

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee Ref: ELL-10-01(p2)/

EDC-08-01(p2)

(Joint Meeting with Economic Development Committee)

Date	23 May 2001
Time	1.30 pm
Venue	Committee Room 3
Title	Corus: Education, Training and Employment Package

Purpose

To provide the Committee with a summary of the education, training and employment measures that are in place for those affected by the Corus redundancies.

Summary

This paper provides details of the education, training and employment elements of the overall package of £66 million to mitigate the effect of the Corus cutbacks, closures and redundancies. The earlier paper (EDC 08-01(p1)) provides information on the background to Corus' rationalisation, details of the job losses, the breakdown of the funding for the total package, and the business support measures and regeneration activities.

Representatives from the Employment Service, ELWa and Careers Wales will be present to provide more detailed information.

The Education, Training and Employment Package

Background

£7 million of the £66 million programme of action is designed to help those individuals and communities most affected by Corus' decision to close or make major cuts. This will provide a comprehensive package of education, training skills support and employment measures. This package is now in place to help ensure that redundant Corus workers, their families and those in the supply chain can access the advice and help needed to successfully secure new

employment.

Allied to this, the unions and Corus are jointly applying for ESF funds to support a training package for workers facing redundancy. The overall cost of such a package is likely to be around £5.7 million in Wales and Corus have agreed to make a significant financial contribution.

Available Facilities

From 14 May, on-site operations have been stepped up. Corus has made accommodation available for Advice Centres at Bryngwyn, Ebbw Vale, Llanwern, Port Talbot and Shotton. These are enabling the Employment Service, ELWa and Careers Wales to have people on-site, working together to provide a comprehensive advice and guidance service and deal directly with requests for support. Wherever possible, they will provide advice and guidance on the spot.

The Benefits Agency is available to provide advice on benefit entitlement.

Activity Undertaken

The Employment Service

The Employment Service has increased its job information work in Wales and is offering a wide range of services tailored to meet the requirements of Corus workers. These services are being well advertised and by mid May, over 1,700 enquiries had been received at the 5 on-site Advice Centres. Employers and certain sectors such as aerospace, electronics, automotive and the construction industry are being vigorously marketed so that as many people as possible can take-up the opportunities that may be available. The Employment Service has also met with representatives of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation to explore ways in which private sector employment agencies can contribute to helping those affected.

Careers Wales

Careers Wales, the new national all-age advice and guidance service, will continue to work in close partnership with the Employment Service and ELWa to provide specialist support for employees in the three areas affected by the closures. Funding to Careers Wales has been increased by £250,000 to ensure that there will be no shortage of support for those who need help in assessing employment and learning options. The services will be made available both on site and at Careers Wales high street offices in local towns.

ELWa

The extra £5.75 million that has been allocated to ELWa will ensure that, through its training provider network and the colleges, they will be providing flexible support tailored directly to the individuals and their needs. For those who need it, training will start while people are under notice of redundancy so that they are best able to secure new employment immediately. Other help will include immediate access to training where there is normally a qualifying period of 6 months unemployment; short up-skilling courses; help with additional travel costs, childcare and such like; and incentives for new employers to recruit Corus workers. There will also be help available for those who wish to start their own businesses.

ELWa has produced a single leaflet that covers support tailored to individual needs that is available from each of the four partners. This includes advice and guidance and flexible support through education and training measures and help with starting up in business.

Future Action

The Employment Service, ELWa and Careers Wales, together with the WDA, will continue to work together for the benefit of the individuals and communities affected.

There will be extra help through the New Deal with new Action Teams for Jobs for Blaenau Gwent; and the extension to the Heads of the Valleys and Caerphilly Employment Zone, which will shortly be extended to cover Torfaen.

As part of the training package, £1 million will be available for union-related projects. We are working closely with the steel unions to put in place a special project as part of the Wales Union Learning Fund for learning advocates in the affected plants and their communities.

Financial Implications

The financial implications for the overall package, of which this is part, are explained in EDC-08-01(p1).

Compliance

The National Assembly has the authority to support training under Section 2 of the Employment and Training Act 1973. There are no compliance issues or issues of regularity or propriety to consider.

Action for Committee

The Committee is asked to note the content of the package in readiness for discussion.

Contact Points

Lifelong Learning Division and Training Skills and Careers Policy Division.