

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Thursday, 15 January 2026</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Start Well Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Connect to Work Regional Programme
Purpose of Report:	To request approval from Cabinet to enter into an agreement to deliver 'Connect to Work' (CtW), a Department for Work and Pension (DWP) employability programme, to be delivered under a regional agreement with Cardiff Council and delegate specific powers to named officers and relevant portfolio holders relating to the local delivery of the project.
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language
Responsible Officer:	Director of Learning and Skills
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p>Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources</p> <p>Operational Manager Partnerships and Community</p> <p>Operational Manager - Accountancy</p> <p>Director of Place – Regeneration</p> <p>Operational Manager – Regeneration</p> <p>Operational Manager (Adult Services)</p> <p>Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer</p> <p>Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services</p>
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.

#### Executive Summary:

- Connect to Work (CtW) is a new UK Government Department for Work and Pensions employability programme aimed at supporting people with learning difficulties, physical disabilities and mental health support needs across the region to access supported employment opportunities.
- The report seeks to inform cabinet of the local and regional plans and requests approval to enter into a legal agreement/contract between all 10 South-East Wales Local Authorities with Cardiff Council assuming the role of main Grant Recipient Body on our behalf. The creation of a Grant Recipient Body would act as the Central Team overseeing the implementation and management of the Connect to Work Programme across the region.
- In addition, the report recommends that employed project staff required to undertake the Connect to work project, sit as part of the Communities for Work Plus employability team within Learning and Skills Directorate.
- Finally, the report seeks delegated authority to the Director for Learning and Skills to take forward this work, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources, Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language.

## **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet be provided with an overview of the UK Government's Connect To Work programme.
2. That approval be granted for the Learning and Skills Employability Team to enter into a regional agreement with all 10 South East Wales Local Authorities, with Cardiff Council acting as the Grant Recipient Body on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's behalf.
3. That approval be sought to work with Cardiff Council as the Grant Recipient Body Central Team, who will oversee the implementation and management of the Connect To Work Programme across the South-East Wales region.
4. That approval be granted for the Connect to Work team to sit within Learning and Skills as part of the Communities for Work Plus employability team in the Vale of Glamorgan.
5. That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Learning and Skills (in consultation with the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh language, Chief Executive, Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to prepare, complete and execute the required legal documentation to enable the Vale of Glamorgan Council to enter into a legal agreement through a back to back Contract/SLA or MOU with Cardiff to progress this work.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. The delivery of Connect to Work provides a significant opportunity to provide additional support to residents who are economically inactive due to long-term health conditions. Over the lifetime of the programme, it is expected that over 9,500 people across the region (including over 275 in the Vale of Glamorgan) will benefit from specialist support.
2. To approve closer regional alignment on the Connect To Work programme, ensuring shared working arrangements with the other South-East Wales Local Authority areas under the oversight of the Grant Recipient body.
3. To acknowledge and agree the Grant Recipients body's role and authorise officers to align with terms and conditions.
4. To ensure alignment of staff and project concept within the Learning and Skills Directorate to support the Connect To Work development.
5. To obtain authority to prepare, complete and execute the required legal documentation to enable the Connect To Work project to progress.

# **1. Background**

## **Overview of the Programme**

- 1.1** The Get Britain Working White Paper was published in November 2024, which outlines the UK Government's strategy to tackle rising economic inactivity and reform employment support systems. It sets out the ambition to reverse declining employment rates, a direct response to a rise in economic inactivity specifically in relation to long-term sickness and health-related barriers to employment.
- 1.2** The Connect to Work programme marks the initial phase of a wider series of employment initiatives under the UK Government's Get Britain Working Strategy. As part of its long-term reform agenda to transform employment support, the Government is encouraging collaboration across sectors. The Vale of Glamorgan Council's employment services are keen to engage and contribute to emerging initiatives aligned with this strategy.
- 1.3** The Get Britain Working White Paper is structured around 3 main pillars:
  - Modern Industrial Strategy and Local Growth Plans; creating more employment opportunities across the UK.
  - Improving Job Quality and Security.
  - Transforming Employment Support Systems.
- 1.4** The broader work of the Get Britain Working Plan and Connect to Work will also support greater integration between local health, skills and employment services, which align to the Government's strategic plans around neighbourhood interventions and place-based control over local services.
- 1.5** Both the Work & Health Programme and the Shared Prosperity Funded Supported Employment Programme (CELT+) are scheduled to conclude in 2026. The Connect to Work programme has been designed to address the ongoing needs of this cohort, offering tailored support to individuals who are not able to access mainstream services. It will complement existing employment provision by bridging gaps and ensuring continued support for those with more complex barriers to work.
- 1.6** To tackle ill-health as a major driver of economic inactivity, the first new employment programme has been launched. The UK Government funded, and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) managed programme – Connect to Work, will support around 100,000 people nationally over the course of the 5-year programme between April 2025 – March 2030.
- 1.7** As of February 2025, there were over 88,000 people claiming Universal Credit and over 43,000 people claiming Employment Support Allowance, in the South-East Wales Region.
- 1.8** The Work and Health Programme has shown a need for dedicated and specialist provision to support this cohort within the region, with over 29,000 people accessing support to go into sustained employment. Referrals to the Work & Health Programme ended in September 2024, with support ceasing for

participants completely in July 2026. The Connect to Work programme will become the successor programme.

- 1.9** Connect to Work is a voluntary Supported Employment project which aims to help disabled people, those with health conditions and people with complex barriers to find sustainable work including those with a disability or long-term health conditions (including neurodivergence), mental health needs, substance dependency (drug or alcohol), homelessness or at risk of homelessness, offenders or ex-offenders, carers, victims/survivors of domestic abuse, young people with care experience, refugees, former Armed Forces personnel and/or their families and victims of modern slavery. It also provides support to those who are in work but are at risk of falling out of the labour market.
- 1.10** The programme's primary focus for this voluntary provision will be those of working age who are not required to seek employment as a condition of benefit support. Connect to Work will take a local approach to tackling 'hidden employment,' by connecting employment, health and skills provision in each local authority area. Connect to Work will complement existing employment support projects by focussing on people who are not being reached by mainstream services.
- 1.11** Unlike many Employment Support projects which focus on preparing individuals to find and stay in work, the Connect to Work programme takes a different approach. As a Supported Employment initiative, it offers specialist, long-term, and tailored support, using a 'place and train' model (individuals are placed in a job role first and then receive on the job training), alongside ongoing assistance and workplace adjustments to help individuals succeed in employment. This will build on the existing Shared Prosperity 'Local Supported Employment' programme, currently delivered within Communities for Work Plus team.
- 1.12** Connect to Work will provide out of work participants with intensive support for up to 12 months. It will also include support for up to 4 months for people in-work who are at risk of losing their job. The support will be based on the well evidenced Individual Placement and Support or Supported Employment Quality Framework fidelity models as appropriate to the participant. Help will include early access to jobs based on job preferences, access to a wide range of support including job and skills matching, on the job training and help to sustain employment, which might include job coaching at work, training, support from a workplace mentor and regular workplace reviews. Support will be provided to the employer as well as the participant. Connect to Work will also provide tailored self-employment support where appropriate
- 1.13** Connect to Work delivery will use both models of supported employment: Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF) which will support individuals with learning difficulties or autism, and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) which support people with mental health challenges. The project will be split with 75% of cases on the IPS pathway and 25% on the SEQF pathway.
- 1.14** Connect to Work will be delivered across England and Wales, split into 43 regions of Local Authorities in England and 4 regions in Wales. Each region is required to

have a Grant Recipient Body represent the Local Authorities in that area and distribute grant payments according to the regional funding profile.

- 1.15** The Department for Work and Pensions has confirmed funding for the Connect to Work programme over a five-year period, concluding in March 2030. This funding is provided through a grant mechanism rather than a payment-by-results model, meaning that eligible costs can be claimed via the Grant Cost Register regardless of participant engagement levels. However, annual funding is capped and cannot be carried forward between financial years. The table below outlines the maximum yearly funding allocations alongside projected delivery figures for the South-East Wales region.

	<b>25/26</b>	<b>26/27</b>	<b>27/28</b>	<b>28/29</b>	<b>29/30</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Funding</b>	£2,290,300	£5,209,000	£12,028,700	£11,599,500	£4,340,100	£35,468,200
<b>Participants</b>						
Blaenau Gwent	35	80	186	179	67	547
Bridgend	71	161	372	358	134	1096
Caerphilly	88	201	464	448	168	1369
Cardiff	133	303	696	671	251	2054
Merthyr Tydfil	35	80	186	179	67	547
Monmouthshire	18	40	93	90	34	275
Newport	53	121	279	269	101	823
Rhondda Cynon Taf	133	302	696	672	250	2053
Torfaen	35	80	186	179	67	547
Vale of Glamorgan	18	40	93	90	34	275
<b>TOTAL</b>	619	1408	3251	3135	1173	9586

- 1.16** The Connect to Work programme is fully funded by a grant from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), with no additional financial burden on the local authority. To access this funding, the Grant Recipient Body must enter into a grant agreement with the DWP and adhere to all associated monitoring and reporting requirements.
- 1.17** Funding from the DWP will be disbursed to the Grant Recipient Body on a quarterly basis, following submission of a completed Grant Cost Register. The Grant Recipient Body will be responsible for allocating funds to individual Local Authorities, subject to successful completion of cost sampling audits.

#### **Grant Recipient Function**

- 1.18** The South-East Wales Region is made up of the following ten Local Authorities: Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen, Vale of Glamorgan.
- 1.19** It is proposed that Cardiff will be the Grant Recipient Body for the region and would therefore be responsible for developing a regional delivery plan that brings together the delivery approaches of all ten Local Authorities in South-East Wales. This plan must outline how the offer will be implemented across the region and must be approved by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) before delivery can begin and a grant agreement issued.

**1.20** The Grant Recipient Body is responsible for:

- Determining how each Local Authority plans to deliver the programme, whether in-house delivery, commissioning external providers or a combination of both. Cardiff Council will not carry out procurement on behalf of other Local Authorities; DWP's Commercial Team will provide commissioning support.
- Overseeing the implementation of the delivery plan, working with the regional Local Authorities, Health Boards and other local key stakeholders.
- Establishing governance arrangements with the regional Local Authorities.
- Identifying how the region will work together to identify, check and secure eligible and suitable participants.
- Managing the day to day operation of the programme and have overall accountability for the grant funding and how the grant operates.
- Ensuring outcomes for participants are delivered in line with DWP performance indicators.
- Agreeing marketing activities to raise awareness of the programme with employers and potential participants.
- Managing the financial and operational performance, quality and audit of the overall programme across the region.
- Engaging with the DWP, meeting regularly to review performance, operational or financial risks or issues and considering contingency measures.

**1.21** To enable Cardiff to act as the Grant Recipient Body, a new Central Support Team will be established to coordinate and manage this work. This team will be funded through an administration fee of 10% of the overall grant allocation for the region. Any underspend would be returned to Local Authorities on an annual basis. A portion of the funding will be allocated to provide dedicated financial support for the programme, as well as the management costs associated with the operation of the Central Team. Additionally, funding will be reserved to cover corporate recharges associated with the Grant Recipient Body, including HR, legal, and audit services. Regional Local Authorities will be expected to cover their internal recharges from their allocated funding.

**1.22** To ensure appropriate governance of the programme, the Central Team will establish a Regional Operational Group chaired by the Central Team's Connect to Work Programme Manager to ensure smooth and effective delivery of the programme. The group will have programme oversight, performance monitoring, addressing delivery challenges including referrals, stakeholder engagement, compliance and reporting, and feedback to ensure continuous improvement.

**1.23** A Strategic Group will also be established to provide oversight on key issues that require escalation, such as persistent underperformance, accountability, partnership working (particularly with the Health Board), and strategic risk management. Given that there are three separate Health Boards within the South-East Wales region, strong and collaborative relationships with both the

Health Boards and Care Providers will be essential to the successful delivery of the programme. Strategic Group meetings will be chaired by the Operational Manager for Advice, supported by the Into Work Manager (Cardiff LA).

- 1.24** The Central Team will support each Local Authority to ensure that all participants enrolled in the programme are both eligible and appropriately matched to the support available. In addition to this, the team will carry out financial and project audits across the region. To maintain accountability and ensure compliance, a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating system will be applied to each Local Authority. This will help identify and address any risks, including the prevention of ineligible expenditure within the programme.
- 1.25** The Central Team will implement a structured timetable of meetings with each Local Authority (regardless of delivery model i.e. full in-house delivery, commissioned to an external provider or a mixture of in-house delivery and commissioned provision) to review performance and discuss the findings of recent audits. As part of this process, the team will conduct monthly audits by examining financial and participant records in detail. The frequency of these audits will be adjusted based on performance, decreasing for authorities demonstrating consistent accuracy and compliance, and increasing where issues or concerns are identified.
- 1.26** To mitigate risk to the Grant Recipient Body (Cardiff), any Local Authority demonstrating sustained poor performance will be placed on a formal improvement action plan by the Central Team; this will be accompanied by increased monitoring and targeted support. Where necessary, issues will be escalated to the Operational and Strategic Groups, and, if required, to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). In cases of continued non-compliance or risk, the Central Team may withhold funding from the Local Authority in question or reallocation of funding to other Local Authorities in the region, to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the programme. In addition, the DWP Relationship Manager will collaborate with the Central Team to address any areas of underperformance, providing targeted support to the Central Team and the regional Local Authorities.
- 1.27** The Grant Recipient Body (subject to Cabinet approval), will issue back-to-back agreements with each participating Local Authority, aligned with the terms and conditions of the DWP Grant Agreement. The Central Team will work closely with each Council's Legal Services to implement any additional safeguards as required. A Risk Register has already been established and will be maintained as a live document, updated regularly to reflect and escalate any emerging risks associated with the project.
- 1.28** Subject to Cabinet approval and completion of grant agreements, delivery of the Connect To Work project will commence during Quarter 4 in 2025/26, on a phased basis across the region.



## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1** The focus of the funding is to support and engage individuals who require additional support to engage. As a programme idea it complements other locally delivered funded employability provision, such as Welsh Governments national Communities for Work Plus (CfW+) programme and UK Governments Shared Prosperity Funded CELT+ programme offering a bespoke specialised engagement provision supporting citizens to move closer to the world of work.

### **Delivery Team – Learning and Skills Employability Service**

- 2.2** The Vale Communities for Work Plus Service offers a comprehensive employment support package for residents across the county. It supports individuals who are unemployed, to progress towards employment. The service is closely aligned with Adult Community Learning and CELT+. Services are mainly funded through Welsh Government, although CELT+ is funded via the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. In the past year, the team has supported over 1200 people with employment support and helped almost 333 people into employment.
- 2.3** In 2022, the employability team successfully secured funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver a Local Supported Employment Programme. This initiative supports individuals with autism and/or learning disabilities to access and sustain meaningful employment. The team has achieved strong outcomes, engaged 93 participants and supported many into paid employment. A key strength of the project has been its ability to build effective relationships with employers, enabling the tailoring of roles and implementation of reasonable workplace adjustments to meet the needs of participants.
- 2.4** It is proposed that the Communities for work Plus employability team will deliver the Connect to Work programme entirely in-house, building on the strong foundations established through the Local Supported Employment project. Delivering the programme internally presents a valuable opportunity to continue supporting individuals who would previously have been eligible for the Work and Health Programme or the Local Supported Employment Programme, both of which will come to an end in 2026.
- 2.5** Under the Connect to work team there is a requirement to comply with strict Fidelity models, the Fidelity Assessment system will involve both self-assessment and external assessment. The external assessment will be delivered by a Third Party and will comprise of scored assessments of services, alongside a full report and the co-production of an action plan with the Accountable Body/Delivery Partner(s) for improvement. To meet the requirements there will be a need to either employ a part time quality officer, contract the work to an external body/partner or enter into a shared agreement with another Local Authority to deliver this section of the contract.

- 2.6** The Vale of Glamorgan's maximum funding allocation for delivery of the programme and participant figures for the programme are outlined below, for each financial year and the programme and the actual financial figure will be lower once the central team's 10% allocation (is removed, if not required any surplus will be returned to the Vale of Glamorgan:

	<b>25/26</b>	<b>26/27</b>	<b>27/28</b>	<b>28/29</b>	<b>29/30</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	£68,709.00	£156,288.00	£360,861.00	£347,985.00	£130,203.00	£1,064,046.00
<b>Participants</b>	18	40	93	90	34	275

- 2.7** Given the reduction in funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) after March 2026, and uncertainty surrounding a replacement funding stream could be slightly mitigated by enabling the Communities for Work Plus Service to deliver the Connect to Work programme presenting an opportunity to maintain some services within the Council. While it cannot replace SPF funding entirely, it may safeguard some existing staff roles and ensure some continued delivery of supported employment support for residents.

#### **The programme timeline**

- 2.8** The regional single delivery plan is being submitted to DWP in December 2025. It is estimated it could take up to 12 weeks for the DWP to approve the plan. Once approved the programme can start. Each area may start at different times, but the Vale of Glamorgan are keen to start in March 2026 to coincide with the end of current SPF supported employment project. This would allow the current staff to be redeployed avoiding staff redundancies.
- 2.9** The planned start date was initially Quarter 4 in 2025/26 although delays by some partners are likely to see project initiation start in Quarter 1 in 2026/27. Clarity on how year 1 (2025/26) funds could be reallocated are yet to be agreed.
- 2.10** The project will require a lead officer and a minimum of 1 full time specialist mentor to start late in Quarter 4 of 2025/26 or early in Quarter 1 of 2026/27 to operate the project. Numbers of specialist mentors will grow to approximately 6 for years 2027/28 and 28/29 before reducing in 2029/30.
- 2.11** As part of a DWP National programme delivered via an Accountable body the Vale of Glamorgan Council along with the other 9 regional bodies will be required to enter into a legal contract/agreement or an equivalent to the regionally delivered programme. These will be signed during 2026.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

#### **Embedding the Five Ways of Working**

- 3.1** The Connect to Work is fully aligned with the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Wellbeing Outcomes, demonstrating a clear commitment to the Five Ways of Working:
- 3.2** The DWP Connect to Work guidance (2025) places a strong focus on early intervention and prevention and actively promotes integration and collaboration as ways of working.
- 3.3** Connect to Work programme will contribute to:
- Well-being Objective 1: Creating great places to live, work and visit, by helping many of the most vulnerable citizens in the most deprived areas move towards gainful employment.
  - Well-being Objective 2: Giving everybody a good start in life. Reducing Poverty and social exclusion, focus on families of children living in poverty and help them to increase their income, access food and housing and escape poverty through wraparound support and advice services. Improve access to good quality and timely advice, support and services to families
  - Well-being Objective 3: Supporting and protecting those that need us. Deliver an integrated programme of work to prevent and tackle poverty with a particular focus on our most deprived communities.

**3.4** Five ways of working:

#### **Involvement**

The programme is designed to have continuous engagement with learners, key stakeholders, employers and third sector partners.

#### **Collaboration**

Delivery of the programme is underpinned by strong collaborative working across Council Directorates, including Learning and Skills and Social Services, across the 10 South-East Wales Local Authorities and the Department for Work and Pensions, as well as with external partners such as employers, third sector organisations and employability providers. This joint approach ensures shared ownership and maximises collective expertise.

#### **Integration**

The programme supports integrated working across Council teams to deliver Government priorities and contributes to broader strategic objectives such as tackling poverty outcomes.

#### **Prevention**

Helps prevent future inequalities by providing employment opportunities and skill development which creates a long-term foundation to help people lift themselves out and remain out of poverty.

### **Long Term**

The programme contributes to a sustainable, long-term UK Government commitment to increase access to education, training, or employment.

## **4. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 4.1** There are no direct climate change or Nature implications associated within this establishment or delivery of the Connect to Work programme.
- 4.2** All 10 Local Authorities place a great deal of emphasis on ensuring the services offered are sustainable, do not impact on the environment and do not contribute to climate change. Examples include all offices used will be compliant with recycling regulations, staff are encouraged to use on-line systems for meetings where possible to avoid unnecessary travel and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging/educating clients to do the same.

## **5. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 5.1** The report seeks various approval in relation to the Connect to Work programme and related grant arrangements.
- 5.2** The report seeks approval to enter arrangements with the accountable body to deliver a nationally led DWP based programme called Connect to Work. The funding envelope is £1,013,428.57 over a 5-year period with the fund tapering up in the first 2 years and then tapering down in 2029/30. DWP have made a commitment to the programme until 2030. As noted earlier the programme will not start until April 2026 and it is suggested that funds will be relocate din later years although this has not yet been confirmed.
- 5.3** As set out in the report, the South-East Wales Region for Connect to Work will comprise 10 Local Authorities. Each delivery area (region) must have a lead Authority to act as the grant recipient and represent the other LAs in their region with the DWP. Cardiff Council have been requested by DWP to undertake the lead role consistently referred to as the “accountable body.”
- 5.4** Under Connect to Work arrangements, functions of the grant recipient/ accountable body role will include acting as a single point of contact with DWP, co-ordinating individual Local Authority employment support plans into one overarching regional delivery plan, monitoring the delivery of local plans (both in terms of spend and performance), preparation of annual budget, submission of quarterly grant claims, receipt of grant and onward payment to other Local Authorities, and auditing / compliance of grant terms and conditions across the region.
- 5.5** To ensure that Cardiff is able to discharge all duties required by the DWP, it will be important that the grant agreements that are put in place between Cardiff and the other nine Local Authorities replicate all terms and conditions that are part of the main agreement between Cardiff and the DWP

- 5.6** The report also seeks approval for the Learning and Skills employability Team to take on local delivery of the Connect to Work Programme in Vale of Glamorgan's indicative share of the regional grant (after initial adjustment at a regional level to deduct admin fee.)
- 5.7** In the longer term it is envisaged DWP will devolve funds to the Welsh Government and that consideration will be given to merging funds with the Welsh Governments employability strategy, should this not happen staff will be redeployed into existing employability provision as funds reduce.
- 5.8** The exit strategy will be the cessation of the programme as funding ceases.

## **Employment**

### **Programme Coordination and Delivery Support**

- 5.9** As revenue funded programme there are some workforce implications. Connect to Work will support a range of internally employed staff to deliver the programme until March 2030. As funding grows and then tapers over the 5 years via DWP and the Accountable Body in future years the service will need to adjust to accommodate these changes and there could be implications on staff establishments.
- 5.10** As noted above it is envisaged that a lead mentor and at least 1 FTE mentor would be required in 2026/27 raising to as many as 6 in 2028/29 prior to tapering down in line with funding.
- 5.11** The project will be monitored closely, and staff establishments will remain under scrutiny by the Learning and Skills Directorate Management Team to ensure any growth or reduction in staffing is matched to project demand and sustainable through the available grant funding.

## **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 5.12** The Council will be required to accept the award by agreeing to the terms and conditions of the Department of Work and Pensions grant, including the purpose of the grant and statement of expenditure.
- 5.13** To enable delivery, the Vale of Glamorgan Council will enter into a legally binding back-to-back agreement with Cardiff Council, replicating all relevant terms and conditions of the DWP grant agreement. This agreement will clearly set out roles, responsibilities, performance requirements, and financial obligations for both parties.
- 5.14** The delegated authority granted under this report will enable the Director of Learning and Skills, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer, and relevant Cabinet Members, to prepare, complete, and execute all necessary legal documentation. This authority will include the ability to sign, vary, and terminate agreements as required to ensure compliance with grant conditions.

- 5.15** The Council will ensure compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, given the sensitive nature of personal data processed under the programme appropriate Data Sharing agreements will be established between Cardiff Council (as the Grant recipient body) and participating Local Authorities to safeguard data integrity and confidentiality.
- 5.16** The Council must also satisfy its public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010, including specific Welsh public sector duties, and the socio-economic duty under section 1 of the Equality Act 2010. An equalities impact assessment will be completed to identify and mitigate any potential inequalities arising from the proposed decision.
- 5.17** The Council will also comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and associated standards, ensuring services are accessible in the preferred language of participants wherever possible.
- 5.18** The Connect to Work programme also works to reduce crime and disorder by tackling the underlying causes of family and youth deprivation; targeting people most at risk of becoming disengaged and not in education, employment and training (NEET) and providing opportunities to access education, training and employment.
- 5.19** An Equalities Impact Assessment aims to identify the equalities implications of the proposed decision, including inequalities arising from socio-economic disadvantage, and due regard should be given to the outcomes of the Equalities Impact Assessment.

## **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1** Grant Guidance provides detailed policy and delivery information to support Connect to Work Accountable Bodies (working with local partners and the Department for Work and Pensions) to develop their own local Connect to Work offers, in agreement with the Department for Work and Pensions Connect to Work - GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/connect-to-work>