

Finance Secretary announces extra £17m EU funds to help young people in South East Wales unlock their career potential

Inspire2Achieve, led by Blaenau Gwent and Newport Councils, will receive an extra £15.9m of EU funding to work with schools and colleges to provide support to young people aged 11-19 years who are at risk of falling out of education and training.

Newport Council's Inspire2Work will receive a further £1.46m of EU funding to provide one-to-one mentoring, help with basic and personal skills and digital literacy, so young people aged 16-24 years can gain qualifications, enter further education and secure employment.

The new investment builds on the £19m of EU funding previously awarded to the schemes, which have already supported over 4,000 young people. Together with the additional funding, the schemes will support 15,000 more individuals over the next four years.

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Mark Drakeford said:

"It is essential we support our young people to achieve a brighter and more prosperous future. The additional EU funding will help young people address barriers to their education and give them the targeted support they need to access employment. It will build on the successful achievements of EU funds so far, which have already helped almost 40,000 young people across Wales to improve their chances of employment success."

Councillor Dai Davies, Executive Member for Regeneration at Blaenau Gwent Council added:

"We fully welcome this additional EU funding for the Inspire2Achieve project which will support more young people across the South East Wales region to fully achieve their potential. "We have been privileged to work in partnership with Newport on this important project which supports young people in the area who feel disengaged from mainstream education and face barriers to learning. We look forward to continuing this very important work so all of our young people, regardless of circumstance, are given the opportunity to gain employment and lead economically active lives."

Councillor Gail Giles, Newport City Council's Cabinet Member for education

and skills, said:

“As a council, we have already made significant progress in reducing the numbers of year 11 young people who are not in education, employment or training, from 4.7 per cent in 2014 to 1.3 per cent in 2017. This extra funding will mean we can help even more young people who are at risk of missing vital educational or training opportunities achieve their potential.”