

## **SCOTLAND'S DEVOLVED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES ADVISORY GROUP– NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 25<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2017**

Scottish Government, Atlantic Quay, James Watt St, Glasgow, G2 8LU

### **Present:**

Professor Alan McGregor, Director of the University of Glasgow's Training and Employment Research Unit (Chair)  
Alastair Cameron, Chair of TSEF  
Clare McIntyre, Scottish Government  
Claire Mack, Director of Policy and Place, SCDI  
David Coyne, Policy Advisor, Skills Development Scotland  
David Hall, Scottish Government  
Deborah Nuttall, Labour Market Interventions Strategy, DWP  
Elaine Livingston, Jobcentre Plus Scotland  
Kirsty McHugh, Chair, ERSA  
Laurie Russell, Co-Chair ESS  
Mike McElhinney, Scottish Government  
Neville Prentice, Senior Director of Service Development & Delivery, SDS  
Pamela Smith, Chair of SLAED  
Stephen McConnachie, Group Partnership Manager, Jobcentre Plus Scotland

### **Apologies:**

Adam Reid, Dave Moxham, John Kemp, Kate Still, Katherine Peskett, Liz Cameron, Lorna Trainer, Michael Cross and Sally Witcher.

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Professor McGregor welcomed everyone to the eleventh meeting of the Advisory Group. In response to recently advised departures from the Group, Alan expressed his gratitude to Liz Cameron (Scottish Chambers of Commerce), Stephen McConnachie (Jobcentre Plus Scotland) and Nick Butler (Department for Work and Pensions) for their fantastic contributions. Alan also welcomed two new members to their first meeting; Deborah Nuttall (Department for Work and Pensions) replacing Nick Butler and Elaine Livingston (Jobcentre Plus Scotland) replacing Stephen McConnachie.

### **Scottish Government Update**

Mike McElhinney provided an update on current activity across the Programme. Good progress is being made with readiness for 2017 service, IT provision and the development of joint communications / messaging with Jobcentre Plus supporting this. Work is continuing on the development of 2018 service with a risk management approach being taken on developing options and contingencies in relation to IT requirements. An update will be scheduled by the Programme IT Director at a future meeting of the Group. The Outline Business Case has been presented to the Programme Board and has secured a general endorsement. The collaborative working relationship between SG and DWP continues to improve with the next meeting of the JMWGW offering an opportunity for respective Ministers to sign off the approach. This should ensure that there is clarity of responsibilities and management information.

**Action:**

- **SG** - Update Group on decision regarding the 2018 service name and branding.
- **SG** - Schedule agenda item on main themes arising on Outline Business Case
- **SG** - Invite SG Programme IT Director to attend future meeting and provide update on 2018 IT options.
- **Mike McElhinney** to develop and circulate paper for discussion at future meeting on options re-establishing user intelligence/engagement mechanism to support delivery.
- **SG** - Schedule follow up item on longer term Integration and Alignment agenda (Local Government)

**SDS: Potential Lessons from Work Able Scotland**

David Coyne (Skills Development Scotland) introduced this discussion on learning lessons from 2017 transitional year and using this to improve the approach as we work towards delivery in 2018. Work Able Scotland will support up to 1500 people with health conditions into work over one year from April 2017. Suggested Learning based on David's presentation and subsequent discussion is as follows:

- **Timescale:** A less compressed timescale would have allowed for more pre-commissioning engagement with the market;
- **Procurement:** Recognition that open procurement approach probably necessary to meet the 2017 (and 2018) timescales. Suggestion to consider alternative procurement routes for future procurement rounds, more capable of recognising the balance between commercial success and ensuring policy success;
- **Co-Design:** Calls for more co-design and co-commissioning which the Group would be interested in exploring further co-investment: SG should lead a discussion on co-investment and co-commissioning options, models and vehicles;
- **Clarity:** More detail should be made available to bidders on how the bidding process will work, is it fair and more detailed feedback to bidders must be provided;
- **Supply Chain Diversity:** More time needs to be given to discussions with Third Sector potential providers to help them develop the capacity to bid;
- **Consortia:** Forming consortia takes time. The timetable for 2018 commissioning needs to reflect this;
- **Evaluation Panels:** More effective consideration re representation of local knowledge on evaluation panels, and how well the local provision networks and capabilities are reflected;
- **Transparency:** Evaluators should be identified and named (SDS took an action point to publish this for WAS).

Significant work has gone into this programme and all agreed that due to the tight timeline, the transitional approach is the best response.

**Action:**

**Advisory Group** – To provide their comments on how best to drive and deliver the longer term integration and alignment agenda.

**Neville Prentice** – Agreed to publish who was on the evaluation panel for Work Able Scotland.

**Scottish Government: 2018 Supplier Information Events**

David Hall (Scottish Government) updated the Group on the outcome of the events scheduled late last year in relation to the delivery of the 2018 service. He reported that there was a healthy spread of organisations with 166 attendees attending representing the main sectors. These events with providers tested overall policy and design and received very positive feedback. They were intended to test the principles of:

- The Procurement Timeline – It was agreed that this would be challenging.
- Potential Funding Model CPA's - Different structures already in place with Scottish Government analysts working full time on analysis / developing options.
- Signposting Support

The Advisory Group agreed that the customer should remain at the forefront of any new procedures.

**Action:**

**David Hall** – will investigate the possibility of increasing the current suggested timeline for developing bids

**AOB**

Mike McElhinney asked the group to consider the role of the Advisory Group in the longer term.

**Action:**

**Mike McElhinney** – Will circulate an outline/discussion paper and schedule an agenda item at future Advisory Group meeting.