

Redundancy response

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Cheshire West and Chester Council (CW&C) set up the Redundancy Response scheme in March 2020 to meet the surge in demand for support from those businesses and individuals facing issues related to redundancy or downsizing. The scheme has seen almost 300 newly redundant people register since the launch in March, with a large proportion of jobseekers moving into roles in care despite having no previous experience in this sector.



“The coronavirus pandemic has posed new challenges to the job market, with many people suddenly out of work for the first time in 20-30 years. Whilst the Emergency Response Portal is just a small part of our wider offer, it has been crucial to the job-matching process.”

Clare Latham
Skills and Employment Manager, Cheshire West and Chester Council

Backed up by digital services, CW&C's Redundancy Action Support Team (RAST) is a fully personalised service. To facilitate this, the Work Zone Employment mentors offer online and telephone services, as well as socially distanced face-to-face support at CW&C's four Work Zones in Chester, Ellesmere Port, Northwich and Winsford.

To reach those people facing redundancy or who have recently been made redundant, CW&C set up a [Redundancy Response Portal](#) for self-referrals, where jobseekers can find CW&C's full employment support offer and submit their CV. This allows those who don't yet have access to Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) services direct access to CW&C's Work Zone.

In addition to matching individuals to vacancies, CW&C's Work Zone Employment mentors:

- help individuals to shape their CV
- provide tips and techniques on searching for jobs and preparing for interviews
- support individuals to assess their current skills and identify training opportunities
- broker links to local employment schemes
- broker links to careers advice
- signpost individuals to information on benefits and health support.

CW&C also developed a free online [Redundancy Toolkit](#) – a set of 6 modules to provide information on preparing for a job search.

These simple steps allow jobseekers to feel supported as they navigate the system. Through this personalised service, CW&C's Work Zone Employment mentors can assess jobseekers' interests and when appropriate attract them to social care roles, providing direct links to vacancies in social care. Following a high volume of submissions during the early months of lockdown, submissions are currently low due to the extension of the furlough scheme but a surge is expected when furlough ends in March 2021. The scheme had seen at its peak upwards of 85% of those who take up support with the scheme receiving positive job outcomes. Of these job outcomes, almost 1 in 5 have been within the health and social care sector.

Ellie Finch was made redundant from her role as Assistant Manager at a bakery in April 2020, and made contact with the Work Zone via the Redundancy Response Portal. Her employment mentor, Darryl, uncovered that Ellie had a passion for social care so offered advice on the sector and introduced her to a local employer, whilst sharing other care opportunities to apply for. Within three weeks of her referral to Work Zone, Ellie was offered the role of Care Assistant by a local care provider. She completed her DBS check and online training, before moving into shadowing a senior member of staff and starting her new career in care.



Top tips for establishing a redundancy response scheme



Set up an online portal for jobseekers to refer themselves the local authority's employment services



Ensure a dedicated team manages the portal, connecting jobseekers to Employment Support Officers



Offer a personalised service to better understand job-seekers interests, advise on re-training opportunities, provide information on local employment opportunities and help navigate the whole journey back to employment

For further information, contact the team directly via:
skillsandemployment@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk