

Social Inclusion in the Heart of the South West



Report 1: The Civil Society Perspective

This report, researched and written by South West Forum, was commissioned by the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (the LEP). It is a key output of a contract with South West Forum to advise the LEP on social inclusion priorities¹, potential interventions and investment allocations in relation to the European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy (ESIFS) and on civil society engagement more broadly.

The report is complemented by a Data Report prepared for South West Forum by Marchmont Observatory which collates data on key social inclusion indicators for the Heart of the South West area.

Feedback obtained from a limited consultation exercise undertaken during an early phase of the contract in September is included in Appendix 2

- 1 Approach and methodology
- 2 Key strategic issues
- 3 Priority groups
- 4 Activities and interventions
- 5 The right money?
- 6 Community Led Local Development (CLLD)
- 7 Commissioning and working with the social purpose sector and civil society
- 8 Governance and engagement with civil society

Appendices

- 1 Definition and description of social inclusion
- 2 Phase 1 feedback
- 3 Workshop participants
- 4 The intervention logic

¹ The European Union's definition and description of social inclusion is included in Appendix 1 for information.

1 Approach and methodology

1.1 South West Forum used two main mechanisms to collect the views of civil society organisations: local consultation workshops in Langport, Exeter and Plymouth² which attracted a total of 30 participants and an on line survey using SurveyMonkey which generated 19 responses. (A list of organisations represented at the workshop is in Appendix 2). Note that some workshop participants will have also responded to the online survey. In addition 3 people who could not attend consultation workshops fed in their views via phone interviews or via email. Given the limited time available and the relatively low level of awareness of the Draft ESIFS this was a reasonable level of response. Throughout this report we use the term “consultee” to refer to anyone who has contributed their views on the ESIFS irrespective of the mechanism they have used.

1.2 Consultees reflected a broad range of organisations and interests, as demonstrated in the Workshops attendance list in the Appendix. We were pleased to engage some small embryonic groups (e.g. South West Portuguese Association) as well as larger and well established organisation (e.g. St Loyes Foundation and Westward Pathfinder). The consultees also embraced a wide range of specific and specialist interests and types of organisations, including local development trusts, cultural and arts providers, training organisations and providers of advice and information services. Although we did manage to involve some voluntary sector networks and infrastructure providers the level of engagement from this sector was a little disappointing, given their importance in reaching out to and communicating with the voluntary sector as a whole. However the short timescale for the consultation and the capacity issues facing the voluntary sector’s infrastructure across the Heart of the South West area would have been key barriers to more active involvement.

1.3 However, in general the breadth and quality of the input, reflecting the views and expertise of this broad range of organisations, has provided a substantial body of material which should be a valuable contribution to the process of developing the ESIFs. It is hoped also that this material will assist the LEP in developing and implementing its broader Strategic Economic Plan.

1.4 It should be noted that respondents found it difficult to comment on some aspects of the ESIFs because the rationale and logic behind the selection of specific priorities and the indicative investment allocations was generally not available. This is always a challenge with consultations of this type where the focus is on a single document. In future, and with more time for a more engaged consultation process, it should be possible to make available supporting background material to enable consultees to make a more informed response.

2 Key strategic issues

2.1 Consultees broadly endorsed the overall strategic priorities relating to “people” as set out in the ESIFs which were stated as:

² A workshop planned for Barnstaple was cancelled because of low numbers and it was not possible to arrange a workshop in Torbay in the time available. However people from these areas were able to feed in their views via the on line survey and direct to South West Forum.

- *“promoting social inclusion and combating poverty” with a focus on “active inclusion in particular with a view to improving employability”;*
- *“promoting employment and supporting labour mobility”;* and
- *“investing in education, skills and lifelong learning”.*

2.2 Ten of the twelve respondents (83%) to the relevant question in the on line survey said “yes” ...”*these are the right priorities for the HotSW*”. Comments relating to this question generally highlighted particular types of intervention which should be supported and their suggestions are reflected elsewhere in this report.

2.3 Eleven of the fourteen respondents (79%) to the relevant online survey question felt that the summary analysis of social inclusion in the ESIFS was accurate. However comments from consultees generally revealed a common view that the ESIFS failed to reflect a deeper understanding of the reality of social inclusion across the area. In the words of one survey respondent, the social inclusion analysis was *“incomplete and overly-simplified but not wrong”*. Consultees noted that while social exclusion does have a geographical component, and is reflected in IMD data at Local Super Output Area level, exclusion is also experienced by small numbers of individuals with particular needs who are often not concentrated in specific geographical areas and thus will not show up on a spatial analysis of exclusion data.

2.4 A number of further overarching concerns about the ESIFS were raised by consultees. There was a widespread view that the Strategy failed to articulate a strong vision as to what the HotSW area should and could *“look like”* if the ESIFS was successful and what would be the legacy of the investment. Coupled with this was a widely held view that the ESIFS was too rooted in the present and did not adequately reflect the challenges and opportunities arising from further big cuts in public sector funding, especially affecting local authorities, welfare reform and other changes in public service delivery and the changing demographic profile of the area. Some consultees said that the ESIFS should better reflect *“what we have now but may not have in one or two years’ time”*.

2.5 Several consultees also commented that the ESIFS focussed too heavily on high level skills and industry sectors. There was a widespread plea to give a greater priority to high volume, relatively low skill business sectors such as tourism, leisure and the care sector. These sectors were regarded by consultees as critical to providing employment opportunities for those likely to be most excluded from the labour market.

2.6 In general consultees advocated that interventions to address social exclusion and remove or reduce barriers to employment should be locally based, often at neighbourhood level, to reflect the needs of particular communities and groups of people and complement existing provision. There was a strong message from consultees that interventions supported through ESIFS investment should be carefully targeted and focussed. These may often need to concentrate on niche and specialist provision geared to those who are most distant from the labour market and whose exclusion is the result of multiple barriers. Feedback generally points to a strong argument for the LEP considering the Community Grants model as an efficient mechanism for delivering targeted investment into locally-based interventions. Modest grants of this type can be highly effective in delivering good outcomes and unlocking the capacity of volunteers and social purpose groups.

2.7 Consultees questioned how well the HotSW LEP understood the real experiences of people facing multiple problems, struggling to secure employment, living in isolation and/or on low wages or benefits. It was suggested that a programme of local “*seeing is believing*” visits and conversations could be arranged to allow the Board and LEP team to “*get down and dirty*” and engage with the people and communities who would be the ultimate beneficiaries of at least some of ESIFs interventions.

2.8 We have included for information in Appendix 4 an explanation of the “intervention logic” relating to the links between social inclusion and economic growth as presented in the initial Interim Report. While this statement was not explicitly a focus for the consultation process we are confident that the general thrust of the feedback supports and endorses the key principles.

3 Priority groups

3.1 Consultees were asked for their views on the “*groups in society facing the greatest barriers to full participation in the labour market*” through the online survey and in the workshops. Inevitably the responses collectively provided a very long list of potential priority groups (see below) but our assessment of the feedback has identified the following key groups as a particular priority for investment:

- **Young people**, mainly in the 18-25 year age group, especially those with low levels of self-esteem, confidence and aspiration and who were poorly engaged in their communities.
- **Mature and older people**, generally identified as those aged 50 and over who had substantial experience and skills but who having been made redundant struggled to re-enter the labour market.
- **Long term unemployed people**, including in particular those who faced multiple barriers to employment relating to, for example, long term health conditions, including mental health, disability, an offending background and caring responsibilities.
- **People living in rural isolation and poverty** of any age and gender who were constrained by the lack and cost of transport to employment opportunities and lack of access to social networks, training and support services.
- **People experiencing digital exclusion**, mainly due to the constraints of their own skills, confidence and physical ability to make full use of on line technology. It was noted that young people while confident in some aspects of social networking may not be well equipped to use digital technology for employability and employment purposes.

- **People who are participating in the labour market but not to their full potential** – including those on low wages, on zero-hours contracts and/or undertaking a number of (low paid) part-time and seasonal or temporary jobs who found it extremely difficult to develop their skills, improve their income and fulfil their aspirations.

3.2 The priority groups identified by consultees demonstrates the need for very targeted interventions geared to people with an often complex range of needs and facing multiple barriers who are not (well) served by mainstream provision. In some cases the number of people involved may be relatively small, in the context of the HotSW population as a whole, but the additionality imperative for ESIFS investment does give the opportunity to commission specialist, closely targeted and, where appropriate, innovative interventions for particular groups and communities.

3.3 The full range of priority groups identified by consultees, excluding those identified above, was as follows:

- Women, especially those who have left the labour force for caring responsibilities
- Lone parents
- Victims of domestic abuse
- Unpaid carers and ex carers
- Young people leaving care
- Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)
- Ex-offenders and prison leavers
- People made redundant
- Ex-services personnel
- Immigrants with qualifications not recognised in UK
- People with poor literacy
- People with poor English language skills
- Asylum seekers
- Disabled people
- Older workers with long term health conditions
- Benefits claimants facing barriers to start up in business
- People with mental health problems
- People with undiagnosed “invisible” disabilities (e.g. Aspergers Syndrome)
- People with disfigurements
- People with learning difficulties
- People in debt
- People from ethnic communities facing prejudice and cultural barriers

3.4 In general consultees argued for investment to focus on specific groups in society who faced particular barriers to (full) employment rather than particular geographical areas – apart from the broader priority group of those living in rural poverty and isolation highlighted earlier. However some consultees did articulate the need for particular areas to be a higher priority for investment. These included Somerset which was regarded as having especially low skills levels and was in “*danger of being left behind*”, Plymouth which was felt to be facing particular difficulties in retaining talent and responding to continue reductions

in defence spending and Torridge and North Devon which were reported as having weak economies reflected in low GVA levels.

4 Activities and interventions

4.1 Understandably consultees highlighted a very wide range of activities and interventions that they felt should be considered as a priority for investment. It is recognised that some of the proposed interventions would be ineligible under ESIFs and there are insufficient resources available to fund HotSW wide programmes across all the interventions suggested. Furthermore some may be regarded as duplicating existing provision. However, we have attempted to draw out the key types of intervention that reflects a broad consensus emerging from the consultees and have most strategic significance. These are as described below.

Local labour market intelligence

4.2 It was proposed that the LEP commissions a process for collecting, maintaining and making available robust local labour market intelligence that could be used by a wide range of providers (e.g. Work Programme, Careers Service, Work Clubs, community based services etc), businesses and individuals. There was a strong view that comprehensive labour market information is not currently available at a geographical level which relates to individuals actual and realistic employment search area. Existing labour market information appears to be collected mainly for strategic planning purposes rather than to inform high quality, informed advice and support to individuals and businesses.

Living Wage and raising incomes

4.3 Consultees recommended that the LEP should consider intervening to raise wage levels, recognising that low incomes are a significant barrier to individuals' progression in employment and constrain the growth of the economy. The LEP may wish to consider developing a specific strategy or strand of activities designed to increase wage levels. These could include initiatives to engage employers in adopting the Living Wage; build in Living Wage commitments in commissioning and tendering processes; and developing ways employers can retain some flexibility in employment while avoiding the most exploitative elements of zero hours contracts. The LEP could champion a "good employer" form of quality mark across its area.

Building the engagement of young people

4.4 The feedback from consultees demonstrates the need for the LEP to invest in a programme of locally based interventions, activities and initiatives designed to build the confidence, self esteem, social networks and aspirations of disaffected and disengaged young people. Consultees in general argue that a key priority is to provide support which progresses people along the route towards employment, rather than necessarily focuses directly on getting them into a job. A range of initiatives including outdoor, adventure, sports and arts based activities were amongst the suggestions.

4.5 Consultees also highlighted the importance of high quality and consistent careers advice and support. It was felt that with responsibility for careers advice now devolved to individual school level provision was now patchy, inconsistent and often inadequately

resourced. Investment in high quality careers advice based on robust local labour market intelligence was argued by several consultees.

4.6 The importance of physical spaces and buildings enabling young people (and others) to meet, support each other, network, access services and training and participate in cultural, artistic and other activities was highlighted by several consultees. This was set within the context of youth clubs and other services for young people closing as a result of public spending cutbacks. There is a case for the LEP considering how investment in physical infrastructure (such as innovation hubs and other workspaces) geared mainly to business and enterprise support could also be flexed to help deliver social inclusion outcomes.

4.7 One consultee noted that in the South West young people, especially those most disadvantaged in the labour market, frequently secured work through “their mates” rather than through formal recruitment routes. It was argued that interventions should respond to and go with the grain of this culture. Structured volunteering programmes were widely regarded as an important part of the mix of support and progression routes that should be made available to young people.

4.8 Early intervention with children and young people and their families around family structures, tackling low self esteem and low aspiration including strengthening social and life skills education in schools was called for by a number of consultees. It is recognised that this may not be eligible for support through ESIFS but should feature in the LEPs Strategic Economic Plan and other appropriate investment programmes.

Transport to work and training

4.9 Access to affordable, demand responsive community-based transport enabling individuals to access training, support and employment opportunities was highlighted as a priority for investment, especially in rural areas. Some consultees noted that transport provision needed particularly to respond to the needs of people taking up part-time and evening and weekend work. The trend for an increasing proportion of people to have a portfolio of part time and self employment with flexible, variable and sometimes unsocial hours indicates that improved transport to work provision should be addressed for the benefit of individuals and employers. The LEP could apply its investment to scale up and expand existing community-based transport provision. The proposed Local Impact Fund could be a mechanism for delivering such investment.

Unlocking the skills and talents of mature people

4.10 Consultees proposed that the LEP should allocate investment specifically designed to unlock the skills, talents and expertise of mature and older people, in particular those aged 50 plus. Although there was no clear consensus as to what specific type(s) of activities were required the following were suggested as potential components of a programme geared to this age group:

- Specific support geared to ex services personnel and their families.
- Re-skilling and skills “refresh” designed to up date individual’s skills to be better geared to opportunities and employer needs.
- Support to strengthen digital skills to better equip individuals for employment and to access services, support and training.

- Structured volunteering geared to those with high level professional, specialist and management experience.
- Engaging mature, experienced individuals to support, mentor and assist young people in moving into employment and self employment.

Progression towards employment

4.11 The importance of providing targeted and bespoke support to people who are furthest from the labour market was a consistent and common theme emerging from consultees. While young and mature older people were particularly highlighted as key target groups it was recognised that support is needed for people facing particular and often multiple barriers irrespective of age. The range of interventions that were proposed by consultees was very wide, pointing to the need for a flexible and responsive investment programme which allows and enables provision to be tailored to particular local or community of interest needs. As stated earlier Community Grants may provide a model for delivering this type of investment.

4.12 The range of interventions proposed included:

- Supporting literacy and English language skills.
- Structured volunteering and Time Bank programmes.
- Support to carers and ex-carers who can be and feel very isolated in the labour market.
- Support to those with mental health issues including depression.
- Support to families on employability and employment which integrates with existing troubled families programmes and similar interventions. Developing apprenticeships geared more explicitly than currently to local employment opportunities.
- Building digital skills relating to employment opportunities and accessing training and support.
- Job clubs and related initiatives.
- Funded attendance at Colleges for basic employability skills.
- Specialist training geared to particular user/customer groups – such as carers who have never worked or people with particular disabilities.
- Work trials and short term work experience with built-in supervision and mentoring.

Growing locally based enterprises

4.13 There was a consistent message from consultees that growing locally based enterprises was an important part of the mix of interventions needed to promote social inclusion. Some consultees referred to the findings of a recent research study by the Federation of Small Businesses³ which demonstrate that *“SMEs are critical to getting the unemployed back into work and offering opportunities to those facing barriers to employment”*. Some consultees advocated providing financial support specifically to assist benefit claimants set up businesses

4.14 Consultees felt that there was considerable potential to support social entrepreneurs and start ups and grow existing social enterprises and conventional businesses in the environmental, cultural, tourism, leisure, care and community services sectors. Enterprise

³ Back to Work: The role of small business in employment and enterprise, FSB, September 2012

development in these sectors would build on the environmental and cultural assets of the Heart of the South West and the area's strong foundations and networks in social purpose and social enterprise activity. A common thread running through much of the consultee feedback was that the LEP should take a strategic role in ensuring and investing in consistent business support to develop the social purpose and social enterprise sectors across the Heart of the South West to maximise growth and employment and play a key role in tackling exclusion. It was noted that current provision in this field is piecemeal across the area and that there needed to be better collaboration and coordination across different initiatives and providers and a strategic approach to ensuring geographical and other gaps in provision are addressed.

Building community infrastructure and capacity

4.15 In line with the general call from consultees to tackle exclusion mainly through locally based, interventions geared to targeted and specific needs, the consultation responses flagged the importance of strengthening and investing in community infrastructure to help unlock the potential and capacity of the social purpose sector and civil society more widely. The case presented by consultees is that in addition to investment in specific front line services the LEP should be supporting local networks and infrastructure organisations which support and incubate local activity and innovative community based initiatives. These might include local development trusts, Transition Town and market town initiatives, work hubs and local social enterprise and social entrepreneurship development networks.

5. The right money?

5.1 Consultees were asked to comment on the proposed distribution of investment funds between "business", "place" and "people". Some consultees found it difficult to respond without having more information about the rationale behind the proposed allocations. And there was a sense from the discussions that this three way split was simplistic and failed to recognise that, as one consultee stated, *"people-based and business support activities are complementary"*.

5.2 However the two main views expressed by consultees were:

- Broadly supporting the proposed approach; and
- Proposing an increased allocation to "people" based activity – with one suggesting this should be 50% of the total.

5.3 Consultees were also asked to comment on the proposed distribution of funds within the "people" strand. Feedback from the online survey and workshop discussions again falls into two main points of view as follows:

- Broadly supporting the proposed allocation (*"seem reasonable"* and *"seems OK"*) and;
- Advocating a higher level of investment in the following priorities:
 - Raising aspirations and supporting those most excluded and furthest from the labour market ;
 - Employment support for long-term unemployed/inactive and young unemployed; and
 - Improving skills to progress in work.

6. Community Led Local Development (CLLD)

6.1 We asked consultees in the online survey about their views on the LEPs position on CLLD. (The ESIFs states that the LEP “...does not anticipate making use of a CLLD model to deliver the ESIF Strategy. The rationale for this is that our allocation is insufficient to justify further disaggregation.”). While this proved difficult for some consultees who were unfamiliar with the concept the responses revealed some strong and divergent views. Some consultees failed to understand why the LEP was rejecting the CLLD concept when it was felt that “groups like LAGs and others have had fantastic success in delivering, jobs, business and training..”; that “EU and government guidance was recommending CLLD as a central plank of LEP activity...[and]..there is no justifiable argument to negate this in Devon”; and “surely you can create at last some opportunity for locally led projects to bid into these funds”.

6.2 On the other hand one consultee felt that “available funding should not be diluted by additional layers and CLLD can sometimes result in factionalism” and another said “it is acknowledged that CLLD does not always fulfil its full potential to comprehensively integrate local needs and solutions into Local Development Strategies”.

6.3 In this context then, the two key messages from the consultation are as follows:

- that the LEP should more thoroughly demonstrate that it has considered the potential for a CLLD approach and that this firmly based on robust evidence of the effectiveness and value of CLLD in the South West and elsewhere; and
- that the LEP should consider adopting some of the elements of the CLLD approach relating to local, community based activity in its proposed interventions without necessarily adopting the formality of the CLLD model.

7. Commissioning and working with the social purpose sector and civil society

7.1 In the online survey we asked respondents the following two specific questions which relate to how the LEP might work with the social purpose sector:

- How do you think the LEP could and should work “alongside” the social purpose sector? (The ESIFs states that “LEP partners see working alongside a strong social purpose sector as a potential means to address some of these (social inclusion challenges)”)
- How the LEP could achieve the accessibility? (The ESIFs states that “across [its] commissioning arrangements, we would..seek to maximise their accessibility to a range of potential providers including SMEs and the Third Sector”).

7.2 The survey responses reflect a high level of interest in these issues and a substantial level of constructive feedback was generated. Our analysis of the responses highlights the following key and common themes.

7.3 Consultees felt that the LEP needs to negotiate commissioning and funding arrangements with Opt in providers and other co funders that enable highly effective small, specialist and niche providers to deliver services – where appropriate in partnership and collaboration with others. There was a strong view that the LEP should recognise that large scale prime provider contracts delivered by national organisations without local connections

and supply chains can often fail to deliver the outputs and outcomes required and can damage existing locally based provision. Some consultees urged the LEP pro-actively to facilitate and encourage the establishment of consortia and partnerships which can enable small specialist providers to contribute to participate in delivering ESIFs priorities and outcomes. (The Cornwall Learning Partnership was cited as a particularly successful cross sector collaboration which enables and maximises the offer from a diverse range of providers.)

7.4 Payment by results contracts should be avoided. Appropriately staged payments enable a wider diversity of small specialist providers that can deliver high quality outcomes and contribute added value to participate in delivery.

7.5 Social purpose organisations and other potential providers should be involved in the co-design of new services and interventions – a practice increasingly common amongst local authority and health and care commissioners. The LEP and its co-funding partners should “talk to” those with front line experience in delivering services and through them the users of those services.

8. Governance and engagement with civil society

8.1 Online survey respondents were asked to comment on the governance section of the Strategy. In general consultees welcomed the inclusion of a VCSE representative on the proposed ESIFS Implementation Group but most argued that this did not go far enough. There was a clear view that seeing governance almost exclusively in terms of representation whether at the LEP Board or at Implementation Group level failed to fully understand the true nature of effective governance which also embraces accountability, transparency, communication and community and public engagement.

8.2 Other key messages from consultees were as follows:

- Effective communication with the civil society sector, including smaller organisations, was a crucial component of effective governance.
- Governance structures should engage a wider range of stakeholders including communities and groups it seeks to benefit.
- Effective representation (including from VCSE) needs to be supported and backed up by mechanisms that enable the individual(s) to “genuinely represent” the sector.
- A single VCSE representative is inadequate in terms of the breadth, range and diversity of the sector.

8.3 Survey respondents were also asked the more specific question: *How can the LEP ensure it engages effectively with voluntary and community organisations and wider civil society?* Inevitably some of the responses to this question also reflect the feedback on the governance question, summarised above. The key common themes emerging from consultees on this topic relate to:

- communication;
- engaging with local networks, forums and umbrella groups;
- engaging with more sector representatives at Board and strategic level; and
- demonstrating the LEP is genuinely and seriously interested in the work of civil society organisations.

8.4 Consultees urged the LEP to “*build a strong communication strategy*” and have “*active communication with VCS organisations*”. This was a consistent plea throughout the consultation process. Feedback from consultees indicates there is a strong willingness from networks, forums and membership organisations to assist the LEP in communicating with the sector and ensuring this communication reaches a much wider range of people, communities and organisations than currently. It was also noted that the content of the material communicated by the LEP needs to better resonant with the target audiences; there was a common view that the language and tone of some LEP material could be exclusive and fail to reflect the LEPs concern with social inclusion and the role of civil society.

8.5 Consultees also encouraged the LEP to engage with local VCS forums, infrastructure organisations, umbrella bodies, networks and user led organisation. This was seen as a key mechanism for effective two-way communication with a wide range of stakeholders and a vehicle for establishing a much enhanced understanding of the LEP’s roles, priorities, constraints and investment programmes. It was recognised that the LEP has limited capacity to engage directly and individually with even a modest number of local networks and in general consultees agreed that there was a need for the social purpose sector at least to “organise itself” across the HotSW LEP area. However if this is to happen social purpose organisations need to believe that LEP is “serious” about engagement with the sector and will actively engage with any mechanisms that are established.

8.6 As reported in the governance section above there was a general call from consultees that the LEP needs to engage with more and a wider range of sector “representatives”, champions or advocates at Board and Implementation Group level. It may be that the “People-focussed” strategic group being assembled through Devon County Council will help to address this gap in engagement but we understand this group is not yet established.

8.7 As reported earlier consultees felt strongly that if the LEP wants to have more effective engagement with civil society then it must demonstrate more assertively than at present that it genuinely understands the nature of social exclusion in its area; that it is committed to reducing exclusion to help increase employment and generate growth; and that it fully recognises the pivotal role played by civil society organisations in delivering solutions and effective interventions. One consultee suggested that the LEP Board should have a range of Key Performance Indicators on engagement and should publish an annual report on progress against which it is held accountable.

South West Forum
29th November 2013

Appendix 1 European Union Definition and Description of Social Inclusion

This definition is provided in the government guidance provided to LEPs
“Social inclusion and combating poverty is defined as provision for those beneficiaries furthest away from the labour market. Provision should assist in improving employability,

promoting active inclusion and combating discrimination in a holistic and integrated way, including early action before problems become entrenched, outreach activities and access to locally provided services. Target groups can include those people with caring responsibilities, minority ethnic groups, those requiring debt and money management assistance and those people who experience digital exclusion. In addition, provision can assist in reducing drug and alcohol dependency; improving educational attainment (particularly due to lack of basic literacy and numeracy and those with ESOL needs); improving family, parenting and relationship intervention; improving access to flexible and affordable childcare, addressing health problems (including mental health); homelessness; learning difficulties and disabilities; life skills; offending; and access to transport.”

Appendix 2 Phase 1 Feedback

Below is an extract from the Interim Social Inclusion Priorities Report submitted to the LEP on 23rd September which summarises the feedback from the limited consultation undertaken in Phase 1.

Feedback so far

Although the consultations and discussions on social inclusion with social purpose organisations and other stakeholders have been relatively limited the feedback to date has covered a very wide range of topics. This feedback has covered the following main themes:

- The importance of addressing **in-work poverty, low wages and under-employment**.
- The importance of **early intervention and support with families and children** (including in schools) to improve long term outcomes – noting that “quality” of parenting in early years is crucial in determining long term prospects.
- **Physical access (for example public transport) to employment, training and sources of support** is a critical barrier to unlocking employment opportunities – especially but not exclusively in rural areas.
- Tackling **financial barriers to participation** – including the cost of training and transport.
- Effective, consistent **information, advice and guidance** for young and older people are essential – and are currently inconsistent and poorly resourced.
- The experience, expertise and **value of older people in the workforce** should be better recognised and unlocked, especially given the growing proportion of older people of working age in the area.
- **Employers need to be supported** (and resourced) to enable them to better realise the potential of the workforce – in relation to provision for training, accessibility and flexible hours.
- Social enterprises offer significant business growth potential – as well as often helping to deliver social inclusion interventions. There is a need to **raise awareness of social enterprise** and build into schools and other education programmes.

- **Low aspirations** remain a persistent barrier to unlocking individual’s potential and this needs to be addressed at a very early stage and through a variety of routes.
- The **food and land based business sector** may offer particular opportunities for locally based employment opportunities in rural areas.
- **Lack of digital skills and capability** in the context of employability is regarded as a key barrier across age groups and across rural and urban areas
- Need to **invest in volunteering support** as a mechanism for bringing those with multiple barriers to employment closer to the workforce and improving employability.
- **Women face particular barriers** in relation to securing work, increasing their hours and pay and setting up enterprises.
- A particular need to support **young people on the autistic spectrum**.
- Support for **offenders and ex-offenders** is important but a key need is for intensive, tailored support to follow up from more generic job club type services.
- **Link into existing community development work** including that managed by housing associations.

Feedback has also identified a number of types of intervention that could be pursued

- A programme of **progression support** geared to **National Citizenship graduates** – at present the NCS provides little follow up support for those exiting the programme.
- The **Future Jobs Fund** which provided highly subsidised jobs and training for long term unemployed in voluntary and public sector organisations was regarded as highly effective – improving the employability of participants and enhancing the capacity of host organisations to deliver support, often to the socially excluded.
- Volunteer-run **English Language classes** for people with poor English skills.
- **Programmes that support women** in the labour market including, for example, those relating to mentoring; promoting positive role models; access to better women-tailored advice, guidance and business support; improved access to childcare and caring respite.
- **Family intervention projects** and programmes are needed as under- and un-employment, low aspirations and other barriers frequently reflect the position of the “whole family” rather than a sole individual. It will be important to build on those already in place and working well.
- **Investment in credit unions and improving access to micro-finance**.

Appendix 3 Attendance at Consultation Workshops

**Priorities for the Heart of the South West (HotSW)
Local Enterprise Partnership Workshops**

Organisation

Plymouth Guild

SWAP

Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity

Stonehouse TimeBank and Stonehouse Community Action Group

The Elder Tree

Young Devon

Zebra Collective

Street Factory

Wolseley Trust

Effervescent

Whitleigh Big Local

Community Regeneration Outreach Projects Ltd (CROPS LTD)

Barbican Theatre

South Somerset Association for Voluntary and Community Action

Somerset Art Works

Whelan Associates

VISTA

Glastonbury Community Development Trust

Careers South West Ltd

Headway Devon

Westward Pathfinder

Unionlearn

Community Action SW

Community Council of Devon

North Devon Voluntary Services

St Loyes Foundation

Community Council of Devon

Wear United Community Forum for Countess Wear Exeter

Well UK, Wellbank

Appendix 4 The intervention logic

This is an extract from the Interim Report prepared during Phase 1 of the contract.

3.1 Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty **directly contributes to the HotSW LEP's overarching aims** of:

- Securing more sustainable and skilled jobs
- Improving productivity and promoting growth
- Generating greater prosperity for all

3.2 Social inclusion interventions can be crucial to securing these aims for the following reasons:

- People effectively excluded from the labour market represent a substantial **pool of skills and expertise** which can help drive business growth but which employers are failing to exploit.
- ‘High levels of social inclusion are correlated with **high levels of productivity, economic growth and sustainability** at the levels of nations and places.’⁴ The EU Growth Strategy ‘Europe 2020’ puts a clear emphasis on prioritising a ‘smart, sustainable and inclusive economy’ which will deliver the targets of high levels of productivity, employment and social cohesion.
- Better support for people with particular needs and their carers provides a more **attractive “social environment”** which will assist employers in attracting and retaining high quality staff.
- Engaging people with particular needs or backgrounds can help employers identify opportunities for **new markets and/or new products and services**.
- Increased employment, more secure long term (as opposed to short term and seasonal) employment and higher skills levels will generate **higher wages** and in consequence **greater spend** within local communities.
- Social purpose organisations, the majority of which are in some way promoting social inclusion, themselves represent a **substantial business sector** providing high quality jobs (37% of voluntary sector employees are qualified to degree level or higher compared to just 21% in the private sector.)
- Social enterprises in particular represent a business sector which exhibits high levels of growth, survival and sustainability as well as commonly operating in the most deprived communities and neighbourhoods.

⁴ http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/109616/Social_Inclusion_Strategy_Report.pdf