

Briefing Paper : Scotland's Employability Support Services



**Third Sector Employability Forum meeting
23rd March**

SEN SCOT

Please read in conjunction with Government's [response to the Creating a Fairer Scotland: Employability support consultation](#)

the **SENs**

8 key policy drivers

1. Support those further from the labour market for whom work is a realistic option
2. Value sub regional delivery and commissioning – encourage collaboration and align support
3. Service fee – underpinned by guarantee of minimum quality/consistency levels
4. Focus on sustainable employment, embedded for all clients
5. Incentivise support for fair work agenda
6. Government commitment that early demonstration should not compromise future services – looking longer term (5-10 years)
7. Drive integration and alignment of employability support to provide pre and post support to people who have been unemployed for over 24 months
8. Affordability – limited resources so numbers accessing services will need to be targeted

Emerging Themes

- A focus on those most in need of support, generally people who social firms/enterprises already support
- Strong emphasis on partnership and collaboration in delivery
- 1 year transitional measure will not compromise long term vision for employability support services in Scotland
- Ministers keen to move away from prime/subcontractor model – value of consortium approach stressed and use of specialist providers at a local level (and to reach people that don't currently engage with JCP/SDS)

Under Consideration

- An incentive (bonus payment) to encourage providers to support people into long term sustainable jobs (reducing the revolving doors syndrome)
- ESF could be a possible future source of funding for employability (from 2018) Attachment payments to smooth out cashflow for smaller providers
- No settled delivery geographically although Government currently considering 3 regions
 - North/Islands, East and West
- A shift in definition of a job outcome from hours to income

- Government aware employability very piecemeal and confusing at the moment. They are considering aligning all employability interventions/programmes so that the individual sees a suite of services and is provided with seamless transition support

Next Steps

There is ongoing engagement around programme design, particularly around what progression means/looks like.

Currently looking at aligning/integrating 3 strands

1. Government recognise the need to align Govt policy landscape internally
2. Map out what Local Authorities and Third Sector currently provide – what services are where
3. JCP and DWP – systems and systematic approach are restrictive. Need to align with JCP policy-wise and in programme terms. JCP remains a key point of referral for devolved services though it is itself not devolved – important to work together and build trust possibly through shared governance arrangements

Key Questions

- How do we define real and fair jobs?
- How do we demonstrate progression towards work and if a job is sustainable?
- Where does employability fit with Health in Scottish policy landscape?

General

- No impact on youth employability programmes, protected in the short term
- Still looking to hear best practice/what works, particularly keen to hear about and further research 'progression models'
- Keen to avoid any changes that will encourage unreasonable behaviour from providers (eg cherry picking)
- No data or costs on Work Programme from DWP

Unified Scottish Health and Work service

For people at risk of falling out of work or people recently unemployed due to a disability or long term health condition.

Government is currently investigating bringing together all the different health and work programmes/interventions into a single branded gateway and a point of contact where people are referred, to access a wide range of health/work support. An improved focus on mental health was also highlighted as was an advisory service for employers.

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