



JOINED UP FOR JOBS
Edinburgh's Jobs Strategy

Partnership Forum

STRATEGIC - Formal link for two way dialogue/influence between partner agencies and JUFJ Strategy Group

PRACTICAL - Promoting partnership working/developing new mechanisms to deliver JUFJ strategy

COORDINATION - Exchanging good practice and enhancing coordination of services

Note of Meeting on Thursday 16th October 2008

Business Centre, City Chambers

Theme - EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

After introductions and welcome, Matthew Crighton gave an update from Jobs Strategy Team (Latest Strategy group minutes can be found on

http://www.joinedupforjobs.org.uk/employment/information_327.shtml)

There will be a meeting of key partners in November to 're-vision' the Jobs Strategy.

Now that the Strategy is developed and targets established- the focus is shifting to implementing programmes and monitoring, learning from progress.

'Offers' to customer and employers now being developed as part of website upgrade.

The European Programme now up and running.

Emerging issue - to integrate UK/Scottish 'skills agenda' into Joined up for Jobs - a possible theme for a future Forum.

Reminder - deadline for response for DWP Green Paper 22 Oct (next week) - CCP will share their response, other agencies encouraged to submit their own as well.

Workplace Perspectives - (all Presentation slides posted on Forum section of JUFJ website)

Employment issues for blind/partially sighted workers - Kelly Curran RNIB gave an overview of employment issues for blind/partially sighted workers, and Barbara Hall an employee of Ark Housing and her HR colleague Fiona Katz gave personal perspectives on the journey back to work for someone who loses their sight, and on Ark's very positive experience of employing a blind worker.

Matching Local Demand with Local Supply

Local Employer Accords Jim Galloway of Economic Development gave an overview of recruitment and training agreements forged with major capital projects in the city eg Waterfront, St James Quarter

Jobcentre Plus Local Employment Partnerships Pauline MacDonald of JobCentre Plus gave an update on LEPs, clarifying that though at national level there were '9 measures', outlined in publicity material, designed as part of Partnership 'Commitment', including agreeing to consider JCP's 'priority' customers for jobs, currently local employers are linked into LEP's without the need for a formal agreement to be signed. So far 490 employers in Edinburgh, who have achieved 920 job outcomes for 'priority customers'. Many of these employers are local branches of large firms, but it is expected that there will be increased focus on signing up small and medium enterprises.

Opportunities to share local employer vacancy 'leads' within the wider JUFJ network

Karen Black of Remploy described her role as similar to a recruitment agency but offering services for free since Remploy is fully funded by DWP. She works in partnership with employers to 'sell' the concept of employing adults with disabilities and matches job ready clients to available opportunities. She introduced Colin Findlay facilities manager from Asda at the Jewel who described how Workstep clients had found opportunities with his organisation. Currently Remploy is seeking candidates for 160 vacancies

they have sourced and would welcome opportunities to work more closely with JUFJ providers, to fill these. It was suggested they post information on the JUFJ Noticeboard and encourage providers to refer clients to Remploy so they can work together to achieve outcomes. Currently they are in dialogue with Action Group's Real Jobs and interested linking in to the developing High Support Needs Consortium. Some questions arose about 'who gets the outcome' but felt valid that some services specialise in work with employers, others in work with clients, thus both could claim outcomes for the same client.

Discussion Notes (see below)

Theme - how can we collaborate to match local unemployed clients with local vacancies, and improve recruitment and retention of disadvantaged jobseekers?

Next Forum

17 December (rescheduled from 18th)

Also Forum (Annual) Planning Group will meet 13 November - to plan and arrange hosting 2009 events - volunteers welcome to support this.

Discussion Notes

Theme - how can we collaborate to match local unemployed clients with local vacancies, and improve recruitment and retention of disadvantaged jobseekers?

Opportunities

- for providers to share vacancies, clients, training and good practice to find and develop suitable recruits for employers.
- Remploy and others working at 'employer end' to share vacancies sourced with other support agencies
- joint working approach - 'win-win' good for clients and helps keep employers interested
- more worktrials needed - willing employers to offer tasters.
- different provider specialisms help the process of matching candidates to jobs - ie one agency deals with 'employer anxieties' the other with 'jobseeker anxieties'
- Public sector and vol sector employers to take lead in demonstrating best practice as employers
- regular meetings/mechanisms to share vacancies - eg monthly meetings, virtual noticeboard?
- specialist 'employer engagement' posts like Remploy/RNIB
- can this work be supported through DWP 'Access to Work' funding stream (changing next year)?

Issues - around 'sharing' clients

- 'Sharing clients' is a perceived problem
- key question - who gets the outcome?
- job matching - 2 sets of clients(jobseeker/employer) Is it OK for 2 or more providers to claim outcomes (eg getting client job ready, matching client to employer vacancy, supporting job entry or progression) for clients on longer pathway of support? (can we clarify)
- Employers - can't always be flexible, depends on economic 'bottom line'
- Employers confused by 'too many initiatives' /fragmentation
- Providers - need to understand employer demand and be clear on what 'job ready' means
- Economic downturn - fewer opportunities likely for disadvantaged clients
- Providers need to be clear on roles and responsibilities in partnership/Consortium arrangements

What we need

- More information sharing - key to effective partnership, pathways of support, matching process
- Providers need to know - where are vacancies?
- Employers need to know - where is support?
- Need for reliable service to 'deliver' candidates for employers. Consistency breeds success
- Employers need to understand client needs, both for support and 'development'
- Providers need info on 'stage on pathway' of clients at referral
- More use of JUFJ Noticeboard - useful tool
- Role for Trades Unions in work with employers - advice on recruitment practice, support for employees
- More coordination of 'employer engagement'
- centralised 'one stop' referral gateway - (High Support Needs Consortium aim to develop this sort of model)
- Less bureaucracy /paperwork/formfilling - simplify 'systems'
- Less fragmentation of provider landscape - needs to be more 'unified' easier to navigate/understand
- Shared marketing - eg at JUFJ level? Consortium level? Sector level?

'Key Partner' Issues arising from Discussion

JobCentre Plus

Local Employment Partnerships

Are frontline recruiting staff of 490 Edinburgh LEP firms aware that their employer is 'signed up' (eg if UK head office made agreement)

Are local employers all aware of the '9 measures' at the heart of LEP's

How can JUFJ providers support LEP if they don't know who the 'signed up' employers are?

Can JCP share the Edinburgh LEP list via JUFJ website? (already requested)

What help can JCP offer locally with setting up worktrials for JUFJ network clients.

Edinburgh Jobs Strategy - LEPS need to link to Employer Offer

- need for collective and inclusive approach to 'employer engagement' at JCP District level

Welfare Reform and Scottish Skills Agenda

Reps from LearnDirect, and SDS partnership officer welcomed to first Forum

Skills Development Scotland - what will be 'local' role, activities, eg where do ILA's fit?

Link to new Employment Support Allowance DWP push to assess and raise skills of claimants