

Minute of the Employability Strategic Group meeting held on 21 March 2012 at Job Centre Plus, Kirkwall

1. Welcome and apologies

Present:

Karen Johnstone	Manager, Jobcentreplus (<i>Chair</i>)
Maggie Berston	Human Resources, NHS Orkney
Fraser Devine	Voluntary Action Orkney
Amy Thomson	Employability Orkney
Linda Russell	Orkney College
Derek Aiken	Team Manger, All age disabilities, Orkney Health & Care
Joyce Slater	Skills Development Scotland
Tina Gilbey	Lifeskills Centre
Jackie Thomson	Economic Development
Hannah Thomson	Community Planning Officer, Orkney Islands Council (<i>Secretary</i>)

Apologies

Doreen Rendall	Skills Development Scotland
Chessa Llewellyn-White	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Robert Allan	Learning and Development, NHS Orkney

In attendance

Ian Robertson (*for item 5*) Employment Worker

Not present

Mary Anne Crook	Pubic Health, NHS
Jeremy Richardson	Orkney Blide Trust

Karen welcomed Jackie Thomson from the Council who would represent Economic Development, Linda Russell who had replaced Bill Ross from the College and Fraser Devine who had replaced Gail Anderson. Mike Drever would no longer be a Member of the group.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting (24 January 2012)

2.1 The minutes were accepted as accurate.

3.0 Matters arising and action points from the last meeting

3.1 The LEADER bid for the Employment Worker was successful. The match funding had been made up of funds from NHS, the Council, Skills Development Scotland, Healthy Working Lives and Life Skills. Karen thanked Amy Thomson for her work on pulling together the bid and everyone who contributed financially to the post. Karen asked that a meeting of the ESG be held to discuss the requirements of the post over the next year.

Action: HT

4.0 Training for Work allocations 2012/13

4.1 This item was postponed.

5.0 Employment worked update and position for 2012-13

5.1 Ian Robertson attended for this item and issued a progress report which outlined progress since appointment in December. Some of the key points were that he had:

- Worked with 40 customers

- Engaged with 45 employers
 - Secured 25 employment opportunities (18 work experience and 11 paid employment)
 - Healthy Working Lives – 27 employers provided with basic leaflet, 6 copies of Health Profits Booklet taken up and 1 Occupational Health visit arranged.
- 5.2 In addition, Ian had discussed with Linda Russell about trying to get an employability slot within the 'Pathways to Independence' course. At a later point in the meeting, Linda explained that this course had been developed with Joe Horrocks, Team Leader Lifelong Disabilities at the Council and Alison Skea, Human Resources at the Council. The full time activity agreement course has run with seven clients from St. Colms The course is about learning independence skills and so far the students have been involved with a range of services including a visit to the dentist, Citizens Advice Bureau, Housing and Fire and Rescue. The course is designed for people with severe learning disabilities and a Social Care Worker is provided by Orkney Health & Care. Linda felt that the College would like to restrict the course up to seven students as some required one to one support.
- 5.3 He had a meeting with Rebecca Scott at Human Resources in the Council about trying to get work placements from the Council, which one had already been committed to within the Library. He had also been working with Maggie Berston at NHS and she is trying to meet with Domestic Services to see whether they can take on a placement. Ian reported that the relationship with the Blide Trust continued to be good and some gardening opportunities for clients have been identified. Finally, two employers had visited Mary Anne Crook regarding Healthy Working Lives on the back of the information Ian had provided to them.
- 5.4 Ian had also circulated responses from the Operation Employability questionnaire of which 20 responses had been received. This showed that only one business had received multiple contact from 2 or more agencies in relation to the same person/job/placement, which was much lower than had been anticipated. Ian felt that the questionnaire could be developed further if it was to be reissued. He had found that it was a useful icebreaker for introducing Operational Employability.
- 5.5 Joyce asked that Skills Development Scotland were removed from the question 1 about agencies who had contacted employers as this was not their routine business.
- Action: IR**
- 5.6 Karen welcomed any comments or suggestions for Ian's work for the year ahead to herself or Hannah. In particular, it was expected that some changes may be required to the referral form.
- 5.7 It was agreed that the final LEADER application would be circulated around the Group.
- Action: HT**
- 5.8 Jackie explained that a follow up skills survey to the Business Survey was to be developed soon and that he would liaise with Ian on this.
- Action: JT**
- 5.9 Amy asked that formal letters of offer for match funding be submitted to her as soon as possible so that this can be confirmed with LEADER.
- Action: All funders**
- 6. Short Life Working Group update**

- 6.1 Karen explained that the piece of work had proved a complex and challenging project but the Short Life Working Group had presented to the OCPP Steering Group on 28 February outlining an Employability Hub model seeking their general steer on the proposal. There appeared to be general support for the model although further work was requested with the Council and NHS's Senior Management Teams. Karen asked that the Employability Hub model be circulated to the ESG.

Action: HT

7. Unemployment statistics

- 7.1 Karen circulated the February 2012 employment statistics which showed a more positive picture than recent months and it was noted that:
- There was a drop in unemployment for the first time since May 2011
 - For young people aged 18-24 there had been sign offs on all duration groups since June 2011
 - Off flows exceeded on flows for the first time since May 2011.
 - The Co-op had recruited 9 people, most of whom had been unemployed for some time.

8. Partnership Liaison Group update

- 8.1 It was noted that the PLG had met on 20 February and the new Economic Strategy had been presented for comment prior to final submission to the Steering Group. This had subsequently been approved by the Steering Group although would require Council endorsement and the next round of Committees in June. The OCPP's Consultation and Engagement Guidelines had also been presented for comment and subsequently approved by the Steering Group. Both of these documents were available to view on the community planning website.
<http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/COMMUNITYPLANNING/>. Hannah had also done a presentation introducing community planning to some new people on the PLG and would be happy to do a similar piece of work with other thematic groups or organisations.

9. Feedback from Strategic Economic Forum

- 9.1 Joyce provided feedback from the Forum and it was noted that they had a talk by Tanya McGill, St Magnus Festival and Neil Firth, Pier Arts Centre about the economic importance of cultural events and facilities. The Forum had been asked by the Steering Group to look into procurement issues with the Scottish Government contact John Ireland. The Coastal Communities Fund had been launched and is expected to be oversubscribed. It was also noted that each community group or organisation could only make one application to the fund.

10. Agency update

- 10.1 Skills Development Scotland reported that
- As part of modernisation, from the 22 March Joyce would also be the manager for Shetland.
 - They would be reporting on the School Leaver Destination Return Follow up soon. This is the six monthly follow up to see whether leavers are still in the same destination.
 - The Service Delivery Agreement with the Council was due to be updated and a meeting has been set for May to do this.

11. AOCB

11.1 Derek asked that an agenda item on Lifestyle Project be on the next agenda and also an item on the Autism Alert Card which was due to be launched on 22 May.

11.2 Jackie Thomson explained that a survey had been sent to 800 businesses and received a 50% response rate. A follow up skills survey will be launched later in the year and the findings from this will be shared with the ESG.

12. Date of next meeting – to be set by Hannah for May.