



MINUTES OF JOBS STRATEGY GROUP

Date: Wednesday 4 August 2010

Held at: Lloyds TSB, 120 George Street, Edinburgh

Present:

Jim McGonigle	Jobcentre Plus
Kate Burton	Edinburgh CHP
Matthew Crighton	Capital City Partnership
Jim Rafferty	Capital City Partnership
Brian Lister	Lothian Association of College Principals
Vivienne Robertson	City of Edinburgh Council
Rhona McLinden	Capital City Partnership
Roger Horam	Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
Pat Thomson	Skills Development Scotland
Malcolm Barron	Skills Development Scotland

In Attendance Frances Wheldon City of Edinburgh Council

Apologies:

David Metcalfe	Chair
Ken Shaw	City of Edinburgh Council
Brian Martin	City of Edinburgh council
David White	NHS Lothian

1 There were no declarations of interest other than those recorded below in respect of Item 9. Jim Rafferty chaired the meeting in the absence of David Metcalfe. David's new operational commitments require him to be in London most Tuesdays and Wednesdays so it was agreed to reschedule future Jobs Strategy Group meetings to take this into account.

2 **Presentation – Edinburgh's European Programme**

Frances Wheldon joined the meeting to deliver a presentation on Edinburgh's Partnership Communities European Programme.

She outlined the background to, overall aim of and the achievements to date of both the ESF and ERDF components of the overall programme.

Discussion took place around the planned bid for European funding under Priority 5. this programme is expected to be funded from April/June 2011 for 2 years with an option to extend up to 3 years in the event of an underspend. Key partners will be included in discussions around the content of the bid. It was emphasised that we must ensure that Partners and Community Planning Partnership ESF bids are complementary. A team was being convened to pull together the plans and write the bid, the initial outline of which has to be with ESEP by 20 August.

3 **Minutes of the meeting of 5 May 2010**

These minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

4 **Matters Arising**

Modern Apprenticeships within the Financial Sector: Patricia Thomson informed the Group that the way the data is collected does not allow for reliable disaggregation into specific sectors so it is not possible to identify the Financial Sector from the information held. There were two new MAs planned for the coming year, one focussing on the Retail aspect and the other on the Investment side of the business.

In general terms within Edinburgh, Modern Apprenticeships at level 3 had 933 starts with a 76% achievement rate and at level 2 had 212 starts with a 73% achievement rate.

Brian Lister emphasised the need for the Financial Sector to be involved in the new MAs and referred to meetings about the Financial Skills Pipeline. As Matthew Crighton is currently addressing this aspect in relation to the Skills Summit he agreed to liaise with Brian on this.

MC/BL

Condition Management Service: Kate Burton informed the Group that this jointly funded (NHS & JCP) service would commence at the end of August

Mental Health Training: Kate also confirmed that further training for Intermediaries is scheduled to start in the Autumn 2010.

Information about the 16+ age group: Following this request from Brian Lister, SDS confirmed that they could provide information on this including the size of the MCMC Group. Patricia to discuss with Brian.

Pathfinder Evaluation: Matthew circulated a copy of the Cities Strategy Learning Network report summarising of the achievements of the Pathfinders which features Edinburgh as one of the case studies.

On-Flows and Off-flows: It was agreed that CCP would seek a way to incorporate this information into future reports, Jim to liaise with Patricia on report format

JR/PT

Participation of Priority Groups in Programmes: a report on the participation of priority groups in the programmes covered by the quarterly outcomes reports is being prepared by CCP.

5 **Transition to Single Work programme**

Jim Rafferty contextualised this item by informing the Group that the consultation paper '21st Century Welfare' was available on <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/21st-century-welfare.pdf> and that CCP will draft a response on localisation issues and circulate to partners for consideration.

JR

Jim ran through the key points of the rapidly developing new Work Programme in particular outlining the change to payment structures for Prime Contractors and the consequential position for local contractors who will need to secure funding mechanisms that will ensure successful local delivery. The Group discussed and noted the emerging position.

Jim shared the response from the Minister for Employment which thanked us for our interest but, as expected mainly served to indicate that localisation, for the moment, was further down the agenda. There was understanding that this is a fast moving agenda in terms of scale and pace and as the 'Big Society' model develops the picture will become clearer.

Matthew informed the Group that the City Strategy Learning Network had pressed hard for DWP to take on board the need for the sharing of management information from

the prime contractors at a Local Labour Market Level. In addition he has drafted proposals for consideration within the National Delivery Group (NDG) framework for developing structures to enable localisation within the DWP's commissioning framework and, with the other Scottish Pathfinders, was seeking Scottish Government support. These proposals also have relevance to the Scottish Funding Council and SDS commissioning. They will be circulated to the JSG

MC

Group discussed and agreed that the prime contractors would expect a strong and cohesive offer. The proposed position statement (which was included as appendix 2 in Agenda Item 5) is fit for this purpose and should be used as the way forward in the pursuit of a risk and reward sharing partnership with prime contractors. Feeling was that the greatest likelihood of success may lie in a cohesive Scotland level approach. This is also being pursued via NDG discussions noted above

6 **Partner Updates**

Jobcentre Plus: Jim McGonigle informed the Group that Jobcentre Plus were very much to the forefront in delivering the new Welfare Agenda and that although there was clearly substantial change on the way they were in a strong position going forward.

Edinburgh had seen a slight drop in the unemployment rate for the 3rd month in a row, 4,500 people had moved off benefit with the employment rate currently sitting at 75.4%. Vacancies however were down in the last 3 months and they were actively pursuing this aspect through concerted Employer engagement especially in the Health & Social Care Sector.

Jobcentre Plus Advisers have now got access to an electronic college prospectus and are using this to make suitable referrals to the FE colleges. Vivienne asked if a printed copy was available but this will not be available from the colleges until late August. Current DWP contracts will run until March 2011 and consideration is underway how to service the delivery between then and the Single Work Programme starting in June 2011.

The Work Choice programme is planned to go ahead.

Jobcentre Plus will be migrating Incapacity Benefit customers to Employment Support Allowance or Jobseekers Allowance in the period April 2011 to 2014. Kate Burton asked Jim whether condition management provision in Pathways beyond March 2011 in the new Work Programme. He said that the way in which the Work Programme would be delivered was down to the contractors in a black box contracting framework but each contractor would have to deliver programmes which address the needs of the customer groups.

Skills Development Scotland: Malcolm reported that SDS had been focussing effort on the summer school leavers and was pleased to report that the 'spike' forecast was less than had been expected possibly on the basis that many pupils plan to return to school after the summer break. Once this week's exam results are assimilated and FE/HE placements firmed up in August the position will be clearer

The Step Forward programme has now been piloted successfully. This is a new initiative that is designed to help Scottish Businesses support young people between 16 and 19 into work by offering the opportunity of a job, Modern Apprenticeship or a work experience placement. This has seen interest growing from employers and a high level of interest amongst young people with good movement onto apprentice status.

In general the number of young people moving into work overall is higher than expected.

The uptake of Training for Work and Get Ready for work is currently very good and ahead of position last year. SDS are looking across all their skills programmes to consider what should be delivered over the coming 3 years as funding gets tighter. Malcolm will update at next JSG. The efforts of the SDS team in respect of increased access to National Programmes and the success of these efforts was noted with appreciation

Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce: Roger Horam reported that membership of the chamber remained stable despite the economic climate.

Self-Employment start-ups are slightly up on 12 months ago and there are a sizable number of enquiries from young people for self-employment. All the suggestions are that the domestic market is too small for businesses to grow and recover from recession so the Chamber has embarked on an ESF funded programme 'Smart Exporter' to provide skills to help businesses to access new markets and maintain jobs.

The Chamber is also bidding into ERDF priority 2 with CEC and West Lothian Council which will include an element of group-based aftercare, again helping to support businesses and maintain employment of staff.

Edinburgh CHP: Kate Burton explained that NHS Lothian currently had recruitment limitations and were only filling business critical posts. It was noted that a similar position existed in respect of CEC

They were also engaged with the Scottish Government and employer organisations to develop a Scottish 'Health Works' Offer.

City of Edinburgh Council: A Project Board to carry through the Integrated Service Model (Halcrow report recommendations) has now been established and progress is in line with proposal

Further Education: Brian Lister reported that the Edinburgh colleges had received £2 million additional funding to provide additional courses for the 16-24 age groups (out of a Scottish total of £15 million). They would meet with JCP about work-focused training as part of the Young Persons' Guarantee. The funding from CCP for additional bursaries was a very helpful contribution to this. The joint prospectus would be complete and available to partners shortly

Capital City Partnership: All key aspects covered within the Agenda.

7 Performance Reports

Operational Plans

Arising from the summaries given on each section of the Operational Plan, the following points were discussed.

Greater Customer Reach: the merger with GAP and Get On which is now providing a one door service for customers in the city.

Health and Employability: The evaluation of the employability training is very good. Some concerns around the capability of the Get On phone lines to cope with NHS referrals are now in hand with Brian Martin at CEC.

There are plans underway for a Road Show for employers highlighting some of the key changes that impact them e.g. Fit Note. Kate Burton and Rhona McLinden will work this up with the relevant partners.

Kate highlighted the possibility of extending the Mental Health Awareness training to include call handling staff. The broader point was made that if CEC contact services generally were migrating to a call centre function then other aspects of employability

training and awareness would need to be covered, particularly with the Get On/GAP service intending to develop as an access point for employability services across the network.

Employer Engagement: It was noted that the recent Health and Social Care Job Opportunities and Information day has been very successful with 166 jobs available on the day and over the coming months. There have been 9 people into jobs to date with more successes expected.

Offer to Jobseekers and Customer Satisfaction: Plan moving on well. Looking at gathering Customer Satisfaction information from partners to see if it can be presented in a coherent and sensible way to reflect the situation in the City of Edinburgh. Customer satisfaction data being gathered currently.

Joined Up Funding: A report was presented to the Group and it was agreed that the current underspend resulting from the cancellation of the proposed Progress to Work contract will be considered once a decision is made on the outstanding PB 50 proposal 'Edinburgh Jobs Fund' and budgeted provision relating to the review of the Employer Offer. It was also noted that although Progress to Work has been cancelled the funds may be required to support any future co-commissioning opportunities with the Work Programme.

Skills Development: Skills summit scheduled for 26 November. Edinburgh will be part of UKCES 2010 Review of employment and skills.

Help for Workers at Risk: need to ensure that when developing the proposals for the European programme P5 bid that the Working Health Services and Support@Work are provided the opportunity for making proposals.

More Choices More Chances: Overall the numbers on training are increasing. This had been an objective of the plan. The Group is taking the opportunity to review its operational plan including the membership of the Group and its structure.

Outcomes Report: The report had been circulated. Patricia handed out an update on the National Training programmes which showed a good increase in results. The pre-Modern Apprenticeship programme has proved very successful and the hope is that more may be commissioned.

The Management Information will now be published every 3 months so this will be provided to JSG on a regular basis.

If partners wish any further changes to the outcomes report to let Patricia know.

8 **Bulletin:**

Welfare to Work conference: this is on 22 September in Edinburgh and we are expecting to host at least one workshop and potentially more depending on overall demand, six proposals have been submitted.

9 **Performance and Resource Planning Group report**

The report was agreed.

Funding Proposal – Edinburgh Jobs Fund (PB50)

A number of questions relating to intended referral routes and follow up provision were asked and confirmation given that SDS would be the main channel in both respects. Following this the chair proposed that the group move to a decision. Roger Horam, Vivienne Robertson and Frances Wheldon, having declared an interest in the proposal as interested parties, left the meeting whilst discussions took place on this proposal.

There was strong support from remaining members for the proposal and it was agreed that the outstanding questions (as circulated) put had been satisfactorily answered by the proposers. The only remaining question raised related to possible alternative uses of the money available but it was noted that there were no substantive alternative proposals currently to hand and that, given the timetable for spend, it would be unlikely that any practical alternative use could be properly developed and assessed.

The proposal was unanimously approved by JSG.

10 **AOB**

Edinburgh, Lothian & Borders Jobcentre Plus District have been announced as the top District in the UK for their Mystery Shopping results. The Group noted this excellent result and extended congratulations on this achievement to all staff in the Jobcentre Plus district. This information should also be included in the next edition of Working Capital.

11 **Dates of next meeting**

As per item 1 we will seek to set revised dates for the JSG asap. The date for the next meeting has been agreed as Thursday 4 November at Lloyds TSB, George St.

DRAFT