

Background

This Progress Report addresses the recommendations of a Working Plymouth Scrutiny Board meeting held on 9 December 2015. The Board recommended the following:

1. to take stock and assess the recent progress of the 1000 Club scheme;
2. check the integrity of the data;
3. cleanse membership list and keep it alive;
4. check if members are receiving emails;
5. reach out to more SMEs and consider who is missing from the list;
6. consider its role for the broader skills landscape, refocus and think through how it will work best;
7. consider implications for its expansion and institutional partners such as Royal British Legion, Age UK;
8. recognise corporate covenant and support for Armed Forces;
9. check if using an external resource offers the best outcomes;
10. report back to Working Plymouth's March 2016 meeting with a progress report.

1. Review of recent progress

Officers have reviewed the existing 1000 Club, to take stock, assess the initiative and propose its focus going forward.

The 1000 Club was established to tackle the high level of youth unemployment in Plymouth, following the 2008/09 financial crisis and recession. In addition, business feedback suggested that young people often lack the employability skills required by employers.

Plymouth's 1000 Club has undoubtedly proven itself a highly successful, effective and low cost partnership to engage with businesses and encourage them to offer job opportunities and build young people's employability.

The number of unemployed young people in Plymouth (18-24 year olds claiming JSA) has significantly reduced, from 2,170 in 2012 to 770 in 2016.

In addition, the 1000 Club has been recognised nationally through award schemes and the model has been replicated by numerous Local Authorities.

In recent months, as the numbers of unemployed young people has declined, the number of businesses signing up to become members of the 1000 Club has also declined. Consequently, the number of new job or work experience opportunities being offered has also reduced.

As a result, the 1000 Club recently decided to widen its remit to enable it to support people of any age (i.e. 18 year olds and above) who want to start working or move forward with their career. Furthermore, it proposes to leverage its extensive business network (currently 1,550) to support the development of employability skills of students in primary, secondary and higher education (described in Section 6 below).

2. Data Integrity

Officers have checked the integrity of the data collected by the 1000 Club to-date and have identified some discrepancies, which have now been corrected. The 1000 Club has always been a campaigning response to the youth unemployment crisis. Data collection and monitoring was never the focus of the 1000 Club; however, it is accepted that there is a clear need to maintain accuracy and reliability of information for internal and external communication. For example;

- 1) Some businesses have been recorded twice on the spreadsheet. Businesses sign up to the 1000 Club via the website and in some instances it appears that the business has entered their details twice. The Bike Cellar for example was listed twice on the original spreadsheet.
- 2) Through cleansing the data we have found that some members who signed up are no longer active businesses. Stonewall Toda, for example, since signing up have ceased to operate.

Going forward, additional care will be taken in collecting and compiling the data of any new 1000 Club member business. Officers will more regularly and robustly monitor data to ensure its accuracy. Furthermore, PCC officers will have direct access to the Customer Relationship Management system that records the raw data provided by businesses when signing up to the 1000 Club.

3. Membership

The 1000 Club utilises two systems to monitor and manage the data that it holds about its member businesses. The first is a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which records the information that businesses provide when they sign up to become 1000 Club members. This includes the name of the business, its address and the details of a

specific contact in the business. The information is supplied by the business itself at the point of signing up and is not routinely updated.

The second system is the online emailing tool, Mailchimp, this system is used to send out monthly newsletters and regular updates to the 1000 Club members. When a business signs up to the 1000 Club their details are automatically added to the Mailchimp database, ensuring they receive the newsletters. Should a business so desire, it is able to unsubscribe from this database meaning they no longer receive the regular newsletters. The Mailchimp database also cleanses itself by removing any contact details associated with email addresses that 'bounce back' when contacted. The Mailchimp database therefore is a list of active and engaged members of the 1000 Club.

4. Emails

Further to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny panel, every contact on the wider CRM database was emailed to provide an update on recent changes to the 1000 Club. The recipient of the email was prompted to inform the 1000 Club Coordinator of any changes to contact details that need to be accounted for and whether the recipient is the most relevant person to receive the emails. The CRM database has been updated to account for any changes that were received.

5. SMEs

Officers have reviewed the existing membership list and identified many large / medium / SME / micros / social enterprises who might be expected to be members, but have yet to join. As a result, the 1000 Club will target specific businesses and sectors to maximise the 1000 Club's coverage and business voice.

Currently the 1000 Club approaches SMEs and micros through its presence at events and through working co-operatively with business representative organisations, including the Chamber and Federation of Small Business. In future, this will be extended to include traditional marketing activities, for example the use of press releases, radio campaigns and communications through trade magazines. In addition, a new business engagement pack will be produced and circulated to any new businesses joining the 1000 Club.

Furthermore, a reconciliation exercise will take place with organisations, such as the Federation of Small Business, to ensure all of the members of these organisations who are not existing 1000 Club members are contacted directly and invited to become members.

In addition, the 1000 Club has approached all businesses in the City Centre and Waterfront BID (Business Improvement District) areas, offering them to join the 1000 Club campaign. 800 businesses in the BID areas are not currently 1000 Club members. We are therefore hopeful that, through targeted communications, we can encourage a wide range of new SMEs and micros to sign up.

Furthermore, businesses will be encouraged to re-engage with the 1000 Club through a specific communications campaign, including a re-launch event, to be held after May 2016, at which the revised vision and remit will be highlighted to members and potential new members. The 1000 Club will also ramp up use of social media (esp. Twitter) to highlight the campaign and its continued relevance, once the vision and objectives have been revised.

6. Role for the broader skills landscape, refocus and think through how it will work best

The 1000 Club has established a successful readymade network of businesses in the city who have committed to supporting people into work and training opportunities. The dramatic reduction of youth unemployment in the city has created an opportunity for the 1000 Club to expand its services.

The 1000 Club's remit has recently (September 2015) been expanded to include:

a) Specific support for the delivery of the Employability Passport in Plymouth

The 1000 Club is currently looking at funding opportunities to further support the Employability Passport activity. The rationale is to leverage business support to better address employability skills, thereby reducing a major cause of unemployment or underemployment, which remains a major issue for businesses in the city. Assuming sufficient grant funding can be secured, it is proposed that:

The 1000 Club will lead on the development of the Employability Passport for schools, college and Plymouth University. The 1000 Club businesses and others will input to develop the Employability Passport and potentially: accredit student achievements; support Dragon's Den-type competitions in secondary schools, and offer student sponsorships to college and University

Plymouth University will align its frameworks with the Employability Passport, and potentially: develop an existing 'Mobile with PU' app for schools and college; accredit the Passport standards; certify achievements; convert achievements into UCAS points, and align the Plymouth Award.

The 1000 Club could support roll out of the new Passport 'app' into schools, college and University; support business and University engagement in schools and college; whilst supporting enterprise education in schools.

In addition, the 1000 Club is well placed to draw on the support of and coordinate the Plymouth Apprenticeship Ambassador Network (PAAN). The PAAN is a group of young people, either current or former apprentices in the city, who have volunteered to go into schools and attend events to promote the vocational route to employment with young people and their influencers. There is a strong and natural link between the

PAAN and the Employability Passport and it is recognised that through strategic coordination the two can mutually support each other.

The 1000 Club is well positioned to implement and deliver truly linked up and co-ordinated careers education, bringing businesses together with schools. Longer-term, the 1000 Club could support careers education brokerage for initiatives such as Building Plymouth, Plymouth Manufacturers Group and for other growth sectors: providing a co-ordinated city-wide approach to ensuring Plymouth's young people are able to develop entrepreneurial skills, whilst learning from tackling real-world business projects.

b) Specific guidance for people returning to work following a period of childcare. Additionally, the website provides guidance for 1000 Club members to ensure they are utilising best practice for employees returning to work

Working closely with Plymouth City Council it was identified that people returning to work following a period of childcare often encounter some difficulties with re-integrating into their workplace. If not handled correctly the process of returning to work can become stressful.

Plymouth City Council surveyed its staff, asking people to describe their experience of returning to work at the council. Some of the responses received highlighted areas of current practice that caused unnecessary work pressure or made it difficult for people to organise their work and home lives. As a direct response to the findings of this survey the council altered a number of its policies to ensure people returning to work felt welcome and valued.

The 1000 Club has since added a new page to its website providing specific advice and guidance around the support that is available to people returning to work. In addition, this webpage also brings together advice around best practice for businesses to follow to ensure their employees do not encounter difficult situations.

c) Guidance and signposting for 1000 Club members that are looking to employ someone who is over 50 years old

The 1000 Club has created a section on its website highlighting a range of support that is available for businesses looking to employ people who are 50 and over.

In addition, the 1000 Club will be seeking to better engage with Plymouth's Age UK branch as highlighted in section 7 below.

d) Guidance and signposting for 1000 Club members that are looking to support and employ ex-military personnel

See section 7 below.

While these specific areas have been identified to date, the 1000 Club can continually evolve to meet strategic objectives.

7. Consider implications for its expansion and institutional partners such as Royal British Legion, Age UK, HMS Endeavour

The 1000 Club has established a single point of contact for businesses who wish to drive employability across the city and can communicate directly with a network of c.1,500 businesses. The proposed new activity will impact on and support some key institutional partners as outlined below:

Royal British Legion – The 1000 Club will promote existing, extensive support for businesses looking to employ ex-military personnel. In addition, the Club will work closely with the Royal British Legion to identify ex-military personnel and include their profile within its newsletters to encourage any businesses with vacancies to get in touch.

Age UK – The Plymouth branch of the Age UK website currently offers limited advice and guidance on how to access work. The 1000 Club website already provides links to online services that businesses looking to employ people over the age of 50 can look at to better understand the options available to them. The 1000 Club will also work with Age UK Plymouth to identify people who are looking to move back in to the workplace and will include a biography about that person with newsletters sent to the 1000 Club businesses.

HMS Endeavour - The 1000 Club will develop a strong relationship with HMS Endeavour, the recovery centre for military personnel in Plymouth. The 1000 Club will help support rehabilitating personnel to gain work experience or access to jobs via the 1000 Club membership by promoting them within the 1000 Club newsletters.

8. Recognise corporate covenant and support for Armed Forces

It is recognised that there are strong links between Plymouth's corporate covenant and the work of the 1000 Club. Therefore, moving forward, the 1000 Club will help communicate the work of the covenant in the city to help raise its profile and encourage businesses that it engages with to support the work of the corporate covenant.

9. External resource

PCC currently retains a contractor to provide the brokerage service between businesses and people looking for job opportunities. This costs £40,000 per annum. This has proven to be a valuable and cost effective method to help businesses navigate a complex employment and skills landscape to secure the employees they need.

A full list of activities performed by the 1000 Club Co-ordinator is included in Appendix 1.

All of this activity requires specialist knowledge and sufficient time to focus on the activity.

External Funding

The 1000 Club currently requires a total budget of £40,000 per annum. This covers the part-time costs of a 1000 Club Coordinator and associated administrative cost and provides for a small budget to run specific initiatives in the city. Since its establishment in 2012, the 1000 Club has been funded through City Council (£25,000), DWP (£50,000) and grant funding underspends (£80,000).

The 1000 Club aims to secure sufficient income to continue its operations into 2016/17 and beyond. It is currently targeting a wide range of potential external grant funding sources, business sponsorship from the members and crowdfunding (see Appendix 2).

Appendix 1

Full list of activities completed by the 1000 Club Co-ordinator:

- In liaison with Steering Group Members, develop project plan detailing aims and objectives and reporting on progress against plan monthly
- Develop content for the web site and maintain all graphical imagery and text (Co-ordinator also funds Domain and Web Site hosting fees)
- Manage Twitter account
- Collate content for and design monthly newsletter using Mail Chimp software and subsequently analysis of statistical information on viewing
- Review updates on careers information, advice and guidance, recruitment methods and funding incentives and subscribe to relevant newsletters and circulations lists to ensure up to date
- Produce Surveys as required for city initiatives (Early Years Provision, Women Returners) and use to gain insight to inform work of 1000 Club and city (Co-ordinator covers the registration fee for Survey Monkey)
- Circulating specific requests for support to membership or specific members depending on requests
- Identify Apprentices in variety of sectors for case studies/poster campaign; liaising with their company; the designer and the photographer; arranging for printing and distribution across the city
- Attending events to promote the 1000 Club with stand
- Speaking at events to raise awareness (1000 Club generally; Employability Passport; Parents Information Evenings)
- Working with CEIAG Leads to develop the Employability Passport in partnership with businesses
- Support for launch of Employability Passport Event
- Brokering support for Employability Passport from Plymouth University in the form of printing of Passports
- Working with CCP to arrange for roll-out of Employability Passport
- Promoting Employability Passport with schools and offering support including posting offer of support from Membership on dedicated page on 1000 Club web site
- Brokering support for schools employability activity - mock interviews, enterprise days, speakers for assemblies
- Co-ordinator also supports schools - mock interviews, careers tutorials, assemblies, career mentor
- Promotion of 1000 Club through Youth Parliament
- Supporting Brathay Challenge Team with promotion
- Promotion of National Apprenticeship Week
- Organisation of event during National Apprenticeship Week
- Listing all events taking place during National Apprenticeship Week on the 1000 Club web site
- Working with Plymouth Apprenticeship Managers Network to raise profile of apprenticeships in the city and disseminate updates to employers
- Supporting recruitment of Apprenticeship Ambassadors and briefing them on 1000 Club and Employability Passport on Training Days

- Promoting 1000 Club to businesses
- Upon sign up, updating database; project plan and producing certificate (Co-ordinator covers cost of frames) and contacting the business to discuss requirement and how the 1000 Club can support; meeting with businesses
- Working with partners to support bids (Building Better Opportunities)
- Support businesses looking to develop new apprenticeship programmes - providing independent advice and guidance regarding training providers etc.
- Responding to queries from parents regarding opportunities for young people
- Targeted mail shots to specific sectors (eg Construction)
- Working with Plymouth University to promote Employability Passport as natural follow on from Children's University
- Drafting reports and Press Releases as required

Appendix 2

Future funding

To secure future funding, the 1000 Club will essentially capitalise on its business network, across a wide range of employability (e.g. Employability Passport), skills (e.g. Building Plymouth) and employment (e.g. City Deal) related initiatives

The 1000 Club has been looking at how it can become a self-sustaining entity with the capacity to generate its own income.

Funding Opportunity	Description	Outcome	Timescale
Economic Development Consultancy funding	A portion of the ED consultancy budget could be allocated to fund the continued activity of the 1000 Club until such time as a more suitable funding source is identified.	The 1000 Club will be able to function as is outlined in this report, rolling out the proposed expansion to refocus where resource is driven. The 1000 Club would not be tied to any external monitoring or reporting mechanism allowing it to function fluidly.	March 2016
Youth Deal Underspend	As a result of a significant underspend which has occurred in the City Deal's Youth Deal a pot of money been made available for applications. The 1000 Club will be bidding into this pot of money to enable it to draw down funding.	The 1000 Club will be able to function as is outlined above, rolling out the proposed expansion to refocus where resource is driven.	Early 2016
Building Better Opportunities - DWP Funds	Pluss has confirmed that the 1000 Club would be an important partner when this bid is open in 2016		Spring 2016

In addition to identifying the funding opportunities highlighted in the table above the 1000 Club has begun expanding its remit to support other key growth areas in the city. The table

below outlines some of the future plans for the 1000 Club, identifying areas of synergy and how the 1000 Club can support them. To date this is a conceptual document capturing our thinking of what the future provision of the 1000 Club could look like.

Growth Area	Description of Support	Outcome
Enhance delivery of the Employability Passport	<p>The 1000 Club is perfectly positioned to ramp up delivery of the Employability Passport by brokering functional and positive relationships between schools and businesses.</p> <p>In addition the 1000 Club is also positioned perfectly to help deliver a city wide approach to enterprise education by overseeing and coordinating initiatives which are targeted at different age groups.</p>	A coordinated city wide approach to enterprise education beginning in primary school and continuing through to Higher Education.
Building Plymouth and the construction sector	The city identified a substantial skills gap looming in the construction sector. As a result the Building Plymouth campaign was developed and is now working directly with industry to raise awareness among young people of the opportunities that are available to them in the construction sector. The 1000 Club is perfectly positioned to support this activity by helping engage young people in schools through existing relationships.	A greater portion of young people and their parents recognise the potential career opportunities that the construction sector offers. A higher number of young people enter training in this sector helping to plug the skills gap and provide worthwhile careers for young people.
Digital Sector	Digital skills are becoming more important for people in any job or position. The city has very much embraced this through a number of commitments. A greater focus can be placed on developing the digital skills of people and the 1000 Club could be the vehicle for achieving this by providing the enterprise link between schools and businesses. This would enable schools to develop real	Schools and young people will better understand the value of digital skills and how important these will be in the future. Digital businesses in the city influence students to consider their sector as a potential career route, stimulating a desire to work within the sector and focus their employment education on this sector

Growth Area	Description of Support	Outcome
	relationships with businesses operating in this sector.	
Health and Wellbeing	The link between poor health and economic inactivity is well documented. The 1000 Club could support the role out of an Employability Passport for those people who are unemployed to support them back into the work place.	As a result of this activity people will gain valuable work experience and potentially secure work, moving them off of government support.