

Item	Date
	02/12/2024
Title	For
Update report from Ceredigion PSB Poverty sub-group	Decision
Summary of Issues	
<p>At the PSB meeting in July 2024, there was a discussion about Fair Work. The resulting action was to explore setting up a task and finish group following discussion with the PSB Poverty subgroup. The Poverty sub-group agreed to establish and facilitate a task and finish group.</p> <p>An initial meeting of the task and finish group took place 19th November 2024. The meeting was chaired by Cllr Catrin MS Davies, chair of the Poverty sub-group. Administration was provided by Ceredigion County Council.</p> <p>Attendees included representatives of HR and/or Procurement teams from Ceredigion Council, Hywel Dda University Health Board, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, CAVO, Coleg Ceredigion, Dyfed Powys Police, DWP and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. National Library of Wales and Public Health Wales will attend future meetings. They worked in small groups to identify current practice and suggest opportunities for improvement.</p> <p>The findings below are loosely grouped under the 6 characteristics used to define Fair Work.</p> <p>Fair Reward</p> <p>It was generally felt that there is good support for the public sector workforce in terms of pensions, benefits, health and wellbeing.</p> <p>There is recognition of the Living Wage movement in Wales but there are some barriers to accreditation.</p> <p>Contracts and grant allocations are monitored but this is done by individual services rather than procurement teams. This leads to a lack of consistency across services and a possible reluctance to ask too many intrusive questions of the providers.</p> <p>Employee voice and collective representation</p> <p>Trade unions are keen to work with us, not just on staffing but also on procurement.</p> <p>New technology is used to engage with the workforce and AI is used (carefully) to help with thematic analysis. Less is being done to reach out to underrepresented voices in the workforce.</p>	

Security and flexibility + Safe, healthy and inclusive working environment

Work is ongoing to update HR policies, particularly in light of changes to the working environment. More could be done to simplify the policies and highlight key information so that they are accessible for all abilities.

Opportunity for access to work, growth and progression

The Disability Confident employer scheme is recognised. Most PSB organisations are Level 2, and some are working towards Level 3. There is potential to request that contracted services are inclusive or become a Disability Confident employer.

There are supported employment schemes for people with autism and learning difficulties, but we could do more. It would also help if we could offer more work placements for people that are unemployed and don't have much experience of work.

Childcare provision is not always available for parents who want to work, particularly in the upper ages (aged 9years+) and particularly during school holidays. This limits their availability to work. Other groups, e.g. older people, disabled people would also value appointments that are more flexible, accessible and inclusive.

There is potential to offer a wider range of more flexible working hours. For example a part year job that is paid for the full year pro rata. Team managers may not be fully aware of all the available possibilities of flexible working or know how to implement them.

Although largely positive, apprenticeships can be challenging in terms of a difference in expectations between apprentices and employers. Current schemes could also be made more accessible, both to employers and to potential apprentices. There is potential for more collaboration between PSB organisations and within PSB organisations.

Some contractors find it difficult to deliver the social value element of contracts; they often don't know what organisations are looking for in terms of community benefits.

Upskilling staff and opportunities for career progression is key, especially as recruiting in Ceredigion can be difficult. There is potential for collaborative working between PSB organisations to raise awareness of career prospects and job opportunities. In particular between the Health Board and the County Council in terms of health and social care staff, who often share common attributes.

There are useful national and local forums to support good procurement practices, but they are intermittent and not everyone knows about them. Some officers don't have time to attend the meetings.

We recognise that due to the location and nature of the county, Ceredigion workforces can become stagnant. It would be useful to explore opportunities for formal arrangements to share best practice such as secondments and

multi-organisation exchange opportunities – leading to new ideas, skills building, higher staff retention and greater workforce resilience.

Legal rights respected and given substantive effect

Pre-tender discussions with local contractors has resulted in a number of local SME's gaining contracts.

A lot of work is being done on ethical supply chains.

Changes to legislation and insecurity about future budgets are a big challenge. There are more things that HR and procurement teams would like to do but they may not be affordable.

Next steps

Ceredigion PSB members are asked to consider the following draft recommendations and identify actions that must be addressed, those that should not be progressed and suggest additional recommendations.

Recommendations:

1. Increase knowledge about the Living Wage movement in Wales and explore potential to become accredited Living Wage employers.
2. Explore potential to achieve consistency of contract monitoring and monitoring of grants provided to others by PSB members.
3. Do more to reach out to underrepresented voices in our workforces.
4. Simplify our workforce policies and highlight key information so that they are accessible for all abilities.
5. Support each other to progress as Disability Confident employers.
6. Request that all services contracted by PSB members are inclusive or become a Disability Confident employer.
7. Explore opportunities to offer more work placements for people that are unemployed and don't have much experience of work.
8. Explore and promote different approaches to flexible working so that the roles that we advertise are as inclusive and accessible as possible.
9. Explore the potential of making current apprenticeship schemes more accessible, both to employers and to potential apprentices.
10. Explore opportunities for more collaboration on apprenticeships schemes between PSB organisations and within PSB organisations.
11. Identify ways to improve contractors' ability to deliver social value on larger contracts.

12. Explore the potential for collaborative working between PSB organisations to raise awareness of career prospects and job opportunities. In particular between the Health Board and the County Council in terms of health and social care staff.
13. Identify ways to improve national and local collaboration on good procurement practices.
14. Explore opportunities for formal arrangements to share best practice such as secondments and multi-organisation exchange opportunities.
15. That a draft Charter, showing Ceredigion PSB's commitment to Fair Work, is developed and presented to the PSB for approval and action in 2025.

Next steps for the task and finish group:

2nd meeting (February 2025) to provide feedback from this PSB meeting, discuss the recommendations further, identify challenges and discuss ways to overcome these. We will also start formulating a draft Charter to demonstrate Ceredigion PSB's commitment to Fair Work.

Final meeting (May 2025) to identify ways to monitor and evaluate impact, to approve a draft Charter showing the commitment of the PSB to Fair Work.

The draft Charter will be presented to PSB members to sign up to. It is anticipated that the commitments on the Charter will have been delivered by March 2028, when the current Well-being Plan will end.

It is recommended that monitoring and evaluation will take place via Ceredigion PSB annual report.

Financial Implications

None at this stage.

Recommendations

That PSB members consider the recommendations of the Fair Work task and finish group and identify actions that must be addressed, those that should not be progressed, and suggest additional recommendations.

That PSB members agree to the 'Next steps' outlined in this paper.

Attachments

There is more information about Fair Work on Welsh Government's website:
[A guide to fair work | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/guide-to-fair-work)

Reporting Officer

Councillor Catrin MS Davies / Cathryn Morgan