THIRD SECTOR EMPLOYABILITY FORUM
Tuesday 25 January 2010
Scottish Government, Atlantic Quay, Glasgow

Present:

Sam Anderson        SAMH
Susan Boath          Glasgow South West Regeneration Agency
Alan Boyle           West Fife Enterprise
Anita Boyle          LAMH Recycle Ltd
Alistair Cameron     Claverhouse Group
Liz Catterson        Scottish Government
Norman Chipakupaku CEMVO
Blyth Deans          Lennox Partnership
Philip Dunion        Apex Scotland
Joanne Farrow        Scottish Government
Edward Gorman        Richmond Fellowship Scotland
John Hinton          Move on
Dughall Laing        The Action Group
Isobel Lawson        Stepping Stones for Families
Lorna McCandlish     ACE Recycling CIC
Oxana Macgregor-Gunn Shaw Trust
Donna Mackinnon      SCVO
Lucy McTernan        SCVO
Judith Park          Richmond Fellowship Scotland
John Reid             Access to Employment
Jim O’Rorke          Scottish Government/SCVO
Joyce Thomson        SCVO
Doreen Walkinshaw    ENABLE Scotland
Margaret Wallace     SCVO
Paul Zealey          pza (Facilitator)

Apologies:

Louise Christie      Aspire2gether
Norma Curran         Values into Action Scotland
Peter Friend         Helm Training
Karen Herbert        Real Work Skills
Cathy McNaughton     Multicultural Family Base
Finlay Laverty       Prince’s Trust
Susan Millar         Prince’s Trust
Peter Purves         Intowork
Laurie Russell       The Wise Group
Rowan Steele         Aberlour Trust
1. Minutes of last meeting

The note of the last meeting was agreed, with an amendment that Donna Mackinnon replaced Lucy McTernan in interviewing for the secondment to the Forum.

2. Matters Arising

Secondment
Jim O’Rorke was introduced as the successful applicant for the secondment to the Forum. Jim will be splitting his time between The Scottish Government and SCVO and can be contacted at jim.o’rorke@scotland.gsi.gov.uk (Tel: 0300 244 1344)

Chair
Information was now available, and would continue to be circulated more widely with a closing date of the end of the month. Please contact Jim O’Rorke in the first instance.

3. Scottish Employability Forum

Donna Mackinnon provided some context to and provided an update from the Scottish Employability Forum (SEF). The Forum had superseded the Workforce Plus Partnership, and with its reinvented strategic direction, now sought to focus the work of the National Delivery Group and Third Sector Employability Forum on identifying the policy and practice issues causing problems for clients and organisations, provide case studies and where possible propose solutions. SEF has three standing sub-groups: on employer engagement, data-sharing and “the Scottish offer”.

Donna issued some accompanying documents:

- Sharing the eight “criteria for success” for SEF
- Circulating the SEF Draft Action Plan, highlighting Action Area 3 (Responding to identified employability challenges – where SEF would welcome examples and case studies from the third sector) and Appendix 2 (detailing available levers in Scotland to resource employability work), and
- Circulating The Scottish Government/CoSLA joint statement (“Equal Communities in a Fairer Scotland”) highlighting the role of the third sector

Lucy McTernan invited anyone with examples or evidence of reductions in employability services provided by third sector organisations as a result of the end of ring-fencing for Fairer Scotland projects to either alert Jim or contact her directly (email: lucy.mcternan@scvo.org.uk)

The Forum discussion included a reminder of the need to engage a deeper constituency and inform a wider discussion across the third sector, ensuring parallel structures were not being invented.

Future SEF dates this year are 4 March, 14 June, 13 September and 13 December.
4. National Delivery Group

Liz Catterson provided a verbal update from the National Delivery Group and agreed to circulate minutes when available.

Agenda items included:

- the better linking of the Workforce Plus and More Choices More Chances agendas at local level
- presentation from the National Practice Forum on information flows between health, social care and employability organisations
- JobCentre Plus current work programme
- Local Management Information Systems
- The Employability Learning Network

Joanne Farrow gave examples of how the Employability Learning Network was working for the NDG, with better use of information, e-learning and a series of learning events underway.

It was emphasised that events were open to TSEF members and there was a desire to have a joint NDG/TSEF meeting in the future.

Joanne stressed that the TSEF could propose learning events that the Network could offer that would be of use to Forum members. After discussion Social Return on Investment and the Impact of the Personalisation Agenda were suggested as topics.

Future NDG dates this year are 24 February, 25 May, 24 August and 23 November.

5. Mapping of Third Sector involvement in Partnerships

After discussion it was agreed that this research project would be tendered, seeking to identify:

- The “big picture” extent of third sector involvement in employability in Scotland – funding, contracts, number of clients supported – drawn largely from Scottish Government and DWP data, and
- How does that translate into third sector participation in local employability partnerships also other thematic partnerships related to employability connected to the community planning structures (eg housing and homelessness, health and social care etc)

Discussion points included the need to distinguish between active and “sleeping” partners in local structures; perceived token presence in some partnerships; the need to be imaginative when looking at what funding streams support employability; and how any study needed to add weight to the sector’s case about adding value to local provision.
It was hoped the research could be undertaken in February/March and would provide a benchmark against which future involvement of the sector could be measured.

6. Forthcoming events

Thursday 18 February
2pm,
Edinburgh International Conference Centre
Formal launch of the Third Sector Employability Forum
Scottish Government minister invited plus keynotes and facilitated round-tables developing Forum’s priority areas of work.

Friday 19 February
2pm
Future Jobs Forum
Jim Murphy, Scotland Minister, profiling Future Jobs Fund consortium members, with Jobs Fair and live recruitment

UK Welfare to Work Conference
1 and 2 July
Liverpool

Welfare to Work Scotland conference
14 and 15 September
Edinburgh

There will also be a TSEF conference later this year.

7. Taking forward Forum priorities

Four “high priority” areas of work had previously been agreed for the Forum:

1. Resourcing the employability pipeline for those furthest from the labour market
2. Third sector involvement in local employability partnerships
3. Opening up local procurement, and
4. Short term nature of funding

These work groups would now be kicked off with facilitated round table events on 18 February identifying the major challenge questions. A paper would then be circulated on each theme and encouragement made to use the on-line resource to develop input.

8. Draft work plan
It was agreed that the draft work plan for the year would be based upon the Forum meetings, work groups and events discussed thus far. Delegates were also keen to ensure that the distinctive values and passion of the sector were not lost in the business of the Forum. There was also a plea to keep a watch on measuring distance travelled, the future of European structural funds and output related funding.

9. Any other business

The S2S Social Enterprise Fair will be on Wednesday 21 April at the Edinburgh Corn Exchange.

DWP’s “informal call for evidence” on Pathways to Work closes on 5 February. Click here for more information.

The future of specialist training centres is under discussion by DWP. Click here for more information.

Julie-Ann Bilotti from The Scottish Government is convening a discussion with DWP on the Future Jobs Fund in Scotland.

10. Dates of future meetings

18 February 2010 Edinburgh – Launch of Third Sector Employability Forum
01 June 2010 Glasgow
07 September 2010 Edinburgh
07 December 2010 Glasgow