

# Employability

## Senior Leaders Group

### Terms of Reference

#### **Purpose**

The **Employability – Senior Leaders Group** has been convened to demonstrate collective leadership, provide advice and constructive challenge to the actions arising from the Employability – CV-19 Response – Operational Group in response to the impact of CV-19 on the labour market in Scotland.

Key to our response is the existing Scottish and Local Government Partnership Working Agreement for Employability and shared commitment to work with partners through No One Left Behind (NOLB). As such, the Senior Leaders group will work in an advisory capacity.

The group will champion a partnership approach, supporting ongoing dialogue with a range of service providers, employers, local partnerships and national agencies. The group will ensure wherever possible decisions and learning are led by evidence and data, in keeping with No One Left Behind objectives.

#### **Background**

As a direct result of CV19 we are facing an unprecedented labour market challenge with unemployment expected to rise significantly in the coming months. We recognise that what has been a health crisis is now turning to an economic crisis. Emerging evidence suggests that economic impacts will be disproportionate on certain sectors, individuals and communities.

The role of employability services is pivotal to avoiding the widening of social and economic inequalities by supporting those who are most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of this crisis, this will be essential in supporting Scotland's economic recovery. We recognise the vital role that a range of organisations across the employability landscape play, and are committed to protecting a diverse range of provision and ensuring that the right support is put into place for those who rely on these services.

#### **No One Left Behind**

Supporting people into fair, sustainable jobs is central to delivering many of the ambitions in Scotland around inclusive growth, tackling child poverty and public health reform.

The intention to create an employability system that puts people at the centre is set out in the publications:

- [No One Left Behind: Next Steps for the Integration and Alignment of Employability Support in Scotland \(March 2018\)](#)
- [No One Left Behind: Review of Employability Services \(December 2018\)](#)

The principles which underpin the approach are:

- Dignity and respect, fairness and equality and continuous improvement
- Provides flexible, and person-centred support
- Is straightforward for people to navigate
- Integrated and aligned with other services
- Provides pathways into sustainable and fair work
- Driven by evidence including data and experience of others
- Support more people to move into the right job, at the right time.

The approach is not about designing new programmes, but instead, reforming the system to be more adaptable and responsive to meet the needs of people and to react more quickly to rapidly changing labour markets.

This includes working closely with partners in Local Government, the third and private sectors, Skills Development Scotland, Department for Work and Pensions and others to build on the strengths of existing national and local services, to better align funding and to improve the integration of employability services with other support to ensure that services are designed and delivered around the needs and aspirations of those using our services.

The [Partnership Working Agreement for Employability](#) for employability signed by Scottish Ministers and COSLA leaders in December 2018, signalled a commitment to a collaborative approach between the two spheres of Government in Scotland. Regular updates on progress are available and can be found in the media section.

Delivering these ambitions will require collaborative leadership across all our partners and a culture change in how we design, deliver and fund services; and a collective commitment to joint working across all partners to plan and deliver services that are shaped by those that use them and the people that deliver them.

## **Membership**

**Chair:** Joanne Farrow, Deputy Director, Employability, Scottish Government

### **Members:**

Gavin Gray	Scottish Government
Amy Stuart	Scottish Government
Michael Dunion	Scottish Government
Ellie Crawford	Scottish Government
Cat Macaulay	Scottish Government
Sandra Black	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE)
Pamela Smith	Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development Group (SLAED)
Robert McGregor	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA)
Anna Fowle	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)
Kate Still	Princes Trust (Network of Networks)
Gordon McGuinness	Skills Development Scotland (SDS)
Alison Findlater	Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
Stuart McKenna	Scottish Training Federation (STF)
Rozanne Foyer	Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC)
Barry McCulloch	Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
Donna Burnett	Public Health Scotland (PHS)
Alison Nimmo	Developing Young Workforce (DYW)
Karen Watt	Scottish Funding Council (SFC)

John Wilkes  
Yvonne Blake

Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)  
Poverty and Inequality Commission (PIC)

**Secretariat:** David Watson, Employability Programme Management Office

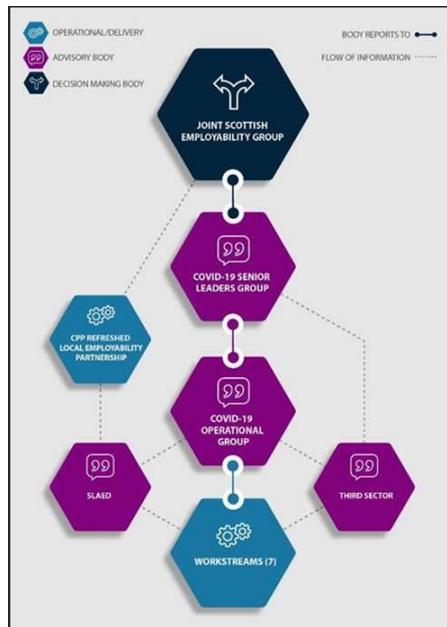
The members detailed above will be permanent. Ad-hoc attendees may be invited by the chair if required to represent a specialised area. The chair will determine the membership as required.

A minimum of 4 members which must include the Chair of the Group must be present for the meetings to be deemed quorate.

If a member is unavailable, a suitably empowered delegate must be in attendance unless agreed with the Chair in advance.

### **Governance**

The Group is an Advisory Group, with no decision-making powers and will make recommendations and escalate risks or issues as per the governance structure below.



It is recognised that members may bring items to the group for discussion subject to other governance structures. In this situation it is the responsibility of members to highlight the input they are seeking and associated governance route.

### **Reporting**

The Chair will provide a written update to the FWES Strategic Group and Employability – Senior Leaders Group on a bi-monthly basis or as otherwise requested.

### **Key Roles & Responsibilities**

- Representing the views and position of your current sector to provide advice, data & evidence, constructive challenge and expertise

- Ensure proposals for employability services remain focused on the best interests of services users and are reflective of the principles outlined in No One Left Behind.
- Endorsing solutions identified by the Covid-19 Operational Group, taking quick action on key issues and use data to monitor their effects, which will support the collective response to real time labour market demands and changes.
- Demonstrate real and tangible change in the actions and interventions of individual partner organisations.
- Advising on effective employability policy, programme and partnership interaction between local and national employability programmes.

### **Escalation**

Issues, risks or decisions will be escalated to the Scottish Employability Group, co-chaired by the Minister for Employment, Fair Work and Skills and the COSLA Spokesperson Community Wellbeing.

### **Way of Working**

- The group will meet every two months
- Meetings will last no longer than 2 hours
- Meetings will be cancelled if the chair agrees there is no substantive business to discuss
- Meetings will take place initially via Teleconferencing facilities
- The terms of reference and abbreviated minutes will be published on the Employability in Scotland website – [www.employabilityinscotland.com](http://www.employabilityinscotland.com)

### **Information Requirements**

The agenda will be agreed by the Chair

- Minutes, actions, decisions and forward look will be maintained by the Secretariat
- The agenda will be circulated at least 48 hours ahead of any meeting
- Information from the meetings will be used to provide updates to other groups and reporting to Ministers
- Information and data shared with members is intended to inform decisions taken by the group and will be treated as official-sensitive. Papers will not be shared beyond members unless prior consent has been agreed by Data Owners.