

CAPITAL CITY PARTNERSHIP**MINUTE OF MEETING**

Meeting of: **JOBS STRATEGY GROUP**

Held at: Lloyds TSB offices, 120 George Street, Edinburgh

Date: **Wednesday 4 February 2009**

Present:	David Metcalfe	Chair
	Patricia Thomson	Skills Development Scotland / Careers Scotland
	Ken Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
	Marion Nicholson	Skills Development Scotland
	Ray Harris	Lothian Association of College Principals
	Bill Wilson	Jobcentre Plus
	John Palmer	Edinburgh CHP
	Jim Rafferty	Capital City Partnership
	Matthew Crighton	Capital City Partnership

Apologies:	Roger Horam	Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
	Paul Gierthy	Skills Development Scotland / Careers Scotland
	David White	NHS Lothian

Action

1 **Declarations of Interest**

Ken Shaw declared the interest of City of Edinburgh Council in the matter of PB37 – the Infobus.

2 **Minutes of the meeting on 3 December 2008; and matters arising**

2.1 These minutes were agreed as a correct record and the following matters arising were discussed:

Partnership Forum Feedback

Ken reported that following a meeting with JCP replies to the questions raised at the Partnership Forum concerning services for IB claimants would be circulated to the Forum. He added that in future such queries might best be addressed to a strategy sub-group rather than just one partner. KS

3 **Partner Updates**

3.1 Jobcentre Plus

Bill Wilson said that he expected the outcome of the Flexible New Deal (FND) tendering to be known within two weeks.

3.2 He also reported that JCP and SDS Careers Scotland were working on a trial called Integrating Employment and Skills. Starting on 16 February Careers advisers will work in JCP premises in order to provide a more seamless service for the customer and achieve greater integration of careers advice with the JCP customer journey. In addition JCP staff will work in CS premises with 16-17 year-olds claiming benefit with the purpose of simplifying the referral between the two organisations. Pat Thomson said that the trial would look at questions of information sharing and seek to find out whether it does help the customer and improve outcomes. Matthew Crighton asked her if this trial included the Skills Health Check which features in the DWP's presentations

about FND. She replied that in Scotland a skills check will be included in the process but that the overall purpose is to help customers choose a clear career path.

3.3 Capital City Partnership

Jim Rafferty reported that funding from the Scottish Government for CCP during the two upcoming financial years (2009/10 and 2010/11) had been confirmed. Unlike the current direct funding arrangement the offer is via the Edinburgh Partnership as an additional element of the Fairer Scotland Fund.

He also informed the meeting about the agreement between CEC (Economic Development) and CCP to do a review of the interface between the two organisations. This will have an impact on the Jobs Strategy and the Jobs Strategy Group would be consulted in the process. He agreed to circulate the paper about this.

JR

3.4 City of Edinburgh Council

Ken Shaw reported that a report on Employment and Skills will be presented to Economic Development Committee on 10 March and that this will propose a shift towards an anti-poverty approach, not just a focus on employability. In future that Committee's agenda will include a section for discussion of specific issues, with external input, and he anticipated that the Jobs Strategy partners would be invited to some of these meetings.

3.5 Skills Development Scotland

Patricia Thomson told the meeting that the SDS Business Model was being reviewed in light of changing economic circumstances. For this reason it was not yet public and the staffing structures were not finalised. The announcement of additional funding for Modern Apprenticeships would also have to be taken into account.

Marion Nicholson reported that the recontracting for National Programmes by SDS was underway.

3.6 NHS Lothian

John Palmer said that he thought that the start of the Linking Health and Employability project, through a secondment from NHS to CCP, would bring a significant shift within NHS Lothian. He also reported on the start of the Vocational Rehabilitation project, which will assist people who have had physical injuries or ill-health retain their employment.

4 Minutes of sub groups and Partnership Forum

The minutes of the following meetings were noted:

- a) Lead Officer's Group (LOG)
- b) Finance and Resource Planning Group (FRP)
- c) Employer Engagement Subgroup
- d) Targets and Evaluation Subgroup (TESG)
- e) Greater Customer Reach
- f) Communications Subgroup
- g) Partnership Forum

5 Response to Economic Downturn

5.1 In a review of the impact to date of the recession and some of the responses taken already the following points were made:

1. The number of new claims each week at High Riggs Jobcentre had risen from

199 a year ago to 500. The on-flow onto JSA includes many people with different and higher skills than previously. JCP was still taking many vacancies a week; but some employers, faced with large numbers of applicants for each vacancy (in some cases 300 for one post), are turning to informal means of recruitment.

2. Careers Scotland anticipated growing difficulties for school-leavers who do not go on to further or higher education – of those who went into employment last year, 52% of males went into construction and retail and 33% of females went into retail, and these are sectors in which employment is most affected by the recession. Many of the schools contributing most to the unemployed cohort last year also had above average entry to unemployment. These schools are also in areas of disadvantage.
 3. The City of Edinburgh Council has prepared an Economic Resilience Plan; it was also doing a workforce planning exercise.
 4. The three colleges in Edinburgh are working together to put in place plans to rescue training places if companies or providers fail. Their plans may include a joint contract for SDS National Programmes which will allow greater flexibility of response, more opportunities for Accreditation of Prior Learning, drawing on senior staff made redundant as mentors and trainers in enterprise; and opening for training 52 weeks a year. At this point they are not anticipating that the need will be for more full-time training places.
 5. NHS Lothian is modelling the impact of recession on public health. Its HR strategy includes a plan for identifying 1000 places in Lothian for disadvantaged people over three years.
 6. Skills Development Scotland has extended the period after redundancy during which a Modern Apprenticeship can be maintained (to allow another employer to be found). The lower age limit for Training for Work has been changed from 24 to 18. PACE is being upgraded.
 7. The government plans to introduce a £2500 subsidy to employers who recruit a long-term unemployed candidate, from April onwards. Since £1500 of this is a training grant the Scottish Government will have to confirm that this is available in Scotland.
- 5.2 The discussion which followed recognised the probability of displacement of groups targeted by Joined Up For Jobs by the newly unemployed. It was also accepted that some of these will have substantial difficulty adjusting to their new circumstances following, in some cases, decades of continuous employment.
- 5.3 It appears that the impact is greatest on the 18-24 age group. Lacking substantial work experience this group will be at a disadvantage in competing for jobs which are filled using competency-based frameworks. Public agencies might consider measures to overcome this problem. The use of volunteering is expected to rise for all age groups.
- 5.4 The conclusion of the discussion was that the Jobs Strategy should continue to focus on its existing target groups, with additional 'sense checks' about the appropriateness of specific initiatives in the new market conditions; while also facilitating the responses to the needs of the new types of customer. In these circumstances keeping joined-up will be important, and also the gathering and sharing of information and intelligence about the local labour market. Bill Wilson said that JCP may be able to do some analysis of its data; Careers Scotland is carrying out a national survey of its customers; and CEC has established Economy Watch to gather information from many different sources relating to the state of the economy. It was agreed that it will also be important to hear from providers, including via the Providers' Forum. David Metcalfe suggested an exercise looking ahead 6, 12 and 18 months at the likely trends in specific sectors.

6 **Progress and Issues Report**

6.1 **PB39 – Service Outreach Unit**

The meeting considered the question referred from the Finance and Resources Sub-group about Project Brief 39 – Service Outreach Unit. Following discussion of the targeting and the purposes of the project it was agreed to approve funding for one year with the following conditions:

- That it dovetails with other outreach projects and avoids duplication
- That there is an evaluation at the end of a one year trial period of operation

It was also suggested that a more strategic approach should be taken to outreach activities, with project proposals fitting into an overall plan, incorporating design principles. This approach could be applied to other parts of the strategy. FRP

6.2 **Operational Plan**

Matthew Crighton said that he anticipated bringing a draft operational plan to the next meeting. It was noted that the Operational Plan will concern the joint delivery of services to jobseekers and employers, and will therefore not cover everything in the strategy and business plan. David Metcalfe recalled his proposal that the Strategy Group be renamed the Operational Board or Strategy and Operations Board. He also suggested a review be undertaken across the Jobs Strategy infrastructure to ensure that it is fit for purpose as we move from planning to implementation and taking into account the need for good forward planning. Jim agreed to undertake this. JR

6.3 **More Choices More Chances strategy**

The meeting agreed the proposal that the More Choices More Chances strategy becomes formally a sub-group of the Jobs Strategy. It noted that plans were being made to increase the number of training places for this age group in Edinburgh by 150.

7 **Fairer Scotland Fund**

- 7.1 The meeting agreed the paper for submission to the Fairer Scotland Fund Implementation Group. It was agreed to collect and circulate information about what Neighbourhood Partnerships had decided to spend on employability-related projects; and also to produce a summary of funding available for employability, covering at minimum the FSF, CCP's programme and the European Programme. This would be drafted for the FRP's Funding Alignment session on 24 February. This should if possible include locality budgets. It was noted that it was important to ensure that delivery of locally-funded projects and those funded by other sources in each neighbourhood is done in a joined-up way. CEC & CCP

8 **Monitoring Reports**

- 8.1 Considering the outcomes report the meeting requested that the format be revised by Targets and Evaluation Sub-group. Specific points included: a totals row; time series data; where no reports are available say when they will be; separate reports on projects with numerical and non-numerical outcomes; for each project and programme the names of the individual responsible for reporting should be clarified (though not for reporting to JSG). TESG
- 8.2 The meeting approved the quarterly report to DWP. Bill Wilson asked whether there had been any consultation on the distribution of the reward funding for CS Pathfinders. Matthew Crighton said that it has been discussed at a Cities Strategy Learning Network approximately 5 months ago but no further consultation or decision had been notified. It was agreed to raise this query with DWP. MC

9 **Any Other Business**

9.1 **Visit by DWP, 6 March**

Matthew Crighton reported that Nahid Majid, Deputy Director/Head of Area Initiatives & Communities of Work Welfare and Welfare to Work Directorate in DWP, had accepted the invitation to visit the Edinburgh Pathfinder and this had been fixed for 6 March. He anticipated this would be a two-way exchange of news and views. Marion Nicholson said she would like feedback on her perception of the Edinburgh Pathfinder in relation to other cities. Bill Wilson said she should be asked to tell the JSG what they are doing and what is their role, and how this can help the Pathfinder in Edinburgh. David Metcalfe said that in addition three key messages from the Edinburgh Pathfinder should be presented; he also requested a one-to-one meeting with Ms Majid. MC

9.2

Cambridge Policy Consultants (CPC) evaluation contract

David Metcalfe asked about the timetable for a further evaluation report from CPC. Matthew Crighton said that they would be starting a new round of interviews focusing on the impact of the inclusion of new partners and on the outcomes of the Vision Session. David asked that the JSG be notified of the schedule. MC

10 **Date of next meeting**

The next full meeting of the JSG will be AT 2.00 pm on Wednesday 1 April 2009.

The schedule of meetings for 2009 will be at 2.00 pm on:

1 April
3 June
5 August
7 October
2 December