners including providers (local authority, FE and HE, Careers Wales), local authorities and learners
- the work of the South East Wales Spatial Planning Group that covers the ten authorities from Monmouthshire to Bridgend.

## **3.3 Target setting**

### **3.3.5 An ambitious target for moving inactive people into jobs should be agreed by the City along with a 5 year action plan**

There are targets for reducing unemployment set by JCP and EDS but they do not specify numbers or types of claimants or their whereabouts the scale and concentration of BME inactivity is not being addressed. The way targets are framed should be readily grasped by all concerned and should be subject to monitoring and annual reports by Newport LSP as part of the evaluation of the impact of the Community Strategy.

In broad terms, we propose a target for reducing the number of claimants by 1600 a year from 2008-2013 in order to achieve the 80% employment target.

### **3.3.6 The target should identify who, how many, where and how**

We further propose that action should focus on the priority areas of the city where there are significant concentrations of claimants, especially BME claimants, and of children living in poverty. Planning should specify which claimants in which areas and in which quantities should be moved into employment, and specify the means.

### **3.3.7 Resource planning**

### **3.3.8 Resourcing plan agreed with WAG, DCELLS and WEFO should show how the action plan will be funded, by phasing interventions across the city if necessary**

The Employment and Skills Board should draw up a resourcing plan for implementing these recommendations in collaboration with WAG, DCELLS and WEFO. If necessary, it should propose the phasing of interventions across the city over a five year period beginning 2008.

### **3.3.9 Plan should provide for comprehensive, integrated employment routeways in 8 key localities plus city centre linked to Pathways to Work programme and New Deals**

Central to the resourcing plan should be a scheme for routeways into employment in eight priority areas plus the city centre, integrated with the JCP Pathways to Work programme and New Deal. If routeways were to be established across the ten local authority areas in South East Wales it makes sense for them to be planned collaboratively. The routeways should be comprehensive ie they should be open to all, not just claimants and they should offer a broad menu of learning and employment opportunities including volunteering, self-employment, social enterprise and community activity.

## **3.5 Employer engagement**

### **3.5.1 Employer pledge to be action planned and resourced**

The two employer pledges – on basic skills and recruitment of claimants - should be discussed with local employers with a view to integrating them into one package. The implementation of the unified pledge should be planned with employers, marketed and properly resourced.

### **3.5.2 Employers should be engaged in designing routeways programmes delivered in local centres**

Routeways should be designed with employers and Sector Skills Councils through a programme of regional collaboration, and delivered in local centres in priority areas.

## **3.6 Procurement**

### **3.6.1 Developers should be invited to sign up to regional code of practice**

Large scale projects such as retail centres offer the potential for local labour recruitment arrangements for construction and post-construction phases. A regional code of practice should be agreed with developers and employers who should be encouraged to propose such arrangements in their tenders. Section 106 powers should be pursued more vigorously across South East Wales.

## **3.7 Linking city-wide and local**

### **3.7.1 Local access to routeways should be identified through referral and signposting**

It should be possible to access the routeways from any of the priority areas or through the city centre. Clear arrangements for referrals should be agreed so that personal advisers and other members of local employment teams understand their own role and can ensure that people they refer are not lost in transit. Local centres should provide clear information about how to access the routeways and local

employment teams and other practitioners including learning advocates should know how to make referrals.

### **3.7.2 Set up city-wide marketing of employment and skills**

The Employment Board should promote agreement between providers to create a website where all employment and skills opportunities are advertised. A joint provider-local centres group should develop an integrated plan for marketing, including the organisation of Adult Learners Week.

## **Local Action**

### **3.8 Cross-service delivery and referral teams**

#### **3.8.1 Create employment and skills teams based in 9 centres**

There are embryonic employment and skills teams based in at least two areas of Newport. They do not exist formally but operate in practice as a team. They include key staff running local centres and community associations, Communities First staff, personal advisers, youth workers, Sure Start staff, Careers Wales staff and sports development workers. We recommend the formation of teams involving those delivering face to face services for workless people in the eight priority areas plus a similar team for Charles Street.

#### **3.8.2 Agree local referral scheme between centres, providers and JCP/A4e**

Local centres, providers, JCP and A4e should agree a referral scheme so that local residents can be properly supported so they can take advantage of city-wide routeways or pathways programmes, and progress into work, self-employment, structured learning or volunteering.

#### **3.8.3 Boost number and skills of volunteer learner advocates to reach and signpost hard to reach and to ensure that the users' voice is heard**

Learner advocates have an important role to play in reaching and signposting local residents and supporting them on their first steps towards employment or further education. They can be particularly important in working with hard to reach groups such as some BME communities where there are language barriers. They can also open up useful channels of feedback with providers and other agencies, ensuring that the learners' voices are heard, and that service delivery is informed by the views of its users, a key policy priority for Welsh Assembly Government through its Making the Connections policy. Learner advocates require and are entitled to good management and support and career pathways. In this way, local residents can be helped to acquire the capacity to hold down useful jobs in community organisations, housing associations and similar bodies, in a stepping stone to professional careers.

#### **3.8.4 Adopt family-focused approach linked to preventative services group (CYP partnership)**

Employment programmes have traditionally targeted individuals in isolation but public policy is recognising increasingly that it is more effective to focus on families including children and young people and that early intervention is vital to break inter-generational cycles of deprivation.<sup>23</sup> But such approaches demand sophisticated collaboration between a range of

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<sup>23</sup> HMT/DfES (2007) *Policy Review of Children and Young People's Services*

agencies including social services, Sure Start, family practitioners, police, youth service, schools and JCP. Newport's Preventative Services Group, which targets children at risk, working through clusters of schools and key agencies, aims to develop a model of good practice that can be extended across the city.

### **3.9 Comprehensive employer-linked menu for employment and skills**

#### **3.9.1 Agree employment and skills routeways menu to be delivered through (initially) 8 local centres and Charles St LAC**

Local centres have developed different approaches to employment and skills with some common features. The time has come to agree a consistent menu designed to get people started on learning leading to employment or other activities that will benefit individuals, families and their communities.

#### **3.9.2 Menu to include careers advice and guidance, basic skills, ESOL, job search, taster courses, access to routeways, FE and HE, childcare, debt/drug/health counselling, help with transport costs plus access to learndirect courses**

A comprehensive, broad and balanced menu should be on offer through centres in priority areas plus Charles Street. This will involve building local capacity for delivery in, for example, basic skills screening. It will involve building up the City's capacity to deliver basic skills, ESOL and careers advice and guidance to 1600 or more people a year. Discussions are under way between the Community Learning Service and Coleg Gwent about developing local capacity for basic skills screening and it is vital that local centres are fully involved in such arrangements.

#### **3.9.3 Identify pump priming funds to set up menu**

At least initially, pump priming funds will be needed to develop the services that form part of the menu. The aim in the long-run is to bring about a change in the way that mainstream services are planned, funded and delivered. A contracting arrangement with JCP involving the local authority, the voluntary and community sector, specialist services and private training providers offers the best hope for secure long-term planning of service delivery overall.

### **3.10 Local centres**

#### **3.10.1 Set up local centres coordination to make best use of resources and to promote consistent branding, service quality and referrals**

Enable local centres to create a single brand for Newport's local centres that recognises local ownership and promotes consistent standards of service, with city-wide arrangements for referrals to routeways.

#### **3.10.2 Develop a network of regeneration centres**

Develop a network of local regeneration centres in line with proposals by the Council's Community Development Service to promote community economic development, including social enterprises and mainstream businesses, and employment and skills opportunities.

### **3.10.3 Agree investment to upgrade where essential**

Review condition and equipment of centres in priority areas and propose upgrades where necessary through the resourcing plan for tackling worklessness managed by the Employment and Skills Board.

### **3.11 Personal advisers**

#### **3.11.1 Increase number of PA posts in line with target and resourcing plan: 25 additional costing £0.9m.**

The evidence suggests that locally based employment initiatives working through skilled teams of personal advisers are the single most effective way of getting people into jobs. Want to Work is the latest of a stream of projects that have proved their value, while the Community Advisers employed through the Creating Futures, Changing Lives, will roll out a similar approach in four Communities First priority areas.

If Personal Advisers can move average 50 people a year into work, and Newport needs to move 1600 people a year into work, the city requires an additional 32 PAs less 4 DAF and 3 WtW = 25 at a cost of £0.9m.

## APPENDICES

### 1. Calculating the Target

- 16235 benefit claimants in Newport (NOMIS July 2007)
- Of these 8370 on IB
- City's employment rate 70.7%
- Lowest employment rate (claimants in brackets): *Gaer (1085), Stow Hill (720), Alway (1160), Victoria (1075), Ringland (1265), Bettws (1485), Tredegar Park (645), Pillgwenlly (1300)* – total 8735 (C.1st in italics)
- 8 wards account for 68.7% of all children – 5490 - living in benefits dependent households
- Fewer long-term unemployed; more repeaters
- Need to reduce 16235 by 7285 over next 5 years to achieve 80% target or 1457 a year + a percentage for stock and flow, say, 10% = 1602 a year
- If Personal Advisers can move average 50 people a year into work, Newport needs additional 32 PAs less 4 DAF and 3 WtW = 25 at a cost of £0.9m

### 2. Meetings and Interviews

The table below lists the people who were met or interviewed in the course of this study.

Date	Name	Contact Method
14.8	Visits to local centres: Pill, Bettws, Duffryn	visits
14.8	Initial meeting with NLSP	meeting
21.8	Pat Singleton, Ringlands Community Development Worker	phone
22.8 and 23.8	Ann Williams, RISE LDO + a group of refugees and asylum seekers + Construction Skills Initiative staff	meeting
22.8	Maria Thomas, Action for Employment	meeting
23.8	Ffion Lloyd, Ann Hobbs and Gill John, NCC Community Learning Service	meeting
23.8	Mark McCrossan and Keir Duffin, NCC Education and Community Development	meeting
6.9	Geraint Lewis, JCP	meeting
6.9	Jane Wallace and Lesa Crowley, Want to Work	meeting
6.9	Ed Watts and Mike Waldron, Pill Centre and Communities First	meeting
7.9	Helen Dearden, Duffryn Community Association	phone
11.9	Preliminary presentation to NLSP	meeting
11.9	Chris Freegard, MD, NCC	meeting
12.9	Brett Pugh, Director of Education, NCC	phone
18.9	Chris Freegard and other senior officers, NCC	meeting
1.10	Keir Duffin and BME Community Development Workers	meeting
18.12	Regeneration Sub-Committee	meeting