

**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

EETCD STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY 11th JUNE 2025

ITEM NO. 06

INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY - AI100821

Motion: Councillor S. Shovlin

"That the Chief Executive explore and encourage opportunities for inclusive training and employment, using the Happy Out Café at Dún Laoghaire Baths as an example of what could potentially be done in Fingal."

Report:

The Council has made enquiries to learn more about the Happy Out Café. The Happy Out Café is an initiative of a social enterprise called The Together Academy which was established by parents of children with Down Syndrome to address the statistic that 90% of adults with Down Syndrome are unemployed in Ireland. The Together Academy is a training & employment initiative which provides young adults with Down Syndrome with training, practical work experience, employment opportunities and a social & support network. Further information on the social enterprise is available at the following link: <https://togetheracademy.ie/together-academy/>

The Together Academy has a partnership with Dublin City Council for a Café at the Bull Wall, Clontarf with Dublin City Council and Pobal providing funding for training programmes and staff respectively. The initiative has expanded with a partnership with Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council for the operation of a Café at Dun Laoghaire Baths.

The Council is currently engaging with Not So Different, a social enterprise based in Blanchardstown, which promotes equality, inclusion and diversity to improve education and employment outcomes for neuro-atypicals and neuro-typicals, to explore the potential for collaboration for inclusive training and employment in the context of the Future Fingal: Fingal Skills Strategy.

The Council is open to engagement with The Together Academy to explore the potential for a collaboration for inclusive training and employment in Fingal to address the following actions:

Future Fingal: Economic Development Strategy - Opportunity 2 Skills

2.2.2 Deliver employability programme for economically inactive people

Local Economic & Community Plan - Theme 2 Prosperous Economy

Goal 2.3 Remove barriers to labour market participation

SCO1 To understand & address key barriers to work & identify & support affected population cohorts

SCO2 To provide supports to enable under-represented groups to (re) enter the workforce.

The Council will proceed to engage with The Together Academy to determine their interest and capacity to expand their activities in the Fingal area and continue its engagement with Not So Different on potential collaborations in Fingal. An update on these engagements will be provided at a future meeting of the Strategic Policy Committee.

Source of Report:

Aoife Sheridan, Senior Executive Officer, Economic, Enterprise, Tourism, Cultural Development.