

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND SCOTTISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AGREEMENT FOR EMPLOYABILITY

PURPOSE

Through the National Performance Framework, both Scottish Government and Scottish Local Government have set out their shared ambitions in developing a Fairer Scotland. We agree that sustainable and fair employment is a critical aspect of inclusive growth and the main route out of poverty, inequality and disadvantage. Job creation, and accessible, sustainable and fair employment are critical to ensure that everyone who can is able to reach their full potential by participating successfully in the Scottish labour market.

Overall, the Scottish Labour Market is healthy with historically high employment and low unemployment. However, we know local labour markets differ significantly and that there are still difficulties for a number of people and groups being able to access and sustain employment. To support more people into work, we must ensure that local and national level services place the person at the front and centre of both design and delivery. We must collectively identify and agree opportunities for better alignment and joining up of local and national service delivery. We must also ensure that our approach drives greater levels of collaboration and is flexible enough to adapt to changing priorities over time

No One Left Behind was published in March 2018 and sets out the next steps for alignment and integration of employability support in Scotland. In doing so, it sets out six objectives:

- A system that provides flexible and **person-centred support**;
- is more **straightforward** for people to navigate;
- is better **integrated and aligned** with other services, in particular, although not exclusively with health provision;
- provides pathways into **sustainable and fair work**;
- is **driven by evidence**, including data and the experience of users; and
- that supports more people – particularly those facing multiple barriers – to move into the **right job, at the right time**.

To achieve these objectives we need a collective approach to employability where the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) work in partnership to positively shape employability provision nationally and to deliver it locally. We will work with key partners, including the third sector and other employability providers as well as the vulnerable in our communities, to redesign services so that the people we collectively serve are better placed to realise their potential, better able to find ways into paid work and to reduce both dependency and inequality.

This partnership working framework sets out the terms of engagement and working relationship between Scottish Government and Scottish Local Government on employability. It will build on existing and effective partnership working for employability and establishes a commitment towards good practice in the way we will work together. The framework will be kept under review and be flexible and agile as the labour market in Scotland evolves over time.



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The Scottish Government Public Service Reform agenda and the local governance review outlines our joint ambition to collaboratively deliver services which are “effective, efficient and represent value for money for Scotland as a whole”. In this spirit, we will work together to develop an approach based on mutual openness, transparency and respect.

PRINCIPLES

Scottish Government and Scottish Local Government agree to a set of core principles to support the collaborative working that will underpin the Partnership Working Framework for Employability and which sit at the core of the relationship between Scottish Local Government and the Scottish Government in Employability. These are:

- Placing people at the centre of the design and delivery of coherent and seamless employability services;
- Working together openly, transparently and constructively in pursuit of our shared aims and objectives and ensure mechanisms are in place for regular, strong, two-way communication;
- Delivering excellent public services and value for money by avoiding duplication and complexity in provision and aligning services to make them seamless, coherent and accessible;
- Developing agreed national and local outcomes and measurement approaches utilising appropriate research, sectoral skills requirements and primary sources of information;
- Reflecting and respecting existing governance and accountabilities within both Scottish Local Government and Scottish Government, briefing each other on matters of mutual interest;
- Exploring opportunities for future co-investment; co-design and shared performance management;
- Collaboratively building on existing local and regional employability partnerships to share and align activities and priorities including partners in the broader public and third sectors; and
- Recognising and building on the strengths of local delivery and good practice around programmes, delivery models and approaches.

GOVERNANCE / LEADERSHIP

Underpinning the Partnership Working Framework in Employability are two Groups:

JOINT SCOTTISH EMPLOYABILITY GROUP

A joint high level Group. Co-Chaired by Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills and COSLA Spokesperson Community and Wellbeing Board, providing leadership and oversight on shared employability objectives and principles between layers of national and local government. Comprising, Senior Representative(s) from Scottish Government Employability Division, Representative from Society Of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and Scotland’s Local Authority Economic Development (SLAED) group.



The role of the group will be to:

- Ensure outcomes are delivered in a way which supports the National Performance Framework.
- Strengthen collaborative leadership and provide the clear vision and priorities required to drive sustainable and fair employment in Scotland.
- Oversight of delivery/performance of local authority/national employability services.
- Advising on effective employability policy, programme and partnership interaction between local and national employability programmes.
- Promoting the smooth and effective working relationship between Scottish Local Government and Scottish Government; and promoting openness, transparency, and trust between Scottish Local Government and Scottish Government teams;
- Agreement on national/local roles & responsibilities in employability.
- Providing a forum for discussion of areas of shared and mutual interest around operation and policy issues, including employability policy interaction between Scottish Local Government and Scottish Government, sharing positions, identifying options and brokering solutions where possible;
- In exception, act as a point of escalation for operational issues which cannot be resolved quickly or at the Scottish Local Government Alignment group.

This group will meet twice per annum, but there may be a requirement to meet quarterly in the first year to establish the group, agree objectives and principles and strategic direction and support on employability priorities.

Scottish Local Government Alignment Group

An operational group co-chaired by Scottish Government Deputy Director and COSLA representative, comprising Scottish Government, SLAED, and SOLACE Officer representatives.

- Identifying and sharing best practice in employability, including a greater focus on user-led service design.
- Identifying and removing barriers to productive employability partnerships.
- Ensuring alignment of local and national government employability delivery.
- Encouraging joint implementation and collaboration across the existing landscape of local and regional delivery in Scotland, including, Community Planning partnerships, local authority led City Region deal and Growth bid areas, nine Fair Start delivery areas and emerging economic partnership areas.
- Ensuring priorities for employability are based on objective evidence, engaging with local stakeholders where appropriate to determine and agree outcomes reflective of local and national ambition.
- Develop options and recommendations for commissioning models which clearly sets out roles, responsibilities and accountability to ensure value for money and effective delivery models.

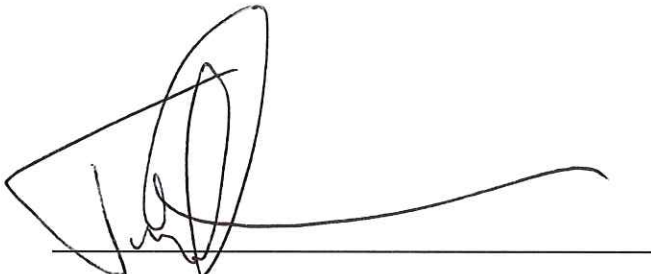


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- Provide a forum for discussion of areas of shared and mutual interest in employability.
- Co-produce delivery models which balance local flexibility with national coherence and direction and which reflect shared aims, joint accountability and transparency of outcomes.

It is proposed this group meets quarterly, with an initial monthly schedule introduced to establish the group and associated work plan.



Jamie Hepburn MSP
Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills



Councillor Kelly Parry
Spokesperson Community Wellbeing

5 DECEMBER 2018