



COASTAL – Creating Opportunities And Skills Teams Alliance

This project covers four local authority areas. It aims to promote relevant vocational and other skills for people who are economically inactive as a result of illness or disability. It is seeking support from the Convergence Funding Programme of the European Union.

The Project will be aimed at the promotion of vocational, employment, skills training and lifelong learning opportunities for individuals who are currently economically inactive as a result of illness, disability, (*Mental Illness, Learning Disability, Physical Disability, Sensory Impairment*) substance misuse problems and/or the serious social disadvantage associated with the transition from long-term care into adulthood.

The Project aims to be flexible encouraging provision that matches local need and helps build capacity whilst also ensuring equitable provision across the region.

In addition to the Local Authority Partnership, the COASTAL also includes a wide range of external partners from the FHE establishments, Independent and Third Sectors. These agencies, which include both local and national organisations, will be providing support and services on either a local, sub-regional or regional basis.

The Project proposals have now been fully considered by the WLGA Regional Partnership Forum, in both the European Officers and the Chief Officers Groups. The proposals have been 'risk-assessed' and the City & County of Swansea has been

confirmed as the Lead Authority for the Project, which has been given approval to submit a formal Expression of Interest to WEFO whenever the Project Team feel it appropriate.

Progress

Senior Officer Working Groups have been established in the four partner Authorities of Swansea, Neath/Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, all of which have made considerable progress in developing a range of proposals for the improvement of local services targeted at the Project Aims and the requirements of the Strategic Framework.

Discussions are also underway with Local Health Boards across the Region to look at the possibility of their working in partnership with the Project to jointly fund healthy lifestyle support and training, with the aim of promoting healthy living in order to maintain economic activity.

Time Frame

It is hoped that a full funding bid can be submitted early in January, with a possible project commencement date of April/May 2008.

Contact

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