

Minute of the Employability Strategic Group meeting held on 6th August 2013 at Job Centre Plus, Kirkwall

1. Welcome and apologies

Present:

Karen Johnstone	Jobcentre Plus (<i>Chair</i>)
Fraser Devine	Voluntary Action Orkney
Doreen Rendall	Skills Development Scotland
Ian Robertson	Employability Orkney (<i>part of the meeting</i>)
Suzanne Baird	NHS Orkney
Frazer Campbell	Orkney Blide Trust
Stuart Allison	Orkney Islands Council
Karen Watson	Skills Development Scotland

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Frances Webster (SDS), Linda Robertson (SDS), Chessa Llewellyn-White (Highlands and Islands Enterprise), Karen Greaves (OIC), Maggie Bertson (NHS Orkney) and Su Dutton (Orkney Health & Care).
- 1.2 Karen J welcomed Karen Watson from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting from 30th May 2013

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising and action points from the last meeting

- 3.1 SDS has offered to arrange a partners' event on local labour market. Karen J to follow up with Frances Webster and Linda Robertson.

ACTION: KJ

- 3.2 Process of money transferring for Karen Currie's post to be finalised. Karen C has been extremely busy especially following the successful employer event. A report will be available for the next meeting.

ACTION: KC

- 3.3 There are 7 employers with people ready to start that are eligible for the wage incentive through Youth Employment Scotland. The target is 10 jobs however there may be additional funding available should there be more demand. New employers are coming forward to enquire about the funding. The employer event initiated many of the enquiries.

- 3.4 The employer event held in the Town Hall was very successful. There was good commitment from employers and between 20 to 30 employers attended. Jobcentre Plus, Orkney Islands Council and Skills Development Scotland attended. CVs were available with wage incentive information attached which was useful. Lots of new small employers attended.

4. My World of Work

- 4.1 Karen Watson is part of the Partner Development and Integration Team at Skills Development Scotland to roll out My World of Work and deliver training sessions. Karen offered to provide sessions for individual organisations if it would be helpful. Karen is based in Kinross with responsibility for Tayside and Orkney. My World of Work was launched in August 2011 and is continually being developed. Karen provided an overview of the My World of Work website.

Ian left the meeting.

5. Unemployment statistics

- 5.1 Karen provided unemployment statistics and explained that there are 130 on the register however there is an aging register of unemployed people who are finding it difficult access opportunities. The majority move off the register before 6 months but there is a group of difficult to help customers who have been unemployed for a long time.

Stuart asked if it was possible to have a comparison of unemployed statistics available. Karen J will investigate if this information is available.

ACTION: KJ

6. Work Programme returners

- 6.1 People who have been on the work programme for two years will be returning to Jobcentre Plus soon. There are about 10 to 12 people and are the hardest to help as they have significant barriers preventing them accessing opportunities. Jobcentre Plus is collating the characteristics of this group which will be brought back to ESG. **ACTION: KJ**

8. Autism Strategy Group

- 8.1 Karen J summarised theme 6 of the Autism Strategy Group report. Theme 6 is the wider opportunities and access to work section which Karen J agreed to take to the ESG. Partners will already be working with people with autism but this information needs to be collated and reported back. Action 55 increase awareness of staff for leisure centres has been passed onto OIC. Action 59 lifelong opportunities has been passed onto Kerry Spence at OIC. Action 58 has been passed onto OIC and Orkney Housing Association Ltd. Fraser Devine said that VAO had secured funding for a 2 day week post to work with young people with autism. The employability pipeline could provide information on the clear routes on progression for people with autism. Suzanne said that there is provision but perhaps there is lack of information.
- 8.2 Partners to map their provision and identify any gaps. **ACTION: ALL**

9. Orkney Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP)

- 9.1 Suzanne said that a needs assessment was carried out by the ADP. Twenty four recommendations were made which were prioritised. A high priority recommendation was that the ADP should ensure that alcohol and drugs treatment and recovery services are identifying their clients' employment related aspirations and needs as well as looking at strengthening the links between education, training, volunteering and employment services and treatments/recovery services.
- 9.2 Provision available but perhaps lack of information and joined up services.
- 9.3 Gap in supported volunteering for this client group. Fraser Devine to contact ADP regarding funding. **ACTION:** Fraser

10. Employability Fund

- 10.1 Doreen explained that the Employability Fund brings together the Scottish Government investment in pre-employment training. The fund aims to better reflect the needs of participants, improve outcomes and encourage progress along the skills and employability pipelines.

11. Agency update

- 11.1 Fraser Devine advised that the Connect project is now operating over 4 days a week which has been decreased temporarily. It is hoped that this situation is temporary and Voluntary Action Orkney has taken this difficult decision to ensure the least impact possible. This was due to funding constraints which should be resolved soon so that the project can return to 5 days as soon as possible.
- 11.2 Suzanne Baird advised that funding has been cut for the healthy working lives co-ordinator post. Suzanne would like to recruit someone based in Orkney with support from NHS Highland but this is dependant on funding.

12 AOCB

- 12.1 Doreen to forward contact details to Karen Watson for Lifeskills Centres.

- 13. Date of next meeting** – next meeting date to be sent by email.