

**North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership**  
**More Choices More Chances (MCMC) Subgroup**  
**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2011**



**Attendance:**

David Carracher, Quality Improvement Manager, Education and Skills, NAC (Chair)  
Laura Cook, Education Development Officer, Education and Skills, NAC  
Mary Docherty, Head of Service, Education and Skills, NAC  
Angus O'Henley, Economic Development Officer, Chief Executive's, NAC  
Lesley Arthur, Senior Educational Psychologist, Education and Skills, NAC  
Christine McGuire, Head Teacher, Greenwood Academy  
Alison Paterson, Principal Officer (Children & Families Residential), NAC  
Morna Rae, Community Planning Officer, NAC  
Stephen McLaughlin, Manager, Volunteer Centre  
Jim Burns, External Relations Manager, Job Centre Plus  
Brian Cameron, Skills Development Scotland  
Helen Canning, James Watt College (arrived later)  
Lesley Jeffery, Community Planning Assistant (Minute)

**Apologies:**

None received

**1. Welcome**

David welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that in recent times the group had expanded beyond the original core group and that, on this occasion, the invitation had been extended to the core partners only. The colleges had also been included.

**2. Previous Minute**

The minutes of the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2010 were approved.

**3. Matters Arising**

Labour Market Information

Angus O'Henley, Economic Development, confirmed that George Thompson is finalising a study on the skills employers are seeking and once completed will forward it to the group.

**Angus  
O'Henley**

**4. CPP Update – SOA Prioritisation Exercise**

Morna Rae, Community Planning Officer, provided an update to the group on the recent SOA prioritisation exercise and explained that the next SOA would focus on three priorities of tackling worklessness; tackling community safety and tackling health inequalities. Quarterly indicators would also be included to provide an improved measure of progress throughout the year.

The structure chart distributed to the group demonstrated the following changes:

- That the Environment Partnership and Housing Partnership (although the Housing Partnership will continue) will no longer be part of the CPP structure;
- That the remit of the CPP Management Group is undertaken by the Strategic Management Team but with a reviewed membership;
- That the sub-groups are not affected.

## 5. School Leaver Destinations Report (SLDR)

Laura Cook, Education and Skills, outlined the findings of the report. North Ayrshire remains 1% below the Scottish average in positive destinations for young people. There has been an improvement of 1% in the last year due to the efforts of school staff and careers advisors. It was noted however that whilst we have improved we have slipped from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> so other councils have made even better progress. Particular mention was made of Greenwood Academy's statistics and Christine McGuire, Head Teacher, Greenwood Academy agreed to speak at the next Head Teacher meeting about what is done in her school to improve the leaver destinations for her pupils.

It was also noted that there are more people going into Further Education and Higher Education this year. However, some young people who have decided not to go to Further / Higher Education but have a good standard of education and have been successful in finding employment which reduces the number of jobs available to those with fewer qualifications. Christine agreed stating that she knows of graduates who are currently employed as shop assistants.

Laura Cook and David Carracher are meeting with James Watt College next week to discuss future provision for schools. David agreed, at the request of Angus O'Henley, to include Priority 5 Funding monies in their discussion. Priority 5 Funding monies have been awarded to the colleges and they are obligated to consult CPPs on how to allocate this funding but to date they have not done so.

Brian Cameron, Skills Development Scotland agreed that the 1% increase is positive but highlighted the number of "unknowns" which has increased this year to 1.5%. He suggested these probably had positive destinations as they are not claiming Job Seeker's Allowance. The group agreed that the three schools with over 2% unknowns (St Matthew's, Garnock and Auchenharvie Academies) should be asked for further clarification.

Brian confirmed there has been an increase in those unemployed with higher qualifications and 32% of those unemployed are winter leavers but again, this is not unique to North Ayrshire.

Laura Cook suggested that there is an issue with winter leavers who start courses in January. As the courses finish in June they are often fast-tracked and therefore not appropriate for winter leavers. Christine McGuire said that she has found Kilmarnock College to be flexible in their approach to this group and Brian confirmed that winter leavers are initially in a positive destination but have often not sustained this at the time of the data collection in September.

**David  
Carracher**

**Laura  
Cook**

North Ayrshire has record numbers of young people returning for S5 and S6. Greenwood Academy had 100 more pupils than expected wanting to remain in fifth and sixth years. There is a challenge for schools in ensuring that their curricula meets the needs of all pupils.

#### Modern Apprenticeships

David Carracher reported that North Ayrshire Council is planning to increase the number of apprenticeships available and Brian Cameron stated that he is meeting with NAC's Human Resources Department to discuss further but there is a need for other partners, eg, NHS, to play their part in employing young apprentices.

### **6. Partners Going Forward – Risks / Challenges**

#### Education and Skills

Laura Cook presented the report to the group on behalf of Education and Skills and highlighted the following:

Activity Agreements are continuing and a national evaluation of the project is ongoing; there are increased numbers of vulnerable young people being helped in North Ayrshire and they continue to work closely with SDS and other partners. The group agreed that the Activity Agreements were working very well with the most vulnerable young people.

Laura confirmed that budget pressures will have an impact on what can be allocated to MCMC work. Mary Docherty confirmed that temporary posts may be extended to June but that David Carracher and Alison Paterson, Social Services and Health, should discuss separately.

Laura explained that some local projects will be reducing their services this year due to the 20% cuts being imposed by Inspiring Scotland including Enable and Impact Arts as well as a possible total loss of funding to Children 1st's mentoring project which had been providing services to Social Services clients.

#### Greenwood

Christine McGuire said that her report was for Greenwood Academy only and not all North Ayrshire secondary schools.

Christine said that vulnerable / at risk pupils are identified and monitored by guidance staff who complete written reports at the prelim stage for individual discussions with the head teacher. Christine added that this is very much a team effort by her staff, SDS, campus police officers, etc. Christine agreed to share this practice at the next Head Teacher meeting.

Christine is concerned about the reduced staffing levels and decreased vocational programmes being available in the future. Greenwood Academy is already running one class which was previously supported by Prince's Trust. Many of the pupils staying on have complex needs which add to staffing pressures.

Christine is also concerned how the Community Learning and

**David  
Carracher/  
Alison  
Paterson**

**Christine  
McGuire**

Development staff cuts will impact as CLD staff support some classes.

David Carracher confirmed that North Ayrshire continue to have meetings to discuss their 16+ provision and to share good practice.

#### Psychological Services

Lesley Arthur, Psychological Services presented her report and highlighted the following:

- That one of the challenges for Psychological Services is to ensure that staff to see the importance of post-school services especially as this is now a mainstreamed service.
- The service being offered to the children's units is ongoing and there are plans to extend this to Throughcare.

Alison Paterson said that she appreciates the effort from Psychological Services in the Children's Units and very much looks forward to the service being extended to Throughcare.

#### James Watt College

Helen Canning, Learning Services, James Watt College gave a verbal update.

Helen said that the current Winter leavers programme is being evaluated as the last young people to participate were not satisfied. David Carracher asked if there were any plans to offer higher order courses to fit with schools who are adjusting their education. Helen replied that they are designing courses which will be suitable for all levels of educational attainment . There are also progression routes available from the Hair and Beauty course and the childcare courses.

It was suggested that Laura arrange a meeting, before the end of January, with Helen, the school deputies and Francis McGeachy to discuss what the schools need and what colleges can offer within their available budgets.

Helen also agreed to find out the current situation with Priority 5 funding. Angus O'Henley will forward details to Helen of who Andy Lee has received information from.

**Laura  
Cook**

**Helen  
Canning /  
Angus  
O'Henley**

#### Skills Development Scotland

Brian Cameron presented his report and highlighted the following:

There is a workshop being arranged following a meeting with North Ayrshire's Chief Executive regarding the service level agreement with SDS and North Ayrshire and a draft agreement is expected by the end of March.

SDS are also going through an efficiencies programme resulting in a of 10% reduction in staff. This will impact on what they can offer and may impact on services within schools and there will be more services available online. Christine McGuire confirmed that, although she could not speak for all schools, that Greenwood had the IT capacity for accessing online. They continue to focus on the 16+ cohort, young carers, offenders, Looked After and Accommodated and disabled

young people and a policy is being developed to deliver on the ASN agenda.

Alison Paterson suggested that Brian contact the workers at the carers' centre who have a young carers' group and the Integrated Children's Services Plan group are also developing a young carers' strategy which may be useful.

**Brian  
Cameron**

Activity Agreements are likely to be rolled out across all 32 local authorities and not just the ten pilot areas. Confirmation is still awaited from the government on Funding for Lifeskills and Get Ready for Work payments transferring to EMA. Laura added that Finance are already speaking with the Government as this will have an impact on authority staff who currently administer EMAs for schools and Activity Agreements.

CPPs will have a say in how SDS deliver employability services. Andy Lee, Economic Development, is on the national group and a Pan-Ayrshire CPP group is expected soon. Angus O'Henley confirmed that North Ayrshire Council is happy with the process so far.

#### Jobcentre Plus

Jim Burns, Jobcentre Plus presented his report and distributed details of "The Work Programme" to the group and highlighted the following:

#### **The Work Programme**

- Tenders are due by 14<sup>th</sup> February and nine organisations have submitted tenders. The two successful organisations will be awarded contracts in March with delivery starting in June.
- Payments on these contracts will start at nine and 12 months so sustainable employment needs to be achieved.
- 18 to 24 year olds will be referred after 9 months and NEETs after 3 months.

#### **Get Britain Working**

- 5 measures including Work Together which focuses on volunteering. Stephen McLaughlin (TACT) confirmed he had already received 70 referrals.
- Work Clubs –CEIS and CLASP already included. Jim suggested that this could be done within schools and there is guidance on setting up work clubs and what may be appropriate for schools on the JCP website.
- 18-21 year olds will be referred for work experience after 3 months and JCP is currently seeking employers who can offer between two and eight weeks for 25-30 per week. David is concerned this may impact on the work experience programme currently offered in schools
- New Enterprise Allowance – referrals after six months but there is a possible conflict with Training for Work / Self Employed currently on offer from SDS.
- Service Academies is a devolved issue and Jim was unable to confirm if these would sit with SDS or colleges. Eligibility is likely to be from 18 years old but this has not been confirmed.

Jim confirmed that Jobcentre Plus' focus will be over 18s.

Jim has met with the Throughcare teams to move young people to working age benefits and also stated that there has been a 30% reduction in 16 and 17 year olds claiming hardship.

A challenge this year will be managing the redesign of Jobcentre Plus as it moves from six districts to four and the current area expands to include Renfrewshire, Dumbartonshire and Argyll and Bute.

Change is happening at a fast rate in Jobcentre Plus at the moment and Jim will endeavour to keep the group updated.

#### Volunteer Centre

Stephen McLaughlin presented his report and highlighted the following:

- Volunteering within secondary schools continues to be encouraged through the MV Award.
- The Volunteer Centre is now an SQA centre and a review is ongoing of MCMC activity programmes.

Work on creating Third Sector Interface which will deliver on four outcomes is ongoing and marketing of The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT) will start soon. Funding is still to be confirmed but Stephen is hopeful of at least a standstill budget.

Stephen confirmed that there are some aspects of The Ayrshire Community Trust which he hopes will cover all of Ayrshire but that volunteering responsibility would remain local in North Ayrshire.

#### Economic Development

Angus O'Henley gave a verbal update highlighting that they have ESF funding for two years and have ongoing programmes with SDS, Education and Skills, Paisley and Johnstone Training Group and Cunninghame Housing Association but will discuss separately with David Carracher how to take forward.

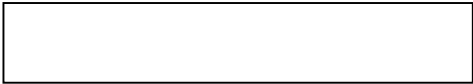
**Angus  
O'Henley /  
David  
Carracher**

### **7. Emerging Themes for 2011**

David Carracher said that it seems we are still at a transition stage but this smaller group has good partners and there will be further discussions outwith this group on a number of issues.

### **8. Date of Next Meeting**

It was clear to the group that more information will be available by March and it was therefore agreed that a further meeting be arranged for **22<sup>nd</sup> March at 2pm in Committee Room 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Cunninghame House.**



**ACTION NOTE:**  
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<b>Minute Item</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Checklist for next meeting</b> ✓
3.	Study of skills employers are seeking to be forwarded to the group once completed.	Angus O'Henley	
5.	Priority 5 Funding monies to be discussed at meeting with James Watt College	David Carracher	
5.	Further clarification on "unknowns" to be sought from St Matthew's, Garnock and Auchendarvie Academies	Laura Cook	
6.	Separate discussion to take place regarding temporary posts.	David Carracher / Alison Paterson	
6.	Current situation on Priority 5 funding to be confirmed.  Contact name to be forwarded to Helen Canning	Helen Canning  Angus O'Henley	
6.	Meeting to be arranged with school deputies, the school deputies, Helen Canning and Francis McGeachy to discuss what the schools need and what colleges can offer within their available budgets before the end of January	Laura Cook	
6.	Young Carers' centre to be contacted for assistance.	Brian Cameron	
6.	Separate discussion on ESF funding and how to take forward to take place	David Carracher / Angus O'Henley	