

£14.7 million EU funding to boost work schemes in the South Wales Valleys

The Nurture, Equip, Thrive scheme is a new project which will help more than 2,000 under-employed people return to full employment and help people with work-limiting health conditions or disabilities to stay in work, return from sick leave or take on career development opportunities.

Led by Torfaen Council, the scheme, which is backed by £5.8 million of EU funding, will offer mentoring, coaching, careers advice, skills development and childcare and transport to help people into sustainable employment.

The South Wales Valleys will also benefit from an extra £8.8 million of EU funding to extend 2 existing projects – Working Skills for Adults and Bridges into Work II, led by Torfaen Council in partnership with Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil councils.

Working Skills for Adults will receive an extra £3.2 million to help employees gain new skills to improve their job security and career prospects. The scheme has already supported more than 2,000 people in the area to enhance their careers.

The Bridges into Work II project will be supported by an additional £5.6 million of EU funding to deliver training and mentoring to improve the skills and employability of long-term unemployed people. The funding will help around 4,880 people over the next 4 years.

Professor Drakeford said:

“It is vital we continue to invest in the areas which need it most, removing barriers to work, reducing in-work poverty and helping people move towards a brighter and more prosperous future.

“EU funds have already helped thousands of people throughout the South Wales Valleys improve their chances of getting a job. This extra investment will help build on this success.”

Councillor Anthony Hunt, leader of Torfaen Council added:

“Torfaen Council is delighted to be leading the Nurture, Equip, Thrive project, helping residents of the South Wales Valleys find work that meets their needs, particularly people with work-limiting health conditions and disabilities.

“We will work with local employers to improve diversity and equality in the workplace and make changes to improve the health and wellbeing of all staff.”

This builds on the work of the Ministerial Taskforce for the South Wales Valleys and the priorities highlighted in the Our Valleys, Our Future delivery plan, including a commitment to close the employment gap between the South Wales Valleys and the rest of Wales.