

North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership
Economic & Learning Partnership
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 26th September 2011

**Attendance**

Alex Anderson, Economic Development Manager, Economic Development, North Ayrshire Council
 Steve Morley, Economic Development, North Ayrshire Council
 Stephen McLaughlin, Chief Executive, The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT)
 Mary Docherty, Head of Service, Education and Skills, North Ayrshire Council
 David Carracher, Education and Skills, North Ayrshire Council
 Brian Cameron, Area Manager, Skills Development Scotland
 Isobel Kelly, Operational Manager, Money Matters, Social Services, North Ayrshire Council
 Jim Burns, External Relations Manager, Job Centre Plus
 Colin McKee, Community Regeneration Unit Manager, Cunninghame Housing Association
 Councillor John Bell, North Ayrshire Council
 James Ledgerwood, Irvine Bay URC
 Jim Nichols, Arran CVS
 Irene Sinclair, Public Health Practitioner, NHS, Ayrshire and Arran

Also in Attendance

Alex Gallagher, Chair, Community Planning Partnership
 Morna Rae, Community Planning Officer (Chief Executive's), North Ayrshire Council
 Lesley Jeffery, Community Planning Assistant (Chief Executive's), North Ayrshire Council (minute)
 For Education and Skills presentation: Laura Cook, William Ferries, Evelyn Martin and Simon Hasler

Apologies

Carol Kirk, Corporate Director (Education and Skills) **(Chair)** North Ayrshire Council
 Angus O'Henley, Economic Development Officer, Economic Development
 Joy Love, Partnership & Stakeholder Manager, Scottish Enterprise
 Margaret Watt, James Watt College
 Audrey Sutton, Manager, Information and Culture, North Ayrshire Council

1. Welcome

Alex Anderson welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that he had been asked to chair in the absence of Carol Kirk.

The group was asked to note that Item 4: Community Engagement Presentation is being deferred to the next meeting. **Note**

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The previous minute was accepted.

2a Matters Arising

2. Andy Lee was not able to attend the meeting but Jim Burns said he had further information contained within his update.
2. Audrey Sutton was not able to attend the meeting and an update will be provided to the next meeting.
3. Morna Rae confirmed that progress is being made on Health Careers Pathways Group.
6. The Future Jobs Evaluation Fund will be available after 30th September and thereafter will be distributed to the group.
7. Details on the Innovation Fund is included in the meeting pack.
7. Details on the Social Impact Bonds are included in the meeting pack.
10. The next meeting of the MCMC Sub-group is 6th October and updated information will be distributed thereafter.

Audrey Sutton

Andy Lee

Note

Note

Mary Docherty

3. Supporting Successful Transitions Presentation

David Carracher introduced the presentation detailing how Education and Skills support young people at risk of not making positive transitions.

After the presentation there was some discussion and the following was highlighted:

- It was confirmed that the team work with Skills Development Scotland and that there is a handover process;
- SDS offer intensive support to sustain positive destinations as 55% of North Ayrshire young people are at risk of not progressing into a positive destination. This compares poorly with the national average of 36% but that it should be recognised that 50% of North Ayrshire's unemployed teenagers live in SIMD areas;
- Jim Burns said that the presentation was very encouraging and that soft skills are what employers are looking for;
- The programme supports 128 young people but only three now had full-time employment and another two had joined the army. This seemed a disappointing return for investment and James Ledgerwood asked what the Partnership could do to help;
- David Carracher agreed that it may appear to be a poor investment but that for many it was not about the result but about how far they had come in the process. Young people helped back to education have improved literacy and numeracy and better attendance levels and deserve the best education and opportunities that can be provided;
- Transitional assistance is provided for all school pupils and David Carracher confirmed that Education and Skills have provided a teacher for one day a week to help support all pupils to find jobs by matching job skills and job aspirations;
- It was suggested that we use the public sector to provide destinations for at least 10 of these young people;
- James Ledgerwood agreed to meet with David Carracher to target

some of these young people for opportunities in the upcoming Irvine Town Centre developments;

- Councillor Bell expressed concern about the number of young people with previously positive destinations who are back on statistics at 18. Laura Cook, Education and Skills agreed stating there is a huge effort to get young people into college but she did not know what colleges did to sustain the placements;
- Jim Burns said that East Ayrshire Council work closely with the Prince's Trust on a number of programmes including retail and cookery programmes. David Carracher responded stating that the Skills Academies within our schools are doing the same work.

**James
Ledgerwood
/ David
Carracher**

4. Community Engagement Presentation

As stated earlier, this item is being deferred.

5. Update: Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy

Alex Anderson informed the group that the Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy was approved in February 2011 and the 3-year business plan approved in August 2011. A board is now being set up and an approach has been made for a chair and invitations sent to invite partners onto the Board.

Also the Council's Communications team is working on a summary document for the Strategy and Action Plan.

6. Update: Employability

Steve Morley, Economic Development confirmed that Priority 5 is on target and a report for Quarter 2 will be available for the next meeting.

A new programme for 18-25 year olds has been introduced based on one used successfully in West Dunbartonshire. 125 young people will participate in the programme which includes vocational training and work placements in a variety of different settings. 75% subsidies will be available and Jim Burns and Steve Morley agreed to meet separately to discuss the eligibility criteria.

**Steve
Morley / Jim
Burns**

Alex Anderson added that the Innovations Fund bid by North Ayrshire Council has now been progressed to Stage 2.

7. Update: Jobcentre Plus – Welfare Reforms

Jim Burns, Jobcentre Plus said that Jobcentre Plus is currently working with employers on seasonal vacancies and he will be examining the seasonal vacancies which may be available locally.

Jim provided some stats comparing North Ayrshire with the national average as follows:

- Unemployed: 22.2% (16.8% national average)
- Job Seeker's Allowance: 5,933 (highest number in the last year and a 25% increase on the same time last year)
- 18-24 year olds: 16.4% (9.3% national average)
- ESA: 9.8% (8.1% national average)

- 22 referrals to New Enterprise Allowance. Jim agreed to check if the Enterprise Allowance works with Business Gateway.

Jim Burns

Jim also informed the group that Jobcentre Plus have signposted over 11,000 people to local work clubs and that Asda have also offered to run a work club which will start in October in their Ardrossan store. There are 3,000 national work experience placements being made available and some of these will be available locally.

Jim also asked the group if they were aware of any organisations looking to develop a work club they should contact him.

ALL

Local Recruitment

Jim said that whilst Sainsbury's are advertising online Jobcentre Plus are working with Community Learning and Development, CEIS and Remploy who offer support and guidance to assist people with online applications. Jim added that half of the 170 available jobs have already been advertised.

Jobcentre Plus also working closely with Stellar UK (call centre) who have continuous vacancies. Belhaven (restaurant and hotel) and KFC are due to move into Kilwinning and it may be that Jobcentre Plus will receive advance notification of vacancies as they have agreements with some employers to provide this.

Modern Apprentice Places

Brian Cameron, SDS asked the group to let SDS know of any employers who are willing to employ a modern apprentice. Whilst the company is responsible for wages training costs are paid by SDS and there may be subsidies also available to assist with wage costs.

ALL

8. Welfare Reform

Isobel Kelly, Money Matters distributed information outlining the impact of welfare reform and the Welfare Reform Bill. The consultation on devolution of Social Fund Grants and Crisis Loans is ongoing but CoSLA are also currently in consultation and local authorities may prefer to wait for more information from the Scottish Government on the risks and costs involved.

Isobel highlighted the change to Employment Support Allowance which will now be time limited (maximum entitlement of one year) with no transitional protection for current claimants and a resultant loss of £94.25 per week. Jim Burns added that Jobcentre Plus has already been asked to write to clients who may be affected by this change and Isobel added that this is likely to increase demand on Social Services and also on council benefits with reviews of housing and council tax expected to increase.

9. SOA Annual Report 2010-11

Morna Rae, Community Planning Officer outlined the report which has been limited to Tackling Worklessness. The appendix highlights some of the year's successes. The group agreed that the focus should remain the same and also that most targets are improving.

Councillor John Bell referred the group to 7b2 (Proportion of children living in households that are dependant on out of work benefits or Child Tax Credit) which last year was 58.8% and demonstrates the scale of the

difficulties faced in North Ayrshire. Isobel Kelly said that this was an HMRC measure and is likely to be different next year and linked to the statistics for child poverty for next year.

CPP Staff Changes

Morna also informed the group that Anne Todd has now moved to another post within Chief Executive's Service and that Sandra Bale, Policy and Performance Officer would be taking over her remit but that she will have her existing responsibilities as well as Community Planning.

10. Partner Reports

a. TACT

Stephen McLaughlin, Chief Executive, highlighted that TACT have recently set up thematic groups replicating the three SOA priorities and also that the Third Sector Interface have formed an overarching group to co-ordinate third sector capacity including Social Enterprise.

b. Money Matters

The report is submitted for information.

c. Cunninghame Housing Association

Hugh McGhee wished to highlight the workshop taking place on 15th December and recommended that members attend. Also that three apprenticeships have been secured with MITIE. These were widely publicised by CHA but that Greenwood Academy somehow managed to advertise them in their newsletter in the local newspaper one week after they were filled which caused disappointment for many young people.

d. Skills Development Scotland

This report is submitted for information.

e. Community and Culture, Education and Skills

This report is submitted for information. However, Jim Burns has spoken with Audrey Sutton regarding the referral process and is progressing with Cat Hester of Community Learning and Development.

11. A.O.B.

Social Economy Partnership

Jim Nichols, ACVS noted that the Social Economy Group, a sub-group of the Economic and Learning Partnership, had not met in 2011. Alex Anderson agreed to arrange a meeting of this group.

**Alex
Anderson**

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on 7th November 2011 at 10am in Committee Room 2.

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