

5 October 2021

## **NO ONE LEFT BEHIND – UPDATE**

As we emerge from the pandemic, supporting each other and the communities we serve we are also focused on our recovery for the future. This recovery provides an opportunity to deliver real change as Scotland embarks on its journey of renewal. A journey which seeks to tackle poverty and disadvantage; deliver a fairer society and create opportunities for people to achieve their potential. This includes looking at ways to give more power to people and communities, creating conditions to empower frontline teams and develop new ways of working that reflect a greater focus on place and the needs of individuals.

No One Left Behind, with its focus on placing people at the centre of the design and delivery of employment support services offers a significant enabler in which to rise to the challenge and ambition set out by the Christie report more than a decade ago and respond to some of the challenges set by the Social Renewal Advisory Board earlier this year. In particular in relation to “Communities and Collective Endeavour” and developing new arrangements for local governance. It reflects a strengthened partnership approach where Scottish and Local Government work more collaboratively with partners in the wider public sector, third and private sectors to make best use of collective resources, identify local needs and make informed, evidence-based decisions. A move to local governance of services resonates with wider collective ambitions on public sector reform, social renewal and place-based approaches that prioritise the needs of people and communities.

Some may say this is overdue. The pandemic has impacted on everyone - all sectors, businesses and people and has exacerbated inequalities in the labour market. There remains duplication in the system, complexity for service users and a duty on us all to make best use of collective resources as we strive to tackle the social and economic inequalities that affect people of all ages who remain at risk of being left further behind.

The need to better align support services has never been greater.

**We can confirm the Scottish Government will proceed with further implementation of No One Left Behind from April 2022.**

### **Why now?**

There has been significant change to the economy, the labour market and the range of support which is available to people since current national employability programmes commenced almost a decade ago.

The decision to proceed with further implementation will see the Employability Fund and Community Jobs Scotland cease in March 2022 with future associated funding transferring to No One Left Behind. Moving to a local governance approach allows Local Employability Partnerships, statutory bodies including Skills Development Scotland, Department for Work and Pensions, Colleges, NHS, the third sector and business representatives to work together with local communities to design and deliver services that best meet both individual and labour market / business aspirations in each local area.

Further implementation of No One Left Behind is not removing funding from the system. Whilst No One Left Behind will see a move from the national funding of programmes to a local commissioning and grant approach, it will also continue to deliver a mixed economy of provision at a local level. A national procurement framework is being developed by Scottish & Local Government with Scotland Excel and a National Stakeholder Advisory Group will be established to help support this process.

Significant work has taken place since the last update in March. A rigorous, independent self-assessment of local partnership functionality and effectiveness has been undertaken, with the results published<sup>1</sup>. Improvements identified in each local area are being taken forward as a partnership through local action plans. A range of further supporting activity is also underway to strengthen local partnerships.

At a national level, we have met with stakeholders and partners regularly to inform the approach and the governance structure which underpins the development and progress of No One Left Behind. This has been refreshed with the introduction of the Transforming Employment Support Leadership Group, which we Co-chair alongside the Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training. The Group brings together political leadership with senior leaders from across business, skills agencies, employability programmes and enterprise agencies to support the implementation of the Scottish Government's Young Person's Guarantee and delivery of No One Left Behind.

While this might seem like the end of a journey, it is not. We recognise that change brings potential challenges and uncertainty, but it also brings opportunities. Through our shared endeavours, strengthened collaboration and continued dialogue we must maximise the opportunity to do things differently and create the conditions to deliver more effective outcomes for people. Working constructively across organisational and sectoral boundaries is key to that and we remain committed to collective leadership in our shared endeavour.

Ultimately, the transformation No One Left Behind brings is one that is about people. An approach where individuals that require employment support are put at the heart of

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<sup>1</sup> [Local Employability Partnership Self-Assessment: National Overview \(employabilityinscotland.com\)](https://employabilityinscotland.com)

services, not trying to fit into structures and programmes which can only offer support for so long. Through our commitment to embed the Scottish Approach to Service Design, users will be empowered to actively participate in the definition, design and delivery of their public services.

## Next Steps

- **Procurement:** Scottish & Local Government will develop and implement a national commissioning framework, a positive and proactive response to calls for national coherence in this area, this will sit alongside existing and emerging local approaches.
- **Local Partnership Activity:** Local Employability Partnerships will develop a local Delivery Plan enabling more inclusive, aligned, integrated and responsive services. This will include the employability elements of delivery of the Young Persons Guarantee within the all age approach.
- **Exit Plans:** We will continue working with partners involved in delivering Community Jobs Scotland and Employability Fund to prepare for the closure of these services and ensure individuals and employers seeking support have access to appropriate local provision.
- **Third Sector Collaboration:** The Programme for Government set out a £20 million investment through No One Left Behind to support people who are facing Long Term Unemployment. The Scottish Government, in agreement with Local Government, has committed up to £5 million of this being ring-fenced to provide opportunities within third sector organisations. This additional investment will be managed through No One Left Behind and will help support third sector employers and provide additional community benefits. This is in addition to funding made by Local Employability Partnerships which may already support delivery through the third sector at local level.

Transformation is not happening overnight and we have been working towards this change, with partners, for some time. With the commitments in place, and the agreed principles that guide our work, we all have the opportunity to shape the future of Employability services in Scotland to better serve those further from the labour market regardless of age or circumstances.



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