

Minute of the Employability Strategic Group meeting held on 3rd September 2014 at 10am at Lifeskills Centre, Kirkwall

1. Welcome and apologies

Present:

Stuart Allison	Economic Development, Orkney Island Council (OIC)
Sue Baird	NHS Orkney
Su Dutton	Orkney Health and Care (OHAC)
Andee Fraser	Lifeskills Centres
Karen Greaves	Education, Leisure & Housing, OIC
Karen Johnstone	JobCentre Plus (JCP)
Robert McGregor	Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO)
Heather Manson	Education, Leisure & Housing, OIC
Doreen Rendall	Skills Development Scotland (SDS)
Linda Russell	Orkney College
Rhona Shearer	JCP
Amy Thomson	Employability Orkney

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Maggie Berston (NHS Orkney), Frazer Campbell (Orkney Blide Trust), Chessa Couperwhite (Highlands and Islands Enterprise), Fraser Devine (VAO), Julie Nicol (NHS Orkney), Jackie Thomson (OIC) and Frances Webster (SDS)

2. Minutes of the last meeting from 24th June 2014

- 2.1 The minutes were agreed.

3. Matters arising and action points from the last meeting

- 3.1 The annual report from the Employment Engagement Worker is yet to be circulated.
- 3.2 It was agreed that the figures for indicator 2.4 should consist of core agencies only.
- 3.3 KG yet to discuss with Anna Whelan as the outcome of the bid for *Get it Together* is awaited.

4. Election of Vice-Chair

- 4.1 As Karen G is now Chair, a Vice-Chair is required.
- 4.2 There were no volunteers for the position of Vice-Chair. It was suggested that Fraser Devine be approached for this role.
Action: KG to ask FD if he would take on the role of Vice-Chair.

5. Strategic Employability Pipeline

- 5.1 EF attended the meeting in order to discuss the suggested amendments to the report he produced regarding the strategic employability pipeline.
Action: EF to make changes to the report as discussed and report to be circulated to group.
- 5.2 A workshop for ESG members will be arranged to discuss and prioritise the recommendations within the report.
Action: HM to arrange

6. Youth Employment Scotland Scheme

- 6.1 Evaluations were carried out with several employers regarding the impact of the funding and sustainability of posts. Evaluations are to be carried out with remaining employers from Phase 1.

Action: Kerry Omand to carry out evaluations.

- 6.2 17 new posts have been created with the aid of YES funding since April 2014. The age limit for employees under this scheme was recently extended from 24 to 29. An increased bid for an additional 10 new posts will be submitted to Scottish Government shortly.
- 6.3 In addition, the YES funding has enabled OIC to create six paid work experience placements, specifically for those most vulnerable young people who are facing significant barriers to work. The posts are 25 hours per week for 26 weeks and are being created across a number of services within OIC. During the placements, the successful candidates will also attend Orkney College in order to complete the Certificate of Work Readiness.

7. European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

- 7.1 Scottish Government and COSLA are considering how funding will be distributed. It is expected that funds will be allocated for 3 years.
- 7.2 Nationally, local authorities are considering how partnerships are to distribute and utilise funds. Guidance is yet to be received.

8. Employment Engagement Worker Update

- 8.1 Kerry Omand is doing well in this post to date. There have been several more outcomes since the report was produced. Kerry has been presented with a number of clients who have been referred to the EEW previously.

Action: HM to circulate EEW report.

- 8.2 The EEW post is currently temporary until 31st March 2015 but it is hoped that it could be stabilised if funding could be committed for 2-3 years.

9. Labour Market Information

- 9.1 Month on month, unemployment figures are continuing to fall. However, with a smaller labour market, the available work force for employers is limited.
- 9.2 There may need to be a greater focus on those aged between 25 and 49.

10. Agency Update

VAO/Connect

Connect are currently advertising for a new post of an Outreach worker. A full-time support worker has recently left and this post will be advertised shortly.

JCP

RS is currently looking at the possibility of a Condition Management post for next year.

Orkney College

Orkney College are embedding the Certificate of Work Readiness (CWR) within the Stepping Stones course. A similar certificate, at a lower level, is currently being piloted by SDS.

It was felt that the CWR should be promoted to employers.

SDS

A UCAS higher education convention is being held on 25th September at KGS from 2pm-6pm. The event is open to all and universities and colleges will be present.

Chris Cook, careers adviser has retired. Kerry Liddle commenced her post as PA in the Kirkwall office recently. Interviews for a Team Leader for Orkney have taken place but the successful candidate is yet to be announced.

Lifeskills Centre

AF reported that the numbers of those on the Work Programme have dropped but there has been success with the Employability Fund.

There is currently a lack of apprenticeships available in Orkney.

11. AOCB

A workshop on Project Search – A Learning Disability Job Coaching Model is taking place on Tuesday, 30th September at 12pm – 3pm in the Grainayre Room, Picky Centre.

The project has proved very successful in USA and elsewhere and the workshop will be used to consider how the model can be adapted for Orkney.

Action: HM to forward invitation from SD to ESG members.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place in early December. HM to email the group.