

Minute of the Employability Strategic Group meeting held on 11th April 2013 at Job Centre Plus, Kirkwall

1. Welcome and apologies

Present:

Karen Greaves	Education, Leisure and Housing, OIC (<i>Chair</i>)
Andee Fraser	Life Skills Centre
Stuart Allison	Economic Development, OIC
Fraser Devine	Voluntary Action Orkney
Chessa Llewellyn-White	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Harvey Johnston	Elected Member, OIC
Karen Johnstone	Jobcentre Plus (for part of the meeting)
Doreen Rendall	Skills Development Scotland
Suzy Hopkins	Orkney Blide Trust

1. Welcome and apologies

1.1.1 Apologies were received Su Dutton (Orkney Health & Care), Maggie Berston (NHS Orkney), Suzanne Baird (NHS Orkney), Linda Russell (Orkney College), Frances Webster (SDS), Linda Robertson (SDS), Claire Sim (SDS), Frazer Campbell (Orkney Blide Trust), Amy Thomson (Employability Orkney) and Andrew Groundwater (OIC).

1.2 Karen G welcomed Harvey Johnston to the meeting.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting from 7 February 2013

2.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting with one minor amendment on page 3 section 8.1 - KG updated the group on the work of the YEAP not YEAG. **ACTION DR**

3.0 Matters arising and action points from the last meeting

3.1 Karen J to speak to Fraser D about target of 5 voluntary placements. Fraser and Karen to follow up. **ACTION FD & KJ**

3.2 Partners were asked to review the text of the Single Outcome Agreement document for accuracy and that the targets are challenging but achievable. Karen G will email all partners to check their section of the Single Outcome Agreement. **ACTION KG**

4.0 Welfare Reform/Universal Credit

4.1 This paper was noted by the group.

5. Unemployment Statistics

5.1 This paper was noted by the group. Karen G to speak to Karen J about a timeline of figures for comparison. **ACTION KG**

6. Youth Employment Scotland

- 6.1 European Social Funding had become through Youth Employment Scotland however there was a tight timescale to submit the application. Amy Thomson from Employability Orkney had been asked to review the documentation to see if an application could be submitted by the deadline of 12 April. Karen G to update the group by email.

ACTION KG

7. Employability Fund

- 7.1 Doreen R circulated a paper on the Employability Fund stages. The contracting process has been completed and contracts have been issued to successful bidders. However local provision cannot be discussed until the contracts have been signed and exchanged.

Karen J joined the meeting.

8. Employment Worker End of Year Report

- 8.1 Karen Currie's report was noted.
- 8.2 Karen J advised that funding had been secured to continue Karen C's post from May 2013 (OIC, JCP, EO, Lifeskills). However funding could not be secured to continue the post on a full time basis. The post will be reduced to 30 hours per week from 6 May 2013.
- 8.2 Karen J advised that a gap had been identified for coaching people with learning disabilities. Partners involved are Orkney Health & Care, Jobcentre Plus and Employability Orkney. Su and Amy have been working on an application to LEADER for funding to pilot one day a week coaching for 12 people with learning disabilities to assist them into employment.

9. Youth Employment Group/Action Plan Update

- 9.1 Karen G explained that the Orkney Youth Employment Action Plan was a working directory. She asked that all partners review the text and contact her with updates.

ACTION ALL

10. Feedback from Partnership Liaison Group

- 10.1 Chessa said that the last PLG meeting was held on 6 March. Fraser from Voluntary Action Orkney gave a presentation on intergenerational working. The Environmental Partnership also gave a presentation. The PLG were given a draft of the Single Outcome Agreement.

11. What next for ESG?

- 11.1 It was agreed that the ESG should focus on updating the employability pipeline document. Also a timeline of unemployment statistics for Orkney would be useful information for the group to have. Karen to send a template to partners to update pipeline.

ACTION KJ

12. Agency update

- 12.1 Karen G updated the group that OIC had agreed 4 graduate posts, 12 work experience placements and 4 Modern Apprenticeships. HR has been working on this and it is hoped that the work experience placements will be offered in May.
- 12.2 Stuart Allison advised the group that the New Business Start-up grant scheme was still available as well as the New Enterprise Allowance.
- 12.3 Karen J updated the group on the Welfare Reforms and the benefit cap. She said that positive messages and support should be given to those most affected by these changes. Also it was important that people were aware of the benefits of permitted work and part-time work which may not affect benefits.
- 12.4 Chessa advised the group that HIE supported graduate placements and there had been 6 in Orkney. She also updated the group on the Get IT Together project which will be launched week beginning 22 April in Westray, Stromness, Shapinsay and Kirkwall.
- 12.5 Fraser D said that VAO was recruiting a Volunteer Placement Worker to help recruit and support potential new volunteers. It's a 25 hour a week post.
- 12.6 Suzy advised the group that Orkney Blide Trust has a Transitional Employment Worker at weekends for 6 months. They also run a Work Club every Thursday morning and at other times as required.
- 12.7 Andee advised the group that some individuals on the Work Programme would be finishing in a couple of months. Lifeskills have been working on developing their provision for the Employability Fund.

13. AOCB

- 13.1 Stuart asked if Skills Development Scotland were continuing Flexible Training Opportunities which assisted businesses with training costs. Doreen advised that a new scheme had not been launched yet for 2013 and she would inform partners when further details were available.

ACTION DR

- 14. **Date of next meeting** – next meeting date to be sent by email. Anna Dawson, Employment Engagement Advisor, Skills Development Scotland based in Inverness would like to attend the next meeting.