

Regional Learning Partnership for South West Wales (RLPSWW)

REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING – LOCAL DELIVERY

E-BULLETIN

APRIL 2011



Welcome to the RLP's monthly E-Bulletin

- The aim of this bulletin is to provide a brief update to all our colleagues in partner organisations about the work and progress of the RLPSWW.
- It will give an overview of the projects we and our partners are involved in based on our three main pillars of partnership working - which include Partnership Brokerage and Development, the Regional Learning and Skills Observatory (RLSO) and the E-Portal.



Key Pillar 1: Partnership Brokerage and Development Update

Third Sector Mapping Exercise

- The Third Sector is defined as non-government organisations which are value-driven and which principally reinvest their surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives including voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals.
- The RLP is undertaking an exercise with partners to help define the scope of the Third Sectors contribution to education, skills and regeneration in general.
- It will also highlight those areas of good practice associated with each of these disciplines across the region, with a final document to be produced which can be utilised as a clear, and current overview, to help inform future policy direction at a local, regional, and national level.

Regional HE/FE Strategy

- Following the submission of the Regional HE / FE Strategy in November 2010, a Work Programme is now in the process of being developed to help inform the work of the HE/FE Sub Group.
- Over the coming months, the Group will look in detail at reviewing the implementation of the Strategy within south west Wales, and how this can be achieved effectively prior to the HEFCW deadline of October 2011.

For further information on Partnership / Brokerage/ Development activities, please contact Elid Morris (RLP Manager) on 01554 742431 or Emorris@carmarthenshire.gov.uk



Key Pillar 2: Regional Learning & Skills Observatory (RLSO) Update

New data on RLSO site

- The Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) Institutions map is one of the latest additions to the RLSO during the last month. The map, found under the Intelligence and Resources headline, shows where all the HE and FE Institutions are in the south west region. The site also includes background information on the establishments. This information is to be further expanded over the coming weeks.

Super User Training Sessions and Feedback

- During February and March 2011, the RLP team conducted training sessions across the five local authorities in the south west – including Neyland in Pembrokeshire, Trinity Saint David Campus at Lampeter in Ceredigion, Delta Lakes Enterprise Centre in Carmarthenshire, Gwalia Training Centre, Swansea, and the Glynneath Training Centre in Neath Port Talbot.
- They were designed to train individuals to become familiar with the RLSO website, and then be able to impart their knowledge on the use of the Observatory to ensure its wider application within their own networks and organisations.
- Feedback from the sessions has been very positive, with numerous comments and observations made which have been noted to further help improve and move the site forward.

What's next for the RLSO?

- Tourism data for the region is currently being gathered and will be accessible on the RLSO site during April. The RLP team, supported by organisations such as Gallu, has been working with its various partners from the five local authorities and Global Tourism Solutions (GTS) UK in order to obtain Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) reports - which collects and analyses tourism data.
- The RLP team is also endeavouring to obtain further data in relation to the themes identified within the Welsh Assembly Governments Economic Renewal Programme. This approach has been agreed by the RLSO Project Management group.
- Data relating to student numbers in HE and FE, the numbers of degrees awarded, as well as other themed data on the Agriculture sector within the region, will also be included on the RLSO and available for users during May.

For further information on the RLSO, please contact Iwan Thomas (Development Coordinator) on 01554 742428 or lthomas@cccpartners.org.uk



Key Pillar 3: Regional E- Portal Update

- The RLP is currently working with a variety of partners in the public and private sectors within Swansea, on a pilot project to deliver an E-Portal.
- With the premise of improving rates of participation, encouraging individuals to return to learning, and promotion of opportunities for a variety of key audiences; the overall aim is that the portal will become a 'one stop shop' for its users.
- By undertaking the initial pilot within Swansea, alongside other key strategies such as the City's own "Beyond Bricks & Mortar", it will allow us to test the models, practices, and procedures appropriate to inform a subsequent regional E-Portal
- One of the significant challenges for the E-portal within its pilot, is to meet the diverse needs of those who are categorised as economically inactive, and to ensure that there are continual opportunities of clear progression.
- A Project Management Group is to be formed to assist the direction and development of the pilot. This will meet subject to the funding outcome of a bid to be submitted to the Swansea Regeneration Area Fund to implement the pilot.

For further information on the E-Portal Pilot, please contact Elid Morris (RLP Manager) on 01554 742431 or EMorris@carmarthenshire.gov.uk



General Update

- In March, the RLP hosted the first of a series of dissemination events for its partners. Delivered by Esther Barrett from the Regional Support Centre at Swansea University, "ACL in the 21st Century", saw methods and opportunities displayed and explained, on how to retain current learners, and engage future learners with ACL. With a broad range of attendees at the event, this is planned to be the first in a number of specifically themed dissemination events to be held over the year.
- The RLP has appointed four new staff members including additional Researcher Matthew Walters, Information & Communication Officer Victoria Williams, Senior Data & IT Technician Stephen Goddard and Data & IT Technician Dave Evans. All are now housed in the RLP Team's new office base at Parc y Scarlets, Llanelli.
- In addition, Gower College Swansea (GCS), on behalf of the RLP, submitted a tender to the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) to have a Regional Network Provider Advocate. Beverley Wilson-Smith, a Director of Faculty at GCS, has been seconded to the RLP team and will be starting her new position in a full time capacity on April 1. Her role will include working across the region, working with employers and Sector Skills Councils and looking at issues such as skill shortages and employer needs.

- Due to the forthcoming Assembly election and therefore, the unavailability of key speakers, a decision was taken at the recent RLP Strategy Group meeting to move the RLP's Annual Event from April 7 to June 30 (TBC). Further details on the key themes and speakers to be present at the event, will be circulated in due course.
- The RLP is in the process of preparing for the submission of its first ESF claim to the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) and also Wales Audit Office (WAO). The audit will take place annually.



A brief guide about the RLP

- The aim of the Regional Learning Partnership continuing is to bring education and regeneration partners together to help provide a better future for learners across the south west Wales region.
- The RLPSWW team, based at Llanelli's Parc-y-Scarlets, has been engaging with key regeneration and education organisations across the five counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Neath Port/Talbot and Swansea.
- Since forming in 2007, the RLPSWW, which is funded by the European Social Fund and other domestic funding sources, has been recognised by the Welsh Assembly Government as a "transformational partnership."
- Its main over-riding aim is to ensure publicly-funded learning providers and associated organisations work collaboratively, effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of learners and the regional economy in south west Wales.
- The RLP works in partnership with local authorities (education and regeneration), higher education and further education institutions, the third sector, work-based learning providers, with private sector representation through the South Wales Chamber of Commerce as well as Careers Wales West and JobCentre Plus.
- The partnership's work is based around three Key Pillars which are Partnership Brokerage and Development, the Regional Learning Skills Observatory (RLSO) and an E-Portal.



Partnership Brokerage and Development

- The Partnership Brokerage and Development pillar underpins the whole ethos of the RLP from maximising external funding opportunities to responding jointly to tender opportunities; from the sharing of good practice around adult and community learning to the submission of the joint strategy for higher education in the region.



The RLSO

- The aim of the RLSO is to improve access to local data and intelligence, for learning, skills and the labour market through a single interactive information base and website.



The E-Portal

- The basic premise of the e-Portal is to be a 'virtual' one-stop-shop to a number of key audiences in a bid to improve rates of participation; encourage return to learning and to promote available opportunities around learning and skills.

Please feel free to circulate this bulletin to fellow colleagues within your organisation.

We would also welcome the opportunity to respond to any queries you may have regarding the work and direction of the partnership - as well as to find out how your organisation can become more involved with the RLP.

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