

STRATEGY GROUP, 7 SEPTEMBER 2005

STRATEGY AND POLICY OPTIONS

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to distil the key options for development of the JU4J strategy, and for policy within that, from The Working Together process; the stocktaking session; and the Baseline Study.

The stocktaking session established the commitment of the key partners to continue the overall direction of JU4J; but it also noted that significant contextual changes may lead to some changes of emphasis and will require significant changes in the implementation of the strategy. The changes with unavoidable consequences are mostly related to changes in the remits and priorities of key partners; and changes in core sources of funding for service delivery.

The Baseline Study has presented substantiation for a number of presumptions and lines of action already within JU4J; and has also suggested some additional initiatives or approaches which need consideration. The Working Together project is pulling these together with the outcomes of other studies, pilots and evaluations; and thereby both adding to the list of issues to be addressed and posing questions about the links between the JU4J strategy and other strategies. The appendix lists all the documents scanned and summarises the points taken from them

2 SHIFT TO A DIFFERENT STRATEGY MANAGEMENT REGIME?

There are implications for strategy implementation of changes in the organisational framework for JU4J which probably need to be considered in advance of the issues about content, because they condition the capacity to act on them.

JU4J has successfully demonstrated a particular model of implementation of a shared city strategy. This has been based on the circumstances at the start in which three organisations with significant funding and/or policy functions (JCP, SEE&L, CEC) worked together in a framework provided by a partnership organisation of which they were all members. CCP had little money to deploy but did provide a connection

to the SIPs. Implementation was through an agreed Action Plan which identified the Lead Partner for each element; which all the same involved all partners in relevant steering groups. Careers Scotland and ECCE were present and gave useful input but played little role in implementation. However for a number of reasons, external and internal to the strategy, this model is less and less viable

Jobcentre Plus is implementing a whole range of far-reaching developments, some of which facilitate close co-operation at delivery level; however the shift from an Edinburgh District Office to one for Edinburgh, Lothian and the Borders has reduced its capacity as a partner to take part in implementation of any elements of a city strategy which do not relate to its own service delivery.

The policy focus and personnel of Scottish Enterprise have also changed, featuring a tighter focus on its core operational programmes; and again less capacity to play a role in implementation of strategic initiatives which are not directly related to them. Hence it has shifted from supporting academy development to being able to support academies through their winning Training for Work contracts.

Careers Scotland also has seen ongoing change including a greater focus on inclusion; and there is potential for it to play a greater role, although again its geographical territory does not lend itself to a city focus in terms of strategy. The role of Capital City Partnership has developed significantly, in particular in relation to the Regeneration Outcomes Agreement and its funding of the ex-SIP intermediaries. It is therefore not only the partnership body but also a significant funder of initiatives, both for delivery and for strategy development.

In terms of the Action Plan and its implementation, these changes suggest that there needs to be a re-examination of lead roles, leading to re-affirmation or changes. This exercise should reflect on experiences to date and assess what might be seen as pressures or tendencies within JU4J for an increasingly centralised approach to the strategy and its implementation. On consideration of the outcomes of this exercise, there may need to be a shift in the style of implementation of the strategy.

Question: should the implementation of JU4J be put on a more formal and more centralised basis?

3 THE SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

Employability and access to work overlaps with many other fields of policy and activity. Those most often mentioned are listed below.

- *Skills and qualifications agenda; lifelong learning*
- *Education: Schools and Further Education*
- *Literacy and Numeracy/Basic Skills*
- *Enterprise/entrepreneurship*

- *Workforce Development (inc. progression, adaptability, equal opportunities)*
- *Occupational rehabilitation*
- *Health Services*
- *Financial inclusion*
- *Childcare*

It is often suggested that JU4J should either

1. expand its breadth to encompass some of these;
2. incorporate elements of them in its implementation;
3. develop systematic linkages to other strategies which deal with them; or
4. mainstream attention to employability into these other areas (inc. referral links).

The clear focus on the territory of employability and access to work has been seen as a contributor to the success of JU4J and some evidence from other cities within the Baseline Study supports this view. **It proposed that in general this approach be continued but a specific decision about the orientation to each of the fields of policy. Therefore in respect of the options above it is proposed not to expand the breadth of the strategy; but to implement option 2 and 4 as appropriate and possible in respect of each policy area.** Views on prioritisation of these actions will assist with strategy implementation.

There are two areas in which this decision needs to be considered in detail before confirmation; and both relate to the functions of the Employment Academies. In addition there is a question about the character of effective links to other strategies.

Skills and qualifications agenda; lifelong learning

There is a definite thrust in England and in DWP policy towards integrating these areas of policy, reflecting awareness of some of the limitations of a solely work-focused policy. While the Scottish Executive's Employability Framework is expected to also reflect this awareness, it is not at the moment following this direction in relation to skills. This difference relates to some extent to the differences between LECs and Learning and Skills Councils; although in both countries there are moves to integrate employability considerations within the funding of Further Education.

While qualifications and skills enter into JU4J as some of the factors which help individuals get work, vocational qualifications (as opposed to employability skills) feature in its programmes only inasmuch as they are considered necessary for the individual to get into the jobs which are appropriate for them. For example, for some groups of people qualifications are necessary to access jobs which pay sufficiently well to make it worthwhile leaving benefits; so here entry into FE is part of the best route into work)

At strategic level it has been possible to make links with the Edinburgh Lifelong Learning Partnership and this has given useful practical outcomes, for example

through the DELIVER project. The winding up of ELLP probably leaves a gap at this level, especially in relation to a city approach to improving the skill levels of the coming and existing workforce, which could be said to be the core business of the FE colleges. Whether or not it could be filled through the JU4J partnership, this is a gap which there are good reasons for filling.

Workforce Development (inc. progression, adaptability, equal opportunities)

This is the one area in the original agenda of JU4J on which no significant progress has been made, except inasmuch as some of the academies have started working with some employers on this matter. Again there is a growing interest in England here, with a number of pilots arising from the Welfare to Workforce Development report. The Employment Research Institute has a recommendation in the Baseline Study that JU4J should embrace the related Quality at Work agenda, which responds to some elements of the European Employment Strategy, but which is motivated mainly on the basis that it would help JU4J and the academies – in supporting individuals and working with employers for mutual benefit. In this respect it would be one way of approaching the implementation of that part of the original JU4J agenda.

Strategically, there is no other partnership or strategy in the city dealing with this issue; although parts of it can be included in the Skills and Lifelong Learning areas discussed above. Therefore if the JU4J partners see that this is an important areas, it probably lies with them to make some moves in one direction or another.

What are effective links to other strategies?

The third of these options above (linkages to other strategies) is least clear in its content; and depends in practice on the existence and effectiveness of city strategies in these other fields. If this is chosen then the purposes and content of the links to other strategies need to be stated, specifically what actions follow from the decision.

Questions:

Should the JU4J partnership seek to embrace any parts of the skills and lifelong learning agenda?

Should the JU4J partnership take any strategic initiatives in relation to Workforce Development

Should the Quality at Work agenda be promoted through JU4J?

What guidance do we have about effective links to other strategies which produce useful outcomes?

4 PRIORITISATION OF AND BOTTLENECKS IN DIRECTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Many of the recommendations of the Baseline Study and suggestions captured in the scan of reports and evaluations refer to proposals about which there is already consensus. They are:

- Ensuring the stability and development of the sectoral academy approach.
- Aligning funding for intermediaries to support the creation of a provider infrastructure featuring joined-up delivery for jobseekers and clear pathways to work and progression. Where possible this should be done on a co-funding basis.
- Developing joint working arrangements between JCP Advisers and intermediaries
- Creating reliable referral routes from 'frontline' and health service organisations for each of the target groups.
- Establishment of robust JU4J Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- Implementation of ICT policy to provide management information and support effective joined-up working
- Improve support for people and employers after recruitment

These are already part of the JU4J Action Plan so their frequent mention should be taken to reflect the assessment that work in these areas, if ongoing, is far from complete. Besides re-affirming them, **the task of the Strategy Group is therefore to deal with any bottlenecks, to identify resources needed, to review responsibilities of the partners, and if necessary to agree overall prioritisation.**

Question:

Is the mechanism of having an Action Plan and Lead Partners proving adequate for implementation of these priorities?

5 PROPOSED ADDITIONAL FEATURES OF JU4J

There are also proposals which would represent an extension or addition to the Action Plan, which are either new or around which there is no consensus. The contractors for the Baseline Study were asked to assess gaps in provision and there response is that there have been no absolute gaps in support for specific target groups, although for each target group there are issues about the pattern of

provision in the pathway to work which need to be addressed. However they do report a lack of certain kinds of provision and some weaknesses in certain areas which should comprise part of the overall employability service. These are set out in the first two sections of the list below of additional features which have been proposed:

Gaps

There should be a more consistent approach to, and more general availability of,

- ❖ support with accessing childcare;
- ❖ better-off calculations (of in-work benefits);
- ❖ assessment of basic skills needs (literacy and numeracy).

Additional Provision

- ❖ There is a need for more transitional work-based or work simulation projects; these would fill the gap between engaging with pre-vocational preparation and being ready for work, which involves developing work-related habits and skills.
- ❖ An organisation to promote and co-ordinate work experience opportunities with employers across the city.
- ❖ There is a need for more supported employment places, for those who will probably need ongoing support in the workplace – classically those with mental disabilities but perhaps others too.

Working With Employers

- ❖ There should be presentation of an ‘offer’ based in the JU4J approach to all city employers, inc SMEs; this should include the academy approach and other options like supported employment and work placements. (For the related question of a Quality at Work agenda, see above).

Funding

- ❖ To sustain the academy approach there is a need to fill funding gap for academies created by eligibility criteria of mainstream funds (ND, TfW)
- ❖ There needs to be a strategic approach to changes in funding (e.g. ESF, New Deals)

Working With Disadvantaged Jobseekers

- ❖ For each target group, there should be a Lead Organisation to co-ordinate provision, and to take forward recommendations for each group
- ❖ JU4J should promote, support or require a Key Worker/Case Manager role where a number of organisations are assisting one individual
- ❖ Promote mentoring to increase sustainability of employment

- ❖ JU4J should require a systematic approach to integrating clients' experiences into programme design

Capacity Of Organisations And Their Staff

- ❖ Providers could adopt a Trade Association approach to quality assurance – minimum standards
- ❖ Providers could have a common model of CPD (continuing professional development) for staff; and do joint commissioning of training;
- ❖ More networking events for delivery staff;
- ❖ Improved opportunities to give comments/ideas to JU4J

Geography

- ❖ Should JU4J aim to have wider geographical coverage (e.g. Lothian-wide)?
- ❖ Should JU4J seek to replicate or learn from new ways of working with very small areas? These suggest benefits from working with families, local networks and small groups.

Questions:

For each of these suggestions, is the proposal supported in principle? is there the capacity to implement it? if so, who should be responsible for implementation?

6 FLEXIBILITY IN IMPLEMENTATION

There has been a considerable improvement in the Labour Market Intelligence relevant to the concerns of JU4J. This is starting to identify trends like changes in the NEET group and a rise in people claiming Incapacity Benefit because of mental ill-health. Similarly the number suffering addictions is reported to be rising. **Is the availability of this kind of intelligence matched by an ability to fine-tune delivery in response to it? If there are finite resources, how can there be a significant rise in the services for one group without disadvantaging others?**

7 CONCLUSION

The Strategy Group should consider the questions presented in this paper and in taking decisions about them present a way forward for the development of Joined Up For Jobs. On this basis the revision of the Action Plan and the re-presentation of the strategy document can be actioned.

APPENDIX

WORKING TOGETHER
STRATEGY AND POLICY REVIEW

DOCUMENTATION

1. EMPLOYABILITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES – JOINED UP FOR JOBS

| COMPLETED DOCUMENTS | | KEY POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION <i>(significant innovations in bold italics)</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Joined Up For Jobs - Edinburgh's Employability Agreement. | Capital City Partnership (2002). | |
| Working Together Baseline Study. | Employment Research Institute (2005). | <p><u>Academies:</u> Respond to challenge of aligning funding with academy needs; sell the academies to employers; check the spec for assisting target groups; Transitional work placements; promote to jobseekers; Financial Services sector;</p> <p><u>Employers:</u> present a JU4J approach to all city employers, inc SMEs; positive challenge to recruitment practices which impede target groups</p> <p><u>A Quality at Work agenda</u></p> <p><u>Intermediaries:</u> check menu of services available; confidence/personal effectiveness/structured pre-voc training;</p> |

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| | | <p>co-ordination with adult learning providers; literacy and numeracy within JU4J; co-ordination with academies provision; evaluate and roll-out JCP/area intermediary partnerships.</p> <p><u>CCP/JU4J:</u> <i>funding model to support sustainable outcomes and progression;</i> system information: common ICT-based client tool; improved tracking; strategic approach to changes in funding</p> |
| An Evaluation of the CCP Equal programme. | Cambridge Policy Consultants (2005). | <p>Closer working to encourage more cross-referrals</p> <p>Develop comprehensive network of support services as gateway to employability services and for continued support of clients</p> <p>Common assessment framework and common approach to employers</p> <p>Extend Wise Move approach to homelessness sector to others</p> <p>Tracking to enable referral back into JU4J network when needed</p> <p>Common monitoring systems to assess performance consistently</p> <p>Review skills and practices of frontline staff (w.r.t. recording)</p> |
| A toolkit for assessing employability interventions | Cambridge Policy Consultants (2005). | |
| The Position of Joined Up For Jobs' Target Groups. | McMurray, S. (2005). | <p><i>Work experience – an organisation to organise this at city level</i></p> <p>Increased pre-vocational and advice capacity</p> <p>Employer awareness sessions</p> <p>Promote mentoring to increase sustainability of employment</p> <p><i>Lead organisations to co-ordinate for each target group, to take forward recommendations for each group</i></p> <p>More supported employment and transitional employment places</p> |

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| Client Engagement within the Joined Up For Jobs Employability Strategy. | SQW (2003). | Emphasises the importance of Marketing, Guidance, Action Planning, Flexibility. Funding framework which promotes joined-up working Explore joint action around Funding, Outreach, Guidance, Monitoring, Tracking and Key Worker Role |
| Evaluation Framework for the CCP/CEC EQUAL Programme. | Cambridge Policy Consultants (2005). | Establish a common system, inc. referrals and tracking Recording of activities, outcomes and impacts in beneficiary records Assess additionality, wider impacts, VFM etc Evaluation plan |
| Childcare and Tax Credits Study. | Grierson Associates (2004). | |
| Targets, Milestones, Target Groups - Proposed Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. | Capital City Partnership (2003). | |
| Linkages and Overlaps Report. | Nisus Scotland (2005). | No quick fix for disadvantaged; clearer routes; costs-benefits of partnership; Protocols and standards; shared database Trade Association approach – minimum standards Model of CPD for staff; joint commissioning of training; networking events |
| Health Care Academy Option Appraisal. | Cambridge Policy Consultants (2002). | |
| Employment Access Services | McGregor, A., A. Glass, et al. (2002). | Implement a monitoring and evaluation framework Review the provider infrastructure Develop the academies A more concerted approach to funding |
| Edinburgh Sectoral Academies - | KMC Management Consultants (2004). | Academy Business Plans to set out basis for achieving sustainability |

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| Shared Resources - Feasibility Study. | | |
| Trade Unions and Workplace Support: Potential Contributions to the Joined Up For Jobs Project. | Ryan, T. (2005). | Promote awareness of JU4J with trade unions |
| Joined Up For Jobs Information Flow and Mapping Research | The Outcomes Partnership (2003). | Common datasets for client records, assessment tools and approach to Data Protection principles JU4J IT strategy to include improving IT capacity and use by providers; also staff IT skills A JU4J data quality plan Standardise referral protocols/SLAs |
| Report of Evaluation of Joined-up ICT Pilot. | Capital City Partnership (2004). | Develop IT policy; improve provider ICT capacity and staff skills |
| Employability in practice | Crighton M (2004) | |
| Annual Labour Market Statement, monthly bulletin; Skills Report | Lothian Labour Market Unit (2005) | |
| Joined up for Jobs/Working Capital survey | Design Links (2004) | Improve opportunities to give comments/ideas to JU4J JU4J does not do much to help people stay in work after recruitment |
| Stock-taking notes Plus Partners' Forum comments | Rocket Science (2005) | Continue with JU4J approach but consider links with/inclusion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills agenda • Schools • Further Education • Literacy and Numeracy • Enterprise • Workforce Development • Health Services |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational rehabilitation • Clients' experiences; co-design <p>Wider geographical coverage?</p> <p>Ways of working – with families? with small groups?</p> <p>Better management information across the system</p> |
| Interim report of Working Together | CEC (2004) | |
| Regeneration Outcomes Agreement | ... (2005) | Set targets and monitor progress on targets |
| Changing Expectations – application and background research | CEC/CCP (2005) | Response to loss of manufacturing and manual employment needed, in particular in changing attitudes to main employing sectors and also enabling employers to recruit from all pools of labour |
| Pattern of Delivery of Employability Services | Capital City Partnership (2003) | |
| Service Delivery and Infrastructure | City of Edinburgh Council (2003) | |
| School leaver destinations and the youth labour market in Edinburgh and the Lothians | LLMU (2004) | |
| Homelessness | Grierson Associates (2001) | |
| Academy Development Model Report | Mark Crawford, ERA (2005) | Academies should demonstrate income from employers Review current areas of delivery |

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| | | Understand relationship between academies and intermediaries |
| Sustaining the Academy Approach | Mark Crawford, ERA (2005) | Fill gap in created by eligibility criteria of mainstream funds (ND, TfW) Incentivise or fund academies to work with JU4J partners |
| JU4J ICT policy | | |
| DOCUMENTS TO BE FINALISED | | |
| Wise Move reports inc 'pathways to work' and 'mapping, co-ordinating and capacity building' | | |
| Wise up, Get sorted Presentations | | |
| Employer engagement – academies, Joined up with Employers | | |
| Policy lessons from local partnership | | |
| W T STEERING GROUP MTGS | | |
| June 2004 – Use of ICT | | Policy on use and function of ICT |
| August 2004 - employability | | Agree a definition of employability Influence Education policy and practice to include employability within curriculum Consult with those who are currently unemployed |
| Sept 2004 - entrepreneurship | | Self-employment as an option for jobseekers Significance of debt as a motivation and barrier to self-employment? |

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| | | Does the benefit system encourage starting in the informal economy Integrate Joined Up For Enterprise activities with WT and JU4J |
| November 2004 – LEAPS, EES | | LEAPS recommendations – equal opportunities monitoring; lifelong learning Question of local capacity to deliver on Objective 2 of EES – Improving quality and productivity at work; On EES Guidelines on Making Work Pay and Transforming Undeclared Work local capacity is limited to providing information on opportunities or obligations created by government legislation |
| Dec 2004 – Adaptability: Basic Skills; | | Linkages between Basic Skills/Lit & Num and JU4J/WT |
| April 2005 – Lifelong Learning | | Linkages with Lifelong Learning Partnership The EU a Knowledge Society by 2010? Guidance skills of frontline staff Linkages with DELIVER and FE colleges Employability on FE courses |
| AREAS OF WORK AWAITING DOCUMENTATION | | |
| Employment and employability for recovering addicts; EDAAT, sorted, Transition, EIU | | |
| Money Advice Pilot (underway) | | Incorporate access to financial literacy, money advice |
| Primary Intermediary Model (underway) | | |
| Prison-leavers study (underway) | | |
| Community Benefit from physical development (ex-Edinwork) | | |

