
TACKLING POVERTY, EQUALITY & PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEALTH & EQUALITY

Welcoming and Supporting Ukrainian Refugees

As I set out in my statement to Council in June, the Council is working to welcome refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine who are arriving through the Family Visa, Homes for Ukraine and Welsh Government Super Sponsor schemes.

As of 13 July 2022, under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, 175 sponsors have applied to take part in the scheme in Cardiff, with 413 visas applied for. Of these applications, 299 visas have been issued, with 232 confirmed arrivals to date. The Council is providing wraparound support for all arrivals, ensuring that they are safe and are supported in terms of language, subsistence payments and access to services. The Council is also in contact with all local sponsors, ensuring that appropriate property checks and DBS applications are completed.

For those arriving via the Family Scheme, I would like to remind members that the Council has put in place a drop-in 'one-stop-shop' service at Cardiff Central Library for any Ukrainian arrivals – irrespective of visa route – that can provide advice on any questions that refugees may have or assistance with accessing public services and other support services. The Council's Hubs and libraries are also working to provide advice and information.

The Council is continuing to work closely with the Welsh Government to support those arriving via the Super Sponsor Scheme, including managing the Cardiff Welcome Centre and supporting arrivals located in other accommodation throughout the city.

Childhood Vaccinations and Screening

Alongside the Covid-19 and winter flu vaccination programmes, routine childhood vaccinations continue to be high priority from a public health perspective due to a decline in uptake for some vaccines, particularly during and as a result of the pandemic. Similarly, the uptake of other preventative programmes, such as screenings, were impacted to varying degrees by the pandemic. In response, as part of the 'Amplifying Prevention' approach to partnership working between Cardiff Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council and Cardiff & Vale University Health Board (UHB), we are currently working to develop and implement actions, which will promote the uptake of immunisation and screening among both service users and staff and will look to address barriers identified by groups and communities where take-up is lower. For example, surveillance data shows that children from some ethnic minority groups have lower uptake for some vaccinations compared to the rest of the population. The

intention of this joint approach is to improve accessibility for families to vaccination, promote positive messages and dispel any myths and concerns that circulate within communities, with the aim of ensuring that as many children as possible are protected against vaccine-preventable diseases.

Move More, Eat Well Plan Update

Moving more and eating well provides us all with great benefits in terms of health and wellbeing and also helps our planet. Since the launch of the Move More, Eat Well Plan in July 2020, in collaboration with Cardiff & Vale UHB, Vale of Glamorgan Council and the third sector, much has been achieved for the population in Cardiff despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Cardiff Good Food Strategy 2021-24 was launched in October 2021 and Welsh Government funding from the EU transition Food Poverty Fund was secured to support its delivery. There are also some fantastic examples of delivery on the ground, including the development of a community food retail project toolkit, Community Food Retail Network, piloting Good Food Neighbourhood projects, as well as the development of 'Plot to Pantry', which aims to increase the amount of produce grown in Cardiff being supplied into community food retail projects. Through our 'Amplifying Prevention' agenda, a partnership approach will be important in driving forward some of the key priorities from the Move More, Eat Well Plan; continuing to improve the food and physical activity offer in our schools and workplaces, as well as taking action to restrict junk food advertising across Cardiff.

TACKLING POVERTY & SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Armed Forces Advice Service

I am delighted that Cardiff Council has been successful in attaining the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award. This is something that the Veterans Advice Team, which is part of the Advice Service within Housing & Communities, has been working steadily towards for a number of years as part of the Armed Forces Covenant, which is the voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces community.

In August 2017, Cardiff Council became the first Local Authority in Wales to set up an Armed Forces Advice Service, a dedicated service for the Armed Forces community, which provides specialist employment, housing, money, and other advice for veterans and serving personnel. The service supports ex-military, cadets, reservist staff as well as staff within Cardiff Council. Between April 2021 and March 2022, the Armed Forces Advice Service claimed over £18,000 in one-off payments and assisted the Armed Forces community to claim £656,469 in previously unclaimed benefits. Cardiff Council has since supported other local authorities (Rhondda Cynon Taf, Vale of Glamorgan, and Swansea) to set up their own Armed Forces Advice Service.

Cost of Living Discretionary Scheme

The Advice and Benefits Teams are currently working hard to distribute £2.2m worth of grants to ease the burden on households in the city during the cost-of-living crisis. The money has been allocated as part of the Welsh Government's Cost of Living Support Scheme. The Council has already written to over 1,600 households inviting them to apply to the scheme. So far, 109 people have been supported with further applications being processed by the team.

However, the Council does not know about everyone who is really struggling right now. Anyone can apply whether they are in or out of work and whether they are claiming benefits or not. Residents will also be provided with bespoke advice, ensuring they are receiving all the benefits, grants and discounts to which they are entitled. For more information or to make a claim, residents can visit their local Hub or call the Advice Line on 029 2087 1071.

New Food and Fuel Champions

New food and fuel 'champions' are providing practical advice in Community Hubs across the city. They will also be attending community events throughout the coming months to provide initial help and support and to refer more complex cases into the Money Advice Team. The Money Advisors will support these customers with income maximisation, benefit checks and budgeting support, providing advice for long-term solutions rather than quick fixes to help address both food and fuel poverty.

Into Work Advice Service

Support for Refugees and Ukrainian Nationals

The Into Work Advice Service has recently launched a new job club at the Oasis Centre in Splott, assisting refugees and asylum seekers with accessing opportunities via mentoring projects, updating/creating CVs and providing referrals for Adult Learning on short courses.

In partnership with Homes for Ukraine, the Into Work Advice Service has also been attending the Welcome Centre to offer training and employment support to Ukrainian nationals. The team has so far supported 30 people with a wide range of employment backgrounds, including solicitors, teachers, computer programmers, barbers, shipping and manual workers. The team is currently in talks with Cardiff and Vale College to provide additional ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) support.

Youth Employment Support

In addition to mainstream employability support, the Into Work Advice Service provides dedicated support for young people with additional or more complex barriers to employment, education or training. This specialist support is provided by our wraparound projects – Bright Futures and MILES – and our community-based Butetown Youth Development Project.

Bright Futures receives referrals from Children's Services and Youth Services to help care-experienced young people aged 16-24 to access employment, education and training opportunities and receive general wellbeing support as they transition into adulthood.

The MILES project works with vulnerable young people who are either homeless or in non-secure accommodation. They offer wraparound support for the young person, providing guidance on employability access, whilst also assisting with housing issues and preparing them for independent living.

The Butetown Youth Development Project was created to meet the specific needs of the Butetown, Riverside and Grangetown areas of Cardiff which have historically had high unemployment rates and low engagement with services such as Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The project's Youth Mentors work one-to-one with local young people to help them enter sustainable employment. They also work to increase community participation, promote utilisation of local services, and liaise with organisations offering support to young people, creating a central knowledge pool of opportunities available to 16 to 24-year-olds in Butetown. Since the launch of the project in December 2020, over 400 young people have engaged with the team, resulting in 112 young people securing employment, 127 completing training and 29 going back into full-time education. Due to the success of the project, the DWP has extended funding for a further 12 months.

The Council's in-house recruitment service, Cardiff Works, has set up the Cardiff Works Ready project. This project specifically helps young people with little or no work experience, to become work ready and assisted into a Cardiff Works placement. The Into Work Youth Team worked closely with the project, supporting many of the young people to start their careers within Cardiff Council. Since the beginning of the year, over 80 people have been supported through the project, with seven people gaining employment.

Support for Young People Post-16

Cardiff Youth Services have developed a wide range of innovative approaches to improve outcomes for young people post-16 by engaging and motivating them to sign up to "A Taste of..." experiences in identified popular education, employment and training fields. Programmes on offer focus on construction, sport, music, beauty, entrepreneurship, arts/theatre, hospitality, digital opportunities (gaming) and animal care. The days will not only be interactive and fun, but most importantly informative. The team will work with the providers to look at identified pathways into education, training and employment opportunities around each theme, which will be given out to the young people who attend. The 3-week offer will culminate on 22 August 2022 with a Post-16 Provider Day in conjunction with the Into Work Advice Service to be held at Cardiff Central Library, where young people can get further advice and sign on to training and employment pathways. More information can be found on Cardiff Youth Service events page at: <https://www.cardiffyouthservices.wales/index.php/en/events>

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Project

[Stronger Me CF23](#) is a tailor-made project for young people aged 13-18 in Llanedeyrn and Pentwyn. The Powerhouse Youth Centre team is part of Cardiff Youth Services and staff are fully qualified to deliver the Platform "State of Mind" programme, which has developed and evolved into the Stronger Me CF23 project. The programme focuses on building resilience, coping strategies and life skills. The project aims to provide a safe space for young people to talk, help young people make new friends and increase their education around mental health and teach them how they can support themselves and others who may be struggling with their mental health.

Councillors Julie Sangani & Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Members for Tackling Poverty, Equality & Public Health (Job Share)
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