

## **North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership**

### **Economic & Learning Partnership**

#### **Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

##### **Attendance**

Alex Anderson, Economic Development Manager, Economic Development (**Chair**), North Ayrshire Council

Isobel Kelly, Operational Manager, Money Matters, Social Services, North Ayrshire Council

Stephen McLaughlin, Manager, Volunteer Centre

Mary Docherty, Head of Service, Education and Skills, North Ayrshire Council

Joy Love, Partnership & Stakeholder Manager, Scottish Enterprise

Jim Nichols, CVS Arran

Jim Burns, External Relations Manager

Brian Cameron, Manager for Ayrshire, Skills Development Scotland

Marlene McMillan, Lead Public Health Practitioner, NHS Ayrshire and Arran

Annique Armstrong, Regional Director, Visit Scotland

##### Also in attendance

Andy Lee, Labour Market Initiative Co-ordinator, Economic Development

Angus O'Henley, Economic Development Officer, Economic Development

Anne Todd, Community Planning Team Leader (Chief Executive's), North Ayrshire Council

Morna Rae, Community Planning Officer (Chief Executive's), North Ayrshire Council

Lesley Jeffery, Community Planning Assistant (Chief Executive's), North Ayrshire Council

##### **Apologies**

Councillor John Bell, North Ayrshire Council

John McKnight, Manager, Community Development, Education and Skills, North Ayrshire Council

Hugh McGee, Cunninghame Housing Association

Irene Gott, Head of Workforce Futures

Cindy Robb, Director of Business and Customer Relations, James Watt College

#### **1. Welcome**

Alex Anderson welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

#### **2. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved with one exception. Isobel Kelly asked that it be noted under Stage 3 of the Strategic Skills Pipeline (Page 4) that "the over 50s may not be overly concerned about training".

## 2.1 Matters Arising

### Third Sector Interface

Alex Anderson requested an update from Stephen McLaughlin or Jim Nichols. Jim provided an update as follows:

Members of the Third Sector had attended the CPP Board meeting in September. There was a short discussion on the interface that VCNA and CVS NA merge into one development trust and will then work in partnership with Arran CVS. This is expected to be finalised by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

### SDI

Alex Anderson confirmed this is ongoing and North Ayrshire is now on the SDI database (extranet).

### Community Learning and Development Update

To be deferred to the next meeting

**Action: Lesley Jeffery**

## 3. Outcomes Modelling – Amanda Coulthard

Amanda Coulthard, Assistant Director, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, on behalf of the CPP Management Group is meeting with all thematic groups. She explained that three priorities were identified by the CPP Management Group on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and there is a need to evidence what is currently happening in these areas across all partners, including the voluntary sector.

The three priorities are Tackling Health Inequalities; tackling worklessness and tackling community safety. Amanda further explained that a report is to be submitted to the Board in December to allow time to feed into budgets, etc, but in the short term we could concentrate on current activity.

There were concerns that early intervention in employment programmes would mean cutting off a lot of people and that early intervention whilst important in areas of health and education was not quite so important in employability.

Amanda confirmed there may be limited funding available to support programmes in the short term while resources are de-invested in other areas and it may lead to change if evidence can be produced of a particular project's importance to the priorities.

Amanda also confirmed that although regeneration is not an individual priority it is a theme which runs through all three priorities and that a report is being submitted to the SMT on 27<sup>th</sup> October which will provide more detail and which can be forwarded to the group thereafter.

Alex Anderson thanked Amanda for the presentation and confirmed that it is agreed that the group would forward Amanda detail of current activity within their service area even if done by another agency, the end date (if applicable), where it fits into the triangle (and it can fit into more than one). Short term outcomes can also be suggested by the group. This information is to be forwarded to Lesley Jeffery

([ljeffery@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:ljeffery@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)) by 9<sup>th</sup> November please. Alex also agreed to forward the Terry report to Amanda once received.

**Action: ALL / Lesley Jeffery / Alex Anderson**

#### **4. DWP Update**

Jim Burns, JobCentre Plus updated the group as follows:

##### **Work Choice Programme**

This will replace Work Step, Work Preparation and Job Introduction Scheme. The Shaw Trust are to deliver the programme using sub-contractors. Access will be via Disability Employment Advisers and the aim is to get those with multiple and complex disabilities moved into 16 hours+ employment after 6 months. Shaw Trust are also providing the programme in Edinburgh, Lothians, Borders and South Scotland .

##### **Work Programme**

26 organisations are involved and the contracts will be worth between £10M and £50M. Those companies tendering must have an annual turnover of more than £20M but they can sub-contract. Assessment is currently ongoing and due end of November but more information is available on DWP website. Jim explained that the reason for a £20M turnover requirement is because they will be expected to cover costs for the first year and that thereafter it would be paid through benefit savings. He confirmed that there may be more support to contractors to support more difficult people into work.

There are 78 organisations tendering across Scotland but some may only bid for part of Scotland and not the whole and the tendering process will not be complete until January 2011. Jim agreed to provide regular updates.

**Action: Jim Burns**

Jim confirmed that the responsibility for conditionality for benefit will remain with JobCentre+ but they will be agreed by the provider. Jim was unable to confirm if lone parents would continue to be considered a group within themselves but added that the programme of not being able to claim income support when a child was over seven years of age had been successful and that this would now be progressing to those with children of five years of age. Andy said this would be more difficult here as in England they have the SureStart programme which provides support to working parents whilst we are having to close our after school care services.

##### **Get Britain Working**

Jim reported that Work Together and Work Clubs was announced on the same day as the child benefit cut and is part of the "Big Society" ethos. There is very limited support available to the most deprived 10 areas in the UK but there may be up to £200 seedcorn funding available.

##### **Work Together**

This is about promoting volunteering and getting unemployed people connected to the labour market and developing their skills but he confirmed volunteering will not be mandatory.

### **Work Clubs**

Work clubs provide support on a self help basis and Jim asked that anyone in the group who knows about job clubs should pass their details to him. It was noted that with the possible closure of community centres that there may be less work clubs as these are often run from community centres. Andy said that CLASPS, Working for Families and CLAD all fit this and he will pass their details to Jim.

**Action: ALL / Andy Lee**

### **Work for Yourself**

This is the new Enterprise allowance and will be launched next year and will be available to those who have been unemployed for six months and more. Guidance is available as well as financial support of £2,000, Job Seeker's Allowance for 26 weeks and half Job Seeker's Allowance for the following 13 weeks.

### **Youth Action**

Jim stated that he is awaiting a response from the Scottish Government but will keep the group up to date on progress.

**Action: Jim Burns**

Jim Nichols said that a lot seemed to be being asked from volunteers but there does not seem to be any funding available for infrastructure.

### **Spending Review**

The group agreed that the spending review and the reductions in child benefit and housing benefit will have an impact as will the tightening up on payments. There are currently 2.6M people on incapacity benefit and this is to be phased out by moving people to Employment Support Allowance or Job Seeker's Allowance through a work capability assessment which will start in February and is hoping to reassess 100,000 per week. Jim added there are currently 52 benefits available and in 2013 these will be reduced to two.

Isobel Kelly said that this will impact on other services like welfare rights (for appeals) or health (for GP reassessments). Jim said that the appeals process may be simplified and he confirmed that anyone making an appeal retains their incapacity benefit until the appeal process is completed which does mean there is no downside to not appealing.

Andy Lee said North Ayrshire is job deprived and we would need 15,000 more jobs just to reach the Scottish average. He said that the programmes may not consider us a priority as they will be less likely to attain sustainable jobs but Jim confirmed that DWP would be monitoring results across all areas.

Jim Burns added that across Ayrshire in the last period 2,203 have joined and 3,096 have left and that there has been a drop in the registers over the last 6 months. Long term unemployment has however increased by 77% over the last two years and there is also a 22% deduction in vacancies from last year. He agreed that more needs to be done to get jobs into the area and is meeting with the Scottish Government in November.

Mary Docherty agreed that we need to believe that we can do something to change the situation and asked what the current position is with a new Sainsbury's moving into the area. Stephen McLaughlin asked if we could ask Irvine Bay to move forward

their plans for Ardrossan Harbour area as this would provide a lot of jobs but Alex Anderson said that Irvine Bay is dependent on the Scottish Government for their funding so it could not be moved forward. It was also suggested that we could target Hunterston monies and find a way to give people access to the hidden jobs market as only a percentage of jobs are advertised with JobCentre+.

The Council have also made a special case to the Government following the SIMD report stating that we need more resources in the area. Andy Lee added that we have slowed the decline but not turned it around. Our programmes perform well and we target different areas but there will be an effect if the economy declines further.

## **5. Employability / Priority 5 Update**

Andy Lee provided the update to the group. The Terry report is still in draft stage and has been asked to be more critical. Victoria Allan will be asked to the next meeting.

**Action: Alex Anderson**

### **Priority 5**

The North Ayrshire bid has now been submitted for 2 years for £1.75M. £1.25M has been awarded to support North Ayrshire and there are currently discussions with SDS and the funding council to see how the money should be spent. Andy added that although we are 8<sup>th</sup> in the list of 13<sup>th</sup> the split per capita rather than percentage of population of our funding award is quite fair.

## **6. Partner Updates**

### **a. Visit Scotland**

Anniqne Armstrong of Visit Scotland had to leave the meeting early and her report is submitted for information. Alex Anderson noted that there is no outcome for North Ayrshire.

### **b. Scottish Enterprise**

Joy Love, Scottish Enterprise presented her report. She continues to keep the group up to date on Hunterston and although the east coast's supply chain is more developed Scottish Enterprise are working to make North Ayrshire more attractive to investors.

The recent Offshore Renewables Conference was also well attended and companies were informed of what is on offer in this area.

### **c. Financial Inclusion**

Isobel Kelly distributed her report to the group for information highlighting that £241,000 of debt had been written off and income maximisation has realised more than £355,000. 51 loans have been awarded in order to redeem high cost loans. Isobel also explained that credit union users have more than one account and that is why there are almost twice as many accounts as members.

## **7. CPP Update**

### **CPP Board - September**

Morna Rae, Community Planning Officer, highlighted a couple of the issues which were discussed at the recent Board meeting; the Third Sector update (which Jim Nichols has already given) and a discussion on the possible job cuts across all partner agencies. Morna also gave the group an update on the SIMD report which was submitted to the Scottish Government and to MPs and MSPs to seek their support for additional intervention. Council officers have now met with civil servants to discuss the priority issues of worklessness and health improvement in the area and Elma Murray has written to Peter Housden, Permanent Secretary, Scottish Government stating that North Ayrshire would wish to be considered for any government initiatives in respect of the two priority issues.

Morna also highlighted the recent successful trip by some councillors from Northern Ireland which had been organised by George Thorley of SOLACE. The councillors reported that they had enjoyed the experience and particularly enjoyed seeing the projects which were visited (Eglinton Park for Future Jobs Fund, Greenwood for Campus Cops, KA Leisure and Firefighters in Schools, Vineburgh Project, Healthy North Ayrshire and CEIS) and that the media coverage was also good. Morna thanked those in this group who were involved in organising and facilitating these visits.

## **8. AOB**

### **Opportunities for Digital Inclusion**

The group agreed that their email addresses could be forwarded to Morag Sinclair of the Scottish Training Foundation.

**Action: Andy Lee**

### **Operational Group**

Jim Burns, JobCentre+ asked if Criminal Justice could join this group. Andy said that following suggestions from the McGregor review there would be a separate operational sub-group of this group and they would be invited to join that group. Jim agreed to forward this information to Criminal Justice.

**Action: Jim Burns**

### **Work, Health and Wellbeing Group**

Marlene McMillan, NHS Ayrshire and Arran reported that a workplan has now been agreed. Training on Employability programmes for NHS staff will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> November and a further one will be arranged for Social Services and Housing staff. Irene Sinclair will provide further details to the group.

**Action: Marlene McMillan**

## **9. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010 at 10am. No apologies were submitted in advance.